

# Conservative Budget Amendment 2013/14

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**Proposed By: Cllr David Snowdon**

**Seconded By: Cllr Zara Davis**

## **This Council Believes That:**

- 1. That the Mayor's plans to increase spending on his private office from £401,000 to £701,000 are wrong. Maintaining the office budget at last year's level will allow for greater spending on front-line services**
- 2. Eliminating the Mayor's hated stealth tax, the bulk waste collection charge, will lead to a cleaner borough, reduce clean-up costs to the council and help hard working local families**
- 3. The abolition of THEOs would allow the Council to fund more local police on the streets, while other savings would allow the restoration of a full out of hours noise service**
- 4. Tower Hamlets Council should not be providing refreshments for Councillors, and that this funding should be re-invested in local services**
- 5. Local residents are opposed to the commercialisation of our parks and open spaces, and would welcome the elimination of all targets to raise income from them.**
- 6. Libraries are an important element of Lifelong Learning, and making draconian cuts to the book fund will result in residents of the Borough receiving poorer library provision.**
- 7. Contracting an outside company to water pot plants in Tower Hamlets building is an outrageous waste of public money.**
- 8. Tower Hamlets Council is not doing enough to protect and promote our rich local heritage, which can be a driver of growth for local businesses**
- 9. Local residents would have greater opportunities if more provision was available for English language classes (ESOL). This should be financed by eliminating spending on non-statutory translation**
- 10. The government is soon to legislate for the abolition of East End Life. Acting now to close down this "newspaper" would be in the best interests of local residents.**
- 11. A 1% Council Tax rebate will follow the lead of the Mayor of London in cutting the cost of government in London, and support hard working local families**

**This Council calls upon the Executive to:**

**1. Increase income as follows:**

Description	2013/14	Notes
Events In Parks	£10,000	Generate £10,000 through private sector sponsorship of Council organised events (e.g. fireworks)
<b>Increase Per Year</b>	<b>£10,000</b>	

**2. Reduce income as follows:**

Description	2013/14	Notes
Commercial, corporate and private events in parks	£290,000	Remove target to generate £290k through commercial, corporate and private events in parks
Bulk waste charges	£60,000	End bulk waste charges
<b>Reduction Per Year</b>	<b>£350,000</b>	

**3. Implement the following increase in spending**

Description	2013/14	Notes
Police Officers	+£1,108,000	Increase funding for police officers through established Metropolitan police scheme to use funding stream created by abolition of THEOs and balancing item.
1% Council Tax Rebate	+£633,000	Provide a rebate equivalent to a 1% council tax cut to all households paying council tax
Library Book Fund	+£200,000	Reverse cuts to the Library Books fund
ESOL classes	+£152,000	Fund ESOL classes in order to further "One Tower Hamlets agenda"
Pot Hole Repair	+£120,000	Create a pothole team to visit every road in borough each year and undertake necessary repairs
Out of House Noise Nuisance Service	+£100,000	Create a new 7 days a week noise nuisance service, to reverse cuts implemented in previous years by Mayor
Docklands History Boards	+£50,000	Replace Docklands History boards located across Isle of Dogs and Limehouse Basin which were installed by LDDC and are now in a poor state of repair
Streaming of Council Meetings	+£25,000	Stream council meetings over the internet.
TfL Travel Card For Mayor	+£1,424	Provide Mayor with a zones 1-3 TfL Travel Card so that he can travel to meetings like most

		Londoners do: via London Transport. Allows abolition of Mayor's car, driver and means taxis will not be necessary.
<b>Spending Per Year</b>	<b>£2,389,424</b>	

#### 4. Implement the following cuts to Council spending

<b>Description</b>	<b>Savings in 2013/14</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Existing THEO posts	£850,000	Delete all existing THEO posts, in order to fund more real police officers
Faith Buildings	£1,000,000	Delete proposed increase in faith buildings programme
Proposed 10 THEO posts	£500,000	Delete proposed THEO posts, in order to fund more real police officers
East End Life	£346,024	Abolish East End Life and instead, provide housing choices information on the Tower Hamlets website and in all One Stop Shop & RSL offices. Remove general marketing & adverts budgets, cut 10% of budget for public notices based on better design of adverts
Mayor's Executive Office	£300,000	Reverse planned increase in spending on Mayor's office. Budget reduced from £701k to £401k
Trade Union Facilities Agreement	£290,000	Review and remove full-time trade union posts
Translation of Documents	£152,000	Stop non-statutory translation of documents into foreign languages in order to promote our One Tower Hamlets objective and follow DCLG best-practice. Money to be spent on ESOL training.
Estate Agents	£75,052	Reduce discretionary bounties paid to estate agents for finding properties by 15%
Mayoral car	£49,500	Abolish the Mayoral car and delete post of full time driver. Provide Mayor with a zones 1-3 Travelcard, so that he will not need to take taxis.
Mayoral Policy Communications	£37,000	Stop Mayoral policy communications by top-slicing the budget of departments that spent £37k on Mayoral communications last year
"Media Monitoring"	£35,000	Stop media monitoring activities
Town Hall subscriptions	£27,150	End our subscription to the LGIU, Randalls Parliamentary Service, Plain English campaign and the Association for Public Service Excellence; submit notice to LGA to end subscription.
Watering of Pot Plants	£22,000	End budget for contractors to water pot plants; instead encourage staff to water the pot plants next to their desk in the Council Offices
External venues	£16,000	Stop hiring out external venues for internal Council meetings and away-days

Newspaper Subscriptions	£12,000	Cut Town Hall subscriptions
TV Advertising	£9,500	Top-slice the budget of departments that spent £9.5k on TV advertising last year
Refreshments at Town Hall meetings	£5,500	End refreshments at Council meetings
Taxis for Mayor, Speaker and Cllrs	£3,500	Remove the budget for taxis for the Mayor, Speaker and Councillors
Travel Allowance For Senior Council Execs	0	Stop offering this perk to newly employed Senior Council officers at £3,500 each
<b>Savings per year</b>	<b>£3,730,226</b>	

## 5. Create Ring-Fenced Reserve

Description	Increase in 2013/14	Notes
16-18 Education Ring Fenced Reserve	£1,000,000	Create a "Ring Fenced" Reserve for education spending within Tower Hamlets to improve attainment of 16-18 year olds