

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 21st JANUARY 2015

**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 Speaker, the Mayor or the relevant Committee/Sub-Committee Chair at the Council meeting on Wednesday 21st January 2015
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

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

8.1 Question from Councillor Asma Begum

As Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, how many of the meetings did the Mayor attend in 2014? Does this reflect his commitment to the important issue of Health in the borough?

8.2 Question from Councillor Abjol Miah

Could the Mayor highlight any steps, policies or initiatives that he has taken to put money in people's pockets in this Borough despite huge Tory cuts?

8.3 Question from Councillor Craig Aston

Will the Mayor inform the Council as to how much money the Council wasted on failed judicial reviews and other failed legal cases in 2014?

8.4 Question from Councillor John Pierce

Can the Mayor tell me how many times he has visited the Rich Mix Arts Centre in the previous year?

8.5 Question from Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaqim

Since the beginning of the year the national Labour Party has been ensuring that the electorate are given a proper choice at the general election. Will the Mayor join me in calling the local Labour Party to stop acting in coalition with the local Tory Party against the Mayor - and his left wing policies - that any Labour Council will be proud of?

8.6 Question from Councillor Julia Dockerill

On 8 December a motorcyclist tragically died after a collision with a lorry at the junction of Dock Street and the Highway. This junction has become of increasing concern to residents in Wapping, many of whom cross it to take their children to school in Aldgate. Will the Mayor inform the council as to what, if any, discussions he has had with Transport for London regarding safety improvements here, particularly in view of the proposed construction of a new school next to this junction associated with the London Docks Development?

8.7 Question from Councillor Ayas Miah

In St Dunstan's ward, particularly in the new development area, residents are having difficulties getting a new parking permit or renewing their existing permit because of the car free zone. According to PTS (2011) parking transfer scheme - if some families move to 3 bedroom or larger social rented car free homes they will get at least one permit but the reality is that they do not get a permit even if they have a 3 or more bedroom house. Can the Mayor explain this please?

8.8 Question from Councillor Mohammed Maium Miah

Recently, Sir Michael Wilshaw raised concerns about the educational attainment of White British Free School Meals Pupils. Does the Mayor have any plan to tackle this issue in Tower Hamlets?

8.9 Question from Councillor Chris Chapman

Will the Mayor comment on the two separate and independent reports from Thames Water and the external consultants LUC which confirm that the that the Isle of Dogs will suffer from low water pressure and possibly run out of drinking water in the summer as well as suffer from 'more frequent and severe back surging of the sewage' network because of overdevelopment overwhelming the existing capacity of the water network on the island?

8.10 Question from Councillor Helal Uddin

Does the Mayor have any plan to improve community cohesion in the borough further?

8.11 Question from Councillor Gulam Kibriya Choudhury

Can the Mayor highlight how he plans to fight the unprecedented and ideologically driven Tory cuts?

8.12 Question from Councillor Andrew Wood

Will the Mayor inform the Council what work has been undertaken following the 2014 disclosure of a decline in the percentage of primary school pupils attending local authority schools rated by OFSTED as Outstanding in Tower Hamlets, which according to the most recent OFSTED inspection has shown has continued.

8.13 Question from Councillor Candida Ronald

Does the Mayor have any plans to tackle the growing problem of buy-to-leave properties in the borough?

8.14 Question from Councillor Mahbub Alam

Could the Lead Member please provide an update about residents' satisfaction levels overall and which areas do we need to focus more on, especially as result of recent politically motivated campaign by Eric Pickles against the people of Tower Hamlets who had the audacity to falsely accuse us of funding bias whilst saving the most affluent Tory-run authorities from the impact of cuts?

8.15 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

Will the Mayor inform the council and local residents as to why he is removing the ancient rights of English citizens enshrined in law since 1832 to protect the amount of light entering their home in order to deliver more profit to the private sector developer of the City Pride development?

8.16 Question from Councillor Danny Hassell

How many children are on the borough's missing children register and what actions are being taken to ensure the safety of these children?

8.17 Question from Councillor Suluk Ahmed

Leading up to Christmas and New year when many were busy buying presents and celebrating with their family and friends, it was appalling to see many vulnerable people sleeping rough. Can the Mayor shed some light on what the Council is doing to reduce rough sleeping in the Borough and is there scope to work with other stakeholders and partners in this area?

8.18 Question from Councillor Rachael Saunders

Does the Mayor intend to improve the cleanliness of the borough's streets in his new waste strategy?

8.19 Question from Councillor Shah Alam

Given that nationally there has been reductions and severe pressure on library services as a result of coalition cuts, will the Lead Member join me in celebrating our local success of idea stores in Tower Hamlets and how this helps local residents?

8.20 Question from Councillor Dave Chesterton

The Mayor will recognise that, as a result of regular CITRIX failures, it is a possibility that some councillors might resort to using alternative providers such as AOL, hotmail and gmail when working from home. Is the Mayor aware that if alternative providers are used, electronic correspondence would be sent outside the council's data protection systems and will he please resolve the contractual issues with Agilisys and ensure councillors are provided with a reliable and secure e-mail system that can be easily accessed from home?

8.21 Question from Councillor Mohammed Mufti Miah

The London Ambulance Service has been receiving very high numbers of calls in recent weeks and came under severe pressure over the Christmas and New Year period. The air ambulance for the Capital is reported to be shut down for a few weeks because they cannot afford a second helicopter. The A&E waiting times are at a 10 year high. Can the Lead Member inform us how the Conservative-led Government cuts are affecting the key public services Londoners and people in Tower Hamlets rely on, especially when it comes to A&E waiting times at local hospitals and ambulance services?

8.22 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

Could the Cabinet Member tell us what the Council is doing to improve the child protection in Tower Hamlets and how can we ensure that officers are doing whatever to support so that no vulnerable child slips through the net and is safe?