


Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 17 th November 2021	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Motions submitted by Members of the Council	

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

SUMMARY

1. 4 motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 11 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 17th November 2021
2. The motions submitted are listed overleaf. In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, the motions alternate between the administration and the other Political Groups, with the Opposition Group motions starting with the largest Political Group not to have that meeting's Opposition Motion Debate slot.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

MOTIONS

Set out overleaf is the motions that have been submitted.

12.1 Motion regarding Local Government Funding

Proposer: Cllr Candida Ronald

Seconder: Mayor John Biggs

This Council notes that:

1. The Spending Review took place last month, and was an opportunity for the Chancellor to provide much-needed respite to the residents of Tower Hamlets and increase funding to public services in these difficult economic times.
2. That the Chancellor missed this opportunity and instead of taking action to address the growing cost of living crisis, decided to raise taxes for working families through a record increase in national insurance.
3. London Councils has estimated that boroughs require up to £2bn of additional funding over the Spending Review period to meet underlying demand, inflation and the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on lost income and additional spending.
4. Tower Hamlets Council has had to save over £200m since 2010 due to Government austerity and increasing demand.
5. While the Chancellor has announced additional funding for local authorities, this doesn't begin to replace the amount of funding that has been lost through austerity, and much of the increase will be consumed by the costs of the Government's Social Care reforms.
6. The Tower Hamlets Poverty Review found that in a typical classroom of 30 children, 17 are living below the poverty line, while at the other end of the age spectrum 44% of older people live in low income households. It also found that inequality and poverty go hand in hand; families that have a disabled member, those from Black Minority and Ethnic backgrounds, lone parents and larger families are all at greater at risk of being in poverty.

This Council believes that:

1. Tower Hamlets, like other London Councils, has seen an increase in underlying demand and has had to respond to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. The impact of the £20 cut to Universal Credit, the end of furlough, rising National Insurance contributions, and rising energy prices will only worsen the impact of the cost of living crisis on our already badly hit residents.
3. While the recent Spending Review has pledged an increase in funding to local government services, the amount promised is nothing compared to the funding that has been cut from councils by the Conservative Government since 2010 and the Chancellor's spending projections assume a 3% council tax increase across the country for each of the next 3 years.
4. While the change to the Universal Credit taper rate is welcome, it only restores around £2bn of funding to the UC system after they removed £6bn through the £20p/w cut.
5. We welcome the Government's announcement that the Whitechapel Road Improvement Programme will benefit from the Levelling Up Fund, but after over ten years of funding cuts we will not applaud the Conservative Government when they restore a fraction of the money that they have plundered from our borough over the last decade.

This Council resolves to:

1. Send a copy of this motion to the Chancellor, alongside a copy of the council's recent Poverty Report, calling on him to boost funding to vital public services including our local councils.
2. Continue to stand up for Tower Hamlets residents and push the Government for fairer policies to fight for social justice and equalities in society.

12.2 Motion regarding Probity in the Planning System

Proposer: Cllr Andrew Wood

Seconder: Cllr Peter Golds

This Council notes:

That Tower Hamlets has more development going through the planning system than most local authorities.

That the gross development value of many developments exceeds £100 million and some such as the recently consented ASDA site exceed £1 billion.

There is frequently local opposition to development for a range of reasons including issues including sunlight, daylight access and the provision (or lack) of social infrastructure.

This Council further notes:

The prominence of some well-known local businesspeople in the role of supporting developers with public relations consultancy support.

The situation at ASDA whereby the Developers sponsored a public event during the determination of the planning application at which awards were distributed to attendees which went beyond public consultation.

Previous allegations of bribery which were never as far as is publicly known investigated by the Police.

This Council resolves:

To restore trust in the planning system and to counter the narrative from some residents that brown paper envelopes full of cash explains why Tower Hamlets approves so many developments.

This Council therefore recommends:

For all planning applications subject to a decision by the Strategic Development Committee:

1. The creation of a Register of all public relations and public affairs companies, individuals and consultants engaged by developers active in Tower Hamlets to be on a publicly available list with the organisations contact details made available. That this register be made available on the Council website.
2. That developers are asked only to use public relations agents listed on this register.
3. That all such organisations are members of the appropriate trade body, the Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA) which includes a register of clients and consultants for each company on their publicly available website.
4. That in the event of an applicant using a company that is a non PRCA member, or an individual practicing in a freelance capacity, this be noted by the council and the information made available to the public on the council website.
5. That all donations / financial support made to local political parties or for Council events from those listed on the Register are declared.

6. That the planning portal details the public relations agent(s) employed by developers on their planning application
7. That all those involved in the planning system commit to reporting directly to the Police ASAP any attempts to bribe or create undue influence.
8. That all members of the Council who are employed by any organisation lobbying on behalf of planning applications, whether it be a PR company, developer or acting as a freelance consultant to developers, declare this and recuse themselves from membership of the Strategic Development Committee.
9. That members of the Strategic Development Committee have no direct relationship with any developer nor their agents by way of meetings or events including exhibitions, social events meetings without the involvement of Council planning officers, during the entire planning process from preapplication to the final decision by committee.
10. That the Council writes to the Government and urges them to bring forward preforms promised prior to them taking office in 2010 regarding the compulsory registration of all lobbyists both at a national and local government level.

12.3 Motion regarding a Memorial to the Matchwomen and matchgirls

Proposer: Cllr Sabina Akhtar

Seconder: Cllr Rachel Blake

This Council believes:

1. We have a proud modern history in Tower Hamlets of championing diversity and standing up to discrimination, but there is more we can do
2. That historically under-represented groups should be remembered in the public realm
3. That the women and girls who took part in the Match Factory Strike of 1888 were pioneers of the Labour Movement (see notes)

This Council notes:

1. The Council has pro-actively undertaken a review of race and equality in the public realm.
2. The purpose of the review was to share thoughts about under-representation in public spaces – not only in terms of race, but also on issues across the equalities landscape including but not limited to civil rights, workers', women's and LGBTQ+ rights and more.
3. The review asked the community identify and nominate other names, particularly of under-represented groups, who have done something memorable and who we should celebrate.

This Council resolves:

1. To welcome ideas for remembering the Matchwomen and Matchgirls who fought for their employment rights
2. To work with the Matchgirls Memorial Trust to remember the struggle of the Matchwomen and Matchgirls

12.4 Motion regarding a Bleed Kit

Proposer: Cllr Rabina Khan

This Council Notes:

1. In the year ending March 2020, there were around 46,000 (selected) offences involving a knife or sharp instrument in England and Wales.
2. London recorded the highest rate of 179 offences involving a knife per 100,000 population 2Fin 2019/20, a slight increase on a rate of 169 in 2018/19.
3. The ONS reported that more than 46,000 offences involving knives or sharp instruments were recorded by police in the year ending March 2020.
4. Tower Hamlets has a growing young population and has witnessed an increase of violent crime in recent years involving knives and sharp objects.
5. The most recent incident at the time of submitting this motion a teenager suffered a significant knife wound after being stabbed in Tower Hamlets on Sunday evening (September 12).

This Council believes:

1. That every measure needs to be taken to save the lives of victims of violent knife crime and congratulates The Daniel Baird Foundation for its work in promoting the use and installation of Bleed Control Kits around the country.
2. The Daniel Baird Foundation was established by Lynne Baird after her son Daniel was stabbed to death in Birmingham after a dispute outside a pub in 2017.
3. A Bleed Control Kit is a small critical injury pack which contains specialised dressings, a tourniquet, instructions and other specialised medical supplies designed to stop or control the severe bleeding that often follows when someone is stabbed.
4. The public access kits are designed to be used by non-emergency personnel in much the same way that heart defibrillators ('shock machines') specifically designed for use by those with no First Aid training are becoming a common sight in London and the UK.
5. While we still need an effective Public Health approach to reduce the catastrophe that is knife crime, Bleed Control Kits can be another way to treat victims.

This Council resolves:

1. To direct the Tower Hamlets Public Health team to work with The Daniel Baird Foundation, the NHS, Metropolitan Police Service and the London Ambulance Service to develop the best strategy for the deployment of Bleed Control Kits across the borough.
2. To seek sponsorship of Bleed Control Kits from commercial partners to reduce costs of purchase and installation go Bleed Control Cabinets.
3. To introduce First Aid training into every secondary school and college classroom in the borough to increase the potential benefits of any Bleed Control Kits that have to be used.
4. To publicly thank Lynne Baird for her tireless efforts in memory of her son Daniel to establish The Daniel Baird Foundation and hope that her good work saves many lives.