

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2011

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD,
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by Members of the Council for response by Members of the Executive at the Council meeting on Wednesday 2nd February 2011.
2. Questions are limited to one per Member per meeting, plus one supplementary question unless the Member has indicated that only a written reply is required and in these circumstances a supplementary question is not permitted.
3. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. There is a time limit of thirty minutes for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any question not answered within this time will be dealt with by way of a written response. The Chair will decide the time allocated to each question.
5. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

24 questions have been received from Members of the Council as follows:-

8.1 Question from Councillor Joshua Peck to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Can the Mayor tell me what he believes is the right number of Children's Centres for Tower Hamlets?”

8.2 Question from Councillor Peter Golds to Cabinet Member, Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

“Has the administration undertaken any investigation or conversations with adjoining authorities and public sector bodies within the borough as to sharing staff or back office functions?”

8.3 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Is the Mayor aware of the frustration and anger of residents in the Brick Lane area about the continuing problem of urination and defecation in public areas around Brick Lane as a result of the lack of public toilet facilities, especially at market times which on Sunday now stretches throughout the day, and is he also aware of a large sign half way up Brick Lane saying please use the toilets but which has no indication where the toilets are, and does he agree that officers should urgently investigate this problem and that at least part of the solution will be to provide adequate and well-publicised temporary toilets, especially at market time?”

8.4 Question from Councillor Anna Lynch to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Given that I have still not been provided with a figure and now that consultation on the future structure of Democratic Services has closed, can the Mayor now tell me what is the estimated additional full year cost to the Council's budget of setting up and staffing his office?.”

8.5 Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Will the Mayor please inform me what the future of the Isle of Dogs hoppla bus is?”

8.6 Question from Councillor Harun Miah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Is the Mayor aware that a contracting local authority may exclude an economic contractor from bidding if the contractor has “committed an act of grave misconduct in the course of its business” and does he agree that grave misconduct must include assisting the maintenance of illegal Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territory and would he urgently investigate the situation of Veolia in this regard and in particular the possibility both of terminating contractual arrangements with this company and excluding them from future bidding for council contracts?”

8.7 Question from Councillor Abdal Ullah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Can the Mayor tell me what action he is taking to build on the progress made by the last administration on increasing recycling rates in the Borough?”

8.8 Question from Councillor David Snowdon to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“The Mayor’s diary includes a regular Tuesday slot with the Head of Communications to “look at the proposed news list for East End Life”. Would the Mayor please intimate as to whether he has directed the Head of Communications or any other officer to include or exclude a story for this publication, or specified which stories he wishes his picture attached to?”

8.9 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Does the Mayor support the Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park in their vital conservation and heritage work and will he work with me to secure the future of the Park?”

8.10 Question from Councillor Zara Davis to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“What steps has the Mayor taken to engage with Tower Hamlets residents over his budget proposals, and what opportunities have been provided for residents to feedback their views?”

8.11 Question from Councillor Bill Turner to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Does the Mayor agree with me that supporting families into work is a key way to lift children out of poverty?”

8.12 Question from Councillor Dr. Emma Jones to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Does Tower Hamlets Council know how many residents in Tower Hamlets suffer from dementia?”

8.13 Question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

“During the recent members budget briefing, Cllr Alibor Choudhury stated that PO5 and above posts will be the key focus in the restructure/cuts with cuts in the ratio of 1 in 12, clearly stating that we need to do more for less and protect our frontline services. Why then has Community Safety proposed pay increases for certain senior managers by creating new posts and deleted managers posts on the one hand and created more managers posts on the other hand using core budget money, while deleting front line services as they are funded by grants?”

8.14 Question from Councillor Craig Aston to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Will the Mayor outline the discussions and consultations he has had regarding Thames Water’s proposed routes for the Thames Tunnel sewer?”

8.15 Question from Councillor Kosru Uddin to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“As a result of the savings being implemented by Tower Hamlets Council and other employers in the Borough which are inevitably leading to job losses, what measures are in place to help up-skill residents and support them in to employment, especially young people and also what else is being proposed as measures of support?”

8.16 Question from Councillor Mohammed Maium Miah to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Does the Mayor, following hints made to the last Cabinet, intend to abolish East End Life in the coming financial year or will he continue to hang onto his propaganda paper until legislation forces him to ditch it?”

8.17 Question from Councillor Denise Jones to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Did the Mayor and Council respond to the recent Thames Water consultation about the use of King Edward Memorial Park and what are their views on the plans to turn the park into an industrial site for up to seven years, permanently spoiling the riverfront views, creating noise pollution and venting sewage air into the park?”

8.18 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Why has Tower Hamlets Council increased the rent for Millwall Rugby Club’s use of the Millwall Park Arches bearing in mind that the volunteers who run Millwall Rugby Club have worked hard privately fundraising from the local community to get the arches they use in Millwall Park from the derelict state they took them over in to the current well maintained state?”

8.19 Question from Councillor Amy Whitelock to the Executive Member for Housing, Councillor Rabina Khan

“Could the Cabinet Member outline what ‘options’ are to be considered in the recently announced ‘options appraisal’ on the best way of delivering housing in the borough, and give details of the process and timelines for consultation on these options, including how he will ensure a range of stakeholders’ views are thoroughly engaged?”

8.20 Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

“How much is the Council's cumulative debt for overpayments of benefits; how much of this results from overpayment of housing benefit; what is being done to recover overpayments of benefits; and how much of this debt is expected to be recovered by the end of this municipal year?”

8.21 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs to the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Councillor Oliur Rahman

“Can the Cabinet Member give me an update on the likely impact of the Conservative led Government’s decision to cut Educational Maintenance Allowance on our young people in further education and training in Tower Hamlets?”

8.22 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum to the Mayor, Lutfur Rahman

“Money will be very tight for the Council in the next few years, this means the management of Section 106 agreements is more important than ever. Can the Mayor assure us that he will make the system more transparent and work to limit the number of developer led projects?”

8.23 Question from Councillor Lesley Pavitt to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Rabina Khan

“Will the Mayor consider introducing a non-laminate flooring policy for tenants with properties that are not on the Ground floor such as that adopted by other London Boroughs such as Islington?”

8.24 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

“Many residents have complained to me that they have seen drug dealing and other criminal activities take place right under CCTV cameras but nothing has been done. Many people now think these cameras are either not working or not being monitored. Can you assure us this is not the case?”