

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 26th FEBRUARY 2014

PETITIONS

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

SUMMARY

1. The Council's Constitution provides for up to three petitions to be received at each Council Meeting. These are taken in order of receipt. In the case of the Budget Council Meeting, petitions must relate to the Council's Budget or the setting of the Council Tax.
2. This report sets out the three valid petitions submitted prior to the deadline set out in the Constitution, for presentation at the Budget Council Meeting on Wednesday 26th February 2014.
3. In each case the petitioners may address the meeting for no more than three minutes. Members may then question the petitioners for a further four minutes. Finally, the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair of Committee may respond to the petition for up to three minutes.
4. Any outstanding issues will be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will respond to those outstanding issues in writing within 28 days.
5. Members should confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING 26th FEBRUARY 2014: PETITIONS RECEIVED

5.1 Support Fair Pay for Local Government Workers (petition from Tower Hamlets Joint Trade Unions)

Text of petition:-

We call on Tower Hamlets Council to recognise that local government workers' earnings have fallen by 18% since 2010 and that this is contributing to a cost of living crisis.

Whilst Tower Hamlets Council has taken some measures that are within its power to address some of the issues of low pay – such as implementing the London Living Wage and ensuring that the £250 promised to public sector workers earning less than £21,000 was paid in 2012, Tower Hamlets employees have overall faced a continuing decline in living standards.

We call on Tower Hamlets Council to:

- Support the 2014-15 NJC pay claim by UNISON, GMB and Unite
- Call upon the LGA to support the claim and lobby government for funding for it
- Call upon the Chancellor and Secretary of State for the Department for Communities and Local Government to ensure that funding is made available for councils to meet the NJC pay claim for a minimum increase of £1 an hour to:
- Achieve the Living Wage for the lowest paid and
- Begin to restore the earnings of the rest of the workforce.

5.2 Scrap the Mayor's Car and Advisers (petition from Kahar Chowdhury and others)

Text of petition:-

We wholeheartedly condemn the independent Mayor Lutfur Rahman's continued waste of taxpayer money on personal vanity extravagances including the mayoral Mercedes and his £300,000 advisor budget. When residents are suffering at the hands of Tory austerity wasting precious taxpayer cash on these kind of luxuries shows how out of touch and unfit for office Lutfur Rahman is.

5.3 Free School Meals (petition from Afia Begum and others)

Text of petition:-

We support the Labour Group's proposal to introduce Free School Meals to all primary school pupils, following in the footsteps of other Labour-run boroughs of Newham, Southwark and Islington.