

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL**

**HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2012**

**THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5  
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

**Members Present:**

Mayor Lutfur Rahman	Councillor Denise Jones
Councillor Helal Abbas	Councillor Dr. Emma Jones
Councillor Khaless Uddin Ahmed	Councillor Anwar Khan
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	Councillor Rabina Khan
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Rajib Ahmed	Councillor Rania Khan
Councillor Rofique U Ahmed	Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Shahed Ali	Councillor Harun Miah
Councillor Tim Archer	Councillor Md. Maium Miah
Councillor Abdul Asad	Councillor Fozol Miah
Councillor Craig Aston	Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer
Councillor Lutfu Begum	Councillor Lesley Pavitt
Councillor Mizan Chaudhury	Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Alibor Choudhury	Councillor Zenith Rahman
Councillor Zara Davis	Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor Stephanie Eaton	Councillor Rachael Saunders
Councillor David Edgar	Councillor David Snowdon
Councillor Marc Francis	Councillor Gloria Thienel
Councillor Judith Gardiner	Councillor Bill Turner
Councillor Carlo Gibbs	Councillor Kosru Uddin
Councillor Peter Golds	Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Shafiqul Haque	Councillor Abdal Ullah
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman	Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman
Councillor Sirajul Islam	Councillor Amy Whitelock
Councillor Ann Jackson	

The meeting commenced at 7.36 p.m.

**The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Mizanur Chaudhury, in the Chair**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Shelina Aktar, Anna Lynch and Mohammed Abdul Mukit, MBE.

**RESOLVED**

That the apologies for absence be noted.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Type of interest</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Cllr Kabir Ahmed	5.3	Personal	Resident of affected area.
Cllr Lutfa Begum	12.5	Personal	I am a member of RCN and NMC.
Cllr Zara Davis	12.6	Personal	I am a Trustee of the Dockland Settlements, which currently accommodates a free school.
Cllr Carlo Gibbs	9.1	Personal	I help to administer schemes to reduce underage drinking including Challenge 25 and Community Alcohol Partnerships in my role at the WSTA.
Cllr Denise Jones	8.8	Personal	I am a trustee of the Rich Mix Cultural Centre.
Cllr Shiria Khatun	12.2	Personal	Husband is a locum employee of Poplar Harca.
Cllr Joshua Peck	12.4	Personal	Employer has a contract with LOCOG.
Cllr Joshua Peck	12.13	Personal	Employer has a contract with LOCOG.
Cllr Rachael Saunders	8.8	Personal	I am a Board member of the Rich Mix Cultural Centre.
Cllr Helal Uddin	12.2	Personal	My employer is linked to Poplar Harca who are mentioned in the motion
Cllr Motin Uz-Zaman	12.5	Personal	Employed by NHS.

**3. MINUTES**

Councillor Joshua Peck referred to agenda item 5.2, Page 10 of the minutes and stated that it was necessary to delete the sentence: "The decision to sell the site was taken by the previous administration" as in his view this comment had not been made at the meeting.

Councillor Peter Golds referred to item 5.1 on Page 9 of the minutes and stated that the petitioners did not receive a written reply within 28 days as indicated.

**RESOLVED**

That subject to the amendment of item 5.2 as above, the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and the Speaker be authorised to sign them accordingly.

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

No announcements were made at the meeting.

**5. TO RECEIVE PETITIONS****5.1 Petition from Wapping Allotments Association:**

Ms Amanda Day and a colleague addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and responded to questions from Members.

Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources, then responded to the issues raised. Legal restrictions and controls had been put in place when the land had been given to the Council. Nevertheless, Councillor Choudhury was keen to assist the Association and would be happy to meet to discuss the matter further.

**RESOLVED**

That the petition be referred to the Interim Corporate Director, Development and Renewal, for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

**5.2 Petition regarding environmental proposals for the canal side, Ocean Estate:**

Ms Brenda Daley and Mr Derek England addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and responded to questions from Members.

Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing, then responded to the issues raised. She indicated that she had spoken to Officers and all flats that had a shed would be allocated a replacement. She undertook to work with the petitioners and stated that full consultation would take place with residents on the matter of proposals for garages and sheds for the affected blocks.

**RESOLVED**

That the petition be referred to the Interim Corporate Director, Development and Renewal, for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

### **5.3 Petition regarding antisocial behaviour in the area of Vallance Road:**

Mr Donald Martin and Ms Hannah McHalick addressed the meeting on behalf of the petitioners and responded to questions from Members.

Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor, then responded to the issues raised. He stated that he was fully aware of problems in the area and had been working with the Police and other agencies to effect a solution. The Police had already taken action and the Weavers Fields gates were being locked at night and patrols increased by the Police and THEOs. He indicated that he would be seeking further meetings between Officers and residents to determine further action.

### **RESOLVED**

That the petition be referred to the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture for a written response on any outstanding matters within 28 days.

### **Change to Order of Business**

At this point, Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED**, and Councillor Rania Khan **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to allow motion 12.14 to be considered as next business.”

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

### **12.14 Sexual Exploitation**

Councillor Rania Khan **MOVED**, and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the report.

After debate, Councillor Rachael Saunders **MOVED**, and Councillor Alibor Choudhury **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedure Rule 14.1.10 the question be now put.” The Procedural Motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The motion as printed in the agenda was then put to the vote and was **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly it was:-

**RESOLVED****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.

**6. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC****6.1 Question from Miss Sultana Begum:**

What does the Mayor think about the Conservative Mayor Boris Johnson's recent rises in London transport fares?

**Response by Councillor Shahed Ali, Cabinet Member for Environment**

Ken Livingstone as part of his draft manifesto for Mayor of London has announced on his 'Ken for London' website that... he will cut fares by 5% in the process and saving the average London transport user over £800 over 4 years.

A key part of the 'One Tower Hamlets' Community Plan is to tackle poverty and protect the environment and people's health.

Increases in public transport fares can adversely impact on social inclusion and people's economic wellbeing, particularly for poorer sections of the community.

Tower Hamlets Council's Transport Planning Strategy (2011-2031), using data from Transport for London, indicates that public transport trips account for 37% of total trips in the borough with 21% of all trips by car, 15% by bus, 40% by walking and 2% by cycling.

Therefore, many residents of the borough rely on public transport, for example, to get to work, shopping, visit family and friends.

Increases in bus, tube, train and DLR fares can also encourage more people to go by car rather than travel in healthier, greener ways to the detriment of the quality of life for all in Tower Hamlets and the rest of London.

The recent increases in fares in London will impact on residents by making public transport less affordable and potentially reducing the attractiveness of bus, tube, DLR and rail services as a greener form of travel for local people.

As Tower Hamlets is ranked as the third most deprived local authority area in the country, after Hackney and Newham, any increases in public transport fares will significantly impact on people going to work and making other important journeys, particularly those having to live on the minimum wage or welfare benefits.

**Summary of supplementary question from Miss Sultana Begum**

Does the Lead Member have a view on Boris Johnson's argument that Ken Livingstone's proposal to use excess TfL revenue to reduce public transport fares is not realistic?

### **Summary of Councillor Shahed Ali's response to the supplementary question**

I will need to look at this in detail before making full comments but would make the point that, since Ken Livingstone left as Mayor of London, the cost of a single bus journey has gone from 90p to £1.35.

### **Change to Order of Business**

At this point, Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED** and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to allow motions 12.1 and 12.9 to be considered as next business.”

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

### **12.1 Public transport and unaffordable fares**

Councillor Fozol Miah **MOVED** and Councillor Harun Miah **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor Peter Golds **MOVED**, and Councillor Tim Archer **SECONDED**, a **tabled** amendment to the motion as follows:-

#### **“Delete all after ‘This Council notes that’ and insert:**

- Prior to the 2000 Mayoral election, Ken Livingstone's Mayoral election manifesto stated “I will freeze bus and tube fares in real terms for four years.” In January 2004, the single bus fare outside zone 1 was increased by 43% and cash fares on the Tube rose by 25%.
- Prior to the 2004 Mayoral election, Ken Livingstone promised fares would not increase above the rate of inflation. In September 2004 he announced that Tube fares would rise at 1% above inflation and bus fares at 10% above inflation. A single bus fare was increased by 20%. Ken Livingstone has since admitted in his memoirs that “I decided to increase the fares before the [2004] election”.
- Prior to the 2008 Mayoral election, Ken Livingstone promised to freeze Tube fares in real terms. Leaked emails have since shown that Mr Livingstone had already in 2007 approved higher than real term Tube increases.
- “Mr Livingstone is wrong to claim there's a £729m surplus, and there is no separate budget for investment projects. If he cuts fares, TfL expects to lose £1.12bn in income from fares – and that's a hole he wouldn't be able to plug without hitting the day-to-day funding for London's transport or taking money from investment projects.”
- “How he'd do that is up to him, but it could mean that tube and bus route upgrades are delayed, or TfL could be forced to shed some staff

members. Any mayoral candidate can raid the TfL's coffers to cut fares. But cutting fares could mean cutting investment – which London's transport system has been sorely starved of for decades.”

**This Council believes that:**

- Boris Johnson's fare restructuring is fair, and will bring long overdue Tube and transport infrastructure upgrades.
- Ken Livingstone's argument that fare reductions can be paid for from a TFL surplus is misleading, as the latest TFL business plan shows all of the operational surplus in the next four years will be spent on capital projects.
- Ken Livingstone's promises on Tube and bus fare increases have no credibility, and that his latest proposals are yet another cynical promise waiting to be broken.

**This Council resolves:**

- To support Boris Johnson's plans to upgrade London's transport infrastructure and Tube network.”

Following debate, the amendment moved by Councillor Golds was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

Following further debate, Councillor Joshua Peck **MOVED** and Councillor Alibor Choudhury **SECONDED** a procedural motion: 'That under Procedure Rule 14.1.10, the question be now put.' The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The substantive motion as printed in the agenda was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly, it was:-

**RESOLVED**

**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.

**12.9 Support Ken Livingstone's fair deal for transport**

Councillor Rabina Khan **MOVED**, and Councillor Shafiqul Haque **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the agenda.

Councillor Peter Golds **MOVED**, and Councillor Tim Archer **SECONDED**, a **tabled** amendment to the motion. The text of the amendment was the same as that moved by Councillor Golds at motion 12.1 above.

Following debate, the amendment moved by Councillor Golds was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

Following further debate, the substantive motion as printed in the agenda was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly, it was:-

**RESOLVED**

**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.

**6.2 Question from Mr Len Aldis:**

Could the Mayor update me on his conversations with LOCOG regarding the controversial sponsorship of the Olympic Games by Dow Chemical?

**Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member for Culture**

Thank you Len for your question. The issue of LOCOG accepting sponsorship from Dow Chemical is causing widespread concern in view of Dow's connections with the Union Carbide - Bhopal disaster which cost the lives of up to 25,000 people.

A joint letter was sent on behalf of the Mayor, Cllr Josh Peck (Labour Group), Fozol Miah (Respect Group) and Stephanie Eaton (Lib Dem) to Lord Coe expressing the view that it besmirched the reputation of the Olympics for it to have any association with Dow Chemicals.

Unfortunately, Lord Coe's letter in response might well have been written for him by Dow Chemical's public relations department.

In his reply Lord Coe stated that Dow 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'. He goes on to say that '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'.

The fact is that Dow Chemical bought Union Carbide they knew that Union Carbide was wanted on criminal charges pertaining to the Bhopal disaster. It is my view, and that of a wide array of public figures in this country and internationally, that Dow therefore has a responsibility to the victims of the Bhopal disaster.

Until it honours that responsibility any association with Dow puts a blemish on the 2012 Olympics which we are all looking forward to, and which we all want to ensure are a great success.

The Olympic ideal aspires to the best in fair play and ethics. LOCOG's association with Dow diminishes those high ideals and aspirations.

### **Summary of supplementary question from Mr Len Aldis**

I have visited Vietnam many times over the years and have seen many people affected after the war there by exposure to Agent Orange that was produced by Dow Chemical. I have since raised this with the Mayor and other agencies on behalf of organisations in Vietnam who were requesting help. I took a letter from those organisations to Lord Coe's office asking that Dow Chemical be dropped as an Olympic sponsor, as they had been instrumental in creating three generations of disabled people in Vietnam. Their sponsorship was regarded by the Vietnamese people as an affront. Lord Coe's response was therefore also an insult to them.

### **Change to Order of Business**

At this point, Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED** and Councillor Rania Khan **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – "That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to allow motion 12.13 to be considered as next business."

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

### **12.13 Dow Chemical, Bhopal and the Olympic Park**

Councillor Lutfa Begum **MOVED**, and Councillor Rania Khan **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the agenda.

After debate, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman **MOVED**, and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – "That under Procedural Rule 14.1.10 the question be now put." The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The motion as printed in the agenda was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly, it was:-

### **RESOLVED**

#### **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.

### **6.3 Question from Ms Catherine Tuitt:**

In light of the Stephen Lawrence case concluding with two convictions, what further steps will the Mayor be taking to monitor, and eradicate, racial and hate crime and promote equality in the borough?

**Response by Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor**

Thank you for your question and welcome to the Council meeting. I know that you are one of those people who can stand up against all forms of racism and injustice, for equal rights and social justice. This is where you are different and you are true Labour, not like the imposters sitting in front of me.

Tackling discrimination and hate is a fundamental part of the Council's approach to building One Tower Hamlets. In developing our work on tackling hate crime we have taken on the recommendations of the McPherson report into the death of Stephen Lawrence. One of the recommendations of the McPherson report was to provide additional reporting means for victims of racism.

In response to this we have worked with the local Police to develop 12 Third Party Reporting Centres in the borough. These are key sites in the borough where victims are likely to attend. We will continue to maintain these centres and provide regular training to the Centre staff so that they can take reports sensitively and appropriately. We continue to promote the centres through effective publicity and outreach work.

This work is complimented by our No Place for Hate pledge which continues to gain support from individuals and organisations in the borough. It has a key role in encouraging everyone in the local community to join forces with the Council and take a stand against hate crime.

Tower Hamlets has a strong network of No Place for Hate Champions, a network of people trained in Hate Crime and supported by the Council to take action on hate crime. They have had many successes in raising awareness of hate crime, promoting reporting and ensuring that the message is widely spread in the community. Our No Place for Hate outreach work reaches far and wide, through attending key community events and forums across the borough, reaching hundreds of different groups of people each year. The Tower Hamlets No Place for Hate Board ensures that there is an effective partnership structure in place to deal with hate crime. It maintains an action plan of work on hate crime, to which Council and partner agencies contribute.

The monthly Tower Hamlets' Hate Incidents Panel (HIP) meets monthly and is seen as a model of best practice in aiming to co-ordinate and review a top quality service provision across partners, for hate crime incidents. It also provides a forum for effective information sharing and enables appropriate actions to be taken to increase public safety.

Other key aspects of our work include the provision of a 24 hour Free phone reporting facility for victims of hate crime (0800 138 0521).

Further work planned for 2012 includes: -

- Production and distribution of an up to date Hate Crime Manual which assists professionals and volunteers to identify hate crime at an early stage and sign post victims appropriately.

- Providing refresher Hate Crime Training for the Council Call Centre staff who answer the Hate Crime hotline.
- Provision of Hate Crime training will be made available to all Council staff.
- Training of staff in charities and voluntary organisations in the borough including Tower Hamlets MIND (mental health charity).
- Training of Police and other key agencies on how to make referrals to the HIP
- We will continue to develop our approach in response to trends identified through analysis of hate crime data and engagement with communities.

Thank you for coming and again for all the good work that you do.

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Ms Catherine Tuitt**

Thank you for your comments – as you have mentioned a top quality service delivery, can I have your assurance that there will be increased resources to maintain the level of this activity in the Borough? Looking at issues included on your agenda, race and hate crime includes anti-Semitism as well as Islamophobia and human trafficking.

#### **Summary of Councillor Ohid Ahmed's reply to the supplementary question**

Thank you again, I can assure you that all necessary resources will be made available to address this problem.

#### **Change to Order of Business**

At this point, Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED** and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedure Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to allow motion 12.11 to be considered as next business.”

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

#### **12.11 Remembering Stephen Lawrence**

Councillor Abdul Asad **MOVED**, and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **SECONDED**, the motion as printed in the agenda.

After debate, Councillor Abdul Asad **MOVED**, and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedural Rule 14.1.10 the question be now put.” The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The motion as printed in the agenda was then put to the vote and was **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly, it was:-

### **RESOLVED**

#### **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.

**Point of Order**

At this point Councillor Joshua Peck rose on a point of order. He stated that it was extremely sad that a debate on which there was absolute unanimity across the chamber, had started with a statement from the Deputy Mayor that Councillor Peck found to be outrageous and unacceptable. Councillor Peck stated that the Deputy Mayor had said to Ms Tuitt 'you stand up to racism, you don't accept any racism, you are different to those opposite' and he felt that the clear implication of this was that the members of the Labour Group failed to stand up to racism and accept racism.

Councillor Peck further stated that at the last full Council meeting, the Deputy Mayor had also made an allegation that councillors were trying to amend the constitution simply for the reason that the Mayor was Bangladeshi. This was again a clear accusation that members of the Council were racist. He had received a rather thin, three line apology for that from the Deputy Mayor dated today, three months after the event. Councillor Peck felt that the Deputy Mayor's further comments at the current meeting showed that apology to be worthless. He proposed that the Deputy Mayor's comments be recorded verbatim in the minutes of the meeting and he invited the Deputy Mayor to apologise and withdraw his remarks.

Councillor Peter Golds stated that he also found the Deputy Mayor's allegations made at the previous meeting about members of the Council to be outrageous. He sought an apology and supported Councillor Peck's request that the Deputy Mayor's comments be recorded in the minutes.

**Point of Personal Explanation**

Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor rose to make a point of personal explanation. He stated that if the Speaker had not stopped him from completing his speech at the last meeting, the current situation would not have arisen. He had written to Councillor Peck and Councillor Golds regarding that meeting but if those councillors wished to take the matter further he would be happy to do so and challenge this issue.

In relation to the current debate, Councillor Ahmed stated that Councillor Peck should stop playing petty politics. He had said to the public questioner, Ms Tuitt that she was true Labour, rather than some in the chamber who were imposter Labour. Councillor Ahmed stated that this was nothing different from what he had said before.

The Speaker of the Council stated that the comments made by Members had been noted.

**6.4 Question from Ms Syeda Nasima:**

What steps is the Mayor taking to respond to the demand in the community for Bengali language teaching in mainstream primary schools in Tower Hamlets?



**Response by Councillor Oliur Rahman, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

Thank you for your question. I am pleased to see the enthusiasm of parents for mother-tongue teaching in our primary schools. This has been greatly expressed through a number of signed petition sheets addressed to individual schools in the borough.

Our Members are talking to senior officers, schools and governors about refreshing the current strategy. Formal consultation will take place at the Head Teachers' Forum and Heads Consultative meeting this term.

Our borough is introducing Level 1 and Level 2 courses in Bengali for class teachers and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to build schools' capacity. However, we as a Local Authority have no power to instruct schools on the issue of choosing a subject. It is an internal matter and schools decide independently, in consultation with their staff, parents and governors.

*(No supplementary question was asked.)*

**7. MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor made his report to the Council meeting, referring firstly to the recent Child Poverty Action report which showed that 52% of children in the Borough lived below the poverty line. The Mayor stated that this must be reduced as a priority issue and that previous reductions in poverty that had been enabled under a Labour Government were under threat because of cuts made by the Conservative-led administration.

The Mayor considered that a further main priority area must be to protect residents of the Borough from the austerity cuts, to promote jobs and education maximise entry into apprenticeships. He added that 868 Olympics jobs had been secured for local people and his administration was working to achieve more.

The Mayor pointed out that, since the last Council meeting, two of the killers of Stephen Lawrence had been convicted and he was pleased to support the related motion on the agenda. He commended the dignity shown by the Lawrence family over the 18 years since Stephen's murder.

That period had also seen much work on changing Police interaction with minorities and the Mayor particularly mentioned the new Metropolitan Police Commissioner's plans in relation to stop and search measures. Much progress had been made on tackling racism but it was still essential to remain vigilant.

The Mayor commented out that the coming month would see the start of the Chinese Year of the Dragon and he added that the Borough had been enriched by the presence of the Chinese community.

The Leader of the Majority Group and Leaders of the Minority Groups each responded briefly to the Mayor's report.

## 8. TO RECEIVE WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

The Speaker indicated that the meeting would now move to questions from Councillors.

Councillor Judith Gardiner put the first question on the order paper and the Mayor indicated that Councillor Rabina Khan would respond.

### Point of Order

At this point, Councillor Peck stated that in accordance with decisions regarding the Constitution made at the last Council meeting, the Mayor should respond personally to all questions asked, rather than nominating Cabinet members to do so.

Following discussion on the matter, the Speaker at **9.15 p.m.** declared the meeting **adjourned** so that Officers' advice might be obtained. The meeting **reconvened** at **9.40 p.m.** Ms Isabella Freeman, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) advised the Council that, in accordance with the valid amendments to the Constitution made at the last meeting, the Council could require that questions are put to the Mayor and could prevent Cabinet Members from responding on the Mayor's behalf, although the Mayor could not be obliged to answer questions personally at the meeting.

The Mayor commented that he had appointed to the Cabinet very able and experienced Lead Members to take charge of service provision and who would be involved with him in addressing matters included in their portfolios. He urged Councillors to work with him for the benefit of the wider community. However, if the Council would not agree to Cabinet Members replying to questions in the Chamber, he would publish written answers to Members' questions at an appropriate time of his choosing.

### Procedural Motion

At this point, Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED**, and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **SECONDED**, a procedural motion - "That under Procedure Rule 14.1.14, Rule 13.1 be suspended to allow the following urgent motion to be debated:-

"We condemn both the Tory and Labour groups for their time wasting tactics and blatant disregard for the public who have come to listen to Council affairs that affect their lives."

More than 10 Members rose from their seats to request a recorded vote on the procedural motion in accordance with Procedure Rule 17.4. A recorded vote was therefore taken and Members indicated their votes as follows:-

For the motion (15 Councillors)

Councillor Kabir Ahmed  
Councillor Ohid Ahmed  
Councillor Rofique Uddin Ahmed  
Councillor Shahed Ali  
Councillor Abdul Asad  
Councillor Lutfu Begum  
Councillor Alibor Choudhury  
Councillor Shafiqul Haque  
Councillor Aminur Khan  
Councillor Rabina Khan  
Councillor Rania Khan  
Councillor Fozol Miah  
Councillor Harun Miah  
Councillor Maium Miah  
Councillor Oliur Rahman

Against the motion (33 Councillors)

Councillor Joshua Peck  
Councillor Peter Golds  
Councillor Helal Abbas  
Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed  
Councillor Rajib Ahmed  
Councillor Timothy Archer  
Councillor Craig Aston  
Councillor Zara Davis  
Councillor Stephanie Eaton  
Councillor David Edgar  
Councillor Marc Francis  
Councillor Judith Gardiner  
Councillor Carlo Gibbs  
Councillor Carli Harper-Penman  
Councillor Sirajul Islam  
Councillor Ann Jackson  
Councillor Denise Jones  
Councillor Dr Emma Jones  
Councillor Anwar Khan  
Councillor Shiria Khatun  
Councillor Ahmed Omer  
Councillor Lesley Pavitt  
Councillor Zenith Rahman  
Councillor Rachael Saunders  
Councillor David Snowdon  
Councillor Gloria Thienel  
Councillor Bill Turner

Councillor Helal Uddin  
Councillor Kosru Uddin  
Councillor Abdal Ullah  
Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman  
Councillor Amy Whitelock  
Councillor Mizanur Chaudhury (Speaker of Council)

Abstained (nil Councillors)

The procedural motion was accordingly **defeated**.

The following questions 8.1 to 8.16, 8.18 and 8.20 to 8.21 (and where indicated, supplementary questions) were then put by Members. In response in each case the Mayor re-iterated that if the Council would not accept a response from his Cabinet Member, he would provide a written answer subsequently at a time of his choosing.

Questions 8.17 and 8.19 were not put at the meeting as the respective members asking the questions were not present when their question was reached. Questions 8.22 to 8.25 were not put at the meeting due to the time limit for the item having expired.

[Note: The written responses that were subsequently provided to all questions, and where applicable to supplementary questions put at the meeting, are attached at Appendix A to these minutes.]

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Judith Gardiner**

Why does the Mayor feel it is so hard to answer in public a simple question that will affect the lives of many tenants in the Borough? Is it because it affects a councillor close to him who is absent from today's meeting?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Peter Golds**

In addition to the case of the councillor already mentioned, what are your comments on a case in Cable Street where a resident complaining of an illegal sub-letting was informed by Social Services that persons moving furniture into a flat were the tenant's carers? And how does the Mayor justify a millionaire living in a Peabody Housing property who also owns a house elsewhere?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman**

As no answer has been given, I shall assume there was no meeting. I do not feel it is appropriate for the Mayor to sit there smiling and not answer the questions. If he does not want to answer he can take a break and leave the Council Chamber. The Prime Minister and Mayor of London answer questions personally, why is the Mayor refusing to do so?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Fozol Miah**

My question was also directed to the Cabinet Member.

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Lesley Pavitt**

Tower Hamlets people don't complain unless they have real cause. What are you going to do about the inevitable increase in complaints when the Rushmead Office is closed and people will have to travel much further to access Council services?

**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?"

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Zara Davis**

It is disappointing the Mayor will not justify his actions in view of the petition signed by many hundreds of residents. Has he considered the full implications of hiring out parks, such as damage caused, restriction of residents' use, areas being cordoned off and thus making it harder for residents to stay active; and the likely increase of childhood obesity from resulting lack of exercise?

**8.7 Question from Councillor Shiria Khatun:**

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

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Shiria Khatun**

Does the Mayor share my concern that the proposed £15 charge for bulky waste collection risks littering the Borough with discarded mattresses, sofas and other polluting debris?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Maium Miah**

Will the Mayor answer my question?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Helal Uddin**

I would have expected the Mayor to have said what action he will be taking. Do I therefore assume there are no measures planned?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor David Snowdon**

Did the Mayor study GCSE history at school?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Kosru Uddin**

£258,600 has been identified for funding activities in the Borough to combat the highest levels of gang and youth violence for 20 years. In what innovative ways will this be spent and how will value for money be achieved?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question by Councillor Stephanie Eaton**

Is the Deputy Mayor aware that the nearest branch of Victim Support is based at Waltham Forest and does he support a branch being opened nearer to Tower Hamlets?

**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?

**Summary of supplemental question by Councillor Carlo Gibbs**

Residents attending the meeting are dismayed that these questions are being made a joke. People are facing a significant lowering of benefits and are losing a One Stop Shop where they could obtain advice. Will the Mayor make a commitment to review the decision to close Rushmead One Stop Shop?

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Gloria Thienel**

Will the Mayor look at taking part in the pilot initiative that will stop scrap dealers from dealing in cash for scrap metal?

**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?

**Summary of Supplementary question from Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed**

At the last Full Council meeting, the Lead Member said that only 30 jobs had been secured – what is the position now?

**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?

*(No supplementary question was asked)*

#### **8.18 Question from Councillor Craig Aston:**

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

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Craig Aston**

On the standard European energy rating scale of A-G, this building is in Band G. What are the implications of this in terms of extra energy costs?

#### **8.20 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum:**

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

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Lutfa Begum**

Some social housing developments have their own car parking. Will the Mayor seek to include this in street parking to achieve more spaces?

#### **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?

*(Councillor Timothy Archer stated that he would send a supplementary question to the Mayor in written form)*

## **9. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES**

### **9.1 Substance Misuse Strategy**

The Council considered the report of the Cabinet at its meeting dated 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011, incorporating the report of the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture, proposing the adoption of a Borough-wide Substance Misuse Strategy.

Councillor Ohid Ahmed **MOVED** and Councillor Kabir Ahmed **SECONDED** the recommendations as contained in the report.

After debate Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedural Rule 14.1 the question be now put.” The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The report recommendations were then put to the vote and were **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly, it was:-

### **RESOLVED**

That the Substance Misuse Strategy be adopted as set out at Appendix 1 to the report of the Cabinet (CAB 054/112) and included at pages 71 to 156 of the Council agenda.

### **Procedural Motion**

At this point, Councillor Alibor Choudhury **MOVED** and Councillor Ohid Ahmed **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedural Rule 14.1.3 the order of business be varied to allow item 11.1 on this agenda to be considered as the next business.”

The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **defeated**.

## **9.2 London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003 (Section 16) - report of the Cabinet Meeting on 11th January 2012**

The Council considered the Cabinet report dated 11<sup>th</sup> January 2012, incorporating the report of the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture, in relation to Section 16 of the London Local Authorities Act 2003, concerning vehicles driving over the footway.

Councillor Shahed Ali **MOVED** and Councillor Shafiqul Haque **SECONDED**, the recommendations as contained in the report.

After debate, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedural Rule 14.1.10 the question be now put.”

The procedural motion was then put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The report recommendations were then put to the vote and were **agreed** with no Member voting against. Accordingly, it was:-

**RESOLVED**

That it be determined that Section 16 of the London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003 will come into operation in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012.

**9.3 Proposed amendments to the Council's Constitution - report of the General Purposes Committee, 17th January 2012**

The Council considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) proposing amendments to the Council's Constitution as recommended by the General Purposes Committee at its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2012. The report, which was circulated with the supplementary agenda, superceded that which had been included in the original agenda papers.

The Council noted that the supplementary report had not been circulated with the Council agenda in accordance with the timescales set out in the Authority's constitution because the meeting of the General Purposes Committee reported therein took place after the agenda was sent to print. The report was nevertheless recommended for consideration at this meeting because the constitutional matters set out in the report required urgent resolution to enable the implementation of the decisions previously made by the Council and, in relation to the Budget Council procedures, to ensure these were in place before the Budget Council Meeting 2012.

The report was introduced by Mr John S. Williams, Service Head, Democratic Services and appropriate advice was provided by Ms Isabella Freeman, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services), in particular drawing the Council's attention to the statutory officers' comments on the proposals regarding (i) recorded votes and (ii) virements.

Councillor Shiria Khatun **MOVED** and Councillor Joshua Peck **SECONDED** the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee as set out in the report circulated with the supplementary agenda.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Peck **MOVED** a **tabled** amendment as follows:-

"Delete points 11.5 and 11.6 and insert:-

'This Council instructs the Interim Chief Executive to make arrangements for a working group comprising a representative of the Executive, the majority and the other political groupings, senior officers and an independent adviser to consider the budget making and virement arrangements of the Council and make recommendations to a meeting of the next non-budget Full Council through the appropriate channel'."

Councillor David Edgar **SECONDED** the amendment moved by Councillor Peck.

Councillor Craig Aston **MOVED**, and Councillor David Snowdon **SECONDED**, a further tabled amendment as follows:-

“1. That the proposed amendment to Council Procedure Rule 17.4 at part 4.1 of the Constitution be deleted.

2. To delete the word ‘ten’ in Council Procedure Rule 17.4 at part 4.1 of the Constitution and substitute the word ‘six’.

3. To amend Council Procedure Rule 17.4 at part 4.1 of the Constitution to add at the end:

‘No recorded vote may be called on motions under Council Procedure Rules 14.1.10, 15.11.4 and 15.12.1 (that is, motions that the question be now put)’.”

### **Extension of time limit for the meeting**

Councillor David Snowdon **MOVED** and Councillor Zara Davis **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedure Rule 15.11.7 the meeting be extended until completion of the current agenda item.” The procedural motion was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

### **Procedural Motion**

Following debate, Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman **MOVED** and Councillor Bill Turner **SECONDED**, a procedural motion – “That under Procedure Rule 14.1.10 the question be now put.” The procedural motion was then put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The Service Head, Democratic Services advised the Council that Members should now consider and vote in turn on each recommendation contained in the report. Amendments to each recommendation could be proposed in the usual manner.

At the appropriate point during the Council’s consideration, the amendments previously moved by Councillors Peck and Snowdon respectively were put to the vote.

The amendment moved by Councillor Peck was **agreed**.

The amendment moved by Councillor Snowdon was **defeated**.

Each section of the substantive motion as amended was then put to the vote in turn and was **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

**RESOLVED**

1. That the deadline for amendments for the Budget Council meeting be brought forward to 9.15 a.m. on the working day before the budget meeting and the amendments be circulated to the Mayor and all Councillors, with any officer comments that are available, at least 24 hours before the meeting.
2. That the Budget Council Procedure Rules at paragraph 4.2 of Part 4.1 of the Constitution be amended as follows in relation to the first Budget Council meeting:
  - (a) Other than amendments notified in advance as above, no further substantial amendment may normally be moved at the budget meeting but the Council may, subject to the advice of the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and Head of Paid Service, agree that an amendment without notice can be debated.
  - (b) The Speaker will remind the Council at the start of the meeting of the importance where possible of all amendments being moved at the beginning of the debate or as soon as the need for the amendment is identified; and before moving to the 'right of reply' and voting stage of the meeting will give a final invitation for any further amendments. No new amendment may be proposed once the call for the vote has commenced.
  - (c) At the first Budget Council meeting, if a new amendment is moved during the final 30 minutes of the time allocated for the meeting, the meeting will automatically be extended by up to 30 minutes to enable that amendment to be debated before the guillotine procedure comes into operation. This will apply even if a previous extension has already been agreed.
  - (d) At the end of the 30 minutes if the debate is not complete, the guillotine process will come into operation in the normal way and the vote will proceed on the amendments and substantive motion the meeting will conclude, unless the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 officer advise the Speaker that the matter has not been sufficiently discussed – in this case the meeting will continue to consider any outstanding amendment(s) and any further amendments that may arise directly as a consequence of those amendments only.
  - (e) Nothing in the above provisions should extend the meeting beyond a total duration of five hours, at which point the guillotine process shall come into operation.
3. That the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules at Part 4.3 of the Constitution be amended as follows:-
  - (a) The adoption or approval of the plan or strategy is the responsibility of the full Council;

(b) The Mayor as the Executive has responsibility for preparing the draft plan or strategy for submission to the full Council; and

(c) If the Council wishes to amend the Mayor's proposals in relation to the items included in the Budget and Policy Framework only, the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 set out the dispute resolution procedure to be followed. The Council must inform the Mayor of any objections which it has to his proposals (i.e. the amendments it wishes to agree) and must give the Mayor at least five working days to reconsider his proposals and re-submit them (amended or not, with reasons) to a further Council meeting. If at this further meeting the Council still wishes to amend the Mayor's revised proposals, such a decision requires a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting. If no valid amendment at the further meeting receives two-thirds support, the Mayor's proposals are deemed adopted in accordance with the regulations.

4. That the position of Deputy Chair of Council be re-designated as 'Deputy Speaker'.

5. That Council Procedure Rule 27.1 be amended to state:-

'No photography or video or audio recording of any kind by Members, guests or members of the public may take place at any Council meeting without the express permission of the Speaker. The Council may determine that the proceedings of the Council Meeting shall be audio recorded by the officers and those recordings stored in accordance with a policy agreed by the Council and accessed by any member on request, for their own use, including publication. Such requests to be made in writing to the Monitoring Officer.'

6. That Council Procedure Council Procedure Rule 17.4 at part 4.1 of the Constitution be amended as follows:

**'Recorded vote.** If twenty Members present at the meeting request it by rising from their seats, the names for and against the motion or amendment or abstaining from voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes.'

7. That the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in relation to the Financial Procedure Rules as set out in Paragraphs 11.5 and 11.6 of the report be deleted; and

8. That this Council instructs the Interim Chief Executive to make arrangements for a working group comprising a representative of the Executive, the majority and the other political groupings, senior officers and an independent adviser to consider the budget making and virement arrangements of the Council and make recommendations to a meeting of the next non-budget Full Council through the appropriate channel.

9. That the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) be authorised to amend the text of the Constitution as necessary to give effect to the changes agreed at 1-8 above.

[Note from Clerk: Following the meeting, Councillors Tim Archer, Craig Aston, Zara Davis, Peter Golds, Dr Emma Jones, David Snowdon and Gloria Thienel each requested that their vote against resolution 6 above be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.]

#### **Time limit for the meeting**

At this point, the Service Head, Democratic Services informed the Council that the time limit for the meeting had been reached. In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.2, the Council then voted on each remaining item of formal business (except motions on notice at agenda item 12) without further debate and the Speaker then declared the meeting closed.

#### **9.4 Recruitment of Chief Executive - update**

The Council received the report of the Human Resources Committee dated 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012, concerning the progress made in the recruitment to the post of Chief Executive and proposing the extension of the current interim appointment pending completion of that process.

The report had not been circulated with the Council agenda in accordance with the timescales set out in the Authority's constitution because the meeting of the Human Resources Committee reported therein took place after the agenda was despatched. The report was nevertheless considered at the meeting in order to ensure that there was no delay to the recruitment process for the post of Chief Executive and to ensure continuity of the interim appointment.

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the update on progress and the revised timetable for the recruitment to the post of Chief Executive be noted.
2. That in view of the revised timetable, the appointment of Aman Dalvi, Corporate Director, Development and Renewal, as Interim Chief Executive (Head of the Paid Service) be extended until the Annual Council Meeting in May 2012.

#### **10. TO RECEIVE REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (IF ANY)**

There was no business under this heading.

**11. OTHER BUSINESS****11.1 Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2011/12**

The Council received the report of the Corporate Director, Resources proposing the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement; Revised Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement be adopted as set out in sections 6-10 of Appendix 1 to the report of the Corporate Director, Resources.
2. That the Revised Annual Investment Strategy be adopted as set out in section 11 of Appendix 1 to the report of the Corporate Director, Resources.
3. That the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement be adopted as set out in section 12 of Appendix 1 to the report of the Corporate Director, Resources.

**12. TO CONSIDER MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Motions 12.1, 12.9, 12.11, 12.13 and 12.14 had been debated earlier in the meeting.

Motions 12.2; 12.3; 12.4; 12.5; 12.6; 12.7; 12.8; 12.10; 12.12; 12.15; 12.16 and 12.17 were not considered due to the time limit being reached. Tabled amendments to motions 12.4; 12.5; 12.6; 12.10 and 12.12 were not moved, accordingly.

The meeting ended at 11.20 p.m.

Speaker of the Council



**APPENDIX A****MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (AGENDA ITEM 8)****WRITTEN RESPONSES PROVIDED AFTER THE COUNCIL MEETING****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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Judith Gardiner**

Why does the Mayor feel it is so hard to answer in public a simple question that will affect the lives of many tenants in the Borough? Is it because it affects a councillor close to him who is absent from today's meeting?

**Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

The Mayor and I regard the unauthorised subletting of Council Housing as an extremely serious concern. I believe that Council Housing should always be used by those who need it the most. In a borough such as ours with a huge need for affordable housing it is vital that all our housing goes to those with the highest need.

This is why we have a dedicated Fraud Team who tackle unauthorised subletting. The team's efforts since October 2010 have resulted in 69 properties being identified as sub-let or subsequently abandoned, these being recovered for return to the Lettings Pool. Our team is recognised as an example of good practice and has also provided training to staff within Tower Hamlets Homes and is working with other local authorities.

To complement the above, the Housing Options Service has its own, Fraud Team that focuses on sub-letting of Homeless Temporary Accommodation. The Homeless Team has separately identified and recovered 27 units of temporary accommodation. They have also provided showcase training to other London boroughs.

The criminalisation of unauthorised subletting however will give the Council no extra powers to tackle unauthorised subletting. I am concerned that this is a knee jerk reaction from the Conservative government which will not actually reduce levels of subletting. It would be more helpful to provide more resources to Councils' Fraud Teams to tackle this through channels proven to work.

Some opposition councillors have claimed that the Mayor is unwilling to provide them with answers to the questions asked at Full Council.

This is not the case.

At Full Council meetings, the Mayor's approach has always been to deliver a verbal statement updating members on the progress his administration is making, and then allow his cabinet members to answer questions specific to their portfolios.

We are a strong cabinet, who invest long hours, remarkable intellect and hard work dealing with issues in minute detail on a day to day basis. We are well placed and will continue to answer questions specific to our portfolios.

## **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?

### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Peter Golds**

In addition to the case of the councillor already mentioned, what are your comments on a case in Cable Street where a resident complaining of an illegal sub-letting was informed by Social Services that persons moving furniture into a flat were the tenant's carers? And how does the Mayor justify a millionaire living in a Peabody Housing property who also owns a house elsewhere?

### **Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

The Government proposals only move matters from the civil to the criminal arena and do not add more powers for the council to deal with unauthorised sub-letting.

The Mayor and I take any such abuse extremely seriously and will be very interested to see the detailed proposals to see if they will actually deter tenants from sub-letting their homes without consent.

All Housing Association tenancies are covered by statute, notably the Housing Acts of 1988 and 1996 with regard to secure and assured tenancies. All Housing Associations are required to enter into a tenancy agreement with individual tenants, which will set out each side's rights and responsibilities through a set of terms and conditions.

Conditions relating to income and property ownership may not necessarily be covered by the tenancy agreements. It will be the responsibility of individual Housing Associations to take legal action against a tenant if they are in breach of their tenancy agreement.

With regard to the Cable Street matter you raise without exact details this can not be verified or investigated further.

### **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?

### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman**

As no answer has been given, I shall assume there was no meeting. I do not feel it is appropriate for the Mayor to sit there smiling and not answer the questions. If he does not want to answer he can take a break and leave the Council Chamber. The Prime Minister and Mayor of London answer questions personally, why is the Mayor refusing to do so?

### **Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

The Mayor and I are extremely concerned by the changes to housing benefit. Almost a year ago as Cabinet Member for Housing I presented a motion to this Council which laid a marker down on this administration's views on the Coalition's appalling measures.

We are already seeing the impact of these changes on families in the borough. Some families are already reluctant to move to larger homes due to the housing allowance cap and are choosing to stay in overcrowded circumstances.

These changes will impact across all the services in the council as well as our partner organisations. This is why I have asked our central research team to coordinate a high level and innovative group to collate the impact this is having across all Council and partner services.

I have also had several meetings with organisations such as Shelter, TELCO and Z2K to discuss a coordinated response. I have also ensured that the Tenant's Federation are fully aware of the changes and have held workshops with them.

Next month we are holding a congress with key Partners, including RSLs, the Police, Schools, the Third Sector and to look at the impact of this in a holistic way and plan ways we can combat the changes and mitigate the impact to our residents. This process is to build a coalition of concerned individuals and institutions, who care deeply about the residents of this borough. We will collect a solid evidence base of the impact across the borough.

We know that millionaire ministers are responsible for pushing through these reforms. They have no idea how most people in this country live. In fact Lord Freud, the minister responsible for benefit change, isn't even elected.

We will have far more of an impact working together. We will demonstrate that individuals and organisations from across this borough oppose these vicious cuts. And we do so, not simply on a whim, but because they are damaging our community and our residents.

It is not the case that the Mayor is unwilling to provide answers to the questions asked at Full Council.

At Full Council meetings, the Mayor's approach has always been to deliver a verbal statement updating members on the progress his administration is making, and then allow his cabinet members to answer questions specific to their portfolios.

We are a strong cabinet, who invest long hours, remarkable intellect and hard work dealing with issues in minute detail on a day to day basis. We are well placed and will continue to answer questions specific to our portfolios.

#### **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?

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Fozol Miah**

My question was also directed to the Cabinet Member.

#### **Response by Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor**

Thank you Cllr Miah for your question.

The Mayor and all councillors welcome the conviction of two of the killers of Stephen Lawrence.

Everyone also feels a sense of admiration for the Lawrence family for the tenacity, courage and dignity with which they have conducted themselves in the 18 years since Stephen's death.

It is a recognised fact, not least within the Metropolitan Police itself, that police incompetence, corruption and institutionalised racism combined to deny the Lawrence family justice at the time of Stephen's murder. Much work has been done to improve the Metropolitan police but as the recent events surrounding the killing of Mark Duggan and the ensuing riots in Tottenham, there is work still to be done.

One area that definitely needs addressing is the widespread sense of grievance in the black community over the use of stop and search. I welcome the comments of Bernard Hogan-Howe, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, in which he expressed his concern about the disproportionate use of stop and search. I welcome also his plan to halve the number of random stops and searches it conducts in an attempt to improve relations with black and other ethnic minority communities.

Any perception that policing is targeting or discriminating against any community is obviously detrimental to police-community relations and the Council. We are sensitive to picking up on concerns about stop and search in the borough. The Tower Hamlets Stop & Search Forum continues to meet quarterly and engages representatives of the community in a constructive dialogue with the Police around Stop and Search. It reviews the data on stop and search in the borough and is able to challenge the Police on matters of concern. It is attended by a diverse range of individuals, including those representing BME and youth communities. Further work is currently underway to develop a Tower Hamlets stop and search forum specifically for young people.

The Police themselves acknowledge the failings of the past and the fact that they still have work to do. Only by working more closely with the Police can we help them on this journey. The Council's Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Team work closely with Tower Hamlets Police Community Safety Unit, who take all forms of hate crime very seriously and the partnership relationship is very strong. They are dedicated partners in attending and contributing to the Council run Hate Incident Panel and also the Strategic Tower Hamlets No Place for Hate Forum.

#### **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?

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Lesley Pavitt**

Tower Hamlets people don't complain unless they have real cause. What are you going to do about the inevitable increase in complaints when the

Rushmead Office is closed and people will have to travel much further to access Council services?

**Response by Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources**

Thank you for your question.

Over the last two years there has been no discernible increase in complaints regarding one stop shops. Indeed the most recent quarter (ending 31 Dec 2011) had the fewest number of complaints for 20 months (just 9).

The highest number of complaints received in the preceding period was 18. This was in the second quarter of 2010/11. The first quarter of 2011/12 saw 17 complaints, but this dropped to just 10 in the second quarter. There is also no discernible pattern to the nature of complaints received though parking related questions usually account for the majority of concerns.

While all complaints are a source of disappointment and learning, Members should draw some comfort from the fact that this financial year we have received just 38 complaints about our one stop shops.

After consultation with the Trade Unions and residents there is now no specific proposal to close the One Stop Shop at Rushmead.

**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?"

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Zara Davis**

It is disappointing the Mayor will not justify his actions in view of the petition signed by many hundreds of residents. Has he considered the full implications of hiring out parks, such as damage caused, restriction of residents' use, areas being cordoned off and thus making it harder for residents to stay active; and the likely increase of childhood obesity from resulting lack of exercise?

**Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member for Culture**

Thank you for your question.

The Full Council Motion had financial implications and was therefore referred back to Cabinet for consideration.

Whilst we understand local concern we remain committed to using parks across the borough for events.

May I reassure you on a number of points:

- The Council is currently carrying out a feasibility study to look at which parks may be suitable for different types of activity. I will ensure that resident's concerns on the types of events are taken into account.
- Events will be held in parks across the borough, not just in Isle of Dogs parks.
- The number of events taking place will be subject to an upper limit.
- No park will be completely shut to the public at any time as hires will be restricted to designated areas within the park.
- Any necessary repairs to grass areas or other damage will be covered by deposits taken from the hirer.
- A contribution of all income raised will be spent on improving and maintaining the parks so that residents will benefit from these events.

Many other London boroughs have similar policies which make commercial use of their parks.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind councillors why we in the Council have been forced to look at our parks and other assets and find ways we can make more revenue from them. This is not a position we would choose to be in. The Conservative led coalition cuts have reduced our funding by £72m. This administration is committed to ensuring there are no cuts to frontline services. We have maintained our Youth Service, Children's Centres and Ideas Stores. We are continuing to build and improve our council housing. All these are services which we know are extremely important to our residents. However in order to continue to support these services we have to find ways to increase revenue from our existing assets.

I have considered the implications and believe it is better to have income from events that contribute to community cohesion than to make cuts to essential services and local people jobless. There will be bond arrangements in place to ensure that, should any damage occur, it will be repaired at the hirers cost. There will always be public access so no one need miss out on their exercise.

#### **8.7 Question from Councillor Shiria Khatun:**

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

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Shiria Khatun**

Does the Mayor share my concern that the proposed £15 charge for bulky waste collection risks littering the Borough with discarded mattresses, sofas and other polluting debris?

#### **Response by Councillor Shahed Ali, Cabinet Member for Environment**

Thank you for your question.

This administration is continually striving to improve the borough's recycling performance.

Our current recycling performance for Q1 is 29.5% against a target value of 27.26%.

We have undertaken a review of our recycling disposal contract to allow the Council to collect a greater range of materials that previously would have gone to landfill.

A recycling campaign will be launched that supports our overall recycling strategy.

In addition to this, we have successfully secured external funding to improve recycling across the borough. Part of this will be used to purchase a new recycling refuse collection vehicle.

The remainder of this funding is being used in partnership with Poplar HARCA to:

- Improve underground recycling storage facilities
- Extend the availability of underground recycling storage facilities
- Initiate an education program focused on decreasing contamination of recycled waste
- And canvas residents to review the location and availability of on street recycling bins

Recycling effectively involves a combination of having useful means of recycling as well as informing and engaging residents for the maximum impact across the Borough.

I am confident that the Borough's recycling performance will further improve with the strategies being implemented.

I do not have any concerns that introducing a very modest charge for bulky waste will increase littering in the Borough. A majority of London Councils have already introduced charging for bulky waste and have not seen any increases in fly tipping or littering. It should also be noted that the Council has an excellent enforcement policy that is used when necessary.

#### **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?

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Maium Miah**

Will the Mayor answer my question?



**Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member for Culture**

Thank you for your question.

The Legal Department is currently working on this matter, however no repayment has been made as of yet.

At Full Council meetings, the Mayor's approach has always been to deliver a verbal statement updating members on the progress of his administration, and then allow cabinet members to answer questions specific to our portfolios.

We are a strong cabinet, who invest long hours, remarkable intellect and hard work dealing with issues in minute detail on a day to day basis. We are well placed and will continue to answer questions specific to our portfolios.

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Helal Uddin**

I would have expected the Mayor to have said what action he will be taking. Do I therefore assume there are no measures planned?

**Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

The Mayor and I are extremely concerned by the financial difficulties facing our residents as a consequence of Government policy. This is why we have taken the decision to freeze the Council Tax for the second year in succession – with an average saving of over £40 for each household.

However I must remind Councillors that the Housing Revenue Account is a separate account which must be balanced without cross subsidy from the general fund.

This Government's policy has forced us to increase rents through their national social rent policy, which has assumed Tower Hamlets will increase its rents – next year and in future years, well in excess of the rate of inflation. What I can also assure Members is that the actual rent increase will be well below this Government's guideline rent increase. Moreover all Councils are being forced to raise rents and ours are amongst the lowest increases.

Finally, all our residents on Housing Benefit will still have their rent covered, even with Central Government cuts. To limit rent rises we have ensured that

THH delivers significant savings, without damaging the delivery of our Decent Homes Programme.

I am confident that following the changes made to the THH Board we will see an improvement in efficiencies.

The Mayor and I have worked to ensure that the rent rise is as low as possible, given the settlement from central government and our ambitious improvements programme. The Mayor's proposed budget is designed to protect services and keep more money in residents' pockets: We have frozen Council Tax; residents fees and charges have been largely frozen or are only rising inline with inflation; we are investigating the creation of an energy co-op which will reduce residents' bills and we are extending our London Living Wage policy to our contractors.

#### **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?

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor David Snowdon**

Did the Mayor study GCSE history at school?

#### **Response by Councillor Oliur Rahman, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

Thank you for your question.

I agree that the teaching of history in schools is extremely important; however the responsibility for this rests with the schools.

Unfortunately we have no funding or resources to promote the specific teaching of history in our schools.

However we have funded 1:1 tuition at both GCSE and A-level for all subjects. We know that this support helps pupils to feel able to take on subjects which are more intellectually challenging, including history.

The Mayor studied both O-Level and A-Level History.

#### **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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Kosru Uddin**

£258,600 has been identified for funding activities in the Borough to combat the highest levels of gang and youth violence for 20 years. In what innovative ways will this be spent and how will value for money be achieved?

**Response by Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor**

Thank you for your question but it is not correct to maintain that THEO's were not involved in supporting the Boroughs residents during the EDL visit or the riots.

It is important to remember that THEO's are not riot police. This is a specialist police role.

But during these incidents THEO's were deployed in consultation with the Police to undertake high visibility patrols in areas of the Borough, report any problems through pre arranged command channels and provide reassurance to residents. All deployment decisions form part of a joint tasking process involving the Police.

At the height of the riot disturbances the police told everybody to stay off the street so that specially trained police officers could deal with the street violence.

The Service Head Safer Communities was in constant contact with the Borough Commander and his Team Leaders throughout the episode, assessing and providing the local authority response. At the end of this episode the Service Head met with the senior police staff to assess the borough response.

Whilst it is recognised that the police service struggled to provide sufficient police officers across London during the riot it was recognised that the local authority had performed well across a range of areas including the THEO's, The Civil Contingency Team, CCTV, Rapid Response Team, and emergency response team.

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question by Councillor Stephanie Eaton**

Is the Deputy Mayor aware that the nearest branch of Victim Support is based at Waltham Forest and does he support a branch being opened nearer to Tower Hamlets?

**Response by Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor**

Thank you for your question.

Any increase in burglary is obviously a concern and the Council and its partners are working tirelessly to address it.

There are a number of factors which impact upon this particular performance indicator. The current economic climate and levels of unemployment are just two of these factors.

It is encouraging to note that the overall trend for burglary since August 2011 has decreased by 23% resulting in the Borough performing better than many other London Authorities.

Through the close partnership working with the police a number of new initiatives have been launched:

- a dedicated burglary reporting system
- a project to proactively detect offenders and improve investigate techniques
- a programme of high impact operations planned over the next 6 months
- a new offender management unit which has a particular focus on targeting 'top offenders' in the Borough

Whilst it is disappointing that rates of burglary have increased in Bethnal Green north every effort is being made to address this trend.

I raised this in a meeting with the Borough Commander recently and have urged him to report back to me in due course the outcomes of the measures I have referred to above and I would be happy to feed the result of this conversation back to you.

Both the Council and the Police work exceptionally closely with victim support on a number of levels. As an Authority we fund specific Domestic Violence Advisors specifically for victims of Tower Hamlets and this work is undertaken in the Borough. In addition the police work closely with the service referring victims of crime to them.

We will continue to fund Domestic Violence Advisors.

**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?

**Summary of supplemental question by Councillor Carlo Gibbs**

Residents attending the meeting are dismayed that these questions are being made a joke. People are facing a significant lowering of benefits and are losing a One Stop Shop where they could obtain advice. Will the Mayor make a commitment to review the decision to close Rushmead One Stop Shop?

**Response by Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources**

Thank you for your question.

A total of 20068 housing benefit enquiries have been managed through the Rushmead OSS in 2011/12. Members should be aware that the monthly average number of visits has halved over the course of the year.

After consultation with residents and Trade Unions there is now no specific proposal to close the One Stop Shop at Rushmead.

**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?

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Gloria Thienel**

Will the Mayor look at taking part in the pilot initiative that will stop scrap dealers from dealing in cash for scrap metal?

**Response by Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor**

Thank you for your question.

Firstly, I would like to stress that the Mayor and I take any disrespectful behaviour towards War Memorials extremely seriously. I am sure that all Members will agree with me that the people who undertake these thefts are completely despicable.

Whilst there are very few War Memorials in the Borough that are on Council land and therefore the responsibility of the Council we will work with our THEOs, CCTV network and the Police to ensure that we maintain vigilance and continue to protect these important memorials.

I would like to reassure Members that I have received no reports of thefts of this nature.

I think it may be helpful to set out the requirements we already have in place for controlling scrap metal. Dealing in scrap metal is controlled by the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 and all scrap metal dealers trading in Tower Hamlets must register with the Council. Registration lasts three years and must be renewed if the registered person wishes to carry on as a dealer.

To register a dealer must provide the following information: full name and address or the address of the principal office; the address of each place in the borough that is being used to store scrap metal; if the business is carried out from a residence and if premises are used for a scrap metal business but not as a scrap metal store, notice of this and the address of the premises. Any alterations to this information must be notified within 28 days.

Every scrap metal dealer must keep a book detailing all scrap metal received at that place and all scrap metal either processed or dispatched from that place. These details include (for all metal received) the description and weight of the metal, the date and time of receipt of the metal; the name and address of the person the metal is received from, either the price of the scrap metal or its estimated value and the registration mark of any vehicle used to deliver the scrap metal.

Details also have to be kept for processed scrap metal, including the description and weight of the metal, the date of dispatch or processing and the process applied, where scrap metal is dispatched for sale or exchange, the name and address of the person to whom it is sold or exchanged and the consideration for which it is sold or exchanged and where scrap metal is dispatched or processed other than for sale, its estimated value before being dispatched or exchanged.

The Government is looking to strengthen these requirements, especially with regard to the traceability of both the materials and the seller. Our Trading Standards Team has been involved in partnership action with local and transport police to audit and inspect local scrap metal dealers and would be willing to be involved in any further action that seeks to curtail the sale of stolen metal.

#### **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?

#### **Summary of Supplementary question from Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed**

At the last Full Council meeting, the Lead Member said that only 30 jobs had been secured – what is the position now?

#### **Response by Councillor Shafiqul Haque, Cabinet Member for Jobs and Skills**

Thank you for your question.

I am pleased to be able to report that as of the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012, six hundred and sixty three (663) job offers had been made to Tower Hamlets residents by LOCOG contractors.

I am also pleased to report that in addition to the job offers made by Games contractors two hundred and five (205) Tower Hamlets residents are employed directly by LOCOG which represents 8.7% of LOCOG's total workforce.

We are holding another Olympic Job Fair later this month to help residents to apply.

#### **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?

#### **Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member for Culture**

Thank you for your question.

PFI was, and continues to be, an option for securing significant investment in public sector capital projects. Individual projects need to be assessed on their own merits for value for money.

There are currently no financing problems relating to PFI schemes of Tower Hamlets schools. There is however an issue with updating the financing model to ensure the right level of schools contributions and contributions from the Dedicated Schools Grant for the financing of the Grouped Schools PFI contract.

Officers have been discussing the options with the 24 schools in the PFI contract and with Schools Forum. These discussions will shortly be brought to a conclusion and officers will bring a report to Cabinet before the end of the financial year, to regularise the position to ensure that the PFI account balances by contract end in 2027.

#### **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?

**Response by Councillor Abdul Asad, Cabinet Member Health and Wellbeing**

Thank you for your question.

The Mayor has not met with ministers of the Department of Health in the last six months.

The Mayor has sent a joint letter, with Aman Dalvi, to raise concerns expressed by Cabinet and CMT around the proposed merger of Barts and the London, Whipps Cross and Newham General Hospitals. In particular, the lack of consultation with the community and concerns over reduction to services.

**8.18 Question from Councillor Craig Aston:**

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

**Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Craig Aston**

On the standard European energy rating scale of A-G, this building is in Band G. What are the implications of this in terms of extra energy costs?

**Response by Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources**

Thank you for your question.

Our Town Hall has an unfortunately low level of energy efficiency. It is considered a 'G' according to the Display Energy Certificate (DEC). This is a typical rating for this type of building and construction type.

The council has a Carbon Management Plan in place to improve the energy efficiency and reduce energy usage in all of its operational buildings.

The refurbishment of Mulberry Place will include energy efficiency improvements such as low energy lightings, energy efficient ventilation systems and better Building Energy Management System for the plant room. Initial discussions with the contractors have indicated that an energy reduction of 30% could be achieved. The new ICT systems will significantly reduce the energy consumption by the current IT equipment.

As the council does not own Mulberry Place, it is limited to the improvements it could make taking in to consideration the pay back period for the investment and the length of time remaining in the lease.

For those buildings that are in the ownership of the council we are investigating the RE: FIT project managed by the LDA. The RE: FIT project provides a commercial model for public bodies to implement energy efficiency



improvements to their buildings, reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions

The 'G' rating on the display energy certificate is an indication on how much energy is being used to operate the building, it does not directly relate to a building's energy cost effectiveness.

The typical benchmark rating for a building like the Town Hall would be 100 which is a 'D' rating, presently Mulberry is showing 173. The refurbishments, which will include the high energy consumers such as lighting, ventilation and IT systems, will all have an implication on energy cost but because of the nature of this type of building we would not expect a significant reduction in rating. The refurbishments are unlikely to generate a real price reduction in energy costs because of the volatility of the market and predicted price increases.

#### **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?

#### **Response by Councillor Shahed Ali, Cabinet Member for Environment**

Thank you for your question but I believe you are mistaken. Not only do the streets of Tower Hamlets continue to be clean, there has been a marked improvement in the level of street cleanliness over the past 12 months. In fact I am happy to announce that our streets are demonstrably cleaner than they have ever been before. So clean in fact that the City of Paris has recently sent over a delegation to see how it is done for the money. I am confident that our street cleansing service will play its part to increase our chances of gaining city status.

I receive regular reports detailing the Council's performance in key areas of service delivery.

The Mayor has repeatedly made it clear that the cleanliness of streets is one of this Council's main priorities. So far it is pleasing to note that our partners Veolia have constantly met their targets that have been set for them.

Not only do we set challenging targets for Veolia but we also undertake a number of educational and promotional activities to dissuade people from littering.

The Mayor has also recently invested in 1200 litter bins across the Borough and introduced the new 'find it fix it' teams to react to littering hot spots that may occur irregularly across our Borough.

Our bid for City Status will not simply be based on the excellent public services we provide but also on the basis that Tower Hamlets is, and has

been for centuries, an engine room for the economy and wellbeing of the United Kingdom.

It is important for us to note that this borough is one of the 3 central business districts in the heart of London along side Westminster, and the square mile of the Corporation of London, both of which are already cities.

We expect the result of our city status submission to be known shortly.

### **8.20 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum:**

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

#### **Summary of supplementary question from Councillor Lutfa Begum**

Some social housing developments have their own car parking. Will the Mayor seek to include this in street parking to achieve more spaces?

#### **Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

The Mayor requested the development of a Permit Transfer Scheme (PTS) which was introduced in September 2011. This scheme allows for those families who move to retain one on-street resident car parking permit subject to certain criteria being met.

The introduction of the PTS fulfils a Mayoral priority to help some larger families move from overcrowded accommodation into more suitable social rented car free homes, whilst at the same time balancing the need to encourage healthier, greener lifestyles to improve the quality of life for all our communities living and working in the borough.

Additionally, where on-site car parking is provided in future housing schemes, it is the intention through the planning process to allocate, for the first time, an equitable proportion to affordable family homes.

In addition to the PTS, the Council is continuing to work to improve all transport modes in the borough, including expanding our car club, walking and cycling networks, as well as working with TfL to improve public transport in the borough

Whilst the allocation of designated parking bays on housing estates are under the control of the Registered Social Landlords, encouraging RSLs to widen the use of their parking spaces would be of benefit to residents in the borough. The Council's parking service is seeking a dialogue with the RSL's on a number of issues. The Mayor and I have asked them to raise the possibility of introducing shared bays on estate roads where on street demand for permit bays regularly exceeds supply.

It would be for the Council, through Tower Hamlets Homes and the Registered Providers (RPs) in the Borough to decide whether they wished to designate parking bays on estate roads for use by Tower Hamlets on-street residents' permit holders. The Council's Parking Service will be in dialogue with the RPs on a number of issues raised in the recent Parking Service Scrutiny and I have asked them to raise the possibility of introducing shared bays (estate permit or on-street residents' permit) on estate roads where on-street demand for permit bays regularly exceeds supply. Responsibility for enforcing any such bays would remain with the RPs. Members will recall that currently, while there may be local variations, in each of the Boroughs four CPZs there is more or less parity between the number of resident's permits and on-street bays where they can be used.

As part of the LBTH consultation draft Managing Development Plan Document (MDDPD), where on-site car parking is provided in future housing schemes, it is the intention through the planning process to allocate an equitable proportion of these parking spaces to affordable family homes.

In addition, the Council is also continuing to work to improve all transport modes in the borough, including expanding our car club, TfL Cycle Hire Scheme, walking and cycling networks, as well as working with TfL to improve public transport in the borough.

#### **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?

#### **Response by Councillor Rania Khan, Cabinet Member for Culture**

Thank you for your question.

The Yorkshire Sculpture Park was advised of the Council's intention to make alternative arrangements for the sculpture and initial discussions have taken place with Canary Wharf Management Group.

Alternative locations are still being explored, the most appropriate being Victoria Park where works are still underway.

In view of the very real risk of theft of artworks for scrap metal; as evidenced by the recent theft of a large Barbara Hepworth sculpture from Dulwich Park in South London, and indeed the question by Cllr Thienel, we will not make new arrangements for this sculpture until we are absolutely certain that we are making the right choice.

**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?

**Response by Councillor Ohid Ahmed, Deputy Mayor**

Thank you for your question.

The Council Funded Police Partnership Taskforce has worked closely with the Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers (THEOs) to bring about significant reductions in Anti-Social Behaviour.

By Police and Council measures, for example, the last full months data (December) shows a decrease in anti-social behaviour (ASB) of 22.4%. Within this are significant reductions in particular areas such as an 81% decrease in ASB related to street drinking.

The team undertakes regular drugs and weapons sweeps through which it has recovered money, drugs and weapons.

In the last month alone, the team has shut down 3 cannabis factories, seized 9 vehicles and recovered drugs with a street value of £100,000. A number of problem licensed premises have had their licenses revoked and have been shut down.

In total since the launch of the Taskforce, the partnership has achieved 286 arrests, 2676 stop and searches, 172 cannabis warnings, 24 penalty notices for disorder and 19 seized vehicles.

It has received positive feedback from residents, for example recently, its work on drug dealing around Beaumont square.

A recent Police operation in the Borough resulted in a drug dealing gang being arrested and receiving a total of 53 years imprisonment.

Dealer a day remains a priority and to date in the current financial year 298 dealers have been arrested.

**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?

**Response by Councillor Alibor Choudhury, Cabinet Member for Resources**

Thank you for your question.

There have been no overpayments to dismissed employees.

**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?

**Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

We use a variety of methods to ensure that Registered Providers (RPs) working in Tower Hamlets are delivering on their service agreements.

RPs who received stock from the Council under the Housing Choice programme, submit a detailed monitoring return to the council once every six months. This report indicates the progress that each RP is making towards delivering the promises made to tenants and leaseholders, when the ownership of the estate was transferred from the Council. Indicators monitored include progress on delivering the investment promised, delivering the Decent Homes Standard, progress on new build developments, estate improvement works, and Governance arrangements.

In May 2010, the Council selected 16 preferred development partners following a rigorous selection process. This initiative enables the Council to have better control over the quality of properties being built in the borough as well as making Registered Providers more accountable for the services delivered to the residents that occupy them. Council representatives meet with developing partners on a regular basis to monitor the progress of their schemes and discuss any management issues brought to our attention.

Where areas of under performance are identified, we work in partnership with the RP both individually and collectively to improve their services and monitor their progress. On an individual level, we achieve this through regular meetings and developing action plans for improvement which is monitored on a regular basis.

Collectively we improve service provision through the work we do as part of the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum (THHF). We are going to work with THHF to develop a set of common housing management standards, which will enable us to hold providers to account for their performance on a standardised basis.

The Council has also agreed a range of 'local offers' with RPs in the Borough, which set out a clear set of standards which all RPs have agreed deliver to Tower Hamlets residents in specific service areas. These 'offers' were developed with residents based on the areas of the service delivery they were most concerned about. These 'offers' are currently being monitored through a Resident's Scrutiny Panel which meets on a regular basis to advise on the how the Local Offers are being implemented in the various Housing Associations and make recommendations for improvement.

**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?

**Response by Councillor Rabina Khan, Cabinet Member for Housing**

Thank you for your question.

For regeneration initiatives to be successful in the borough, the interests of all residents are considered, such as tenants and private home owners, including council leaseholders.

In the current financial climate, there are challenging funding issues, but also strategies to ensure that, as far as possible, whilst lasting improvements are made, the existing communities are not disadvantaged.

It is recognised that leaseholders have specific concerns in the present economic climate, whether they live in the homes they own or sub-let them as private landlords.

Each social landlord, whether Tower Hamlets Council or a Registered Provider (Housing Association), will work with the homeowners affected by its regeneration initiatives.

Leaseholders are required to pay a pro-rata proportion of the cost of qualifying works under the terms of their leases. Before works commence leaseholders are presented with an indicative cost of the works to be done to their particular blocks - subject to the final account upon completion of the works - through the standard Section 20 Notice. Leaseholders then have the right to respond to their particular landlord on any issues or observations they wish to raise.

Leaseholders should also benefit from reduced fuel costs where works are devised to make homes in blocks more energy efficient.