

Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 20 January 2016	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Melanie Clay, Corporate Director of Law, Probity and Governance	Classification: Unrestricted
Motions submitted by Members of the Council	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services.
Wards affected	All wards

SUMMARY

1. Nine motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 13 for debate at the Council meeting on Wednesday 20th July 2016.
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in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.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 Council promoting a sensitive approach to the victims of racist attack and their relatives and friends

Proposer: Councillor Oli Rahman
Seconder: Councillor Mahbub Alam

The Council notes that:

1. The Independent has recently carried an online article, written by former local journalist Ted Jeory, which reveals that, [Name redacted at the meeting] has been working at Ian Mikardo School, a special school for boys with emotional and behavioural problems, for the last five years – despite having been convicted in 2001 of the manslaughter of Mr Shibli Rahman just 500 metres from the school site which was widely reported as a racist murder. This initial article was then picked up by other parts of the local press;
2. That only one member of the local community is directly quoted by Mr Jeory in his article, namely Mayor John Biggs's predecessor as Labour's candidate for Mayor and former councillor, Mr Helal Abbas; although Mr Jeory also refers to John Biggs's "allies" in a manner which suggests he discussed his story with other Labour Party members before it was published;
3. That Mr Jeory appears to know of two Labour Party "officials" who were among those who appointed [Name redacted at the meeting] to his post, but has chosen not to name them;
4. That Executive Mayor John Biggs has stated that he wishes his Administration to be transparent and accountable.

The Council further notes that:

5In 2001, Mr Shibli Rahman was subjected to sustained abuse before he was eventually subjected to an unprovoked attack by three local youths, during which he was stabbed and beaten, and that Mr Rahman died from those injuries;

6. At the trial of Mr Rahman's killers, Judge Richard Hawkins described Mr Rahman as having been a "loving husband and father";

The Council further notes that:

7. After the story appeared in the media, the Council issued a formal statement indicating that although it had provided professional advice to the school, staff appointments were a matter for the governors of the school in question and any further concerns should be raised with the school direct.

8. So far, the Met Police has stated local community tensions which have arisen as [Name redacted at the meeting]'s appointment has become public are "not a policing matter at this stage".

9. [Name redacted at the meeting] has served his prison sentence, and the head teacher of Ian Mikardo school has expressed confidence in him and his work at the school.

10. Appointments are indeed a matter for maintained schools to make according to their own policies and the Executive Mayor and the Council have no power to intervene.

Nonetheless, the Council has a duty of care towards its citizens and a duty to safeguard the children of the borough.

11. The appointment of [Name redacted at the meeting] in a nearby school has caused serious concerns among local residents, who have been reminded of the racist attacks which occurred frequently in Tower Hamlets' past and which left the Bangladeshi community in constant fear. Concerns have been expressed about how someone convicted of manslaughter can be employed at a school so close to where the murder was committed.

12. Parents across the borough have become concerned about what sort of people can be employed in the borough's schools.

The Council believes that:

1. The killing of Mr Shiplu Rahman was a terrible, tragic racist murder of the kind which must never happen again in Tower Hamlets.
2. The appointment of [Name redacted at the meeting] to a school so close to the scene of the murder in which he was involved is insensitive to the feelings of the local community, is insulting to the memory of Mr Shiplu Rahman.
3. The Council statement issued after the appointment was made public in the press has done nothing to allay fears among parents of children at other schools about how staff are appointed and whether their children are safe. Many parents are not aware that schools are responsible for their own appointments and the Council statement was wrong not to address this.
4. Therefore, it is important that, while leaving Ian Mikardo school to discuss concerns with the parents of its own pupils, the Executive Mayor takes further steps to reassure the local community and parents across the borough that the Council takes its duty to safeguard our younger residents very seriously.
5. It is not clear whether Mr Jeory only approached one single person, local resident Mr Helal Abbas, to provide a comment on [Name redacted at the meeting] employment, or whether Mr Helal Abbas approached Mr Jeory with a view to making the story public, and either way it is unfortunate that one or both of them has rushed to print the story without apparently considering the distress the news will cause to the local community and parents and/or any threat to public order; and this is irresponsible.
6. The troubled pupils at Ian Mikardo school, and the school's staff, deserve to see a calm and mature responses from the adults around them in this difficult situation which should include focusing on the welfare and education of children and not on surprising the community with news which may cause distress or speculating on whether there will be public protests, which could be very divisive.

This Council requests the Executive Mayor to:

1. Prepare a statement explaining that schools are responsible for appointing their own staff and that the Council and police will always work to protect ethnic minority and other relevant communities from hate crimes, and circulate this widely to local residents. The statement should acknowledge that parents have right to be assured that staff at the school which their children attend are appointed in a proper manner. As this cannot go in East End Life any longer, we will have to be content with it going on the Council website,

going out to the other local press in a press release, and going in the next edition of Our East End in about three months' time.

2. In the interests of the transparency with which he had pledged to surround his administration, to make public the identity of the three "Labour Party officials" mentioned in the article as having made the appointment, and whom the Party's Councillors had appointed as LEA members to the governing body of Ian Mikardo school.
3. To write to all school governors in the borough pointing out the sensitivity which should be exercised when considering appointing people convicted of serious offences, and especially those with a racist element, and to ensure that this need is communicated to all new LEA governors when they are appointed in the future.
4. To write to all schools in the borough to advise them of this resolution.
5. To write to Mr Jeory and Mr Helal Abbas to advise them that their article, however it arose, has caused distress and may yet lead to public disorder and, while members of the public are doubtless grateful that they have revealed this appointment, asking them to consider the consequences of what they are writing in any future articles which they may produce or collaborate on.
6. To point out to his "allies", whom Mr Jeory mentions in his article (if he is aware who Mr Jeory thinks they are), that consideration should be given to possible distress that such articles may cause before they provide material to journalists.
7. To follow the example of the late Jo Cox MP, who said that her multi-ethnic community had more in common than it had division, by promoting community harmony in Tower Hamlets and having no truck with any actions which would cause distress and promote disharmony.

12.2 Motion regarding Ian Mikardo School

Proposed by: Councillor Andrew Wood
Seconded by: Council Peter Golds

This council expresses its concern at the employment of [Name redacted at the meeting] at the Ian Mikardo School who was, in his youth, involved in the racially motivated murder of a resident, Shibli Rahman.

The council notes the increasing concerns raised across the borough as to the circumstances of the employment of this individual.

The Council notes:-

- The requirement to ensure the continued high quality specialist education provided to some of our most vulnerable young people.
- The grief that this issue must cause the family, friends and neighbours of the late Shibli Rahman, who was murdered less than 500 meters from the school
- The Council's duty of care to all employees of the Council including [Name redacted at the meeting]
- The need to rehabilitate offenders back into society
- The need for accurate and timely information to keep residents aware of matters of interest to ensure the prevention of false rumours.
- The need for transparent management of its safeguarding responsibilities
- The importance of strong and effective school governing bodies and that those governing bodies have access to the appropriate support and advice.
- That where the borough has overall authority for the supervision of and management of schools that this authority is exercised appropriately.
- There have been serious questions raised in the public domain as to the current management of the school which is currently being considered by OFSTED.

This Council recommends;

1. To fully investigate the process of how & when [Name redacted at the meeting] was recruited and the involvement of the Council in that process and that this be reported to and considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a matter of urgency.
2. That the result of this investigation be considered in public.
3. To fully support the school governing board during this time.
4. To publish the different powers and responsibilities of school governing bodies and the council.
5. To continue to pro-actively work for the rehabilitation of offenders, whilst ensuring

that there is policy guidance on such employment to ensure greater sensitivity to the role and location in which they work towards rehabilitation.

12.3 Motion regarding the Housing and Planning Act

Proposer: Councillor Andrew Cregan
Seconder: Councillor Sirajul Islam

This Council Notes that:

1. The Housing and Planning Act ('the Act') received Royal Assent on 12th May 2016.
2. The Council debated and supported a motion (20th January 2016) which called on the Mayor and all Councillors to actively campaign to highlight the disastrous consequences of the then Bill; and called on Mayor to give full consideration to finding meaningful, genuinely affordable housing solutions for Tower Hamlets.
3. The Mayor and/or Lead Members have subsequently attended public meetings organised by 'Kill the Bill' on the Cranbrook, Collingwood, Ocean estates and outside Albert Jacob House and confirmed their commitment to attend others as invited.
4. LBTH Officers have attended public meetings on Collingwood and Ocean estates to set out the technical aspects of the Act.
5. The Mayor has launched the Housing Strategy consultation which seeks to address the impact of the Housing and Planning Act 2016
6. East End Life, Our East End, and 24 Hour Housing have all published articles setting out the Mayor's opposition to this Act and his response to the impact.
7. An all members briefing on the Draft Housing Strategy including impact of Housing and Planning Act was held on 2nd June 2016.
8. The Housing and Regeneration Mayors Question Time in Poplar included an officer briefing for residents on the Housing and Planning Act.
9. An article in THH newsletter and information has been circulated to all RPs for their newsletters.
10. The Tower Hamlets website features a detailed summary of the Act and the impact on Tower Hamlets at
http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/housing/Housing_and_Planning_Act.aspx
11. LBTH has responded to Government consultations on details of the Act and responses are available
http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/housing/Housing_and_Planning_Act.aspx
12. In order to fully prepare for the impact of the Act, further guidance is required from Government regarding the implementation.

This Council believes that:

1. The Housing and Planning Act represents a Conservative attack on the diverse communities in Tower Hamlets and it will significantly impede the council's ability to provide adequate affordable housing for families in the borough.
2. The Tory 'Pay to Stay' policy will drive up rents and have a devastating effect in Tower Hamlets.
3. The Government should publish guidance on the implementation of 'Pay to Stay' and 'Sale of High Value Voids' to allow Councils to fully prepare

This Council calls on:

1. The Mayor to write to the Minister of Local Government setting out the impact of the uncertainty over the Act.
2. Local MPs to raise questions in Parliament about how the Act will be implemented.

12.4 Motion regarding the future of the Tower Hamlets Youth Service

Proposer: Councillor Gulam Robbani
Seconder: Councillor Oliur Rahman

This Council notes that:

1. Former Mayor Lutfur Rahman had a positive vision for the Youth Service which was expressed, for example, at the Cabinet in April 2012:

"He considered that what really mattered were the young people of Tower Hamlets who represented the future of the Borough and that youth services were provided that benefited them. It was his intention as Mayor that young people in Tower Hamlets received the best youth services and best education possible."

2. That the main motivations of bringing the Youth Service back in-house were:

- to save money on duplicating management functions and re-invest it in the front line of the service;
- to respond to the Government's localism agenda;
- to strengthen the Council's partnership agenda;
- to obtain extra value by, for example, the youth service working effectively.

3. That although bringing the Service back in-house was a decision of the Executive Mayor, councillors were able to discuss the transfer openly within Council structures – for example, Cllr Oliur Rahman was able to explain the decision to the April meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at which Cllr Rachael Saunders declared a personal interest on this item as she had "been in receipt of information from some of the service providers managing the contract in question."

This Council further notes that:

1. The current Mayor's intention to make a fundamental change in the way that the Youth Service is run (initially on an interim basis) was not mentioned at the Cabinet on 10th May 2016, although planning must have been well underway by then.

2. The Mayor's intention to make this fundamental change was set out in a briefing paper from the Mayor's office dated 12th May 2016 which was circulated to all councillors.

3. This paper stated that the interim delivery plan would begin in July, which clearly precludes any wider member involvement (indeed, the paper refers to the decision having been developed in discussion with John Biggs and Cllr Saunders) and a future delivery model will be in place from April 2017 (and there will be full member involvement in options for this model, but how this will happen is not explained).

4. This paper also stated that a gap analysis is underway with a view to there being a programme of procurement and commissioning in June 2016 targeted at local third sector organisations.

5. This paper also states that it is the intention to offer youth services for the rest of this financial year from only eight venues in the borough – despite the fact that youth are often very reluctant to travel far to a formal provision. The paper states that the Council intends to offer an outreach service to encourage you to travel to the formal provision and also to rely, in the interim, on whatever additional services are provided in an un-co-ordinated manner by local charities or voluntary organisations.

This Council further notes that:

1. The Mayor's decision was revealed at the Council's Annual Meeting on 18th May 2016 by Cllr Rachael Saunders in what appeared to be an unplanned announcement. This included Cllr Saunders reading out an email from her mobile phone but not saying who had sent her the email (in sad contrast to her previous openness about who was briefing her).

2. Cllr Saunders stated that "The service has faced allegations of fraud and corruption" and other serious allegations. She also said that "Investigations into these serious allegations are ongoing," and that the Youth Service does not have the capacity to deliver as much as it has in the past. She stated that "we" were working out a service plan which would be based on reduced capacity and on when that had been developed would consideration be given to identifying and filling gaps. She expected the identification of gaps to be finished by June (a couple of weeks after she was speaking) – but did not mention John Biggs's intention to fill these gaps by contracting out parts of the service to third sector organisations (or who, in the event of this being done, would manage these organisations).

3. The Council Communications Office issued a press release on 26th May referring to the change only having been prompted by "historic shortcoming". This announced that an interim delivery model would be adopted "by the summer". It gave details of the interim delivery model and stated that young people's views had been listened to throughout the review process. (The members have yet to see a concrete tangible and evidence of that)

4. There have been a number of reports in the local press since the Council AGM which have reported the detail of various allegations – presumably either on the basis of their own imaginations or on the basis of briefings from unknown parties in the Council which have not been shared with all councillors.

5. That as a result of the way the Mayor and relevant Cabinet Members have dealt with this issue, it is entirely unclear what is happening to the youth service – which has led to a great deal of serious concern among service users and in the wider community.

This Council believes that:

1. If and when there are allegations of corruption or other serious malpractice, these should be investigated in accordance with Council procedures and individuals should be dealt with appropriately. (Independent Group fully supports this approach and have publicly offered to work together for the benefit of young people of Tower Hamlets).

2. That if a service is to be reviewed in order to spend or save money by cutting certain provisions, and/or deliver the service more efficiently or effectively, this should be discussed openly, including with councillors and services users and the wider community rather than playing politics or blame-game.

3. (1) and (2) above should not be confused.

This Council further believes that:

1. The current position, in which the Administration appears to have responded to allegations against individuals by pre-emptively altering the service as a whole, and in which the Youth Service is to be run on an interim delivery model based on reduced capacity and enhanced by some sort of ad-hoc procurement, is ill thought out and poorly planned.
2. The interim service delivery model will, for the rest of this financial year, lead to an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour across the Borough – to the irritation of the whole community, for whom this is already a massive problem.
3. The interim service delivery model will, for the rest of this financial year, incur a risk of extra spending on management and quality assurance of the service – risks which have not been addressed in the little documentation available or in such public statements as have emerged.

This Council resolves that:

1. The current Mayor, John Biggs, should honour his commitment to govern in a transparent manner and he should put on the public record a full account of what has been going on, including what allegations have been made, when these were made, by whom and how - and critically how these are being investigated (releasing as much information as is possible without compromising the investigations or the individuals concerned); what prompted the service review and how it took place; and what his intentions are towards the service.
2. The current Mayor, John Biggs, to immediately stop any further work to drastically reduce and cut the Youth Service provision in the name of interim delivery model and engage in a serious, open, transparent consultation with the young people, residents and stakeholders.
3. The current Mayor, John Biggs, to reverse the decision to close unprecedented number of Youth Centres and look for an alternative way to provide effective, efficient and fit-for-purpose Borough-wide localised youth service provision.
4. The current Mayor, John Biggs, must keep the Youth Service in-house rather than privatising or contracting it out.
5. In the event that the current Mayor, John Biggs, should not agree to do think again, he must issue a statement clarifying how he intends to procure a service to fill in the gaps from the third sector, given that the Commissioners have been running grant-making functions; and he must also issue a comprehensive statement covering which of his chosen eight venues will pick up delivering the service previously provided by centres which John Biggs and Cllr Saunders have closed and how service users whose centres have been closed are expected to access the replacement services, including details of travel arrangements, etc.

12.5 Motion regarding Road Safety

Proposed by Councillor Peter Golds
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Wood

This Council has a requirement to make roads safer for all road users.

However, the only measure recently taken has been the implementation of an 18 month 20mph borough wide speed limit.

Other road safety measures have yet to be implemented. For example, example the Council is aware that 40% of pedestrians cross Marsh Wall at unsafe crossing points and that construction work routinely closes pavements forcing residents to walk on roads. Funds are available from Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the government provided New Homes Bonus resulting in there being over a hundred million pounds available.

However, for a 20mph speed limit to be effective it has to be done with the compliance of road users and cannot be enforced on them especially if the police are only able to do occasional traffic stops as they have access, as now, to only one portable speed camera in the Borough.

To use the words of the Council itself;

- “Successful 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits should be self-enforcing.”

The Council notes that :-

- The way in which Tower Hamlets 20mph ban was originally consulted on and implemented has ensured that the ban is not self-enforcing.
- Residents do not feel involved and do not respect the way in which the borough wide 20mph limit was implemented especially as it was one of the last decisions of a now discredited former administration.
- There have been cases of residents observing council vehicles, buses and police vehicles exceeding the speed limit and knowing that ambulances on emergency call have to legally drive more slowly because of this change, does not inspire confidence.
- The result is that while some law-abiding citizens drive more slowly, many do not. Actual road experience suggests that there is now a greater gap between the fastest and slowest vehicles on the road, there is more overtaking of vehicles and that vehicles are slowing down before the few speed cameras which are the only methods of enforcing the speed limit.
- It is also clear that some drivers completely ignore the speed limit.
- None of these changes improve safety and careless overtaking by frustrated drivers makes the roads more dangerous.
- With 43,589 vehicle owner's resident in Tower Hamlets if a borough wide ban is to be imposed then it must have more credibility.

- The 20mph ban is also a distraction from other more effective road safety solutions, whether it is the use of mirrors at blind spots, cycle boxes at traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, more speed cameras, CCTV cameras to spot overtaking, shared(naked) streets, better designed road junctions, more one way streets, slower speeds outside schools at opening and closing time and, restrictions on HGV traffic on narrow streets.
- Recently most road deaths in the Borough have been either cyclists killed by HGV's turning at speeds below 20mph or young residents driving dangerously as recently happened on Marsh Wall.

This Council requests the Mayor to undertake the following steps;

1. Ensure residents are actively involved in the decision on what replaces the borough wide 20mph limit, noting that the online consultation was merely a start and should not be the end of that engagement.
2. That a decision on what replaces the 20mph limit is ultimately taken via a resident's referendum as has happened elsewhere in the country as only then will it have credibility amongst road users.
3. That road safety is properly debated by this Council in through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the full Council.
4. That more work be done to identify those young drivers driving dangerously and that there is a programme of education in place.
5. A proper systemic analysis of road safety for all road users is done focussed on what physical changes may be required to improve road safety.
6. To purchase more portable speed cameras to enable police teams to conduct traffic stops.
7. Publicise the actual rules under which speeding tickets can be issued as there is a widespread belief locally that speeding tickets cannot be issued on vehicles travelling between 20 and 30mph.
8. A recognition that vehicle drivers are not the enemy and that private vehicles are part of our transport solution and should not be driven out of the Borough by a lack of forethought.

12.6 Motion Regarding Increasing Organ and Blood Donation in Tower Hamlets

Proposer: Councillor Clare Harrisson

Seconder: Councillor Amina Ali

This Council notes:

1. Organ and blood donation is vital to save and improve lives in Tower Hamlets and beyond
2. That there are currently not enough donated organs for the people who need them and as a result over the last financial year over 1,300 people either died whilst on the waiting list or became too sick to receive a transplant
3. There is a particular shortage of organs donated by people in BME communities. Because ethnicity is important in an organ transplant being successful, this means that a disproportionately higher number of people from BME communities die whilst on the list
4. Ethnicity is vital in the success of blood transfusions too. When someone has to have multiple transfusions, for example in cases of sickle-cell anaemia, blood that is not ethnically matched can lead to resistance to new blood
5. In Tower Hamlets the percentage of people on the organ donation register is only 22.05% of the population. The percentage of people who give blood is only 1.06%.
6. Newham Council, by partnering with the NHS Blood and Transplant Service, increased their sign-ups to the Organ Donor Register by 332% last year.

This Council believes:

1. That we should be doing more to increase the number of people on the organ donor register and the numbers giving blood
2. That as a Borough with a highly diverse population we have a real opportunity to help address shortages of BME blood and organs
3. That working with other partners we can save more lives across all our different communities.

The Council resolves:

1. To approach the NHS Blood and Transplant Unit to establish a partnership and develop our own local action plan
2. To work with local organisations, including local health trusts, CCGs, and community groups to deliver the action plan and to reach out to a wide range of communities in a sensitive and appropriate way
3. To promote organ and blood donation across the Council; for example in Idea Stores, One-Stop-Shops, and to Council staff
4. To investigate as to whether we can include registering for organ donation as part of our electoral registration process.

12.7 Motion regarding Vandalism in Eastferry Road E14.

Proposer: Councillor Chris Chapman
Seconder: Councillor Peter Golds

This Council expresses its condemnation of the recent unauthorised demolition by a speculative vandal of three grade 2 listed houses located at 1-3 Eastferry Road, Isle of Dogs.

The Council further notes that officers had been made aware of this possibility by Cllr Peter Golds and local residents as far back as April this year.

The Council, noting the recent success by other London authorities in taking action against speculative vandals, calls upon the Mayor to use full legal power to ensure that restoration of the three listed houses.

12.8 Motion regarding Hate Crime in Tower Hamlets

Proposed by Councillor Rachael Saunders
Seconded by Councillor Mayor John Biggs

Jo Cox MP lived with her family in Wapping, and was a valued member of our local community.

Council notes the words of Jo Cox in her maiden speech: “we are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us.”

Jo Cox was murdered, in an act of hatred. In Brendan’s statement on 16th June, the day of Jo’s murder, he said: “Jo believed in a better world and she fought for it every day of her life with an energy, and a zest for life that would exhaust most people.”

“She would have wanted two things above all else to happen now, one that our precious children are bathed in love and two, that we all unite to fight against the hatred that killed her.”

“Hate doesn’t have a creed, race or religion, it is poisonous”.

A fund was set up in her name, and Hope Not Hate, the anti-fascist, anti-racist charity, is one of the beneficiaries of that fund.

This Council further notes the result of the EU Referendum and the worrying reports of an increase in the incidence of racism and hate crime in the aftermath of the vote.

Tower Hamlets Council resolves to condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally and will remain vigilant against attempts to divide our communities. Council welcomes the fact that Mayor Biggs has met the Borough Commander to discuss concerns, and instructed senior officers to closely monitor the situation, and ensure immediate action in the event of any rise in incidents.

This Council further welcomes Mayor of London Sadiq Khan’s assurance of “a zero-tolerance approach to any attempt to hurt and divide our communities” and Scotland Yard commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe’s statement that the Metropolitan Police “will investigate vigorously any reports of crime motivated by hatred.”

Council resolves to honour the legacy of Jo Cox MP, and to write to her family with our condolences.

Council resolves to reassure all people living in Tower Hamlets that we will retain the sense of tolerance, community and diversity that has defined our borough, city and country for so long.

12.9 Motion Regarding the Ian Mikardo School

Proposer: Councillor Helal Uddin

Seconder: Councillor Rajib Ahmed

This Council is fully aware of the level of anger and concern at the employment of a convicted criminal at Ian Mikardo High School, so close to where he was involved in the racially motivated killing of Mr Shibli Rahman. Council notes the resignation of four school governors.

Mr Rahman was killed in a racist attack in Bow (April 2001) and subsequently three youths were imprisoned for the horrific crime. One of the youths was sentenced to nine years for manslaughter, reduced by two years on appeal, and has been employed as an assistant at Ian Mikardo High School since 2010.

This Council notes that Mayor Biggs has instructed officers to examine what role the council had in the appointment process in 2010.

This Council believes:

1. The appointment at Ian Mikardo School was insensitive and insulting to Mr Rahman's family and the wider community, particularly given the close proximity of the school to where the crime took place.
2. We fully support rehabilitation as an essential step in stopping re-offending and reducing crime, however in this particular case the proximity of the school to where the crime took place has caused insult and anger.
3. The council should consider a protocol to ensure that where rehabilitation of offenders takes place in the community, it is done in a safe manner which holds public confidence, with due regard to community sensitivities.

This Council resolves:

1. To ask Mayor Biggs to review processes to ensure that such a situation does not occur again.