

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2011

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

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

SUMMARY

1. Six motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 2nd February 2011.
2. In accordance with the protocol agreed by the Council on 21st May 2008, the order in which the motions are listed is by turns, one from each group, continuing in rotation until all motions submitted are included. The rotation starts with any group(s) not reached at the previous meeting.
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in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.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 are the motions that have been submitted.

12.1 The Condem Government cuts

Proposed: Councillor Fozol Miah

Seconded: Councillor Harun Miah

This Council notes that:

- 1) The Con Dem Coalition government is imposing very severe cuts on local government, including £70 million cuts on Tower Hamlets
- 2) These cuts are affecting poorer areas like Tower Hamlets much more severely than better off areas represented by the Conservatives and Lib Dems
- 3) These cuts will have a disastrous effect on the essential services provided by this Council
- 4) These cuts will have a disastrous effect on employment in the borough as jobs in the Council disappear
- 5) The effects of these cuts are going to be compounded by rising unemployment particularly but not exclusively amongst our young people
- 6) The cuts in local government spending are also being made worse by other cuts such as the abolition of the Educational Maintenance Allowance and by the massive increase in university tuition fees

This Council believes that:

- 1) These cuts are unnecessary and unjustified
- 2) The government deficit which is being used to justify these cuts is the product of the chaos and decline in the real economy brought about by the reckless activity of the financial sector
- 3) The deficit does need to be reduced over time but in the first instance this must be through economic growth which is being jeopardised by the government's spending cuts
- 4) The deficit can be further reduced by taxing those most able as opposed to least able to pay, i.e. through a rise in the top rate of taxation and through exceptional taxes on bank profits and bankers' bonuses
- 5) The deficit can be further reduced by selective spending cuts where there is waste such as in the enormous expenditure that continues to be made on nuclear weapons and on armaments more generally rather than on services essential to ordinary working people and the less well off.

This Council recognises the difficulties imposed on the Council, given the central Government cuts, by the legal requirement to produce a so-called "balanced budget".

This Council wants

- 1) The budget being prepared for vote on 23rd February to reflect the perspective outlined above
- 2) Every effort to be made both to eliminate waste and drive up efficiency in the delivery of council services
- 3) Opportunities taken to boost locally raised revenue for the Council including through an increase in council tax whilst avoiding adverse effects on the least well off
- 4) Maximum consultation with the trade union representatives of the council staff and with the recipients of the council's services to try to identify efficiency savings and to minimise the adverse effects of the government imposed cuts.
- 5) A campaign, such as the one being pursued by Lambeth Council, informing Tower Hamlets residents of the unprecedented cuts being imposed by the Con Dem Coalition government and inviting them into a dialogue on the best way forward.
- 6) A campaign to inform every Tower Hamlets resident of the great march and demonstration against the cuts called by the Trades Union Congress for Saturday 26th March

12.2 King Edward VII Memorial Park

Proposed: Councillor Rabina Khan
Seconded: Councillor Alibor Choudhury

The Council notes:

1. That Thames Water is planning to build a sewerage facility on the waterfront by King Edward VII Memorial Park, a landmark of the East End both for its historical significance and its social value;
2. That at present the park is well used by the community all year round and it provides an oasis in an area where green spaces are scarce;
3. That King Edward VII Memorial Park is vital to the community life of Shadwell, Wapping, Limehouse and Stepney and that damaging it in any way or reducing its accessibility and possibility of enjoyment for any period of time would have an impact on said communities;

The Council believes:

1. That the works being done by Thames Water are important for London as whole and that Tower Hamlets must work with other boroughs and London-wide agencies to find a solution that satisfies the needs of London and the needs of local residents;

2. That a consultation was undertaken by the Council but since it closed on 14 Jan, a range of issues have emerged that indicate this scheme does not do enough to meet the needs of TH residents;
3. That Thames Water needs to revisit these proposals with the Council and that negotiations with Crossrail set a precedent for this approach and prove it can work.

The Council resolves:

To work with Thames Water to find an alternative site for this project that does not impact on the historic King Edward Park and its environs.

12.3 Recording Council Meetings

Proposed: Councillor Tim Archer
Seconded: Councillor Peter Golds

This Council notes that:

- It is able to audibly and visually record council meetings using current technical equipment available in the council chamber.
- It is able to record business conducted at Full Council with little or no cost to the taxpayer.

This council believes that:

- democracy and accountability are important concepts in order to gain public trust in the decision making in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- residents should be able to refer to and view council meetings through the use of audio visual equipment.
- conduct of Members of the Council will be positively affected by the knowledge that footage is in the public domain.

This Council resolves: -

- to audio and video record each meeting of the Full Council to enable reference for Members of the public, Council Members and Officers and to increase transparency and accountability.
- to amend the Tower Hamlets Council Constitution, Part 4, Rule 27.1 to read 'No photography or video or audio recording of any kind by guests and members of the public may take place at any Council Meeting without the express permission of the Chair.'

- to introduce to the Tower Hamlets Council Constitution, Part 4, Rule 27.2 to read 'The Council Chamber, whilst the public gallery is open and the Council is conducting its business at the Meeting of the Tower Hamlets Council, will be video and audio recorded by the Council and made available online within 48 hours.'

12.4 Bin Veolia

Proposed: Councillor Harun Miah

Seconded: Councillor Fozol Miah

This council notes that:

- 1) This council has long-term contracts with the multinational company Veolia
- 2) Veolia is deeply involved in contract work for the Israeli government which assist their continued oppression of the Palestinian people
- 3) In particular Veolia is directly implicated in maintaining illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territory
- 4) Under the Public Contract Regulations (2006) a contracting local authority may exclude an economic contractor from bidding for a contract if the contractor has "committed an act of grave misconduct in the course of its business"

This council believes that:

- 1) Veolia has clearly committed acts of grave misconduct in relation to the Palestinian people and the maintenance of illegal settlements and in other respects as well
- 2) There should be an urgent investigation by council officers to confirm the charges of grave misconduct that have been levelled in the international campaign to "Bin Veolia"
- 3) This council should do everything in its power to support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign against the pariah state of Israel.
- 4) Urgent steps should be taken to terminate all contracts with Veolia and not to place any further contracts with this company
- 5) The mayor should write to Veolia as soon as possible to communicate to them the contents of this motion and the council's determination to terminate any relationship to Veolia

12.5 Recovery of Rich Mix Loan

Proposed by: Councillor Ohid Ahmed

Seconded by: Councillor Rania Khan

This Council believes:

That the decision taken under the previous Labour administration led by to loan £850,000 to the Rich Mix cultural centre with no apparent recovery plan in place for the cash was deeply irresponsible.

This Council resolves:

To put in place a recovery plan with the aim of investing that money into community projects including the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster Memorial.

12.6 Thames Tunnel

Proposed by: Councillor Dr. Emma Jones

Seconded by: Councillor Zara Davis

This Council notes that:

- Thames Water is planning an upgrade of London's sewer system and has recently consulted on a number of proposed routes for the proposed Thames Tunnel sewer from Tower Hill to the sewage treatment works at Beckton;
- Thames Water's preferred 'Abbey Mill' route includes overflow points on the foreshore of the King Edward VII Memorial Park in Shadwell, and part of the back of Narrow Street;
- that King Edward VII Memorial Park was opened in 1922 by King George V; has been one of the green lungs of the borough for nearly 90 years;
- that Narrow Street is a historical thoroughfare through Shadwell and Limehouse, containing rare examples of Georgian terracing; and
- the alternative 'River Thames' route includes shaft sites at Sir John McDougal Gardens and Bellgate Place on Westferry Road
- the borough has a shortage of open space and that the area around Sir John McDougal Gardens is one of the most densely populated in the borough.
- Thames Water has also shortlisted sites at Shadwell Basin, Limehouse Basin and School House Lane

Therefore, this Council:

- objects to the 'Abbey Mill' route with the proposed siting of overflow points at the King Edward VII Memorial Park foreshore and in the vicinity of Narrow Street;
- objects to the River Thames route which would involve shaft sites at Sir John McDougal Gardens and Bellgate Place on Westferry Road
- objects to the shortlisting of the Shadwell Basin, Limehouse Basin and School House Lane sites
- notes that there are available brownfield sites, already identified by Thames Water, which would be more appropriate for work of this nature;
- calls upon Thames Water to give consideration to the many public objections to the proposed route via Shadwell and Limehouse, and the alternative River Thames route via Millwall; and
- calls upon the Executive Mayor to meet with Thames Water to discuss the route of the Thames Tunnel, and to urge them to rule out the proposed route and the River Thames route in favour of the alternative via Rotherhithe.