

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Council</b>  19 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Petitions to Council</b>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

## SUMMARY

1. This report sets out details of the valid petitions submitted for presentation and debate at this Council meeting. The text of the petitions received 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.
  - a. There is one petition to be heard
    - i. Asking to reconsider cuts to certain infrastructure projects
  - b. There are no petitions to be debated or noted.

## **PETITIONS TO BE HEARD**

3. 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.
4. 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. Responses to all petitions will be sent to the lead petitioner and displayed on the Council's website.

### **5.1 Petition regarding cuts to certain infrastructure projects**

We, the undersigned, are concerned residents of Tower Hamlets who demand the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to reverse its decision on how to spend the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) funding.

NCIL is a portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that is collected by the borough from new developments over a certain size. It can be used to fund local infrastructure projects that are needed to support new developments, such as schools, health services, leisure, open spaces and transport improvements.

On 21 June 2023, the Mayor in Cabinet approved a new delivery framework for NCIL funding, which splits the funding into three sub-programmes: Community Grants Programme, Capital Projects and Affordable Housing Projects. According to this framework, the Mayor in Cabinet has the power to decide which projects will receive NCIL funding and which projects will be cancelled.

We are extremely disappointed by this decision, which effectively cancels a large number of existing projects that were previously approved by the Council and supported by the community. These projects include improvements to parks, playgrounds, community centres, libraries, sports facilities, cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings. These projects are vital for our local area and our well-being.

We believe that this decision is undemocratic and unfair. It disregards the views and needs of the local communities and prioritises the Mayor's agenda over ours. It also contradicts the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which states that the Council should consult with the community on how best to spend the NCIL funding.

We therefore call on the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to reverse its decision on how to allocate NCIL funding and to reinstate the cancelled projects. We want to see our NCIL funding used to deliver local infrastructure improvements that are chosen by residents, not by the Mayor alone.