


Non-Executive Report of the: Council 21 st July 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of, Legal and Interim Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Petitions to Council	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	All wards

SUMMARY

1. This report sets out details of the valid petitions submitted for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 21st July 2021. The text of the petition received for presentation to this meeting is set out in the attached report.
2. The Council's Constitution provides for up to four petitions to be heard at each ordinary Council meeting. These are taken in order of receipt, except that petitions for debate (those in excess of 2,000 signatures) will take precedence. Should more than four petitions be received, all remaining petitions will be listed to be formally noted by Council.
3. For Petitions listed as to be heard:
 - a. Petitioners may address the meeting for no more than 3 minutes.
 - b. Members may then question the petitioners for a further 4 minutes.
 - c. Finally, the speaker will invite the Mayor or (at the Mayor's discretion) the relevant Lead Member or Committee Chair to respond to the petition for up to 2 minutes. The petition will then be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will provide a written response within 28 days of the date of the meeting.
4. Members, other than a Cabinet Member or Committee Chair responding at the end of the item, should confine their contributions to questions and not make statements or attempt to debate.
5. For Petitions listed as to be noted, petitioners may not address the meeting. The Speaker will state where they will go for a full response.

6. Responses to all petitions will be sent to the lead petitioner and displayed on the Council's website.

PETITIONS FOR DEBATE

There are no petitions for debate.

PETITIONS TO BE HEARD

5.1 Petition: Objection to the one way system in Shadwell and carry out a New Consultation submitted by Ruhul Amin and others.

We Petition Tower Hamlets Council to stop the street works to Martha Street, Dellow Street, Tarling Street, Lowood Street, Bewley Street and Sutton Street which will result in to a one way system in Shadwell. We strongly urge the Council to Immediately carry out a new inclusive consultation. Mayor John Biggs acknowledged this in 2018, where he received a petition with over 800 signatures. As a result, and following this, at the Tarling Centre in a meeting, he stated that the works to create a one way system would not be carried out.

5.2 Petition requesting a Moratorium on the Felling of Trees submitted by Geoffrey Juden and others.

Tower Hamlets as a local authority has a remit to understand the needs of all its residents, these to include the trees in the borough. It seems that trees are felled without a tree report, together with no notification. Tower Hamlets must take from best practice of other London Boroughs in the way it deals with its biodiversity.

5.3 Petition regarding Bring Back the Basketball courts at Wapping Gardens submitted by Fernando SaraviaRajal and others.

We the undersigned petition the council to reinstall the basketball hoops at Wapping Gardens. The 4 basketball rims were an essential part of the community, and they were abruptly removed in May 2021. It was a place where local neighbors connected, communities formed, and parents introduced their kids to basketball. Especially in the context of the tough past year, in which the Covid pandemic forced people to stay home and indoor facilities are still restricted, removing outdoors recreational space is a disservice. We have heard that the reason for the removal was noise complaints and for that we propose restricting playing times and using noise barriers. They are used throughout the country for sports. Finally, we would like to emphasize that these courts were the best basketball courts in the entire Tower Hamlets and the only ones in Wapping (The court in Helling st. is a children's court). And while the basketball courts were removed, the tennis and football areas are still in place.

5.4 Petition regarding Human Rights Violation submitted by Abdul Salam and others

I am deeply concerned that Tower Hamlets Council voted unanimously to agree the IHRA definition and all 11 accompanying examples, on 19th September 2018. I believe that the examples are against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “everyone has the right to freedom of expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers” – Human Rights Act 1998, section 6.

Therefore, I am requesting that Tower Hamlets Council inserts two “clarifications”, which was recommended by the Home Affairs Committee to the UK government on 12th December 2016:

- It is not anti-Semitic to criticise the Government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest anti-Semitic intent.
- It is not anti-Semitic to hold the Israeli Government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in the Israeli Government’s policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggest anti-Semitic intent.

PETITIONS TO BE NOTED

None.