

Non-Executive Report of the: Council 19 September 2018	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director, Governance	Classification: Unrestricted
Petitions to Council	

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

SUMMARY

1. This report sets out the valid petitions submitted for presentation at the Council meeting on Wednesday 19 September 2018. The texts of all petitions received for presentation to this meeting are set out in the attached report.
2. The Council's Constitution provides for up to four petitions to be heard at each ordinary Council meeting. These are taken in order of receipt, except that petitions for debate (those in excess of 2,000 signatures) will take precedence. Should more than four petitions be received, all remaining petitions will be listed to be formally noted by Council.
3. For Petitions listed as for debate:
 - a. Petitioners may address the meeting for no more than 3 minutes.
 - b. Members may then question the petitioners for a further 4 minutes.
 - c. The petition will then be debated by Councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes. All speeches are limited to a maximum of 3 minutes. During his or her speech, any Councillor may move a motion for the Council's consideration relevant to matters in the petition (this does not require the suspension of the Council Procedure Rules).
 - d. The speaker will invite the Mayor or (at the Mayor's discretion) the relevant Lead Member or Committee Chair to respond to the petition for up to 3 minutes.
 - e. Following the petition debate, any motions moved will be put to the vote in the order they were tabled.

- f. If no motion is agreed, the petition will stand referred to the relevant Corporate Director for a written response within 28 days of the meeting.
4. For Petitions listed as to be heard:
 - a. Petitioners may address the meeting for no more than 3 minutes.
 - b. Members may then question the petitioners for a further 4 minutes.
 - c. Finally, the speaker will invite the Mayor or (at the Mayor's discretion) the relevant Lead Member or Committee Chair to respond to the petition for up to 2 minutes. The petition will then be referred to the relevant Corporate Director for attention who will provide a written response within 28 days of the date of the meeting.
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.
6. For Petitions listed as to be noted, petitioners may not address the meeting. The Speaker will state where they will go for a full response.
7. Responses to all petitions will be sent to the lead petitioner and displayed on the Council's website.

PETITIONS FOR DEBATE

No petitions for debate had been received by the petitions deadline.

PETITIONS TO BE HEARD

5.1 Petition regarding Glyphosate/Roundup (From Geoffrey Juden and others)

We the undersigned petition the council to ban the use of Glyphosate/Roundup within parks and gardens of Tower Hamlets. Glyphosate/Roundup is being banned in many countries around the world. France being the last country to ban this toxic herbicide, Glyphosate/Roundup being a known cancer inducing agent.

Glyphosate, the active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup, is the most heavily used agricultural chemical of all time. It's a mind-boggling amount of usage for one agricultural chemical, and it was only a matter of time before the wide-reaching environmental and public health implications became apparent.

Monsanto advertised Roundup as "biodegradable" and "environmentally friendly," even going so far as to claim it "left the soil clean" — until they were found guilty of false advertising. Now it's showing up in people, at alarming levels, with unknown effects on human health.

Researchers tested urine levels of glyphosate and its metabolite aminomethylphosphonic acid (AMPA) among 100 people living in Southern California over a period of 23 years — from 1993 to 2016. The prevalence of human exposure to glyphosate increased by 500 percent during the study period while actual levels of the chemical, in ug/ml, increased by a shocking 1,208 percent.

It's unknown what this means for human health but, in 2017, separate research revealed that daily exposure to ultra-low levels of glyphosate for two years led to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) in rats. Researchers stated that the glyphosate levels revealed by their JAMA study were 100-fold greater than those detected in the rat study.

More information on its effect on health can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEjpkx3KBAC>

GM campaigners have stated:

“This is the first study to longitudinally track urine levels of glyphosate over a period before and after the introduction of GM glyphosate-tolerant crops. It is yet another example illustrating that the vast majority of present-day Americans have readily detectable levels of glyphosate in their urine, ranging from 0.3 parts per billion, as in this study, to ten times higher – 3 or more parts per billion – detected by others.

These results are worrying because there is increasing evidence to show that exposure to glyphosate-based herbicides below regulatory safety limits can be harmful.”

Concerns over glyphosate's toxicity have been mounting since the International Agency for Research on Cancer's (IARC) 2015 determination that glyphosate is a "probable carcinogen." As of July 2017, California's Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment also listed glyphosate as a chemical known to cause cancer.

5.2 Petition regarding a people's vote on the final Brexit deal (From John Shore and others)

We the undersigned demand that our Tower Hamlets Mayor fulfils this manifesto promise, campaigns for a second vote and Tower Hamlets council passes a motion to support a Peoples Vote the final Brexit deal including the opportunity to vote on Remaining in the EU.

Its two years since the Brexit vote and the Government still has no satisfactory Brexit plan. Since the vote we have gone from the top of the G7 for economic growth to the bottom.

For communities up and down the country, jobs and businesses are under threat and it is absolutely right for local authorities to be making a stand on

their behalf.

Councils in Swansea and Hammersmith and Fulham have already passed motions calling on for a Peoples Vote on the final Brexit deal, In the 2018 Mayoral manifesto John Biggs stated:

"We will campaign for a referendum on the final terms of any Brexit deal, so that local people are able to express their view on the future of this country"
We the undersigned demand that our Tower Hamlets Mayor fulfils this manifesto promise, campaigns for a second vote and Tower Hamlets council passes a motion to support a Peoples Vote the final Brexit deal including the opportunity to vote on Remaining in the EU.

5.3 Petition asking Tower Hamlets Council to Please welcome child refugees (From Rachel Ellman and others)

We the undersigned petition the council to We the undersigned petition the Council to provide 10 places for child refugees per year, over the next 10 years. This year is the 80th Anniversary of the Kindertransport, the scheme through which Britain welcomed 10,000 child refugees over 2 years. This anniversary marks the best of what Britain is about and is particularly to be celebrated here in Tower Hamlets, as the Kindertransport trains arrived on our doorstep, at Liverpool Street Station. As part of this anniversary, a national campaign, led by Lord Alf Dubs, himself a Kindertransport child, is calling on Central Government to start a fully-funded scheme for 10,000 child refugees to be resettled in the UK over the next 10 years. Councils up and down the country have already begun to commit places for children. We call on Tower Hamlets Council to show leadership on this issue by matching the commitment made by Hammersmith and Fulham, who have already committed 10 places per year for refugee children.

Why Tower Hamlets?

Tower Hamlets has a long and proud history of providing refuge. We would like to thank Tower Hamlets Council for their ongoing commitment to refugees, including the brilliant recent work they have done in resettling 5 Syrian families through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.

Funding for this resettlement programme would come from central government, not from Council budgets. However, as a community we will work to support the Council's capacity to resettle refugee children, in any way we can.

The petition organisers are a group of local volunteers, brought together by Safe Passage: safepassage.org.uk

Why is the Kindertransport anniversary campaign needed?

There are currently more than 25 million refugees worldwide, the vast majority

of them hosted by developing countries and fewer than 1% by the UK. Over half the world's refugees are children. You can learn more at <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance>.

The Kindertransport anniversary campaign is not asking the UK to take more refugees than the UNHCR will ask them to anyway, but simply to ensure that 1000 places per year are provided specifically for children.

No child should have to live out their childhood in appalling conditions in a refugee camp or war zone, or have to risk their life to reach sanctuary. Yet many will spend their entire childhoods away from home, sometimes separated from their families.

When doors are being closed to refugees across the world, it is more important than ever that we play our small part, in the UK and here in Tower Hamlets.

5.4 Petition regarding the provision of proper basketball facility in Millwall Park (From a number of local residents)

We the undersigned petition the Council to invest in a proper basketball facility in Millwall Park, which is locked at night so that the community can make use of the court and residents can have a peaceful night.

PETITIONS TO BE NOTED

None.