

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2015

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

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

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by members of the public, for response by the Mayor or appropriate Cabinet Member at the Council Meeting on 16th September 2015.
2. The Council's Constitution sets a maximum time limit of twenty minutes for this item.
3. A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one brief supplementary question without notice to the Member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. Supplementary questions and Members' responses to written and supplementary questions are each limited to two minutes.
4. Any question which cannot be dealt with during the twenty minutes allocated for public questions, either because of lack of time or because of non-attendance of the questioner or the Member to whom it was put, will be dealt with by way of a written answer.
5. Unless the Speaker of Council decides otherwise, no discussion will take place on any question, but any Member of the Council may move, without discussion, that the matter raised by a question be referred for consideration by the Cabinet or the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee.

QUESTIONS

Twelve public questions have been submitted as set out below:-

6.1 Question from Ms Marie Larvin on behalf of Tower Hamlets Fairtrade Network:

Will the Mayor and Councillors support an urgent review and report back on procurement policies to ensure that:

1. Contracts for all council catering facilities maximise the ranges of fairly traded products stocked at the earliest opportunity. (Given that seven years after Tower Hamlets became a Fairtrade Town, no Fairtrade certified products have been stocked in cafes/canteens in: Ideas Stores in Bow and Whitechapel; the Brady Centre; the Shadwell Centre; and vending machines in many council offices and Leisure centres)
2. Over 60 of our local school canteens continue being supplied with Fairtrade bananas and fruit juices, under the joint contract due to be re-let in January 2015. (Given that many local students, parents and teachers have signed petitions asking for this, and for other products to be supplied if possible in future, and given that Tower Hamlets Contract Services can make requests of the lead borough, currently Havering).'

6.2 Question from Mr Md Sumsul Talukder:

Private Renting in Tower Hamlets is become sky high! There is no such standard guideline for Private Landlord to rent a property or Rent limit for the property. So every working class living in the Tower Hamlets borough are seriously affected & struggling to pay rent including me. Many of us facing Eviction on a daily basis in some point, so it's an important issue to think about.

1. Does council has any plan to introduce a standard policy guideline for Private Landlords to control the uncontrolled property Rent of the borough?
2. How importantly you will consider the matter and when it can be implemented to protect working class of the borough?

Council May DO;

1. Introduce landlord Registration scheme.
2. Every landlords has to register their property with council and Must get an unique registration no to put property on Rent advert
3. Council official conduct survey of every individual property and set up a limit rent for the property. Based on;

- Area, mortgage amount, property standard, age of property, size, how many bed rooms, local facilities, furnished/unfurnished etc.

4. Also Council may generate revenue from property registration & renewal scheme

So let's have all your thoughtful opinions and possible outcome in this regards. It can be a great initiative to help the local community.

6.3 Question from Mr Mohammed S. Rahman:

What sports and recreation provisions are available there for youth and young in my Mile End ward, particularly for teenagers below 18 and of 10-12 age groups?

6.4 Question from Mr Mohammed Abdur-Rahman:

What action is the Council taking to deal with and clean dog litter on the streets of Tower Hamlets?

6.5 Question from Mr Chris Nineham:

The austerity policies being pursued by this government have been a disaster for this borough.

Will you join leading figures in the community in Tower Hamlets in encouraging the biggest possible turnout for the anti-austerity protests organised by the TUC and the People's Assembly at the Conservative Party conference in Manchester on 3-7 October?

6.6 Question from Ms Rachel Vincent:

When will Dame Colet and the Haileybury Centre be finished?

6.7 Question from Ms Lilian Collins:

Can you give me a progress report of Poplar Baths and a report about the housing?

6.8 Question from Mr Abu Talha Chowdhury:

On 29th July the Commissioners, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, took formal decisions on the Main Stream Grants Programme. Horwood Estate Bangla School has received funding since the 1980s to run Mother Tongue classes and supplementary school. Would the Mayor make a statement on how he expects this group to continue to provide this service?

6.9 Question from Mr Abu Hussain on behalf of Thames Bengali Association

On 29th July the Commissioners, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, took formal decisions on the Main Stream Grants (MSG) Programme. This has left 237 organisations without Council funding and having to consider cutting back or even stopping their services. Although the Council has no control over how the MSG budget is spent, the Mayor controls other funds, including contingency funding. Thames Bengali Association has scored 84 and 80 for two MSG grant applications but they are not recommended for funding. The children will return after summer holiday but abrupt funding decision force us to stop our services after 18 years of service.

Will he make officers available to help organisations which have not been funded under the MSG programme find a way of surviving? This could include assistance in finding alternative premises or in awarding some emergency funding so they can survive.

6.10 Question from Mr Abdirashid Gulaid:

Could the Lead Member for Health and Adult Services update us on what actions the Council and partners have taken since signing the Time to Change pledge on ending mental health stigma and discrimination?

6.11 Question from Ms Lucy Rogers:

Developers are getting away with increasingly low provision of affordable housing due to the fact that their financial viability appraisals (FVAs) are private and their claims of being strapped for cash cannot be assessed by the Public. Meanwhile developers continue to build major luxury schemes in Tower Hamlets.

This situation is even acknowledged by the Mayor of London to be weighed too heavily in favour of developers, while other boroughs such as Greenwich have decided to make FVA's public. Will this Council in turn now make Financial Viability Appraisals transparent and public so that the right benefits arising from development will accrue to the community?

6.12 Question from Mr Ahmed Hussain:

Does the council have different (or equal) procedure on "Compulsory Purchase Order(s)" in relation to Social Landlords oppose to individual Freeholders as both own their own land?