

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY 2014**

**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 Mayor or relevant Committee/Sub-Committee Chair at the Council meeting on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014.
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**

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

### **8.1 Question from Councillor Denise Jones**

Sadly for the second year running we are meeting after more stabbings in Wapping over the Christmas period. This year's incident came at an illegal rave which spiralled out of control. Will the Mayor tell us what steps he has taken since he came to power to crack down on this type of activity as well as to combat knife crime on our streets?

### **8.2 Question from Councillor Peter Golds**

Will the Mayor explain the reasons for the conflicting statements issued by the council in his name regarding the march against the sale of alcohol organised by Anjem Choudhary in Brick Lane during December?

### **8.3 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders**

At the Council's last meeting the Mayor sat for over an hour whilst serious questions were asked about the integrity and legality of his re-election campaign. The Mayor has also refused to attend any of the ten Overview and Scrutiny meetings this municipal year. Does he not realise that he, like us, was elected by the people of Tower Hamlets and that he has a duty to justify his decisions both to residents and the councillors they have elected to hold him to account?

### **8.4 Question from Councillor Fozol Miah**

Is the lead member aware of the recent publicity about the levels of sugar content placed in many foods and drinks by the food industry unbeknownst to consumers contributing to life threatening obesity, cancer and other ill effects and could the lead member say what the council is doing to inform Tower Hamlets residents about the bad effects of high levels of sugar and about how they can realistically reduce sugar consumption?

### **8.5 Question from Councillor Joshua Peck**

Is the Deputy Mayor happy with the level of dog fouling and street cleanliness in his ward and in the borough as a whole?

### **8.6 Question from Councillor Gloria Thienel**

Does the Mayor support my motion, which would see spitting and urinating in public places punishable by a fine, as is already the case in Waltham Forest?

### **8.7 Question from Councillor Helal Abbas**

Could the Council have an explanation of exactly how the Mayor's incredibly expensive taxpayer funded press machine issued an incendiary statement in his name regarding the Anjem Choudhury march on Brick Lane?

### **8.8 Question from Councillor Harun Miah**

Would the lead member join with me in welcoming Bangladesh hosting the T20 Cricket World Cup in a few weeks' time with matches scheduled to take place in Sylhet, Chittagong and Dhaka and wishing the tournament every success despite the political turmoil which the Bangladesh government has plunged Bangladesh into and would the lead member say what the council will be doing to use the T20 World Cup to promote cricket amongst young people in Tower Hamlets across all communities?

### **8.9 Question from Councillor M.A. Mukit M.B.E.**

How many residents in Weavers Ward are affected by the Mayor's trial to dim street lights in the Borough?

### **8.10 Question from Councillor Craig Aston**

How many bin collections were missed in Tower Hamlets in the last municipal year, and what is the Mayor doing to address the persistent complaints of missed bin collections?

### **8.11 Question from Councillor Amy Whitelock Gibbs**

Could the Mayor update the council on what action has been taken since he signed the Time to Change pledge against mental health discrimination in April 2012, and reaffirmed the pledge with the Health and Wellbeing Board in October 2013?

### **8.12 Question from Councillor Kabir Ahmed**

What are the Mayor's views about the findings of the Transforming Education for All report which stated that Tower Hamlets has some of the best urban schools in the world?

### **8.13 Question from Councillor Marc Francis**

Who authorised the developer of the former Methodist Church on the corner of Armagh Road and Old Ford Road to obstruct hoardings across the footpath? Given that this has resulted in pedestrians including children and pensioners, being forced to walk in the road at this dangerous junction and why LBTH did not require the creation of a temporary walkway to ensure the safety of pedestrians before these hoardings were erected?

### **8.14 Question from Councillor Dr Emma Jones**

Will the Mayor please confirm what steps are taken to ensure council leisure facilities are clean and safe for the public?

### **8.15 Question from Councillor Shiria Khatun**

What response does the Mayor have to George Osborne's suggestion that the Government should further cut welfare benefits from the poorest in our community? The Conservative Government would cut housing benefit from under 25 year olds & increase rent for social housing tenants if they are re-elected isn't the only choice to elect a Labour Government?

### **8.16 Question from Councillor Gulam Robbani**

Councillors launched a campaign based on the statement that the Mayor was unwilling to clean up the borough, only to find it was the cleanest it had ever been. Now they are claiming that rubbish miscollections are out of hand. Could the Lead Member tell us what the real figures are?

### **8.17 Question from Councillor Carli Harper-Penman**

The Council's new Communications Protocol states that the Council "may not publish material that, having regard to the content and style, appears, in whole or in part, to be designed to affect public support for a political party." Can the Mayor therefore explain why over six months last year East End Life featured 320 quotes from the Mayor and independent councillors compared with only 15 from Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Respect councillors combined. Or why the paper also ran 164 images of the Mayor and his supporters as opposed to 26 featuring opposition councillors including the ceremonial speaker of the Council?

### **8.18 Question from Councillor David Snowden**

What is the Mayor doing to ensure that the Thames Path on the western side of the Isle of Dogs is made safe as soon as practical? It has been blocked by building work north of Cascades Tower, and residents have also contacted me regarding unfinished pavement repairs next to Sir John McDougal Gardens?

### **8.19 Question from Councillor Judith Gardiner**

What contingency planning has the Mayor and his officers undertaken in relation to the impact that the Tory Government's Plans to privatise the probation service and cut legal aid will have on the borough's ability to effectively deliver its crime and anti-social behaviour strategies?

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

What are the Mayor's views about the impact on Tower Hamlets of George Osborne's decision to make a further £25 billion of cuts, half of which are to come from welfare spending?

### **8.21 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam**

Does the Mayor welcome John Biggs' lobbying efforts which helped to secure the TFL investment in Cambridge Heath and Bethnal Green train stations? Does he agree with me that this will have a significant and positive effect on residents in my ward?

### **8.22 Question from Councillor Tim Archer**

What steps is the Mayor taking to combat speeding on Manchester Road?

### **8.23 Question from Councillor Ann Jackson**

Why has the Mayor, in his 'frontline saving' budget, cut vital mental health supported accommodation and older people's telecare; yet last month thought it right to agree over 150k of third sector support grants be 'moved' to spend on events such as Gala Dinners and concerts?

### **8.24 Question from Councillor Maium Miah**

Following the opposition publication of inaccurate and alarmist statistics on crime last month, can the lead member tell us what the true figures are and how they compare to other London Boroughs?

### **8.25 Question from Councillor Helal Uddin**

Can I ask the Mayor whether he has any further update on Watts Grove housing development scheme in Bromley by Bow?

### **8.26 Question from Councillor Zara Davis**

Could the Mayor outline the impact on the council of the recent case of East End Homes Ltd vs London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council, heard at the Chancery Court in December?

### **8.27 Question from Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman**

An independent review found last month that the reforms brought in under the last Labour Government and Council helped create some of the “best urban schools in the world.” Instead of taking credit for the work of those who came before him, could the Mayor now congratulate those Labour politicians, council officers and local school teachers who have made this transformation possible?

### **8.28 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan**

Can the Mayor tell us if he has heard back from Boris Johnson after writing to him regarding cycling safety?

### **8.29 Question from Councillor Anwar Khan**

What's the plan to reform bow west road network?