

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2008

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY
MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

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

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions submitted by Members of the Council for response by Members of the Executive at the Council meeting on Wednesday 25th June 2008.
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 **two** minutes. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to **two** minutes 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 dealt within this time will be dealt with by way of written responses. The Mayor 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.

QUESTIONS

Set out overleaf are the questions which have been received.

1 Question from Councillor Ann Jackson to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

How many social rented homes were built in Tower Hamlets in 2007/8?

2 Question from Councillor Peter Golds to the Lead Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Rofique Ahmed

Despite promises to the contrary over a long period, it would appear that the council is planning to split up and disperse the Borough's archive which is acknowledged as being one of the finest collections in the country. This proposal has been opposed by academics, residents, all political parties and east enders in general. Why is the Labour Council doing this in the face of such opposition?

3 Question from Councillor Abjol Miah to the Lead Member for Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

The Olympic Delivery Authority have protected, under The London Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Act 2006, the following as trademarks:

- The Olympic symbol
- The Paralympic symbol
- The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic emblems
- The words 'London 2012' and '2012'
- The words 'Olympic', 'Olympiad', 'Olympian'
- The words 'Paralympic', 'Paralympiad', 'Paralympian' and their plurals and things very similar to them – e.g. 'Paralympix'
- The Olympic motto: 'Citius Altius Fortius'
- The Paralympic motto: 'Spirit in Motion'
- The Team GB logo
- The Paralympics GB logo
- The British Olympic Association logo
- The British Paralympic Association logo
- London2012.com (and various derivatives)

This will preclude almost any commercial, social, charitable venture in Tower Hamlets utilising the Olympics to promote activities despite it taking place in our borough.

Can the Leader of the council explain what provisions is the council seeking to negotiate with the ODA for exemptions to this punitive exercise in order to ensure our local community is able to secure the maximum benefit of hosting the games?

4. Question from Councillor Stephanie Eaton to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

What does he plan to do to reduce the level of overcrowding in the Borough's residential accommodation?

5 Question from Councillor Lutfa Begum to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman

Can the Leader please tell me the basis on which service charges for leaseholders are calculated? Is this based on geographical area, social housing, leaseholder etc?

Some of the residents in social housing in Tower Hamlets are paying service charges of £600-700 per year. Why are Malting, Brewster, Padstow, Barleycon and Bethlehem paying services charges of £2000 per year? Most of these residents are leaseholders and pensioners who bought flats by the right to buy scheme. Presently they are having serious financial burdens placed on them. Can you explain why there is this huge difference in service charges in the same borough? Can you find out if they are being mistakenly over charged? If not, the service charges need to reduce to the level that other Tower Hamlets residents are paying.

6 Question from Councillor Fazlul Haque to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Clair Hawkins

How will the £3.8 million London Youth Offer granted to Tower Hamlets by the Labour Government and Ken Livingston be invested in improving youth services for the Borough's young people?

7 Question from Councillor Tim Archer to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

Can the lead member for housing outline what the delays have been in setting up Tower Hamlets Homes, why these have occurred and what he will do differently to ensure that the ALMO is actually successful?

8 Question from Councillor Harun Miah to the Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Joshua Peck

Does the lead member confirm the Council's intention to impose market rate leases/rents on Third Sector organisations using council premises; explain how the resulting extra income will be used, and the impact on effectiveness and public service of any consequent conflicts arising from being forced into private partnerships, or landlord role with sub tenants, and Third Sector

organisations' values, aims and strategies. Does the lead member agree that the tradition of charging Peppercorn rents/leases to community and Third Sector organisations expresses the Council's support for the services and contribution provided to community participation and cohesion?

9 Question from Councillor Tim O'Flaherty to the Lead Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Rofique Ahmed

Could the Lead Member outline the Council's criteria for offering financial support to cultural events in the coming year?

10 Question from Councillor Md. Shahid Ali to the Lead Member for Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships, Councillor Ohid Ahmed

What progress has been made with the Bishop Square development? In particular, can the Lead Member tell us what has been secured for the community in that locality?

11 Question from Councillor Philip Briscoe to the Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Joshua Peck

With Tower Hamlets in the news headlines for the wrong reasons again, can the Lead Member provide a breakdown by department of the £33million spent by the council on temporary and consultancy staff in the last year, along with reasons for doing so and outline any proposals for reducing this bill?

12 Question from Councillor Azizur Rahman Khan to the Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Clair Hawkins

Could the Lead Member advise what she plans to do to reduce the level of young people entering the criminal justice system?

13 Question from Councillor Salim Ullah to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah

Can the Lead Member update us on Police performance in 2007/08, more specifically could he provide us with examples of successful operations or initiatives which have helped to reduce the impact of drugs and violent crime in the borough?

14 Question from Councillor Ahmed Hussain to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman

Can the leader confirm that national policy is to promote more women councillors and leaders for the future, and how is this agenda being promoted by Tower Hamlets administration and governing party.

15 Question from Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

What priorities have been identified for this year's £6 million Estate Improvement Programme?

16 Question from Councillor David Snowden to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah

Could the lead member comment upon whether the Council has investigated whether CCTV in the Borough has sufficiently good lights sources to enable good quality images to be captured in the evenings and at night time?

17 Question from Councillor Shiria Khatun to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

Can the Lead Member for Housing and Development issue a statement on the implementation of the Arms Length Management Organisation – Tower Hamlets Homes?

18 Question from Councillor Dr Emma Jones to the Lead Member for Cleaner, Safer, Greener, Councillor Abdal Ullah

Will the Council be refunding illegally collected parking fines, and if so, how much is this expected to cost?

19 Question from Councillor Bill Turner to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman

Would the Leader please outline the importance of participation in quasi-judicial and scrutiny committees by members from across the Council. Is he able to provide examples of the invaluable work undertaken by members from across the council in these committees, and their role in ensuring that the Council meets its obligations as set out by law. What are the risks which might be faced by local residents if members decided not to participate in these committees? Can he provide examples?

20 Question from Councillor Rupert Eckhardt to the Lead Member for Safer, Greener, Cleaner, Councillor Abdal Ullah

Will the lead member for transport, having noted the extensive press coverage outlining the concerns of residents of the Isle of Dogs regarding buses used as DLR replacement vehicles operating through narrow residential roads, outline what representations have been made to Transport for London to alleviate these concerns?

21 Question from Councillor Shafiqul Haque to the Lead Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Anwara Ali

What is the Council doing to reduce health inequality in Tower Hamlets? Can the Lead Member cite some examples of what is being done?

22 Question from Councillor Shirley Houghton to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Lutfur Rahman

Will the Leader of the Council set out the number of times that Tower Hamlets Council has granted the power of a Compulsory Purchase Order to a private developer since 2000, and provide details of each occasion including the qualification of public good that was demonstrated in each case and also whether the CPO power was exercised by the developer?

23 Question from Councillor Waiseul Islam to the Lead Member for Employment and Skills, Councillor Alibor Choudhury

How many unemployed Bangladeshis does the Council plan to find employment for in Canary Wharf this year and what was the figure last year? Can the Lead Member provide us with a figure on the total number of Bangladeshis who have secured employment in professional firms in Canary Wharf over the last two years?

24 Question from Councillor Denise Jones to the Lead Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Joshua Peck

Can the Lead Member update Council on progress being made with Single Status?

25 Question from Councillor Alex Heslop to the Lead Member for Housing and Development, Councillor Marc Francis

Will the Lead Member for Housing & Development initiate any changes regarding the methodology for calculating the Management & Administration

Charges for leaseholders, following the outcome of the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal?

26 Question from Councillor Rajib Ahmed to the Lead Member for Culture and Leisure, Councillor Rofique Ahmed

Leading up to the Olympics what will Tower Hamlets contribute to the nationwide Cultural Olympiad and what does this mean for local people?