

APPENDIX A – WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS THAT WERE NOT PUT AT THE MEETING

6.2 Question from Kuba Stawiski

At the last full Council in September, councillors from the Independent Group walked out of the meeting after it had barely started. Given that the councillors clocked off so early, doesn't this show utter contempt for the residents that elected them to serve?

Response from Cllr Shiria Khatun:

It speaks volumes that members of the public are willing to give up their free time to attend a council meeting, but independent councillors, who all receive allowances to represent their constituents, think it is acceptable behaviour to walk out of an important council meeting in a tantrum.

Instead of asking their questions about anti-social behaviour, parking charges, or planning issues, Independent Group councillors said nothing.

Instead of debating our Substance Misuse Strategy or Treasury Management they sat in a separate room, where they were overheard arguing with each other.

Their childish walkout again revealed that they are far more interested in themselves than the people of Tower Hamlets, and they should hang their heads in shame.

6.7 Question from Chelsea Aldridge

I am very concerned about the recently reported rise of racist and xenophobic incidents and hate crimes. I believe that we all have a duty to stand up and stamp out racism and xenophobia.

We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country.

What steps will the Council take to tackle this racist, xenophobic and criminal behaviour? Will it work to ensure that local bodies and programmes have the support and resources they need to fight and prevent racism and xenophobia and reassure all people living in this area that they are valued members of our community?

Response from Cllr Shiria Khatun:

Thank you for your question. The Council takes hate crime very seriously. That is why the Council works to stamp out hate crime.

The national rise in hate crime following the EU referendum has been extremely worrying and is something we must remain absolutely vigilant against.

There are various partnership forums such as the No Place for Hate Forum, Hate Incidents Panel, Tension Monitoring Group and Community Safety Partnership that are monitoring and implementing the borough's strategy around cohesion and tackling prejudice. Any issues or patterns emerging are addressed.

The Mayor and I also regularly raise this issue with the Borough Commander and have recently spoken about hate crime prevention with the Deputy Mayor of London

for policing, Sophie Linden.

As a result of the post-Brexit rise in hate crime the Council has stepped up visibility of the No Place for Hate Campaign through increased publications in local media, tweets, training and outreach activities.

We have also trained 11 new No Place for Hate Champions from the local community to help arrange new events and initiatives to build community cohesion and encourage victims to report hate crime. These new champions join 60 others already trained and supported by the council.

We have also seen an increase in sign up to the No Place for Hate Pledge which makes visible the Partnerships commitment to tackle hate and promote diversity. We have over 130 organisations in the borough who have signed up to the Pledge and over 1300 individuals including high profile celebrities such as Sir Ian McKellen and Dame Helen Mirren.

The Council is doing all it can to crack down on hate crime and encourage initiatives which further build community cohesion but there is also an important role for the police to play in ensuring these types of crime are prioritised and acted upon.

8.14 Question from Independent Group Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaquim

Despite repeated questions, so far, the Mayor has been unable to provide a clear answer and information about the business rate changes and its clear impact on Tower Hamlets. When will the Mayor have 'precise or further details' in relation to changes to business rates affecting the Borough and provide exact details of the amount by which the Council will be 'better or worse off' under the new business rate retention proposal announced by the Government last year in relation to 100% business rate retention and base reset?

Response from the Mayor

No council questions have in fact previously been received on this topic.

The government only released the draft revaluation list in October 2016. In addition, changes to the rate multiplier and details of the preferred Transitional Relief Scheme (a scheme that is meant to cushion the impact of larger increase or decreases in values) have only just been made as part of the Autumn Statement of 23rd November 2016.

It will not be possible to provide any further detail until these announcements have been evaluated, particularly in the context that Tower Hamlets is expected to move from being a top up authority to paying a tariff as a result of these changes. The January 2017 MTFS report will contain further analysis and details.

Looking forward to 2020, and the change to 100% business rates retention, the government has yet to make any further announcements on this matter and so it is unclear what additional responsibilities might be devolved to local authorities to offset any additionally retained Business Rates, the split of responsibilities and retained income between the GLA and the Council, or any further detail of how the scheme will operate. There are no indications when such announcements might be made.

8.15 Question from Labour Group Councillor Rajib Ahmed

Will the Cabinet Member outline what the Council is doing to tackle hate crime?

Response from Cllr Shiria Khatun:

The Council takes hate crime very seriously. The Domestic Violence and Hate Crime Team have 2 Hate Crime Officers and a Manager who works in partnership with the voluntary and statutory sector to tackle hate. This includes working closely with the Police to ensure enforcement action against identified perpetrators and commissioning 2 Hate Crime Caseworkers at Victim Support who are able to ensure support and protection for victims.

We have an award winning partnership forum called the **Tower Hamlets No Place for Hate Forum** which develops and implements the borough hate crime strategy which ensures support and protection for victims, ensures offenders are brought to justice and raising awareness to promote community cohesion. The Forum develops best practice responses to tackling hate crime and is a leading borough across London.

We coordinate a monthly **Hate Incidents Panel** where key partners come together to ensure a coordinated response to hate incidents.

We have a high profile **No Place for Hate Campaign** which promotes increased public awareness of hate crime through a range of publications. The campaign is high profile communicated through outreach, billboards, advertisements and local media.

To strengthen the campaign we developed the **No Place for Hate Pledge** which aims to encourage all individuals who live, work or visit the borough to make a united stand against prejudice and discrimination. This public condemnation aims to send a strong message to offenders that Tower Hamlets is No Place for Hate. It also encourages organisations to sign up to the Pledge committing them to ensuring their organisation is equipped to respond to hate incidents effectively.

No Place for Hate Champions Project recruits local volunteers to go out into the community utilising their unique skill set to ensure One Tower Hamlets messages are far reaching. It empowers local people to play their part in promoting community cohesion. This project received an invitation to meet the Prime Minister due to its innovation. Eleven people recently successfully completed specialist training organised by Tower Hamlets Council to tackle hate crime, they join 60 volunteers who run projects to bring thousands of people together to improve relationships within their communities.

Training: the team works with the Tower Hamlets No Place for Hate Forum to deliver multi-agency training on hate crime, and provides in-house and corporate training, briefing sessions, seminars and events to develop staff skills and knowledge in responding to hate crime.

8.16 Question from Conservative Group Councillor Peter Golds

Government regulations say 15% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) should be spent in consultation with residents and that money can be spent to support the

development of an area. When will the Mayor inform residents and Councillors what the process will be for making those spending decisions?

Response from the Mayor

Cabinet will discuss a report on 'The Infrastructure Delivery Framework – Neighbourhood Portion of CIL' tomorrow (6th December) which covers the proposed process for dealing with the CIL Neighbourhood Portion.

It outlines 3 recommendations for consideration:

1. Approve the adoption and implementation of the proposed CIL Neighbourhood Portion process.
2. Approve the apportionment of 25% of LBTH CIL receipts resulting from development to the CIL Neighbourhood Portion across the whole borough.
3. Approve the adoption of the proposed boundaries for considering CIL Neighbourhood Portion.

The proposed CIL Neighbourhood Portion process is a 5 step process:

1. Evidence gathering (including existing engagement feedback)
2. Public consultation
3. Developing projects
4. Decision making processes
5. Project delivery

A process map and detailed explanation of each step in the process is included in the report.

8.17 Question from Independent Group Councillor Mahbub Alam

At 20th July 2016 Council meeting, Independent Group members raised several important questions relating to community safety and crime. The Cabinet member for community safety, Cllr Shria Khatun, could not provide the answers at the time and wrote that she is trying to get the answers to our members' questions - such as, question 8.18 in relation to figures for the Islamophobic racist hate crime, something she'd claimed the Police have started to record separately since November 2015, question 8.20 about crime hot spots, anti-social behaviour in the Borough and lastly question 8.22 from Cllr Ohid Ahmed, about official crime rates and their respective percentages since 2011. Has she now provided or is able to answer these important questions relating to her portfolio and if so can she please provide the requested information to all members and include the answers in the minutes for proper record keeping?

Response from Cllr Shiria Khatun

Thank you for your question. I had requested this information be sent on to the relevant councillors but for ease I include the additional responses below.

Additional Response to 8.18 of 20th July Council Meeting:

Due to Metropolitan Police restructures in recent year, the borough has faced significant cuts in terms of analytical resources, to the current state in which there are no longer any on borough or within the Met's Eastern Data Hub. This has had significant impact on the Borough and Community Safety Partnership's ability to obtain/extract raw performance data and then analyse it. Also the way that crimes

are recorded and then flagged as 'Hate Crime' or sub categories of it, means that it is difficult and resource intensive (if there were any) to then filter and extract the relevant figures. Previously the Police were able to obtain the total number of Hate Crimes in the Borough, but are unable to provide a breakdown of Hate Crime figures prior to 2015/16.

In September 2016 the Borough Police managed to extract the following breakdown of figures for our annual CSP Strategic Assessment (they do not have the capacity either in borough or in the Metropolitan Police Centre to provide any further breakdown or analysis), so we are unable to obtain/provide the figure for Islamophobic Hate Crimes for 2015/16. They have committed to supply the following categories/breakdown on a quarterly basis to the Borough's No Place for Hate Forum:

For the financial year to date (1st April – 2nd October 2016) the following numbers of Crimes and Incidents have been reported to the Police and been flagged/categorised as being Hate Crimes or Incidents:

1st April – 2nd October 2016 Borough Police Hate Crime and Incidents		
Category/Flagged	Hate Incident	Hate Crimes
Race & Religious	427	452
Race	399	428
Faith Hate	62	58
Anti-Semitic	9	8
Islamophobic	47	44
Total	944	990

Comparison with previous Years – Hate Crimes were not broken down sufficiently to compare 2016/17 available sub categories/flagged hate crimes with previous years, however the following is available.

Strategic Assessment 2016 Metropolitan Police Borough Hate Crime Figures		
Racist and Religious Hate Crimes and Incidents		
Financial Year	Incidents	Offences
2015-16	552	569
Out of the above the following can be attributed, however due to the way that offences are flagged by the police, they could be 'flagged' as several of the following forms of hate in addition to the above apparent Total Racist and Religious Hate Crimes and Incidents, these are the issues faced due to the recording system operated:		
Racist Hate Crimes		
Financial Year	Incidents	Offences
2015-16	515	534
Faith Hate Crimes		
Financial Year	Incidents	Offences
2015-16	73	70

8.20 Question from Councillor Abdul Asad [20th July Council Meeting]

Can the Community Safety Cabinet member provide the list of anti-social behaviour and crime hot-spots (areas with the highest number of anti-social behaviour) in the borough with respective crime rates – both percentage and numbers - for each hot-spot with the types of crimes and corresponding numbers and percentages?

Written Response of Councillor Shiria Khatun (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety) [20th July Council Meeting]

The Police collect and hold this data, it is not held by the Council. A request for this information has been made and when received will be provided to Cllr Asad.

Further response:

Further to 8.18 20th July Written Response, the Borough Police are not in a position to provide data or analysis for crime and ASB hotspots in the borough, due to a lack of analytical resources on borough in the Metropolitan Police or in the East London Data Hub. The following has been obtained by the Council Community Safety Team and analysed as follows:

Anti-Social Behaviour

ASB Demand hotspot (top 5) estates based on figures for reported ASB calls to Police 101 and 999, also known as Computer Aided Despatch (CAD) for the period 01/12/15 – 29/11/16:

- 1) Chicksand Estate 305 calls
 - a. 52.1% (159 calls) Rowdy or Inconsiderate Behaviour
 - b. 9.5% (29 calls) Prostitution Related
 - c. 7.5% (23 calls) Rowdy/Nuisance Neighbours
- 2) Boundary Estate 295 calls
 - a. 40.7% (120) Rowdy or Inconsiderate Behaviour
 - b. 16.9% (50) Vehicle Nuisance / Inappropriate Use
 - c. 10.2% (30) Begging / Vagrancy
- 3) Watney Street & Spencer Way 234 calls
 - a. 42.3% (99) Rowdy or Inconsiderate Behaviour
 - b. 15.4% (36) Fireworks
 - c. 12.8% (30) Vehicle Nuisance / Inappropriate Use
- 4) Rogers Estate 216 calls
 - a. 73.1% (158) Rowdy or Inconsiderate Behaviour
 - b. 5.6% (12) ASB Nuisance
 - c. 5.6% (12) Youth Related
- 5) Dundee Wharf 141 calls
 - a. 79.4% (112) Rowdy or Inconsiderate Behaviour
 - b. 5.0% (7) ASB Nuisance
 - c. 3.5% (5) Street Drinking
 - d. 3.5% (5) Youth Related

Total Crime

The data available from Metropolitan Police's Data Tables Webpage on Total Notifiable Offences also known as 'total crime', broken down into the borough wards monthly totals shows that the following were the top 5 hotspot wards in Tower Hamlets for financial year 2015/16:

- 1) Spitalfields and Banglatown 2,769
- 2) St Peters 2,440
- 3) Bethnal Green 2,195
- 4) Weavers 2,040

5) Whitechapel 1,922
For the first 6 months (April-September) of 2016/17, the top 5 hotspot wards in Tower Hamlets:

1) Spitalfields and Banglatown	1,446
2) St Peters	1,314
3) Whitechapel	1,175
4) Bethnal Green	1,119
5) Weavers	1,075

8.22 Question from Councillor Ohid Ahmed [20th July Council Meeting]:

Please provide the official recorded headline crime rate for the Borough, both in numbers and % terms, for each year since May 2011 until June 2016?

Written Response of Councillor Shiria Khatun (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Community Safety) [20th July Council Meeting]:

The Police collect and hold this data, it is not held by the Council. A request for this information has been made and when received will be provided to Cllr Ahmed.

Further Response:

Figures obtained from Metropolitan Police Datatables Website for the following full financial years along with their percentage of the Metropolitan Police total are as follows:

- 2011/12 – 29,463 (3.62% of Met Total)
- 2012/13 – 29,082 (3.77% of Met Total)
- 2013/14 – 27,139 (3.87% of Met Total)
- 2014/15 – 27,345 (3.86% of Met Total)
- 2015/16 – 28,752 (3.89% of Met Total)

8.18 Question from Conservative Group Councillor Craig Aston

Will the Mayor give an update on the progress of Decent Homes work at Oast Court, Three Colt Street and Kiln Court, Newell Street?

Response from Cllr Sirajul Islam

1. Flat roof – replace covering to main flat roofs

This work has been completed and the guarantee for the work has been issued.

2. Clear rainwater pipes

A CCTV survey of the downpipes has been completed. This has identified a number of problems. Work is underway to produce a programme of remedial actions to deal with these issues.

3. Repair balcony asphalt

Patch repairs have been completed to the scheduled areas. Further areas that require work have been identified during the investigation water penetration. These areas will be programmed as part of the remedial work for water penetration.

4. Carry out repairs to areas of spalling concrete

This work has been completed.

- 5. External decoration and decoration to internal communal areas**
This work has been completed, however, there are issues with the quality of some of this work. THH are addressing this with the contractor.
- 6. Repointing/ repairs to areas of damaged brickwork**
This work has been completed. There are examples of previous poor quality repairs to brickwork which will be picked up before the end of the contract.
- 7. Repairs to communal doors**
This work has not been completed and there are some quality issues with some of the work completed to date that will be remedied before the contract is complete.
- 8. Replace wooden front doors to tenanted properties**
There are a small number of doors that remain to be fitted due to access issues. THH are working with the contractor to try to resolve this.
- 9. Repair glazing seals, handles and hinges to uPVC windows**
This work has been completed.
- 10. Repair timber communal windows**
Some repairs have been carried out but the quality and scope of works are not acceptable. A new schedule of work is being drafted to ensure all issues are addressed.
- 11. Upgrade to communal lighting**
Work is underway to replace the existing lighting with LED lighting and to carry out upgrades to elements of the electrical installation required to support this change.
- 12. Sika waterproofing treatment to balcony parapets and brickwork.**
This work is completed at Oast and will shortly be completed at Kiln.
- 13. Replacement of defective flooring.**
Some flooring work has been completed, however, there are issues with the quality of the completed work. A new schedule of work is being agreed with the contractor to include the remedial and extra works required.
- 14. Scaffolding.**
The scaffolding is being struck lift by lift as the Sika waterproofing work is completed. The scaffolding will be removed before Christmas
- 15. Project completion.**
The project is due to complete in February 2017. It is anticipated that all work except for the programme of work to rainwater goods will be completed by then. The work to rainwater goods is expected to take longer as it is complex and will require access to properties to allow invasive work to be completed.