

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 15th OCTOBER 2008

DEPUTATIONS AND PETITIONS

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

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

SUMMARY

1. The Council's constitution provides that a maximum of three deputations and three petitions are received at any meeting. These are taken in the order of receipt. This report sets out the deputations and petitions submitted by members of the public for presentation at Council on 15th October 2008.
2. Members will note that the report includes the maximum three petitions for the meeting. One deputation is also included. The final deadline for receipt of deputation requests is noon on Thursday 9th October and any further deputations received before that date will be circulated to Members prior to the meeting.
3. In each case the members of the deputation/petitioners may address the meeting for no more than five minutes. Members may then question the deputation/petitioners for a further five minutes. The relevant Lead Member or Chair of Committee may then respond to the deputation or petition for up to three minutes.
4. Any outstanding issues will be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will respond to those outstanding issues in writing within 28 days.
5. Members should confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

5.1 DEPUTATIONS

One deputation has been received as set out below.

5.1.1 Deputation from Tower Hamlets Leaseholders Association about Leaseholder service charges

“The Tower Hamlets Leaseholders Association calls on the executive to carry out a comprehensive external audit of leaseholder service charges in order to establish that the method of calculation is correct and lawful, and that the allocation and apportionment of the charges is accurate, reasonable and fair.

Leaseholders in Tower Hamlets consider that ordering the external audit is the only way of re-establishing confidence and trust between homeowners and the landlord and the only way of creating a partnership between the stakeholders which is essential in order to move forward.”

5.2 PETITIONS

Three petitions have been received as set out below.

5.2.1 Petition from Mr. Mohammed Zakir Hussain and others regarding a Muslim Graveyard

“During the election of 2006, this council and then councillors also those that were running to become councillors (most of them are elected members today and are on the administration group) have promised that they will provide a Muslim Graveyard for the Muslim community of Tower Hamlets. Subsequently the Bow Gas site was identified, discussed and dropped. Currently the council has agreed to subsidise £200.00 (which no one knows about) towards any burial that needs to be taken place and has negotiated an interim temporary space in LB Newham. This is not what the Muslim resident of Tower Hamlets have voted the current administration for. Among other things the Muslim graveyard was one of the reasons the Muslims of Tower Hamlets have voted you mainly the Labour administration in again.

We ask the Council (Mainly the Labour Councillors) to note:

- That it/they have promised to deliver a Muslim Faith Burial space not a “Interfaith Cemetery”
- That it/they have promised to provide the space in Tower Hamlets and not in Newham or any other borough
- That a Muslim burial site would be designed with prayer facilities and facilities related to the Muslim Burial procedure
- That Muslim Burial is different then other Burial facilities

- That the Muslim graves can be turned every twenty-five years or as when necessary to make space for other new burials (According to the common law every fifty years)

We the Residents of this Council believe:

- That the council can provide the Muslim Burial as promised
- That we do not want the subsidy of £200.00 or a burial space in Newham or in any other borough
- That they want a permanent space where they can lay to rest their close and loved ones and in future themselves
- That only the financial feasibility is holding the council to deliver the promise
- That dead man/woman cannot ever be financially feasible and should not be measured with the pound sign
- That with proper intention and will the council can secure the Bow Gas site as promised

We the residents call upon this council and those responsible to ensure:

- That negotiation should start again with the Bow Gas works site
- That the site when available should be secured for and designed for a Muslim burial space
- That the council built in a financial strategy to secure the site for the asked price of £5M
- That the council creates a clear pathway and strategy to secure the Bow Gas site when it is available in ten years time.”

5.2.2 Petition from Mr. Rafik Ahmed, Rabbi Ashfak Hussain, Mohammed Amir Uddin and others to ban the following book from marketing in Tower Hamlets and lobby UK wide ban

“Kalapanir Hatchhani, Biletey Bangaleer Itihash

Author: Golam Morshid (Professor of UEL – SOAS)

Publication: Abshor Prokashona Sangstha

46/1 Hemandra Das Road, Shutrapur, Dhaka – 1100

Printing: New Pubali Mudralaya

46/1 Hemandra Das Road, Shutrapur, Dhaka – 1100

We the residents of Tower Hamlets are concerned over the above book being sole in UK; especially in Tower Hamlets as the book promotes haterate among the ethnic Bangladeshi communities. We therefore bring this before you asking the council to do anything and everything within its power to ban the book from being shelved in shops in Tower Hamlets.

We ask the Council to note:

- That the book Kalapanir Hathchani, Jan 2008 (Author Gulam Murshid) has created a haterate among the local Asian communities mainly in Bangladeshi's
- That the book has mis-led the community to a myth that is completely untrue
- That the book promotes haterate among the local Bengali community

We know that this Council believes in:

- Promoting community cohesion
- Dis-encouraging haterate among communities
- Promoting healthy communities and would intervene as and when necessary to reduce haterate and inequality in all or any communities in the borough
- Any literature containing haterates should not be allowed in Tower Hamlets

We call upon this Council and those responsible to ensure:

- That the book Kalapanir Hathchani, 2008 (Author Gulam Murshid) not to be shelved in any Idea Store
- That the Tower Hamlets Trading Standards Agency sent letters to all Ethnic and high street Bookshops not to shelf this book
- That the council lobbies the government to ban this book entering the UK market."

5.2.3 Petition from Mrs Theresa Shiyabola, African Women's Welfare Association and others regarding the Tower Hamlets Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Centre in St. Margaret's House

"We the undersigned are supporting the Tower Hamlets Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Centre in St. Margaret's House, 15A Old Ford Road, London, E2 9PL. We disagree with the decision to cease their funding. We support a motion to the full Council to be passed successfully"