

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 30TH JULY 2014

**MOTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

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

SUMMARY

1. Ten motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 30th July 2014.
2. The motions submitted are listed overleaf. In accordance with the protocol agreed by the Council on 21st May 2008, the motions are listed by turns, one from each group, continuing in rotation until all motions submitted are included. The rotation starts with any group(s) whose motion(s) were not reached at the previous meeting.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

MOTIONS

Set out overleaf are the motions that have been submitted.

12.1 Motion regarding Space for Cycling Campaign

Proposer: Councillor Rachel Blake

Seconder: Councillor Amy Whitelock-Gibbs

This Council Notes:

- That 40 of the 42 councillors elected on 22nd May had signed up to support the London Cycling Campaign's 'Space for Cycling' initiative.
- That the 'Space for Cycling' campaign called upon candidates to commit to supporting a number of local measures if they were elected.
- That the measures, identified by local residents and promoted by the Space for Cycling campaign listed by ward are:
 - o **Bethnal Green:** Protected Space for cycling on Mile End Road
 - o **Weavers:** Make Columbia Road Market a Liveable Town centre with cycle and pedestrian access to, and through the area.
 - o **Spitalfields:** Allow two way cycling on Brick Lane.
 - o **St Peter's:** Protected space for cycling on Cambridge Heath road with a safe junction at Bethnal Green.
 - o **Bow West:** Protected Space for cycling on Bow Road
 - o **Bow East:** Remove through traffic from Tredegar Road and the surrounding area
 - o **Whitechapel:** Remove through motor traffic from Vallance Road, New Road and Cannon Street Road
 - o **Stepney Green:** Safe cycle access to Sir John Cass Redcoat School and Stepney City Farm
 - o **St Dunstons:** Safe cycle access to schools around Ben Jonson Road
 - o **Shadwell:** Protected Space for Cycling on Cable Street
 - o **St Katherine's and Wapping:** Allow 24-hour access on the Greenway through King Edwards Park
 - o **Limehouse:** Protected Space for cycling on Horseferry Road (E14)
 - o **Mile End:** Protected space for cycling on Burdett Road
 - o **Bromley North:** Protected Space for cycling at Bow Roundabout
 - o **Bromley South:** Install protected space for cyclists along both Devons Road and Devas Street

- **Lansbury:** Safe and convenient route from all of Lansbury ward to Lea River Park
 - **Poplar:** Provide a safe, inviting and clear route for Cycle superhighway S3 in Bromley South centre
 - **Canary Wharf:** Reinstall the riverside path at West Ferry Circus and create a cycle crossing across South Dock.
 - **Blackwall and Cubitt Town:** Protected Space for cycling on Manchester Road and Preston's Road
 - **Island Gardens:** Protected Space for cycling on Manchester Road and Preston's Road
- The motion previously passed by Council on the LCC Safer Lorries campaign included an ask that the Council “strongly encourage contractors used by the Council to meet its Safer Lorries conditions.

This Council believes:

- That all of the councillors who signed up to the Space for Cycling Campaign should now work with the campaigners to further develop the feasibility of the commitments and then deliver the changes needed to make cycling in the borough safer.
- That while the pledges are an incredibly welcome development some will be more challenging than others and there is potential for officers, councillors and cyclists to develop the plans and, in some limited cases, propose alternative actions which would achieve the aims in a different, potentially more effective manner.
- That the number of councillors who made these commitments, and the support the electorate gave them, shows a clear mandate for action to improve cycling infrastructure.

This Council therefore resolves:

- To call on the Mayor and relevant Cabinet Member, following consultation with ward councillors, to bring a plan to the September Council meeting detailing the budget feasibility and impact of each of the specific ward based asks set out above and that this plan should include potential options for implementation.
- Following the aforementioned report from the Mayor, that councillors should consult with residents and cycling campaigners in their wards to prioritise and agree a course of action to best deliver the strategic aims of each pledge.
- To welcome the Labour GLA campaign to improve the safety of the Cycle Superhighways and in particular their lobbying work on the Bow Roundabout.
- To call on Boris Johnson to immediately look at further steps to protect cyclists using CS2 along the full length of Mile End Road and Bow Road, and the Bow Roundabout.

12.2 Motion regarding Save Our Surgeries

Proposer: Councillor Mahbub Alam

Seconder: Councillor Abdul Asad

This Council notes:

- In 2014 the government changed the funding formula for GP surgeries without due consideration of the impact these changes have on areas with high levels of deprivation, such as Tower Hamlets, with complex health needs.
- This change threatened many practices with bankruptcy so the government introduced the 'minimum practice income guarantee' (MPIG) to stop them falling below their previous level of income.
- The government is now taking away the MPIG and many practices are threatened with bankruptcy again.

This Council believes:

- The survival of GP practices in Tower Hamlets, and their ability to deliver the high quality services for patients, in particular to improve services for those with complexity needs, requires appropriate and sufficient funding.
- Withdrawals of MPIG will disproportionality affect all patients living in areas with high levels of deprivation such as Tower Hamlets.
- This withdrawal of MPIG will open the door for more GP surgeries to be run by large private firms on the cheap leading to deterioration in the standard of care that patients receive.

This Council agrees:

- That the Mayor continues to work with the Save Our Surgeries Campaign, local GP practices, health workers and patients to lobby NHS England and the Secretary of State to provide long term appropriate and sufficient funding for surgeries.
- That the Council and the Mayor continues to do all they can do to support and protect the interests of resident and patients and the health sector in Tower Hamlets.

12.3 Motion regarding transparency within local council meetings

Proposer: Councillor Chris Chapman

Seconder: Councillor Andrew Wood

This council notes:

- The Government's commitment to transparency within local council meetings.
- That in keeping with this commitment, draft legislation in the form of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, has been laid before Parliament.

This council further notes:

That the Mayor has previously made positive statements in regard to transparency, such as seeking the "highest standards of probity and transparency" and proclaiming "this council has nothing to hide".

This council believes:

That actions speak louder than words and that the new Mayoral term is an opportunity for the Mayor to ensure that these sentiments become council practice.

This council resolves:

- To reaffirm its desire to see an open and transparent administration, working in the interests of all the people in our diverse borough.
- To consult nearby boroughs on local best practise in regard to press access to council meetings.
- To provide reasonable facilities to the press, including print media, film crews, hyper-local journalists and bloggers. Facilities should include a table with clear views of the council chamber and public areas so that a full report can be taken.
- That a formal report be presented to the next full council meeting, ensuring our standing orders are updated so as to be in line with the new requirements and to remove any ambiguity in relation to this matter.

12.4 Motion regarding Save Our Surgeries – Cuts to the Minimum Practice Income Guarantee

Proposer: Councillor Asma Begum

Seconded: Councillor Rachael Saunders

This Council notes:

- Government changes to the NHS GP funding formula mean that money has been taken out of mitigating the health impacts of poverty is instead being allocated to plug funding gaps in other areas. In total 98 practices in deprived areas are at risk of closure as a result of the cuts to their funding make them financially unviable.
- That existing pressure on GP surgeries, as well as a growing population, means that many families are struggling to register with their most local practice and that appointments at convenient times are regularly hard to get.
- 5 of the surgeries are in Tower Hamlets despite Tower Hamlets facing many serious health inequalities and having the fastest growing population in the country increasing the burden on public services in the borough including GP surgeries.
- This decision was taken by NHS England and Government ministers without giving the local CCG the power to object to the cuts and that 40% of GP surgeries will lose out as a result of the MPIG (Minimum Practice Income Guarantee) redistribution.
- In addition to launching a petition campaign which is supported by the GP practices Labour have also written to Jeremy Hunt, tabled a number of Parliamentary Questions and held a parliamentary debate on the issue.
- When Labour's Shadow Health Secretary Andy Burnham visited the Jubilee Street Practice he pledged his support stating: "It's unbelievable that GPs find themselves in this position" and calling on the Secretary of State to resolve the issue as "a matter of urgency".
- On 3rd June Jim Fitzpatrick MP led a delegation of GPs to meet with Health Minister Earl Howe. In their note of the meeting the CCG said: "Earl Howe acknowledged and accepted our case and expressed a readiness to engage. He gave a commitment to find a solution."
- The Save our Surgeries march by local doctors and supporters on the 5th June protesting the closure of the five surgeries and threatened cuts to others.

This Council believes:

- Without mitigation the MPIG cuts threaten to severely undermine the ability of the local health service to deliver a sufficient level of primary care for residents.
- The poor implementation of the Tory MPIG cuts policy has caused serious distress and anxiety amongst healthcare professionals and patients.
- Local politicians should continue to be at the forefront of building a major campaign alongside GPs, trade unions and local people to highlight these cuts.

- These cuts clearly demonstrate why we need a Labour government to repeal the Health and Social Care Act and to hand back democratic control to elected representatives.

This Council resolves:

- To call on the Department of Health and NHS England to ensure that no GP surgeries are forced to close as a result of the MPIG changes.
- To instruct officers to provide the CCG with all necessary assistance in building the case against these funding changes.
- To mandate the Health Scrutiny Committee to maintain oversight of this situation and to consider hosting further scrutiny sessions on the MPIG cuts if a resolution is not reached.
- To support the Labour Party's pledge to provide GP appointments within 48 hours.

12.5 Motion regarding building of affordable housing

Proposer: Councillor Maium Miah

Seconder: Councillor Oliur Rahman

This Council Notes:

- That Tower Hamlets is delivering more affordable homes than any other local authority nationwide.
- That over 4,000 affordable homes was delivered between 2010 and 2014.
- That this achievement has been recognised by central government in awarding Tower Hamlets the highest allocation nationwide under the 'New Homes Bonus', a revenue funding stream tied to new builds.
- That this figure, as per national policy, includes homes delivered in partnership with RSLs, as well as Council homes.
- The Council has plans in place to deliver 5,500 additional homes over the next 4 years, including over 300 Council homes.
- That earlier this month this Council secured a further £8.2m from government to deliver 48 new affordable homes.
- That on 7th July Gareth Thomas MP publicly criticised the decision to provide this additional funding, which will provide 48 new affordable homes to Tower Hamlets.

This Council Believes:

- That London's acute housing shortage must be tackled urgently.
- That Tower Hamlets is to be congratulated on its unparalleled delivery of new affordable housing aiming to meet this need.
- That it is in recognition of this administrations excellent delivery on affordable housing projects that the Council have been awarded this additional funding opportunity.
- That calls for the funding to be withdrawn from a Council with a strong track record of delivering affordable housing are irresponsible and misguided.

This Council Resolves:

To support the continued building of affordable housing in Tower Hamlets.

12.6 Motion regarding Magna Carta

Proposer: Councillor Peter Golds

Seconder: Councillor Chris Chapman

This Council notes that June 2015 will be the 800th Anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta by King John and that:

- Magna Carta is the world's most enduring symbol of the rule of law and the concept that nobody, Monarch or President, is above the rule of law is a fundamental to the legal codes of some 2 billion people today.
- The fundamentals of Magna Carta are symbolised in Tower Hamlets, with its rich heritage of residents with roots in the Commonwealth, all of whom include parts of Magna Carta in their local constitutions.

The Council further notes:

- In February 2015 the four oldest copies of the original Magna Carta, all dating from 1215, will for the first time ever be displayed together at the British Library and that they will be joined by the original US Declaration of Independence and the original US Bill of Rights.
- That during the year there will be commemorations of this event throughout the country.

The Council resolves to call upon the Mayor to utilise programmes and information from local and national government to ensure that the Borough's residents, particularly those in our schools, are aware of the importance of Magna Carta and the part that it has played over the past 800 years.

12.7 Motion regarding access to Cabinet/Committee/Sub-Committee Papers (including background papers) – Forthcoming meetings

Proposer: Councillor Marc Francis

Seconder: Councillor t.b.c.

This Council notes:

- That upon occasion the Council may classify reports and decisions as exempt items where there is a commercial, legal or other sensitivity.
- That paragraph 9.8 of Part 5.4 of the constitution of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets states:

“The rights of Members can be summarised as follows:-

- (i) They generally enjoy the same access rights as members of the public in respect of Part I Cabinet/Committee/Sub-Committee papers, but are not entitled to such papers where they have a personal and prejudicial interest as set out in the Code of Conduct for Members*
 - (ii) Members of the appropriate Cabinet/Committee/Sub-Committees will have a good reason for access to all Part II exempt information on the Cabinet/Committee/Sub-Committee agenda under the “Need to Know” principles set out in Paragraph (e) below.*
 - (iii) Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have a prima facie “Need to Know” where they require access to Part II Cabinet agenda items as part of their scrutiny function provided the subject matter is within the Committee/Sub-Committee’s terms of reference.*
 - (iv) All other Members who require access to confidential/exempt Cabinet/Committee/Sub-Committee documentation will need to request disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or demonstrate a “Need to Know” by complying with the principles set out below.*
- In effect, this currently means that councillors who are not members of the Executive or the O&S Committee do not have an automatic right to receive Part 2 ‘exempt’ Cabinet reports but need to demonstrate a ‘need to know’ in each case.
 - Additionally, those councillors do not have a right to remain in a closed session of the cabinet unless they can demonstrate a ‘need to know’ concerning the particular agenda item in relation to their council duties.
 - That in addition to their ward based duties backbench councillors have a general duty to hold the executive to account and to ‘call in’ decisions made by the mayor where they have serious concerns.

This Council believes:

- Not having access to exempt reports and decisions prevents councillors from making judgements as to whether to call in a decision or not.
- That these restrictions are provide insufficient freedom for councillors to carry out their role as Elected Members. For example, our constituents are consistently

affected by decisions of the Mayor in Cabinet and under his Executive decision-making powers that do not relate to a single ward.

This Council also believes:

- That as LBTH's scrutiny rules provide for any councillor to sign a call-in, all Members would be able to establish a "need to know" in relation to each decision that is potentially available for call-in and should therefore receive those exempt papers.

This Council therefore resolves:

- To amend to amend paragraph 9.8 of Part 5.4 of the constitution of the London borough of Tower Hamlets by deleting existing sections (iii) and (iv) and inserting the following new section
 - (iii) In the case of all decisions and reports which are subject to potential call in, all members have a prima facie "need to know" where they require access to Part II Cabinet agenda items as part of their scrutiny function.

12.8 Motion regarding pupils getting into higher education

Proposer: Councillor Abjol Miah

Secunder: Councillor Gulam Robbani

The Council notes:

- The recent statistics from the Department of Education show that 68% of students from Tower Hamlets go to Russell Group of universities, the country's top universities.
- That Tower Hamlets is 7th best in the UK – the only Inner London borough to appear in the top 10 table - despite having one of the highest levels of deprivation in London and the highest levels of child poverty in the UK
- That in an academic report by Prof. David Woods, Prof. Chris Husbands and Dr. Chris Brown - 'Transforming Education for all: the Tower Hamlets Story', the authors concluded that 'Tower Hamlets has some of the best urban schools in the world'.
- That these achievements come after over a decade of hard work by the Mayor's and previous administration raising Tower Hamlets from being one of the worst performing boroughs educationally in the UK to one of the best.

The Council believes:

- That Tower Hamlets is proof to other schools across the UK and internationally that a first class education and high levels of educational achievements can be delivered in the areas with high levels of deprivation.
- The hard work of schools, pupils, parents, the local authority and the implementation of policies of investing in young people, such as £320 million in schools. The Mayor's Education Allowance, Higher Education Grant and Free School Meals have secured these outstanding results.

The Council resolves:

- To praise and continue to invest in and support all Tower Hamlets' students.
- To praise the boroughs' schools, parents, teachers, governors and colleges for their commendable work
- To praise the Council officers who have worked hard over many years to support pupils, parents, teachers, governors and schools.
- To continue investing in young people.

12.9 Motion regarding Government cuts increasing poverty and destroying public services

Proposer: Councillor Mufti Miah

Seconder: Councillor Alibor Choudhury

This Council notes:

- That the People's Assembly against Austerity demonstration on June 21 in London attracted over 50,000 people and was addressed by a range of speakers including MP's Diane Abbott, Caroline Lucas and Jeremy Corbyn, Mayor Lutfur Rahman, journalist Owen Jones and comedian Russell Brand.
- That government cuts are driving greater numbers of people into poverty. Latest research shows record levels of poverty with 1 in 3 Britons are going without three or more "basic necessities of life", such as being able to adequately feed and clothe themselves and their children, and to heat and insure their homes.
- That the government exaggerates the size of the welfare bill and extent of benefit fraud. Benefit spending in 2011-12 accounted for 10.4% of GDP, lower than in the mid-1980s (11%) and mid -1990s (12%). In 2011/12 just 0.7% or £1bn of the benefit bill was overpaid due to fraud – compared to £70 billion lost through illegal tax evasion.
- That according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the majority of those in receipt of benefits are from working families. Low wages, the growth of part time work and the rising cost of living are forcing more people into poverty.
- The warnings of the Local Government Association that councils in England face a funding gap of £5.8 billion between March 2014 and March 2016, putting frontline public services under threat of having their funding cut.
- The Mayor's commitment to protecting residents from the impact of austerity by fighting welfare changes via policies such as the extension of free school meals, Mayor's Education Award and University grant scheme, Energy Co-op and free Homecare.
- That measures the Council has implemented to tackle child poverty are facing huge pressure as a result of the continued austerity.

This Council agrees:

- It is wrong that the poorest in our society and the public sector have been the scapegoated for an economic crisis which is the sole responsibility of bankers, the politicians in thrall to them, and a deregulated financial industry.

This Council resolves:

- To reiterate our commitment to oppose government spending cuts to local government and support the People's Assembly campaign against austerity.

- To make a commitment to fight all welfare changes that contributes to poverty.
- To ensure that our residents affected by welfare reforms have specialist support available.

12.10 Motion calling on landlords to engage with tenants

Proposer: Councillor Harun Miah

Seconder: Councillor Rabina Khan

The Council notes:

- The continuing housing crisis and the growing significance of the private rented sector in the UK and in Tower Hamlets.
- That the Mayor remains committed to increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes - including council housing - but many Tower Hamlets residents do not have an alternative to private renting.
- That there is an increase in the threat of eviction and the absence of proper engagement with tenants.

The Council believes:

- That we should not accept the increase in eviction, retaliatory evictions or the lack of proper engagement by private landlords with their tenants.
- It is incumbent on the Council to seek the best possible conditions for all our residents including tenants in the private rented sector.

The Council resolves:

- To call on all private landlords to engage with their tenants and the local authority to ensure that all statutory and necessary repairs are carried out.
- To call on all private landlords to establish a regular dialogue with tenants through which they can raise legitimate concerns, without the fear of eviction.
- For the Mayor and the Council to actively explore options for regulating and licensing private landlords in order to ensure the highest possible standards.