

Non-Executive Report of the: Council 19 July 2017	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director, Governance	Classification: Unrestricted
Questions submitted by Members of the Council	

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

SUMMARY

1. Set out overleaf are the questions that were submitted by Members of the Council for response by the Mayor, the Speaker or the Chair of a Committee or Sub-Committee at the Council meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2017
2. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.2 as amended, questions relating to Executive functions and decisions taken by the Mayor are put to the Mayor unless he delegates such a decision to another Member, who will therefore be responsible for answering the question. In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor will answer questions directed to the Mayor.
3. 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. Oral responses are time limited to one minute. Supplementary questions and responses are also time limited to one minute each.
4. Council Procedure Rule 12.5 provides for an answer to take the form of a written answer circulated to the questioner, a reference to a published work or a direct oral answer.
5. There is a time limit of thirty minutes at the Council meeting for consideration of Members' questions with no extension of time allowed and any questions not put within this time are dealt with by way of written responses.
6. Members must confine their contributions to questions and answers and not make statements or attempt to debate.

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

29 questions have been received from Members of the Council as follows:-

9.1 Question from Councillor Denise Jones

Can the Mayor tell us what steps he has taken to ensure fire safety on Tower Hamlets Homes and other housing provider estates following the tragic Grenfell Tower disaster?

9.2 Question from Councillor Ohid Ahmed

Can the Mayor confirm the precise figures and names of the high-rise buildings as well as tower blocks in the borough which are 'unsafe' or 'at risk' because of the 'substantial' or 'significant' fire risk, and what action has he taken to make sure these are safe?

9.3 Question from Councillor Rajib Ahmed

Can the Mayor update the council on his housing plans including the opening of Watts Grove and the new Private Renters Charter?

9.4 Question from Councillor Andrew Wood

Is the Mayor satisfied that all buildings in Tower Hamlets with cladding have now been checked or are in the process of being checked and that fire safety assessments are up to date?

9.5 Question from Councillor Candida Ronald

What is the Mayor doing to ensure that the failures revealed by the Clear Up investigation can never happen again, whoever is Mayor?

9.6 Question from Councillor Rabina Khan

Will the results of the cladding tests of both council and social high rise tower blocks in Tower Hamlets be made public?

9.7 Question from Councillor Helal Uddin

Can the lead member give an update on the performance of Work Path?

9.8 Question from Councillor Oliur Rahman

Can the Mayor confirm what salary is he claiming at present from the Council - is it the full increase to his pay packet that he granted himself in his budget - and since when has he claimed this full increase? Will he confirm if he receives any other allowances, salaries, money or perks from the Council or elsewhere? (In addition, notwithstanding what may or may not be currently on the council website buried in reports, for the sake of transparency and for the benefit of residents who may not have time to explore website links or read reports full of jargons, will the Mayor clearly list all his current, past and up to date hospitality/gifts, salaries, allowances and any financial interests since the day he became the Mayor, and list the full details in the minutes for a simple public record reference?)

9.9 Question from Councillor John Pierce

How many meetings of Tower Hamlets Homes board were inquorate, preventing key strategic decisions being made, due to non-attendance of Councillors, appointed by Mayor Rahman from 2012 – 2015?

9.10 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

Will the Mayor inform the council as to whether the four homeless families have moved into 10 Turin Street according to the decision of the Asset Management Board seven months ago on the 9th December 2016?

9.11 Question from Councillor Marc Francis

When will there be a safer crossing over the A12 at Wick Lane?

9.12 Question from Councillor Shah Alam

Following the stabbing of Syed Jamanoor Islam, the Mayor committed to the requests of the family in Altab Ali park, can he please provide an update to the council as to what he has completed to date?

9.13 Question from Councillor Danny Hassell

Will Tower Hamlets have a Creative Enterprise Zone when announced by the GLA later this year?

9.14 Question from Councillor Mahbub Alam

Given the alarming increase in Islamophobic hate crimes in recent time, particularly the shocking rise in acid attacks against Muslims, including those in Tower Hamlets, one of which took place on 29 June 2017 in Watney Market (unreported and possibly not recorded), and another attack on Burdett Road, E3 at 02:13hrs on 4 July 2017 (recorded and reported) as well as other such attacks - will the Mayor provide the figures for acid attacks, including any form of dangerous chemical, in Tower Hamlets for each year since 2011?

9.15 Question from Councillor Shiria Khatun

What is being done to ensure fire safety inspections are being carried out for residential blocks in the borough?

9.16 Question from Councillor Julia Dockerill

Following the meeting I organised on the 27th April at St Georges Town Hall to discuss Anti-Social Behaviour problems in St Katharine's & Wapping ward will the Mayor provide an update on the specific issues raised in particular the actions requested by the Borough Commander after the meeting.

9.17 Question from Councillor Dave Chesterton

Will the Mayor please take whatever action he deems necessary to prevent the demolition of the No.1 gas holder at Leven Road, Poplar? This gas holder, made at Ironworks on the Isle of Dogs and erected in 1878 is of significant local historical interest and should be preserved as part of the redevelopment of this part of Poplar.

9.18 Question from Councillor Shafi Ahmed

The legal definition of an offensive weapon includes anything intended to be used to harm another person, like a sharpened comb. Acid must also now be seen as an offensive weapon. Will the Mayor write a joint letter with all Group Leaders to the Secretary of State to review the legislation of acid so that to carry acid or corrosive substance will be an offensive weapon?

9.19 Question from Councillor Ayas Miah

Does the Mayor support the Mayor of London's Ultra Low Emission Zone?

9.20 Question from Councillor Md. Maium Miah

On Monday 26 June 2017, a mother was shockingly hit by a lorry due to dangerous driving in Westferry Road. I attended the scene and residents told me that dangerous driving and lack of proper road safety management/enforcement are among the most consistent and serious concerns for local residents, and across the Isle of Dogs. These issues, along with persistent traffic chaos, building and maintenance work activities mostly sanctioned by the council is turning the Canary Wharf Ward and the Isle of Dogs into an unsafe and chaotic place for both pedestrians and drivers. Will the Mayor tell us what action has been taken to address these issues for Canary Wharf and Isle of Dogs residents?

9.21 Question from Councillor Chris Chapman

Given issues raised in the Channel 4 Dispatches programme on the 3rd July about cruise ship related air, noise and light pollution, what steps is the Mayor and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets undertaking regarding cruise ships on the River Thames, docks and in the future docking at Enderby Wharf which is contiguous to the Isle of Dogs?

9.22 Question from Councillor Aminur Khan

The Tower Hamlets Sports Foundation delivers a fantastic sports programme for children and young people in Tower Hamlets. Will the Mayor and his Cabinet ensure that Tower Hamlets Sports Foundation continues to deliver the much needed sports programme for youngster in Tower Hamlets?

9.23 Question from Councillor Gulam Robbani

As per HMRC's children in the low-income families' local measure, the most basic and a critical set of data set for a local authority and the Government, will the Mayor confirm how many children are currently in this category and what percentage is it of the total children in Tower Hamlets?

9.24 Question from Councillor Craig Aston

Will the Mayor confirm how much S106, CIL and New Homes Bonus cash is sitting in the Councils bank account to help pay to replace the broken play equipment in Ropemakers Fields which is being held up by a lack of funds to pay for replacement equipment?

9.25 Question from Councillor Abdul Asad

Given the damaging impact of the new Council Tax Reduction scheme on self-employed residents and others in the borough will the Mayor now admit that he misled Tower Hamlets when he stated that it was still retaining 100% of the original scheme?

9.26 Question from Councillor Suluk Ahmed

Will the Mayor tell us:

- What is the level of child poverty in Tower Hamlets?
- What % and numbers of residents currently live in fuel poverty?
- How many households have an income of less than £15,000?
- How many residents have used food-banks and vouchers for each year since 2015 until now?(Please kindly provide the exact figures and information and not refer to a web-link or report. Thank you)

9.27 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

In relation to housing, will the Mayor tell us:

- How many households are currently on a borough's housing register – and how many of these are in priority categories 1 and 2. How many of these are officially overcrowded?
- How many are in temporary accommodation? Are any in Bed and Breakfast?
- What are the top three furthest places a family on a housing register been accommodated – temporarily or permanently - by the Council since June 2015 and to which areas and when?
- How many properties are under/over occupied at present?
- How many approaches to the Council about homelessness were made – broken down for each year since 2015 – until present. How many of them were already homeless and how many were at the risk of being homeless?
- How many homeless families were/are from the ethnic minorities or from the protected categories under the Public Sector Equality Duty with a breakdown for each category, please?(Please kindly provide the exact figures and information and not refer to a web-link or report. Thank you)

9.28 Question from Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury

Will the Mayor tell us the crime figures – with numbers and percentages from 2012/13 until now - for the following categories:

- Murders
- Assaults
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Knife Crime
- Islamophobic crime (the Cabinet Member responsible stated at a previous council meeting that these were started to be recorded separately, possibly since 2015/16 but were never confirmed or made public?!)
- Acid and any kind of chemical attacks(Kindly do not provide a link, refer to report or that unable to find the information, please provide the precise information requested. This information is very important for community, council and residents. If for any reason it is not available, please find out and make an official request to obtain this information as a matter of urgency and let the members know and include in the minutes and the written answer)

9.29 Question from Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaqim

In relation to the cost of living, employment and jobs, will the Mayor inform:

- What is the average cost of living for Tower Hamlets residents now?
 - What is average rent in Tower Hamlets at present, and was in 2014?
 - What is the long-term youth employment in the borough for each year since 2010 until present?
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- Does the Council currently provide the Education Maintenance Allowance(EMA), Higher Education/University Bursary, PGCE subsidy to teachers from BAME community who are still underrepresented compared to population ratio, if the council does, to how many young people and what are the current budgets? If not, will the Council confirm when were these stopped by the administration, and for which time-periods these three schemes operated for, how many people benefit(ted) from each scheme and what was the total budget for each scheme while in operation?