

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL – EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY, 18 JUNE 2012

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

Members Present:

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

The meeting commenced at 7.38 p.m.

The Speaker of the Council, Councillor Rajib Ahmed, in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Stephanie Eaton, David Edgar, David Snowdon and Kosru Uddin.

RESOLVED

That the apologies for absence be noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors declared interests in items included on the agenda for the meeting as follows:-

Councillor	Item	Type of interest	Reason
Cllr Kabir Ahmed	6	Personal	Party to legal correspondence on the matter
Cllr Abdul Asad	4	Personal	Employed by youth service provider at Bishop Challoner School

Point of Personal Explanation

Councillor Ohid Ahmed stated that he had been asked by Councillors Peter Golds and Joshua Peck to give an apology for comments he made at a previous Council meeting. Councillor Ahmed stated that he had previously explained that if the previous Speaker of the Council had allowed him to finish his speech at the meeting concerned then the situation would not have arisen. Nevertheless, Councillor Ahmed stated that he had written to the Councillors and made it clear that he did not accuse any of them personally of racism. If his remarks had inadvertently given that impression then Councillor Ahmed was sorry for that.

3. LOCALISM ACT 2011 - THE AMENDED STANDARDS REGIME

The Council considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) proposing arrangements for the adoption of an amended Standards regime as introduced by the Localism Act 2011.

The Council noted that an addendum report, which was circulated with the supplementary agenda, proposed additional amendments that had arisen due to:

- (i) Two Statutory Instruments made on 6th June 2012 in connection with the 2011 Act which gave further direction on the detail of the new regime, particularly in relation to the definition of a 'Disclosable Pecuniary Interest' and made provision for transitional arrangements; and
- (ii) The meeting of the Standards Committee on 12th June 2012, when further consideration had been given to the new arrangements and comments thereon submitted by the political groups and others.

The addendum report accordingly set out revised recommendations for the Council's consideration.

Councillor Ohid Ahmed moved, and Councillor Alibor Choudhury seconded, an amendment to the recommendations as follows:-

“That the words ‘and other faiths’ be inserted after the word ‘church’ in paragraphs 4.8 and 4.11 to the draft terms of reference of the Standards Advisory Committee.”

The amendment moved by Councillor Ohid Ahmed was put to the vote and was **agreed**.

The substantive recommendations as amended were then put to the vote and were **agreed**. Accordingly it was:-

RESOLVED

1. That agreement be given, with effect from 1st July 2012, to:-
 - (a) The establishment of a Standards Advisory Committee with revised terms of reference as set out in Appendix 1 to the addendum report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services), subject to the addition of the words “and other faiths” after the word “church” in paragraphs 4.8 and 4.11 of the revised terms of reference.
 - (b) The re-appointment of the current Independent Members of the Standards Committee, with the exception of the Independent Chair, as co-optees to the new Standards Advisory Committee.
 - (c) The adoption of the new Code of Member Conduct for the Council as set out in Appendix 3 to the addendum report.
 - (d) The revised arrangements for dealing with allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct as set out in Appendix 2 to the addendum report.
2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make arrangements to advertise for, and together with an Appointments Panel drawn from the Standards Advisory Committee in accordance with proportionality to take the necessary action to appoint, an Independent Person and a reserve Independent Person, whose appointments shall be confirmed by the Council.
3. That the existing Independent Chair of the Standards Committee, Mr Barry O’Connor, be appointed as the ‘Independent Person’ under the new arrangements, to serve until the completion of the recruitment process to that position.
4. That consequent on resolution 3 above, the existing Chair of the Standards Committee be not appointed at this stage as a co-opted member of the new Standards Advisory Committee but that he be invited to attend meetings of that Advisory Committee as an observer.

5. That the Monitoring Officer have authority to convene a Dispensations Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee, to consider and advise on applications from the Mayor, any Member or co-opted member for dispensations from the restrictions on participation in any matter in which there is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

4. COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2012-13

The Council considered the report of the Cabinet meeting of 4th April 2012, incorporating the report of the Corporate Director, Communities, Localities and Culture, proposing the adoption of a Borough-wide Community Safety Plan for 2012-13. The Community Safety Plan was one of the plans and strategies that make up the Council's Policy Framework and was therefore required to be adopted by the full Council.

Councillor Abdal Ullah moved, and Councillor Judith Gardiner seconded, a tabled amendment as follows:-

“This Council notes:

- There continues to be serious public concern about the levels of crime in Tower Hamlets.
- Incidents of serious violent crime and serious acquisitive crime have increased over the past year.
- The proposed Community Safety Plan contains very few targets or measurable criteria for success, therefore allowing little oversight.
- The proposed Community Safety Plan does not clearly focus on the issues of most importance to local residents, those of serious violent crime and serious acquisitive crime.

This Council believes:

- Every step should be taken to combat criminality in Tower Hamlets.
- Priorities for community safety in Tower Hamlets should be clear and measurable in order to maintain public support and oversight.
- It is the role of every elected representative to work towards a safer community.

This Council therefore resolves to amend the report as follows:

- Delete the second bullet point on page 31, (“Exploit the Mayor’s role as a unifying figure via the Citizen Engagement Strategy”).
- Delete “through scrutiny and its role in the budget process” from the third bullet point on page 31.

- To add a new page after page 3, in the same font, size and layout as page 3, stating:

Note from Tower Hamlets Councillors

Tower Hamlets councillors represent residents living in all corners of our borough and so every day we hear about the crime and anti-social behaviour experienced by local people.

We know that for too many of our residents, Tower Hamlets doesn't feel safe enough, and that too many people are still the victims of crime and anti-social behaviour.

That's why we were concerned that this Community Safety Plan did not seem to recognise this reality. Undoubtedly a lot of good work has been done by the Council, the police, housing providers and others in tackling crime and ASB, and every year there are lots of successes.

But despite that good work, some types of crime are rising. In the last year, both serious violent crime and serious acquisitive crime have gone up. At the same time, residents' concern about drug-use and dealing, drunk or rowdy behaviour, and vandalism, graffiti and criminal damage has also risen.

In a year when visitors from all over the world are coming to East London to enjoy the Olympics, the Community Safety Partnership needs to be better than ever at identifying the risks and causes of crime and ASB, and putting in place challenging targets and strategies for reducing them. Whilst there is clearly good work being done by the partnership, Tower Hamlets councillors were disappointed that this Community Safety Plan contained few targets, had very little in the way of concrete plans and didn't reflect the concerns that residents raise with us. It also is of great concern that the Plan does not set out a clearer strategy for halting the rise in serious violent and acquisitive crime and reducing the fear of crime in our borough.

As councillors we have opposed police counter closures planned for the borough, called for action to tackle drink-related ASB around Brick Lane and united against the threat to order in our borough posed by extremists – yet none of this is reflected in the plan.

We hope that, despite this, the Community Safety Partnership will work effectively this year to address the concerns of our community. We also hope that the Partnership will make more of an effort to use the expertise and knowledge we have, as representatives of our whole borough, in doing so.

Tower Hamlets councillors"

Following debate, the amendment moved by Councillor Abdal Ullah was put to the vote and was **agreed**. The substantive motion as amended was then put to the vote and was **agreed**. Accordingly, it was:-

RESOLVED

That the draft Community Safety Plan 2012-13 be referred back to the Executive for further consideration in the light of the amendment agreed by the Council in accordance with the provisions of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted contains information defined as Exempt in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

6. APPOINTMENT TO POST OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE (HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

It was agreed that consideration of this matter be deferred to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to be held immediately prior to the next Ordinary Council meeting on 11th July 2012.

7. MOTION REGARDING THE DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER AND MONITORING OFFICER

Councillor Anwar Khan moved, and Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman seconded, the circulated motion.

Following debate the motion, including the revised Policy and Procedure as amended in accordance with the comments of the Monitoring Officer, was put to the vote and was agreed.

The meeting ended at 8.48 p.m.

Speaker,
Council