

<p style="text-align: center;">Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Council</p> <p style="text-align: center;">19 July 2017</p>	
<p>Report of: Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director, Governance</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Petitions to be Presented to Council</p>	

SUMMARY

1. The Council's Constitution provides for up to three petitions to be presented at each ordinary Council meeting. These are taken in order of receipt. This report sets out the valid petitions submitted for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2017.
2. The deadline for receipt of petitions for this meeting is noon on Thursday 13 July 2017. However, at the time of agenda despatch the maximum number of petitions has already been received as set out overleaf.
3. The text of the petitions received for presentation to this meeting are set out in the attached report. In each case the petitioners may address the meeting for no more than three minutes. Members may then question the petitioners for a further four minutes. Finally, the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair of Committee may respond to the petition for up to three minutes.
4. The petition will then be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will provide a written response within 28 days.
5. Members, other than a Cabinet Member or Committee Chair responding at the end of the item, should confine their contributions to questions and not make statements or attempt to debate.

5.1 Petition regarding Poplar HARCA (Petition from Ras Uddin and Tower Hamlets East Residents Association)

Petition from the Residents & Tenants of Poplar Harca, London Borough of Tower Hamlets to Mayor John Biggs and all Tower Hamlets Councillors.

For the attention of the Tower Hamlets Mayor John Biggs and all Tower Hamlets Councillors:

The tenants and residents of Poplar Harca are very concerned about the actions and recent behaviour displayed by Poplar Harca and feel that they are acting along the lines of a private landlord as opposed to a social landlord. The Poplar Harca housing stock was originally transferred by Tower Hamlets Council and we are keen to ascertain what responsibilities the Borough still has in regarding to this housing. Poplar Harca tenants and residents are currently experiencing many issues and concerns including:

1. The private selling/ auctioning of housing stock by Poplar Harca without any consultation with the Poplar Estate Board.
2. Parking Bay rent increases which have gone up astronomically and without any consultation with the Poplar Estate Board.
3. Parking bays have been terminated without following the correct policies and procedures.
4. Major works carried out for leaseholders without proper consultation procedures being followed which has resulted in very large and unaffordable bills issued to tenants and residents.
5. Service charges are erratic and some residents/tenants are being charged more than others for the same services.

The above are some of the issues which the tenants & residents have repeatedly attempted to convey to Poplar Harca. Poplar Harca have, for the most part, ignored the issues and have responded intermittently but do not communicate effectively or willingly. As you can imagine this is very frustrating and time consuming. As a result we have formed the Tower Hamlets East Residents' Organisation in order to try and resolve this growing list of issues. We have written many times to Poplar Harca but have received no written responses at all.

As mentioned above both tenants and residents feel that Poplar Harca is acting as a private landlord might and we do not have any information about the Poplar Harca Board Members, how they been selected and what their individual roles are. We are also unclear as to how the parking bay charges have been arrived at as the increase is far greater than inflation. Some properties have been vacant for many months and were sold off recently via auctions. This seems odd as there is currently a waiting list of 24,000 people

for housing in Tower Hamlets. How are these people being catered for and what is the nominations process.

We feel strongly that Poplar Harca is not adhering to correct policy and procedures, according to the tenets of being a social landlord. We would, therefore, like to request Tower Hamlets Council to look into the matters detailed with urgency and to suspend all Poplar Harca communications, funding and planning applications with immediate effect. We would like to invite the Mayor John Biggs and all the Tower Hamlets Councillors to meet with our association to discuss the aforementioned points at your very earliest convenience.

We have collected a large number of signatures from Poplar Harca tenants and residents which we are including with this letter. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

5.2 Petition regarding Save Our NHS (Petition from Dr Jackie Applebee Turner and others)

We, the undersigned, are gravely concerned that the North East London Sustainability and Transformation Plan (NEL STP) cannot achieve the proposals set out within the STP without a dangerous deterioration in the services that the NHS is able to provide. The NEL STP will require savings from the NHS budget in the region of £500,000,000 across the eight boroughs, while it is expected to require £500,000,000 up-front capital funding for new facilities.*

We urge Tower Hamlets council to reject the STP and to join us in campaigning for properly funded social care and a properly funded NHS, to a level of 10% of GDP, in line with health services in comparable countries.

(*Source <https://www.bma.org.uk> news 2017 februar /nhs-needs-9-5-to-transform)

5.3 Petition regarding renewable energy (Petition from David Raedeker and others)

Restart the debate on how Tower Hamlets can meet its renewable energy targets with a closer look at the financial potential to utilise solar energy on the rooftops of Tower Hamlets owned property.

In 2008 Tower Hamlets set out their ambitions for a decentralised low carbon energy supply. Unfortunately, and for no obvious reason, the debate has been buried. In the face of daily illegal levels of carbon dioxide emissions, to name just the most obvious example, this is contradictory.

In the meantime renewable energy has become cheaper than fossil fuel and nuclear energy. In a climate of budget cuts it is counterproductive that there is no surge towards saving money long term by utilising these new resources. Rather than financial pressure, it seems to be a lack of political will instead of

a positive vision, which could promote Tower Hamlets as not only one of the most culturally diverse councils in the country, but one of the most progressive.

A starting point could be the utilization of council owned roof top spaces for solar energy supply. It has been well documented that solar energy makes financial sense in a city like London and that city-rooftops are an under used skyline resource.

We would like to know, what has been done in recent years and what is holding you back from engaging with these new opportunities...?