

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 26th JUNE 2013

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

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

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by Members of the Council for response by the Executive at the Council meeting on Wednesday 26th June 2013.
2. Questions are limited to one per Member per meeting, plus one supplementary question unless the Member has indicated that only a written reply is required and in these circumstances a supplementary question is not permitted.
3. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. There is a time limit of thirty minutes for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any question not answered within this time will be dealt with by way of a written response. The Speaker will decide the time allocated to each question.
5. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

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

8.1 Question from Councillor Mizanaur Choudhury

Referring to Boris Johnson's proposed fire station cuts the Mayor said in East End Life recently, and I quote "its essential that we take every chance to support the campaign against these cuts". Can he then tell the Council why he failed to turn up to the crucial public consultation on fire station closures on the 7th May and why he has consistently missed key London Councils meetings on police and fire station closures?

8.2 Question from Councillor Zara Davis

In the Mayor of London's '2020 Vision' for the city, he cited the City Fringe as an opportunity area. What collaboration between the Council and the Mayor's office has already taken place, and is planned to take place, to develop a cohesive vision and generate jobs in this area?

8.3 Question from Councillor Khales Uddin Ahmed

Does the Mayor think it is right that after he urged the Boundary Commission to cut the number of councillors, Tower Hamlets will now have one councillor per 4,417 residents yet Kensington and Chelsea will have only 2,270 per councillor? Why should poorer areas like Tower Hamlets have fewer councillors?

8.4 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah

Could the lead member say what the council is doing to monitor the impact of the bedroom tax on those renting homes in Tower Hamlets and in receipt of benefit?

8.5 Question from Councillor Motin Uz Zaman

Market stalls are fantastic examples of our community's small businesses and we should be supporting them. Recently I met market traders in Whitechapel who told me you have cut pitch sizes for traders in Whitechapel and across the borough. Why have you done this?

8.6 Question from Councillor David Snowdon

How much has been spent over the past year within the Mayor's Office on Communications and Marketing related activities?

8.7 Question from Councillor Denise Jones

At our last ordinary meeting the Council passed a motion asking among other things for the Mayor to investigate the status of the investment made by Tower Hamlets in the Women's Library building and to recognise the building as a community asset. We have since learnt that London Metropolitan University have appointed architects to redesign the interior of the Women's Library so that they can use it as lecture space. Can the Mayor update the Council on what action he and his officers have taken since the Council motion in April?

8.8 Question from Councillor Maium Miah

Is the Mayor aware that the Far Right EDL are planning to march in Tower Hamlets in August, and what steps has he taken to ensure that these extremists do not come to our borough?

8.9 Question from Councillor Amy Whitelock

Local residents from the Longnor Estate have been raising concerns via their Tenants and Residents Association and through councillors about cars speeding round the corner from Bancroft road, which is a dangerous blindspot and suffers increased congestion from both Queen Mary University and Mile End Hospital. Can the Mayor please advise what traffic calming and road safety measures are under consideration for the Longnor Estate, given the high number of families and pensioners living in the area, in response to these concerns?

8.10 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

How many staff are employed in the Communications and Marketing Team at Tower Hamlets Council?

8.11 Question from Councillor John Pierce

How much has the Mayor spent on the road works/changes on Bethnal Green Road near the junctions of Chilton Street and St Matthew's Row? What is the aim of these works? What consultation was had with local residents and stakeholders?

8.12 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

Could the lead member say if the council has made any assessment of the likely impact of the PFI payments for the new Royal London Hospital on the financial situation of the local health economy in Tower Hamlets?

8.13 Question from Councillor Marc Francis

What plans does the Mayor have to extend the pilot food waste recycling service in blocks owned by East Thames Housing, Poplar HARCA and THCH to other housing associations and private developments?

8.14 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel

Given the prolonged disruptions caused by roadworks on the Isle of Dogs, what is the Mayor doing to ensure that utility companies complete works within a reasonable period?

8.15 Question from Councillor Helal Abbas

Residents have received letters telling them that the Mayor and his deputy are taking enforcement action in Cudworth St to remove illegally parked taxis. The situation is back to normal again and therefore could the Mayor outline a long term plan for dealing with problems in this area?

8.16 Question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed

I would like to congratulate the Mayor for his leadership on the UNITE partnership project, and ask what does he envisage for the future of the community centre?

8.17 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam

The Tory bedroom tax is now doing real harm to many of our residents, and the benefit cap will have a major impact very soon. What real practical steps is the Independent Mayor taking to protect residents from these Tory attacks? How many Tower Hamlets households have been moved out of the borough in the last year, and how many are in bed and breakfast accommodation?

8.18 Question from Councillor Dr Emma Jones

What are the Council's plans for alterations to Wapping Woods?

8.19 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders

The Independent Mayor signed the Time to Change Pledge. What has he done to implement it?

8.20 Question from Councillor Gulam Robbani

Was the Mayor aware of Baroness Estelle Morris's recent column in the Guardian, singing the praises of our local schools? Will he join me in congratulating our teachers, parents and pupils for their remarkable achievements?

8.21 Question from Councillor Joshua Peck

How many pubs have closed in the borough in each of the last five years?

8.22 Question from Councillor Craig Aston

Evidence has been given to me indicating Tower Hamlets Homes leaseholders are being charged £135 each time bulk waste is collected from their estates. Can the Mayor give me an explanation why this is?

8.23 Question from Councillor Carlo Gibbs

What will the council do to prevent a repeat of the unlicensed "Canalival" event last month?"

8.24 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan

Does the Mayor agree with me that the recent opening of Watney Market Idea Store, in contrast to other boroughs such as Brent which has closed six libraries, shows that Tower Hamlets is truly leading the way in offering an alternative to austerity and Tory cuts?

8.25 Question from Councillor Anwar Khan

How many people has Skillsmatch placed into work in each of the last five years, and what postcode areas did the people who got jobs live in?

8.26 Question from Councillor Tim Archer

Can the Mayor please reassure us that he would oppose any plans to build on Sir John McDougall Gardens, or develop the park in any way not in keeping with its status as a park?

8.27 Question from Councillor Ann Jackson

Can the Independent Mayor tell me what costs were incurred in putting Victoria park to rights as regards ground damage last year after Lovebox and live nation; and what costs were reclaimed from promoters.

8.28 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum

What is the Mayor doing to ensure that our young people are supported in going on to further and higher education?