


Non-Executive Report of the: Council 18 th January 2023	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Questions submitted by Members of the Council	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of 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 for this Council meeting.
2. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.4, 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 10.7 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

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

11.1 Question from Councillor Amin Rahman

Can the lead member update the chamber on where we are with the council's accounts? These accounts have been left unsigned for the past 6 years thanks to the previous administration.

11.2 Question from Councillor Shubo Hussain

It was Small Business Saturday last month. The previous Labour administration invested a huge amount of money into our local small businesses when they were negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Given the uncertainty surrounding Government support for small businesses, will the Mayor commit to the Labour Group's proposals of a Small Business Hardship Fund and much-needed Business Rates relief in these times of crisis?

11.3 Question from Councillor Bodrul Choudhury

The answers to the questions from the last meeting of Full Council indicated that the Lead Member was in conversation with the Chief Executive concerning the acceleration of a Council-wide audit. Could the Mayor provide an update on this process?

11.4 Question from Councillor Mufeedah Bustin

Please could the Mayor and Lead Member explain why they have reversed the decision to grant the Mudchute Association a 99 year lease?

11.5 Question from Councillor Wahid Ali

One of the Mayor's central manifesto pledges was reinvesting in the council's youth services, can he provide an update on this?

11.6 Question from Councillor Amy Lee

Will the Mayor fully outline his plan for social care in the borough?

11.7 Question from Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled

Could the Lead Member provide an update on the Council's Budget for 2023/24, and what are the key headlines?

11.8 Question from Councillor Marc Francis

Can the Mayor and Lead Member let me know what action is being taken to revitalise Roman Road market and the local high street?

11.9 Question from Councillor Musthak Ahmed

Could the Mayor provide an update of where the Council is with the Liveable Streets consultation?

11.10 Question from Cllr Amina Ali

As you will know, the previous Labour administration invested £3.1 million to deliver the Council's CCTV Transformation Programme.

Can the Lead Member please provide an update on this vital work to enhance community safety for our residents?

11.11 Question from Councillor Abdul Mannan

Can the lead member explain what progress the Youth Justice Management Board has made in addressing each of the Inspectors' recommendations made in the HMIP inspection the Tower Hamlets & City of London Youth Justice Service (YJS) in April 2022 – and how this progress is being measured?

11.12 Question from Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury

Poplar HARCA has stopped issuing parking permit except fully electric car in the Burdett Estate. The residents report that they were not consulted by the Housing Association before making such a big decision. That decision has made a serious negative impact on many residents' lifestyle and employment.

Can the Mayor tell me what support he can offer to the affected residents of the Burdett Estate?

11.13 Question from Councillor Kamrul Hussain

Can the Lead Member update Full Council on what measures have been taken since the Mayor announced the Waste Emergency at the last Full Council meeting? What are the current levels of waste across the Borough?

11.14 Question from Councillor Sabina Akhtar

Would the Mayor and Lead Member please provide a date for when the plans for the new school building for George Green's on the Isle of Dogs, will be made available for public consultation?

11.15 Question from Councillor Ahmodur Khan

Could the Lead Member inform Full Council on additional measures that the Council have put in place to help residents in the Borough with the Cost-of-Living crisis?

11.16 Question from Councillor Sirajul Islam

The Frank Dobson Square Improvements Project originated in a 2019 LIF consultation entry to address safety concerns and to enhance residents use of this public space. I understand that as of July 2022 LIF funds have been allocated and a design team allocated, but there has been no progress since then.

Can the Lead Member please provide an update on these works?

11.17 Question from Councillor Abdul Malik

Could the Lead Member update Full Council on what this Administration is doing to ensure Tower Hamlets becomes a greener Borough?

11.18 Question from Councillor Abdal Ullah

What is the Mayor doing to encourage and incentivise businesses into empty shops, such as properties on Wapping Lane?

11.19 Question from Councillor Bellal Uddin

Can the Lead Member provide Full Council with an update on the progress of the establishment of the Institute for Academic Excellence, as announced at last Full Council?

11.20 Question from Cllr Maisha Begum

Will the Mayor commit to making scrutiny effective in Tower Hamlets and offer the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to a member of the opposition?

11.21 Question from Councillor Harun Miah

Tower Hamlets used to have a thriving voluntary and community sector, can the Lead Member set out his vision and plans to re-establish this?

11.22 Question from Cllr Asma Begum

Regarding the introduction of one-hour free parking close to markets, Tower Hamlets has some excellent transport links, especially with the introduction of the Elizabeth Line, which makes it easy for those who want to shop and eat here to add to the local economy. This one-hour free parking will only benefit commuters and increase air pollution.

Our residents struggle to find parking spaces close to their home. Shouldn't these 248 new parking spaces benefit our residents as opposed to commuters?

11.23 Question from Councillor Musthak Ahmed

How many headteacher posts (including the academies) do we have in the borough and how many of them are from ethnic minority backgrounds? Does the council have a strategy to tackle the under-representation of British Bangladeshi teachers in headteacher posts by 2026?

11.24 Question from Councillor Peter Golds

For many years there has been growing concern regarding illegal cycling in the Greenwich Foot Tunnel which is dangerous pedestrians and the disabled and the erratic provision of lifts. Will the Mayor consult with the Council of Royal Greenwich who are responsible for the lifts and ensuring safety in the tunnel to maintain the safety of pedestrians and ensure improved lift provision.

11.25 Question from Councillor Nathalie Bienfait

What is the administration doing to hold housing associations to account? I am aware the Mayor and Lead Member recently met senior Clarion representatives. Could you give an indication of what you talked about, and what consequences you would consider imposing on housing associations to ensure high quality living for their residents?