

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

HELD AT 7.06 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 15 MAY 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present:

Mayor Lutfur Rahman (Member)	Councillor Iqbal Hossain (Member)
Councillor Faroque Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Kabir Hussain (Member)
Councillor Kabir Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Kamrul Hussain (Member)
Councillor Leelu Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Shahaveer Shubo Hussain (Member)
Councillor Musthak Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Asma Islam (Member)
Councillor Saied Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Sirajul Islam (Member)
Councillor Shafi Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Ahmodul Kabir (Member)
Councillor Suluk Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled (Member)
Councillor Ohid Ahmed (Member)	Councillor Ahmodur Khan (Member)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Member)	Councillor Sabina Khan (Member)
Councillor Amina Ali (Member)	Councillor James King (Member)
Councillor Asma Begum (Member)	Councillor Abdul Malik (Member)
Councillor Maisha Begum (Member)	Councillor Abdul Mannan (Member)
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait (Member)	Councillor Ana Miah (Member)
Councillor Mufeedah Bustin (Member)	Councillor Ayas Miah (Member)
Councillor Bodrul Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Harun Miah (Member)
Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Amin Rahman (Member)
Councillor Jahed Choudhury (Member)	Councillor Rebaka Sultana (Member)
Councillor Abu Chowdhury (Member)	Councillor Maium Talukdar (Member)
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury (Member)	Councillor Bellal Uddin (Member)
Councillor Marc Francis (Member)	Councillor Abdal Ullah (Member)
Councillor Peter Golds (Member)	Councillor Abdul Wahid (Member)

1. ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Jahed Choudhury in the Chair

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Jahed Choudhury addressed the meeting about his time in office.

He thanked the Council, the Mayor, and elected Members for giving him the opportunity to serve as First Citizen of the Borough since May 2023.

He noted that he had made every effort to carry out his duties in a fair and impartial way, attending many community events, celebrating milestones and achievements of the people of Tower Hamlets. He said he regularly attended citizenship ceremonies and welcomed new citizens to the borough. Furthermore, a successful Civic Awards event had been held in April 2024, where the work of ordinary residents of the borough was recognised.

His chosen charity for which he had fundraised for, were the St Joseph's Hospice and Eden Care UK. Both provided compassionate care and support to people living with life limiting illnesses. He said the charity dinner event held in December 2023 helped to raise almost £20,000.

He thanked his Consorts for their support, in particular his daughter Miss Maria Sultana Choudhury who had supported him at many events, including the Royal Garden party at Buckingham Palace last week.

He also thanked the Democratic Services Team for their unequivocal support with particular thanks to Patricia Attawia and Benilda Baden. He said he looked forward to serving his constituents and spending more time with his family.

Following the Speaker's address, the following Councillors addressed the meeting:

- Councillor Iqbal Hossain
- Councillor Nathalie Bienfait
- Councillor Abdul Mannan
- Councillor Peter Golds
- Councillor Abdul Wahid
- Councillor Mufeedah Bustin
- Councillor Musthak Ahmed
- Councillor Abdal Ullah
- Councillor Maium Talukdar
- Councillor Sirajul Islam
- Councillor Ohid Ahmed
- Councillor Sabina Khan
- Councillor Kabir Hussain
- Councillor Amina Ali
- Councillor Suluk Ahmed
- Councillor Leelu Ahmed

The Councillors praised Councillor Jahed Choudhury for this year in office and stated he had calmly presided over the Chamber at some difficult meetings. They thanked him for his charitable work and the money raised for his chosen charities. The Councillors thanked the Speaker for all his good work and his service to the Borough during his term. They wished him well for the future.

ELECTION OF NEW SPEAKER

The Speaker then called for nominations to serve as Speaker of the Council for the coming year.

The following nomination was proposed:

It was **moved** by Councillor Maium Talukdar and **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed that Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled be elected to serve as Speaker of the Council until May 2025.

The nomination to elect Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled to serve as Speaker of the Council was put to the vote and was agreed on a majority vote.

RESOLVED

1. That Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled be elected to serve as Speaker of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025.

Councillor Maium Talukdar and Councillor Kabir Ahmed then came forward to witness the Speaker of the Council signing the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

The meeting was adjourned at 19:39 and reconvened at 19:48.

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled in the Chair

The incoming Speaker, Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled thanked the Council for electing him as Speaker and congratulated the outgoing speaker on a successful term in office. He said he had been a fair and effective speaker and a worthy ambassador for the Borough. He thanked the Mayor and fellow councillors for electing him for the year ahead.

To support the Speaker in his role, he would be accompanied by his consorts:

- Nurul Huda Juned;
- Hasnath Chowdhury; and
- Mukammel Hoque.

The new speaker noted the residents of the borough were facing a difficult time, with the cost-of-living crisis and said it was more important than ever to work together to ensure residents were supported by creating opportunities for them through education, employment, encouragement and inspiration.

Finally, the Speaker stated his chosen charities were Sick Children's Trust and Osmani Trust. He explained both charities worked with young children and families.

2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

The Speaker sought nominations to serve as Deputy Speaker of the Council for the forthcoming municipal year.

The following nomination was proposed:

It was **moved** by Councillor Maium Talukdar and **seconded** by Councillor Kabir Ahmed that Councillor Suluk Ahmed be elected to serve as the Deputy Speaker of the Council for 2024/25.

The nomination to elect Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled to serve as Deputy Speaker of the Council as the first nomination received was put to the vote and was agreed on a majority vote.

RESOLVED

1. That Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled be elected to serve as Deputy Speaker of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council until the Annual Council meeting in May 2025.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Rachel Blake
- Councillor Amy Lee

4. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting held on 8th May 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

6. TO RECEIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) FROM THE SPEAKER OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There were no announcements from the Speaker or Interim Chief Executive to note.

7. MAYOR'S CABINET AND EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, setting out the Mayor's Cabinet appointments and other arrangements in respect of Executive Decision Making, as set out in the agenda and the supplementary agenda.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** the recommendation in the report.

Council **RESOLVED** unanimously:

1. That the Mayor's Executive Scheme of Delegation be noted.

8. PROPORTIONALITY AND ALLOCATION OF PLACES ON COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL 2024/25

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, proposing the establishment of the Council's committees for 2024/25 and setting out the review of proportionality and the allocation of places on those Committees, as set out in the agenda and amendment in the supplementary agenda.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** the recommendations in the report as adjusted by their tabled amendment.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider the review of proportionality as at Section 3 of this report and the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub-Committees for the Municipal Year 2024/25 as adjusted by the tabled amendment.
2. Agree to establish the Committees set out for the municipal year 2024/25, and for places to be allocated on those Committees, as set out in the tabled amendment.
3. To note that the Monitoring Officer is authorised to approve the appointment of Councillors required to fill positions that fall vacant during the municipal year in line with the proportionality arrangements set out in this report from nominations received from the political groups.
4. Agree that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to approve the appointment of ungrouped Councillors to any committee places not allocated by the Council to a political group, after consultation with those Councillors and the Speaker of the Council where there is only one application for the position (where there is more than one application these will be presented to Council for decision).

9. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL 2024-25

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, regarding the appointment of members to the Council's Committees, and Chairs where appropriate, (including those established under item 8 above). The report as set out in the main agenda, the amendment in the supplementary agenda and the tabled nominations were considered by Council.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** the recommendations in the report subject to the adjustment in their tabled amendment.

Councillor Ohid Ahmed requested that under Council Procedure Rule 16.7 his vote against the appointment of Councillor Peter Golds as Chair of the Licensing Committee be recorded.

Councillor Sabina Akhtar **moved** and Councillor Sirajul Islam **seconded** that Councillor Amina Ali be removed and Councillor Asma Islam be added to the Human Resources Committee.

Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

1. Appoint members and substitute members to the committees and subcommittees of the Council and other bodies (including Outside Bodies) for the municipal year 2024/25 as set out at Appendix 1 attached subject to the amendment proposed at the meeting by Councillor Sabina Akhtar.
2. Appoint the Chairs of Committees for 2024/25 from amongst the nominations listed at Appendix 2 attached.
3. Agree that in relation to any unfilled places within the seats allocated to a particular political group, the Council note that the Director of Legal, as Monitoring Officer has delegated authority subsequently to agree the appointments to those places in accordance with nominations from the relevant political group.
4. Agree that in relation to any unfilled places within the seats allocated to a particular political group, the Council note that the Director of Legal, as Monitoring Officer has delegated authority subsequently to agree the appointments to those places in accordance with nominations from the relevant political group.

10. COMMITTEE CALENDAR 2024-25

The Council considered the report setting out the calendar of meetings for the Council, Committees and other meetings for the municipal year 2024/25.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** an amendment to move the next Council meeting from the 31st July to the 17th July 2024.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** the recommendations in the report subject to that amendment.

Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

1. Approve the proposed calendar of meetings for the municipal year 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 plus agreeing the change of date for July Council.

2. To delegate to the Monitoring Officer the authority to agree meeting dates for any new Committees or Panels that Members agree to set up subsequent to this report being presented to Council, subject to appropriate consultation with Members.

11. COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION 2024-25

The Council considered the report of the General Purposes Committee, setting out the Council's Constitution including the new Member Code of Conduct.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** the recommendations in the report.

Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

1. Note the work of the General Purposes Committee throughout the year to support the Constitution and its role in monitoring and agreeing changes to the Constitution in 2024-25.
2. Note the additions and amendments agreed throughout the year and agree the addition of the Summary Contents Page at the front of the Constitution.
3. Agree to confirm the re-adoption of the Council's Constitution as set out in Appendices 1-4 to the report, including the new Summary Contents List described in Paragraphs 3.8 to 3.10 of the report.

12. USE OF SPECIAL URGENCY PROCEDURES 2023-24

The Council considered the report of the Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer, setting out when Special Urgency provisions have been applied to Executive Key Decisions.

Councillor Maium Talukdar **moved** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **seconded** the recommendation in the report.

Council **RESOLVED** unanimously to:

1. Note the report on the use of special urgency provisions in relation to Executive Key Decisions and use of urgency with respect to call in.

The meeting ended at 8.26 p.m.

Speaker of the Council