


Non-Executive Report of the: COUNCIL 19 September 2018	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Asmat Hussain, Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Amendments to Motion for debate submitted by an Opposition Group	

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

SUMMARY

1. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for time at each Ordinary Council meeting for the discussion of one specific Motion submitted by an Opposition Group. The debate will follow the rules of debate at Council Procedure Rule 13 and will last no more than 30 minutes.
2. The Opposition Motion for Debate from the Conservative Group is listed at Item 9 of the main agenda pack.
3. Council Procedure Rule 11 allows for amendments to the Opposition motion to be submitted to the Monitoring Officer by Noon the day before the meeting. The content of amendments must comply with Council Procedure Rule 13.6.
4. One amendment to the Administration Motion was received by the Monitoring Officer by the above deadline and is set out overleaf.

Amendment to Opposition Motion regarding anti-social behaviour & crime in Tower Hamlets

Proposer: Councillor Asma Begum
Seconder: Mayor John Biggs

Added text underlined.

Deleted text scored out.

The Council notes:

The results of the 2018 Tower Hamlets Annual Residents' Survey show that the top concern for residents was crime with 41% concerned. Only 48% rated Policing as excellent, very good or good, the lowest rating of the subjects surveyed. 60% felt drug use or drug dealing issue was a big problem.

It is clear that residents are deeply concerned about the impact of ASB and drug dealing on their neighbourhoods.

The key issue facing residents in many instances is a lack of police resources to investigate and arrest those who are carrying out these offences and until the Government start to properly fund our police service the impact on the ground will be limited despite any progress to make it harder for the perpetrators.

The council is however committed to doing all we can to tackle ~~We have four core problems as regards~~ ASB and the issues that affect people's quality of life. This includes addressing:

1. Reporting difficulties leading to frustration from residents and probably under reporting
2. The use of NOX canisters and the limited means the Police have to control their use
3. The distribution of CCTV cameras with heavy concentrations in some areas and few elsewhere
4. There being different processes and contact methods for different issues which affect residents, a noticeable example being the 7 different steps in the Councils 'Who do I call Crime & ASB reporting in TH' flowchart or the flowchart used by Limehouse SNT mapping all of the different contact methods.
5. That the council requires a 1-page flowchart (with links to other information) to document the information indicates that there is a communication problem.

Given the major reductions in Police numbers and funding we need to find ways of using the resources we have more effectively, and holding the Conservative Government to account for their reckless approach to community safety.

According to a National Audit Office (NAO) report published this month, the Home Office does not know whether the police system in England and Wales is "financially sustainable", and highlights that across England and Wales:

- There has been a 19% reduction in real-terms funding to Police and Crime Commissioners from 2010/11 to 2018/19;
- There has been an 18% reduction in the size of the total police workforce between March 2010 and March 2018.

In Tower Hamlets, we have lost about 200 police officers since 2010 and three police stations in recent years (Limehouse, Brick Lane and Isle of Dogs) have been closed as a direct result of Government cuts to police budgets.

Further, three-quarters of PCSOs in the borough were axed between 2010 and 2017.

The main method for reporting ASB is the 101 service but this has fundamental problems:-

- It can be difficult to get through especially at night
- It is one dimensional and cannot easily be use it to share locations, video or photographs.
- It does not record other quality of life issues, in particular noise
- It's lack of integration frequently results in SNT teams requiring residents to report issues twice:
 - Firstly on 101 to get a CAD reference
 - Secondly, to the SNT via email or their own phone perhaps using WhatsApp to share photos

However all of these problems are eclipsed by the Conservative Government's complete disregard for community safety as evidenced by their dangerous cuts to policing budgets, leaving boroughs like Tower Hamlets with hundreds of fewer police officers on the street.

Council notes that the Metropolitan Police has recognised the issues with 101, and the council will offer any support it can to help make improvements.

Official Government advice is to report anti-social behaviour through 999 in an emergency, or through 101 in a non-emergency or through your Safer Neighbourhood Team.

The council also has an online reporting tool which is publicised on the council's homepage.

The council is also partnered with OWL (Online Watch Link) which provides the public with the latest local crime alerts sent by email, telephone or SMS.

~~Tower Hamlets is disproportionately dependent on the 101 service unlike our neighbours who usually provide other methods for reporting ASB.~~

Examples are:-

- ~~Newham residents are able to call their Enforcement and Safety Team on a 24 hour number. There is also an online reporting tool.~~
- ~~Greenwich residents are able to report non-urgent incidents to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team by email and phone number.~~
- ~~Southwark residents have access to an Antisocial Behaviour Unit contactable by telephone or email~~

- Hackney residents have an ASB team for streets, public spaces and parks contactable by phone and email

Other London Boroughs also have online reporting forms prominently displayed when residents undertake an internet search on the boroughs name and ASB.

Tower Hamlets by contrast provides no central email address or phone number to call and only has an online reporting form at the very bottom of a long web page.

This may explain why the Borough Commander's report for 2016 showed Tower Hamlets had the worst rates of ASB in East London.

Given the Government's major underresourcing of the police and the consequent difficulty that residents face in trying to report ASB, this Council therefore proposes to ask the Cabinet Member for Community Safety to review the options which are currently available to residents, and to examine the effectiveness in other boroughs of the following in meeting the challenge:

1. The establishment of a 247 phone service together with a central email address for all ASB and quality of life related issues
2. This service to be fully integrated, dealing with noise and other related issues to ensure that residents only need to know just one number/one email
3. The Police agree that ASB reported to the Council is included in any allocation of resources to ensure that residents do not have to also call 101 in order to secure the allocation of Police resources to their area
4. The development of an online tool + app allowing residents to report a range of issues online. This could be based on the 'MyStreet' App rolled out in Sunderland this year. Other possibilities are the FiFiLi app, OWL. The council could simply buy the license for 'My Street' which would be the equivalent of an online One Stop Shop for quality of life issues. As with FiFiLi this would have the ability to tag precise locations on a map and to share photographs.

~~These solutions will:~~

~~Ensure that residents have the ability to share precise locations, videos, pictures across multiple platforms but that it would all go to same place.~~

~~That easily obtained software solutions which are now available will help integrate and share this data with partners~~

The Council notes:

~~That the Labour manifesto for 2014 pledged "A 24hr noise and ASB hotline to help tackle rising crime – Nuisance noise doesn't sleep, that's why Labour will introduce a 24h hotline to report noise and anti-social behaviour at weekends to ensure people's complaints are addressed."~~

~~By instituting proposals outlined above will reduce pressure on the 101 service, allow the collection of more data, reduce the frustration residents feel as they have multiple methods for reporting issues and provide the council and partners with more intelligence as where to focus necessary activities.~~

The Council resolves to follow the example of Labour controlled Lambeth Council and:

Ask the Cabinet Member for Community Safety to consider the effectiveness of implementing a its Public Space Protection Order for Novel Psychoactive Substances, which allows Police Officers, PCSO's and THEO's to issue fines up to £1,000 per incident Borough wide. The order prohibits the

“ingestion, inhalation, injection, smoking, possession or otherwise use of intoxicating substances” in public spaces. The order also provides powers to stop the selling or supply of intoxicating substances.

Such has been the success in Lambeth that the council is now extending their PSPO for another 3 years having first introduced it in 2015

This, if introduced in Tower Hamlets ~~will~~ could provide the Police and Council with more tools to combat the ~~young men~~ people often in cars who litter our streets as they party.

The council notes that:

The Psychoactive Substances Act came into effect in May 2016 and makes it illegal to sell or import Nitrous Oxide for human consumption (exempting medical supply). However, the use of Nitrous Oxide, as opposed to the import and sale of nitrous oxide remains legal. Equally whilst driving when intoxicated may result in fines or a custodial sentence, Nitrous Oxide is not one of the drugs with a specified limit within the Road Traffic Act.

The legal situation with regard to Nitrous Oxide remains confused ~~which is why the adoption of a targeted Public Space Protection Order while~~ so we must work alongside our local MP's and Ministers, London Councils and the Local Government Association for an enforceable solution to this ongoing problem.

This council institutes a review of the current CCTV and lighting network.

The Council rightly highlights on its social media the successes the cameras have had in arrests (on average 3 a day). Those areas with little or no CCTV feel left out. ~~Criminals and boy racers know where the holes are in the CCTV network i.e. Limehouse Op Naga or Wapping High Street. Temporary cameras can help but the Borough has changed a great deal in the last 15-30 years but that the locations of our CCTV cameras has not followed to the same extent. Given the S106 and CIL resources the council has in the bank, it should also be possible to add new cameras as well.~~ but it is important that we balance the need for surveillance with the right to privacy and ensure that our CCTV complies with the requirements set out in the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice, following our established 4 step evaluation process where CCTV is judged as needed.

The council calls upon Cabinet Member for Community Safety to consider the further use of LED bulbs ~~would also~~ to help reduce costs and improve visibility on our streets.

The council notes that Norfolk County Council have recruited local residents as unpaid Police Support Volunteers to help with CCTV monitoring. ~~This would be an opportunity for Tower Hamlets residents to take part in assisting the fight against ASB.~~ and we call on the Cabinet Member for Community Safety to raise this with the Borough Commander.