

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2012

**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 25th January 2012.
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 Speaker 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

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

8.1 Question from Councillor Judith Gardiner:

"The Government has recently announced that it will be changing the law to make unauthorised subletting a criminal offence. What extra measures will the Mayor be taking to crack down on this and other abuses of the allocation process to ensure that those in genuine housing need are not disadvantaged or taken advantage of by cheats?"

8.2 Question from Councillor Peter Golds:

"Does the Mayor support the Government's announcement that it will seek to criminalise sub-letting of socially rented property?"

8.3 Question from Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman:

"Housing Benefit changes will have a profound impact on our residents and it will lead to some having to leave the borough because the housing allowance will not cover their full rent. Can the Mayor inform the Council the number of meetings he has had with the Minister responsible for these changes to highlight the impact on residents of Tower Hamlets?"

8.4 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah:

"Will the Mayor and lead member celebrate with me the bringing to justice of two of Stephen Lawrence's killers and congratulate all those involved in achieving this and above all Neville and Doreen Lawrence, but also regret that police incompetence, racism and maybe even corruption botched the original enquiry and may lead to his other murderers continuing to evade justice, and will they also agree that, whilst there have been significant improvements in policing in London since the landmark Macpherson report, there are still serious problems, for example in the abuse of "stop and search" powers and in the lack of ethnic minority appointment to senior management positions in the Metropolitan Police, and will they agree to make representations to the new Commissioner and to the borough commander that the concept of "total" policing should include making the police reflect at all levels of the force and, above all, respect all of the communities they police?"

8.5 Question from Councillor Lesley Pavitt:

"Can the Mayor please tell me why the number of complaints about One Stop Shops went up by 29% in the first half of 2011/12?"

8.6 Question from Councillor Zara Davis:

“Why has the Mayor ignored the motion agreed by Full Council in September 2011, which resolved that “Sir John McDougal Gardens, Millwall Park and Island Gardens will remain solely for the use of residents and community groups for the purposes of recreation, leisure and sports?”

8.7 Question from Councillor Shiria Khatun:

“Can the Mayor tell this Council what is being done to increase recycling in the borough?”

8.8 Question from Councillor Maium Miah:

“Can the Mayor inform the Council on whether the Rich Mix Centre has repaid its £850,000 short-term loan, as agreed by Michael Keith when he was Council Leader?”

8.9 Question from Councillor Helal Uddin:

“How does the Mayor justify the recently announced significant rent rise, which will hit tenants already struggling with rising costs in other utilities, falling wages and benefit changes, and rising fees and charges for parking and other Council Services, and what measures will he be taking to mitigate its effect?”

8.10 Question from Councillor David Snowdon:

“Will the Mayor please outline what measures he is taking to promote the teaching of history in Tower Hamlets schools?”

8.11 Question from Councillor Kosru Uddin:

“Following the EDL visit and the riots last year and lack of involvement of THEOs in supporting the borough's residents, has a revised strategy been agreed in terms of THEOs involvement in community safety if future disturbances on the scale witnessed last year were to be repeated?”

8.12 Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Deputy Mayor:

“Would the Deputy Mayor agree that the 41% increase in burglary over the past 12 months in Bethnal Green North is a serious concern and would he join with me to urge the Borough Commander and the BGN Safer Neighbourhood Team to undertake an immediate review of the ward and implement burglary prevention measures in the ward?”

8.13 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs:

“Can the Mayor please tell me how many visits were made by residents to Rushmead One Stop Shop last year regarding Housing Benefit?”

8.14 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel:

“Considering the rising incidents of metal theft from public memorials; how many incidents of metal theft from a public memorial in Tower Hamlets has taken place in the last year, will the Mayor please inform the Council what measures he has taken to ensure that war memorials are protected in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets?”

8.15 Question from Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed:

“Can the Mayor tell me how many jobs so far have been taken up by Tower Hamlets residents as a result of the deal made between him and LOCOG?”

8.16 Question from Councillor Harun Miah:

“Will the Mayor and the lead member agree with me that the Private Finance Initiative was an unnecessary accounting trick which has not produced value for money for the taxpayer but has instead lumbered taxpayers with very large and potentially unsustainable future debts and could they confirm which PFI schemes imposed on Tower Hamlets schools have run into financing problems, what the implications are of these problems and what the council is doing to sort these problems out?”

8.17 Question from Councillor Anna Lynch:

“Can the Mayor tell me how many times he has met ministers of the Department for Health in the last six months, on what occasions and what issues he raised on each occasion?”

8.18 Question from Councillor Craig Aston:

“Will the Mayor provide an update on energy efficiency in the Town Hall building?”

8.19 Question from Councillor Zenith Rahman:

“Given the reductions he has already made in street cleaning in the borough, what measures is the Mayor taking to ensure that the increasingly filthy streets will not negatively impact on Tower Hamlets securing City Status?”

8.20 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum:

“What has been done to help overcrowded families who are reluctant to move to Car Free Properties?”

8.21 Question from Councillor Tim Archer:

“Will the Mayor provide an update on the progress of the motion agreed by full Council on 15 September 2010, to bring the Henry Moore statue back to the borough and explain to the Council why this is taking so long, what meetings/discussions have taken place and will the statue be back in time for the Olympics?”

8.22 Question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed:

“Could the Mayor tell us what has been the impact of his significant investment in tackling drugs and anti-social behaviour?”

8.23 Question from Councillor Dr Emma Jones:

“How many people sacked from Tower Hamlets employment have accidentally continued to be paid in the past year?”

8.24 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan:

“How has the Mayor progressed on his pledge to make sure Registered Social Landlords deliver on their service agreements?”

8.25 Question from Councillor Shafiqul Haque to the Cabinet Member for Housing:

“Many housing estates in the borough are benefiting from regeneration. I would like to thank the Mayor for bringing this much needed investment. However many of our leaseholders are suffering in the current financial climate, with increasing inflation, fuel prices and worries around employment. How are we ensuring that leaseholders will be charged fairly for any major works?”