

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 25TH JANUARY 2012

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

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

SUMMARY

1. Seventeen motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 25th January 2012.
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in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.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 Public transport and unaffordable fares

Proposer: Councillor Fozol Miah

Seconder: Councillor Harun Miah

This Council notes that:

- 1) the importance of encouraging use of public transport to limit pollution in London and to save on use of fossil fuels which increase global warming
- 2) people on lower incomes are particularly dependent on public transport to ensure they can gain access for themselves and their families of the benefits of living in London
- 3) many people have seen or are seeing no rise in their incomes despite the fact inflation is over 5% and this is cutting their living standards
- 4) Tory Mayor of London Boris Johnson is committed to raising fares on public transport in London year on year by 1% above inflation, despite falling living standards for many, particularly on lower incomes across the capital and in Tower Hamlets in particular
- 5) Ken Livingstone, the only candidate who realistically can be expected to replace the Tory mayor Boris Johnson in elections in May 2012, has promised to reduce fares by 5% if elected with no increase in fares in 2013

This Council believes that:

- 1) the rise in fares proposed by the Tory Mayor Boris Johnson will have a severe effect on the living standards in London particularly of those on lower incomes
- 2) the rise in fares proposed by Tory Mayor Boris Johnson will discourage use of public transport
- 3) a reduction in fares rather than an increase is both affordable and desirable

This Council supports the plans announced by Ken Livingstone to reduce fares if elected next May

12.2 Warm & dry flats

Proposer: Councillor Judith Gardiner

Seconded: Councillor Helal Uddin

This Council notes:

1. Climate change, caused by anthropogenic CO2 emissions, is an urgent problem for the whole world, killing 300,000 per year at the moment according to the Kofi Annan Foundation.
2. Bangladesh is one of the countries most affected by the effects of climate change, so our borough's links with the country give us particular impetus to act.
3. Cold housing is unpleasant and dangerous for vulnerable people. Well insulated homes are warmer and safer, and reduce fuel poverty.
4. This branch welcomes the mayor's announcement that Decent Homes works will be accelerated in the borough. Although this is sometimes ignored, one Decent Homes standard is that properties offer a reasonable standard of insulation.
5. Under Ed Miliband's stewardship, the DECC instigated various funding streams to insulate and so save CO2 emissions from homes. These include the Community Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and the Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP). These are funded from levies on energy companies and targeted at deprived communities, e.g. Tower Hamlets.
6. Works to insulate homes can be done during Decent Homes projects to minimise disruption and cost. These funding streams can top up Decent Homes funding to ensure the housing ends up healthy, warm, and with the lowest CO2 emissions reasonably possible.
7. Poplar HARCA are already undertaking a CESP-funded insulation project.

This Council further notes:

1. Damp and the mould it causes, is a serious issue causing severe respiratory problems and makes asthma very much worse.
2. Most damp is caused by condensation: moisture from breathing, cooking and washing condensing on cold surfaces. Overcrowded families suffer more from condensation, with more people in the flat creating moisture.
3. When flats have double-glazing installed, but no other insulation undertaken, the coldest places will be the external walls and top-floor ceiling, so condensation and mould will form there. This could be seen clearly in the recent BBC documentary Poor Kids. This has happened in some Decent Homes projects in Tower Hamlets, increasing the health risks from mould to residents.

4. If walls and roofs are properly insulated, they will generally not be cold enough for condensation to form, so the flats will be free of mould. Cavity wall insulation is inexpensive, and Tower Hamlets have pioneered innovative installation methods, like abseiling down tower blocks squirting it in as they go. Insulation for solid walls is more expensive, costing about the same as double-glazing a flat, however because walls are bigger than windows, typically more energy is saved.
5. Proper ventilation is also necessary to banish mould. As noted by Lewisham council, humidistat controlled extraction for kitchens and bathrooms, and heat-recovery ventilation (where the outgoing warmth is transferred from the old wet air to the fresh dry air) are the best, most economical solutions.
6. Independent specialists who are not being contracted to undertake the work will be able to offer advice without profiting from the measures they recommend.

This Council Resolves

1. To ensure Decent Homes client organisations get the maximum benefit from CERT and CESP schemes.
2. To ensure that Decent Homes works do not put residents at greater risk of mould-related illnesses. The order of precedence of works should be such that condensation within the home is not increased.
3. To encourage Decent Homes client organisations to consider taking independent technical advice about the issue when appropriate.

12.3 Motion on Cllr Shelina Aktar (AKA Shelina Akhtar)

Proposer: Councillor Peter Golds

Seconded: Councillor Tim Archer

This Council Notes:

- That incidents of fraud and dishonesty in public life in the United Kingdom are relatively rare and that when proven both political parties and the relevant body, whether it be national or local take appropriate action, as was seen in the recent expenses scandal where all parties suspended recalcitrant members.
- That Councillor Shelina Aktar, who as a matter of record altered the spelling of her name following her election to the council in 2010, was in July 2010 convicted of benefit fraud, under the name of Shelina Akhtar.
- In January 2012 she pleaded guilty to further fraud and is to be sentenced in February 2012.

This Council Believes:

- That it is wrong for such a person to vote on matters that would affect the lives and well being of the overwhelmingly law abiding citizens of this borough.
- That according to time sheets and other information, that Cllr Aktar is a regular attendee of group meetings involving the Independent mayoral supporting members and regularly attends “mayoral engagements” including six hours of such engagements in December 2011.

This Council Requests:

- Councillor Aktar to leave the meeting and resign the trust placed in her as a Councillor.

This Council calls upon the Mayor to disassociate himself from Cllr Aktar and confirm publicly that she will not be invited to join him on further “mayoral engagements”.

12.4 The lack of local benefit from the Olympic Games 2012

Proposer: Councillor Harun Miah

Secunder: Councillor Fozol Miah

This Council notes that:

1) the reason the former Mayor of London supported London's bid for the Olympic Games was to help with regeneration in East London, including the creation of homes and lasting jobs for the residents of East London

2) the plans for the Olympic Games as implemented under the current Tory Mayor have failed to live up to the hopes for regeneration, homes and jobs

3) in particular, the number of jobs for people resident in East London as a whole and Tower Hamlets in particular directly generated by the construction of the Olympics site has been pitifully small

4) most of the homes in the Olympic Village will not be given over to social housing after the Olympics, despite the millions of pounds of public money that has been poured into the project

5) residents of East London are now promised an unprecedented security clampdown limiting their freedom of movement.

6) security at the Olympics site may involve foreign nationals carrying firearms in East London and the deployment of missile batteries

7) David Cameron has absurdly decided to double spending, despite the austerity cuts being inflicted on many people in Tower Hamlets and beyond, on the opening ceremony to £81 million and this will have no beneficial effect on sports anywhere in this country

8) residents in East London also face massive inconvenience as roads are closed and priority is given to luxury limousines ferrying the multiplicity of Olympics officials, hangers on and corporate sponsors

This Council believes urgent measures need to be taken to persuade residents of East London that the two week Olympic Games will bring lasting benefit to East London residents in terms of jobs, homes and regeneration

This Council has no confidence the current Tory Mayor and his administration will take the necessary measures to ensure that the potential benefits from the Olympic Games will accrue to the residents of East London

12.5 Defending local NHS services

Proposer: Councillor Rachael Saunders

Seconded: Councillor Lesley Pavitt

The Council notes:

- The proposed merger between Barts and the London, Newham and Whipps Cross acute trusts.
- That the three hospital trusts have been forced by Conservative government policy to consider a merger to protect local services.
- That clinicians are also seeking to use the opportunity to drive up clinical standards.
- That proposals for savings beyond back office mergers have not yet been made.

This Council believes:

- That it is a matter of significant concern that services could move out of Tower Hamlets to Whipps Cross or Newham, as public transport links are poor.
- That the proposed merger will mean significant change at the same time as the Royal London hospital is moving into its new building and there are major changes in NHS structures, locally and nationally.
- That there is concern that a much bigger merged organisation would find it more difficult to keep in touch with the needs of local people.
- That it is likely that a merged organisation would seek to make savings through reshaping services in the future.

This Council resolves:

- To campaign to keep NHS acute services in Tower Hamlets
- To call on the Mayor to support the Labour Party in ensuring the voices of local people are heard in their NHS.
- To campaign for a holistic, not purely clinically led, approach to care for our local communities.
- To campaign for representation of local people and locally elected councillors at every level of decision making in any new organisation.

12.6 Education in Tower Hamlets

Proposer: Councillor Zara Davis

Seconder: Councillor Dr Emma Jones

This Council notes:

- That the Secretary of State for Education has recently approved the creation of three new free schools in Tower Hamlets which will be run by The Constable Education Trust, the Wapping and Shadwell Secondary Education Trust and City Gateway, all of which will open free schools in September 2012
- That the severe shortage of school places in Tower Hamlets is such that:
 - § According to the borough's own projections, at primary school level an additional 16 form entries are required in Tower Hamlets primary schools between the academic year 2011/12 and 2012/13 to cope with the projected increase in population in the borough [1]
 - § At secondary school level, the number of students will increase from 12,987 (2009/10 roll number) to 16,314 by 2020, thereby requiring an additional 110 form entries.[2]
 - § It is already the case that for 301 children in Tower Hamlets, the nearest school available to them is so far away that the Council has to provide them with Home-School transport. [3]
 - § The number of children requiring Home-School transport on distance grounds has trebled in the last two years, and it is forecasted to increase to 500 pupils in the next three years.[4]

This Council believes:

- That giving schools independence helps to raise standards, as recognised by a recent OECD report which states: "where schools have greater autonomy over what is taught and how students are assessed, students tend to perform better"[5]
- That free schools will therefore help to raise standards in Tower Hamlets, both in the free schools themselves as well as in neighbouring schools which will be spurred on to achieve higher standards
- That free schools will increase the choice available to parents and pupils, with the three new free schools in Tower Hamlets going far beyond the National Curriculum, e.g. the Constable Education Trust Primary School with modern foreign languages; Wapping High will offer an extended school day with 34 hours of teaching a week and the opportunity for a variety of enrichment activities etc.
- That free schools will also help to alleviate some of the pressure on school places in Tower Hamlets

Therefore, this Council resolves:

- To welcome and support the creation of free schools in Tower Hamlets, which will be attended by hundreds of pupils from our borough
- To actively co-operate with and support free schools on matters such as finding premises.

12.7 Opposing cuts to the provision of Legal Aid

Proposer: Councillor Stephanie Eaton

Seconder: Councillor Kabir Ahmed

This Council notes that:

Access to legal advice and representation makes it more likely that everyone is treated fairly under the law. Legal aid helps vulnerable, poor and powerless people in Tower Hamlets to reach fair financial settlements; exercise their human rights; and challenge decisions in areas of dispute such as medical negligence, access to children in family disputes, divorce, housing, employment and welfare.

Part 1 of The Legal Aid, Sentencing, and Punishment of Offenders bill which is currently going through parliament will limit the availability of legal aid for welfare benefits cases, including for people appealing against government decisions, for example about entitlement to disability benefits.

This Council believes that:

Access to independent advice and representation on legal matters is essential to achieve justice for all;

The proposed reduction in spending on legal aid, through restrictions in the scope and eligibility of aid and the cut in the fee paid to providers of legal services, will have a detrimental effect on access to justice and on provision of legal safeguards for individuals and families involved in disputes;

The Ministry of Justice has proposed a number of alternatives to legal aid funding but these are not suitable, available or affordable for many people in Tower Hamlets as:

- A community legal advice telephone helpline cannot replace face-to-face advice and communication in all cases
- Legal costs insurance is not widely held and carries exclusions.
- Voluntary sector advice agencies can help with early intervention but do not have the training and experience to deal with complex legal cases and court representation.

This Council:

Shares the concern about the changes to legal aid expressed by a broad range of legal and advice agencies, trades unions, charities, politicians, community groups and members of the public;

Requests the Mayor of Tower Hamlets and political party leaders in the Borough to write jointly to the Secretary of State for Justice, the Rt Hon. Ken Clarke to express this Council's concern over the legal aid changes proposed in the Bill and their potential impact on residents of Tower Hamlets.

12.8 Troubled Families

Proposer: Councillor Tim Archer

Seconder: Councillor David Snowdon

This Council Notes:

- The Coalition Government plans to deal with Troubled Families is a much welcomed step in the right direction.
- Currently the government spends £9 billion a year on Troubled Families, with only £1 billion a year going to turning Troubled Families around.
- Each Troubled Family costs £75,000 a year.
- The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has 1,120 Troubled Families, the highest of any London Borough.
- This means £84 million is spent each year on Troubled Families in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

This Council Believes:

- The creation of a new Troubled Families team at the Department for Communities and Local Government.

This Council Resolves:

- To support the setting up of a national network of Troubled Families 'Trouble Shooters'.
- To work with the Coalition government on this plan and to start to turn around the lives of London Borough of Tower Hamlets residents who live in Troubled Families.

12.9 Support Ken Livingstone's fair deal for transport

Proposer: Councillor Rabina Khan

Seconder: Councillor Shafiqul Haque

This Council notes:

1. That from January 2012 there has been a steep rise in bus, tube and rail fares under Tory Mayor Boris Johnson
2. That under the Tory mayor the cost of a single bus ticket has risen by a massive 50 per cent since 2008, whilst the price of a monthly zone 1-2 Travelcard is up 21% costing £230.40 per year more, and the price of zones 1-6 Travelcard is up a fifth.
3. That a key part of the "One Tower Hamlets" Community Plan is to tackle poverty and protect the environment and peoples' health.
4. That increases in public transport fares can adversely impact on social inclusion, mobility and people's economic well being, particularly for poorer sections of our community.
5. That increases in bus, tube, train and DLR fares can also encourage more people to use cars rather than public transport and therefore contribute to increased congestion and poorer air quality.

This Council believes:

1. That Boris Johnson's transport policies are hurting our residents.
2. That we should support initiatives that seeks to reduce the costs of using public transport.
3. That Ken Livingstone's manifesto pledge to cut fares immediately by 7%, to freeze them the next year and saving the average London Transport user £1000 over 4 years is good news for residents in Tower Hamlets and to be welcomed.

This Council resolves:

To support Ken Livingstone's campaign to make fares affordable for Londoners.

12.10 History Teaching And the English Baccalaureate

Proposer: Councillor David Snowdon

Seconder: Councillor Peter Golds

This Council notes:

- Only 11.7% of Tower Hamlets school children passes GCSE History at grades A*-C. This is the fifth lowest number in England, ahead of only Knowsley, Newham, Kingston-Upon-Hull and Manchester.
- Over three times more school children achieve A*-C GCSE History in the top performing council in the country, Hammersmith and Fulham.
- That the new gold standard of English secondary education, the English Baccalaureate, requires school children to have A*-C passes in Maths, English, two sciences, a modern language and history or geography. Only 5.9% of children achieved this, in part due to the low number of history GCSEs entered.
- Tower Hamlets has the ninth lowest number of children passing A-Level History in England.

This Council believes:

- That the study of history allows our school children to develop high level analytical skills, and helps them to more fully appreciate the world around them. This in turn promotes civic and community engagement.
- That in order to increase the number of Tower Hamlets school children achieving the English-Baccalaureate we need to increase the provision of History teaching in our schools. Not achieving this standard threatens to limit the educational opportunities available to our school children.

This Council resolves:

- To instruct officers to write to all head teachers of schools within the Borough to make them aware of the Council's support for a higher provision of History teaching.
- To instruct officers to contact schools to see what barriers exist to a higher level of provision of history teaching, and report back to full council within six months.
- To ask the Mayor to champion the case of history teaching in Tower Hamlets, and investigate what he can do to promote this objective

12.11 Remembering Stephen Lawrence

Proposer: Councillor Abdul Asad

Seconder: Councillor Kabir Ahmed

This Council notes:

1. That after eighteen years the Stephen Lawrence case has finally seen some resolution with two men convicted for his murder.
2. The dignity with which the Lawrence family have led their campaign.
3. That Stephen Lawrence's murder highlights that there are people, albeit a tiny minority, who harbour a deep racism and may even be capable of terrible, violent acts.
4. The fact that Tower Hamlets is a multi cultural, multi racial borough, where the overwhelming majority of people work and live together happily, should not allow for any complacency.
5. That the Stephen Lawrence case also highlights the insidious nature of racism and how it can infect and distort the workings of institutions.
6. That among the findings of the Macpherson Inquiry was a clear conclusion about the existence of institutional racism in the police service and other public sector organizations.
7. That the Stephen Lawrence Centre in Deptford is facing closure due to lack of funding.

This Council believes:

That we owe it to the legacy of Stephen Lawrence and the hard work of the Lawrence family to strengthen our commitment to tackling institutional discrimination and exclusion and confronting all prejudices, inequalities and unfair treatment whether as a result of gender, sexuality, age, race, disability, religious affiliation, belief or class.

This Council resolves:

1. To write to the Lawrence Family on behalf of all councillors in an expression of support and solidarity.
2. To continue to campaign against all forms of discrimination and hatred.
3. To explore all we can do to help the Stephen Lawrence Centre to continue its important work.

12.12 Government policies are increasing child poverty

Proposer: Councillor Oliur Rahman

Seconded: Councillor Rania Khan

This Council notes:

1. The report from the Campaign to End Child Poverty that more than half the children in the inner London boroughs live in poverty and 52% of children in Tower Hamlets are living in poverty.
2. The warning from the Institute for Fiscal Studies that child poverty will rise by 400,000 children by 2015 unless the government takes a "more progressive" approach to tackling the deficit. The total could exceed three million children by 2021.
3. Growing child poverty costs the economy around £25 billion a year as society picks up the pieces of damaged lives and unrealised potential.

This Council believes:

1. That the borough's long standing problems of child poverty have been massively compounded by government spending cuts which are hitting the poorest families hardest and women and children worst, and curtailing economic growth and job creation.
2. That the borough's long standing problems of child poverty have been worsened by government breaking its promise to increase Child tax Credits above inflation.
3. That the government flagship 'free schools' policy is accentuating social segregation and divisions and undermining education options for poorer families to break out of poverty. For example, Canary Wharf College has only 1.7% on Free School Meals - compared to 48% in the local area.
4. That government economic policies are driving more and more families into poverty. Instead of stripping demand out of the economy, the government should be investing for growth and job creation.
5. That child poverty arises from a multitude of factors including lack of affordable housing, poor educational opportunities and low parental employment.

This Council resolves:

1. To lobby central government to review new policies and benefit changes, including to Child Tax Credits and Housing Benefit which will have a negative impact on Child Poverty.
2. To continue to build more affordable family-sized homes.
3. To continue to tackle the problem of rogue landlords charging extortionate rents.
4. To continue to demand that council and partner projects deliver local jobs for local people.
5. To continue to boost educational opportunities by means of innovative measures such as the Mayor's Education Award.

12.13 Dow Chemical, Bhopal and the Olympic Park

Proposer: Councillor Lutfu Begum

Seconded: Councillor Maium Miah

This meeting notes:

1. That on December 12 2011 Mayor Lutfur Rahman, Cllr Josh Peck (Labour Group), Fozol Miah (Respect Group) and Stephanie Eaton (Lib Dem) sent a joint letter to Lord Sebastian Coe, Chairman of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) expressing concern over its decision to accept sponsorship for the Olympic Games from Dow Chemical, in light of its associations with the Union Carbide/Bhopal disaster.
2. That in a reply to that letter Lord Coe stated 'Dow is an industry leader in terms of operating with the highest standards of ethics and sustainability' and that LOCOG 'stand behind' Dow 'both as a worldwide sponsor of the Olympic movement and as a supplier to LOCOG'.
3. That Lord Coe also stated that Dow Chemical had no responsibilities in relation to the Bhopal disaster as 'they did not own or operate the Union Carbide India Limited Plant that was the site of the 1984 disaster'.
4. That due to campaign pressure Dow Chemical has agreed to remove all its branding from Britain's Olympic stadium.

This meeting believes:

1. That when Dow Chemical bought Union Carbide they knew that Union Carbide were wanted on criminal charges pertaining to the Bhopal disaster.
2. That Dow therefore has a responsibility to the victims of the Bhopal disaster.
3. That any association with Dow tarnishes the name and reputation of the Olympics.

This meeting resolves:

To maintain pressure on LOCOG to drop Dow Chemical as a partner for the 2012 Olympics.

12.14 Sexual Exploitation

Proposer: Councillor Rania Khan
Seconded: Councillor Ohid Ahmed

This Council notes:

1. That despite the abolition of slavery over 200 years ago, modern forms of trading in human beings continue, particularly for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic slavery or organised crime.
2. That 80,000 people are trafficked each year, 80% of which are women and children.
3. That in the UK many thousands of individuals are bought and sold as commodities and forced into modern-day slavery.
4. That Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) does excellent work focussing on the protection and welfare of children and young people.
5. That the Metropolitan Police have set up a Trafficking Helpline, working with some local authorities to launch raids and closing down brothels, gathering intelligence on known trafficking gangs/groups and working with their home countries.

This Council believes:

1. That schools should be encouraged to incorporate the topic into their curricula to raise awareness among students.
2. That the efforts made by individuals, business, organisations, the police, government and educational institutions to raise awareness of human trafficking and to oppose such trafficking actively; are to be commended

This Council resolves:

1. To express its support for the work that ECPAT UK (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) is doing around the UK to promote the rights of children and for the measures the organisation is taking to protect them from commercial and sexual exploitation and abuse.
2. To acknowledge the potential impact of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games on trafficking, in the context of a possible increase of people entering the UK due to human trafficking, and to work with LOCOG, other Olympic agencies and the police to counteract this.

12.15 Commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day

Proposer: Councillor Alibor Choudhury

Secunder: Councillor Aminur Khan

This meeting notes:

1. That 27 January is Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD), which marks the murder of six million Jews, and millions of others, by the Nazis and their collaborators.

2. That in addition to Jews, the targeted groups included Slavic peoples, Romany people, the mentally ill, the Deaf, the physically disabled and mentally retarded; homosexual and transsexual people; political opponents and religious dissidents alongside many others regarded not part of the 'Aryan race'.

3. That HMD provides an opportunity for everyone to learn lessons from the Holocaust, Nazi persecution and subsequent genocides and which enables us to create a safer, better future.

4. That on HMD we share the memory of the millions who have been murdered in the Holocaust and subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur in order to challenge hatred and persecution in the UK today.

5. The theme for HMD 2012 asks us all to **Speak Up, Speak Out** against injustice, discrimination and exclusion in order to create a safer, better future. The theme asks us to think about the rights, responsibility and duty we all have to speak up when we see or hear something which we believe to be wrong. It challenges us to learn about what happens when we don't speak out and what can happen when we do use our voice.

6. To mark Holocaust Memorial Day the Mayor is speaking at an event in January in Nelson Street synagogue.

This Council resolves:

1. To advertise and promote participation in Holocaust Memorial Day.

2. To organise its own event to mark next year's Holocaust Memorial Day.

12.16 Innocent victims of private colleges

Proposer: Councillor Shahed Ali

Seconder: Councillor Oliur Rahman

This Council notes:

1. International students bring billions of pounds of trade and education revenue to the UK each year.
2. Cuts in funding mean that universities and colleges are more dependent than ever on the fees paid by international students to keep courses open and education provision intact.
3. 40% of international students start at private colleges before going on to Universities.
4. In the last year, thousands of international students were left stranded without a college when their government accredited colleges went out of business. Many students have lost up to £8,000 in tuition fees with no means to recoup these funds.
5. The UK Border Agency's 60 day rule - which gives international students in such situations just 60 days to find another educational provider offering the same or similar course – is a major worry for students who fear it provides insufficient time to find a new college or university, organise funds and apply for a new visa.
6. The warning from UK Universities that government failure to properly regulate education providers, combined with the introduction of the 60 Day rule, has resulted in an 11,000 drop in international students and risks damaging Britain's reputation in education abroad.

This Council resolves:

1. To lobby government for greater protection for all students, including international students, who find themselves victims of unscrupulous private education providers.
2. To lobby government for an extension of the 60 day rule in order that students who have already suffered at the hands of unscrupulous education providers have the time to make the most informed decision about their next education choices.
3. That international students who are required to re-apply for a visa as a result of being forced to seek a college transfer should be permitted to carry-over existing visa conditions such as permitted hours of work.
4. To explore, with highly-trusted educational institutions like Tower Hamlets College, the possibilities of introducing measures that might facilitate students in '60 day' situations and benefits students and colleges alike.

12.17 Energy suppliers are failing poorest families

Proposer: Councillor Ohid Ahmed

Secunder: Councillor Rofique Ahmed

This Council notes:

1. Save the Children have launched the 'No Child Left in the Cold campaign' in response to the fact that government schemes to help with household energy bills are reaching fewer than 3% of eligible families.

2. 800,000 of the poorest families who get cold weather payments should also qualify for a £120 discount on fuel bills under the Warm Homes Discount scheme, but a huge funding shortfall means only 25,000 families will get it.

3. The No Child Left in the Cold campaign is calling on energy companies and the government to fill this funding gap, so more families are given the fuel discount.

This Council resolves:

1. To support the No Child Left in the Cold Campaign.

2. To explore ways to promote discounted energy deals.

3. To support the Mayor's decision to explore the use of an energy Coop to bring discounted energy to all residents.