

Non-Executive Report of the: Council 16 th November 2022	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Questions submitted by Members of the Council	

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

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions that were submitted by Members of the Council for response by the Mayor, the Speaker or the Chair of a Committee or Sub-Committee for this Council meeting.
2. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.4, questions relating to Executive functions and decisions taken by the Mayor are put to the Mayor unless he delegates such a decision to another Member, who will therefore be responsible for answering the question. In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor will answer questions directed to the Mayor.
3. 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. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. Council Procedure Rule 10.7 provides for an answer to take the form of a written answer circulated to the questioner, a reference to a published work or a direct oral answer.
5. There is a time limit of thirty minutes at the Council meeting for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any questions not put within this time are dealt with by way of written responses.
6. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

11.1 Question from Councillor Musthak Ahmed

Can the lead member update the chamber on where we are with the council's accounts? These accounts have been left unsigned for the past 6 years thanks to the previous administration.

11.2 Question from Councillor Asma Begum

The Mayor's Air Quality Action Plan 2022-2027 contained a study which showed that children's health is being negatively affected living in highly polluted areas and that children in Tower Hamlets have reduced lung function, which they may never recover. It also states that "Reducing pollution in and around schools, and extending school audits to other schools in polluted areas" is a priority for the administration.

Can the Mayor explain how his decision to remove School Streets fits in with this priority?

11.3 Question from Councillor Bodrul Choudhury

At our last Full Council meeting the lead member for resources explained action was being taken following a catalogue of council failures under the previous Mayor. Can he be more precise about Council's progress in appointing a diagnostic consultant to investigate every department and function in the council?

11.4 Question from Councillor Asma Islam

As the Lead Member for Housing and the Mayor knows, the Housing Crisis is one of the biggest issues facing families across London and especially Tower Hamlets.

As Aspire voted against the Canal Club development last month and rolls back on the much-needed Council home programme from the previous Labour administration, what has your administration done so far to achieve your high aims of building Council homes?

11.5 Question from Councillor Amin Rahman

Could the Mayor provide Council with an update on his pledge to accelerate education in Tower Hamlets?

11.6 Question from Councillor Faroque Ahmed

I have been receiving emails regularly from my constituents regarding refuse collection. This has been happening mainly on Whitechurch Lane, Whitechapel Road, Commercial Road and more, and the issue is inconsistent refuse collection. What actions will the Mayor and the lead member take to solve this problem?

11.7 Question from Councillor Ahmodur Khan

Could the Mayor provide an update on the support his administration has given to the Borough's most vulnerable residents during this Cost of Living Crisis?

11.8 Question from Councillor Rebeka Sultana

There are said to be several illegal clubs on Commercial Road where drugs and gambling are entertained as well as large parties being held. What initiatives are the Mayor or Lead Member taking to tackle these issues which causing severe distress to local residents?

11.9 Question from Councillor Jahed Choudhury

Can the Lead Member tell the chamber why a Joint Consultative Advisory Group meeting of officers, unions and the Administration had to be convened in relation to a recent proposed restructure.

11.10 Question from Councillor James King

The Mayor and his Cabinet recently agreed to a rebuild of St George's Pool on the Highway, alongside new social housing.

Can the Mayor provide an update on initial plans for this work, and give an insight into where the planned social housing may fit onto the site?

11.11 Question from Councillor Abdul Wahid

Can the lead member explain why hundreds of waste management operatives turned up to protest at Mulberry Place on 12th October?

11.12 Question from Councillor Amy Lee

There are an estimated 1.6 million people on mental health NHS services waiting lists, and the bleak economic outlook is no doubt affecting the mental health and wellbeing of many struggling residents who are on the brink of poverty.

In light of the Cost of Living Crisis, what steps is the Council taking to ensure that the mental health of residents across the borough is safeguarded and is a priority of this administration?

11.13 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

Can the lead member provide Council with an update on the high levels of waste across the Borough?

11.14 Question from Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

Will the Mayor commit to a monitoring and evaluation scheme to ensure transparency and fairness in the new Education Maintenance Allowance / University Bursaries scheme?

11.15 Question from Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled

Following revelations, the council is non-compliant with regulations governing its surveillance systems and processes, can the lead member explain how long this has been the case and what action is being taken to address this failure?

11.16 Question from Councillor Sabina Akhtar

Can the Mayor provide an update on the much-needed regeneration program on Clichy Estate in my ward which the previous Labour administration started and was agreed at Cabinet.

11.17 Question from Councillor Abdul Mannan

Based on complaints from across the community about the effectiveness of drug treatment in the borough, can the lead member outline what is being done to improve services and tackle problematic drug addiction that has blighted Tower Hamlets for so long.

11.18 Question from Councillor Sabina Khan

Can the Mayor outline how he will meet his manifesto pledge to work with the Mayor of London to tackle pollution in Tower Hamlets?

11.19 Question from Councillor Kamrul Hussein

Could the Lead Member explain what provisions have been implemented to aid the Borough's residents with their energy bills?

11.20 Question from Councillor Maisha Begum

I have been receiving a high number of emails from residents regarding their concerns about a lack of action on repairs on the Ocean Estate.

What work is the Council doing to ensure residents are protected from landlords who do not take their legal responsibilities seriously in regards to repairs?

11.21 Question from Councillor Ana Miah

Can the Mayor update the chamber on where he is in relation to increasing the numbers of police and THEOs on our streets.

11.22 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam

At a meeting of the Mayor's Cabinet on 26th October, when discussing the Air Quality Plan Cllr Kabir Ahmed raised his concerns that there was a very high level of air pollution around Bangabandhu Primary School in my ward.

Can the Mayor confirm if he will be implementing a School Street outside Bangabandhu Primary School?

11.23 Question from Abdul Malik

Can the lead member update the chamber on how the redesign of the youth service is coming along?

11.24 Question from Councillor Nathalie Bienfait

In the Aspire Manifesto, a pledge was made to resident to set up a Mayor's Advisory Board for Climate Change. Could an indication be provided for when this advisory board will be set up and who will be members of it?

11.25 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

In recent weeks increasing numbers of buses are waiting on both sides of Manchester Road at Island Gardens, for crew changes. Residents living in nearby flats are suffering

noise and pollution because many buses do not switch their engines off during these stops.

Will the Mayor use his authority to call on Transport for London to require drivers to switch off engines when buses are stationary, apart from stopping for passengers?