

Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>COUNCIL</b>  8 <sup>th</sup> May 2024	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Motions submitted by Members of the Council</b>	

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

## SUMMARY

1. The following motions have been submitted by Members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 11 for debate at the Council meeting.
2. The motions submitted are listed overleaf. In accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, the motions alternate between the administration and the other Political Groups.
3. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Borough. A motion may not be moved which is substantially the same as a motion which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the previous six months; or which proposes that a decision of the Council taken in the previous six months be rescinded; unless notice of the motion is given signed by at least twenty Members.
4. There is no specific duration set for this agenda item and consideration of the attached motions may continue until the time limit for the meeting is reached. The guillotine procedure at Council Procedure Rule 9.2 does not apply to motions on notice and any of the attached motions which have not been put to the vote when the time limit for the meeting is reached will be deemed to have fallen. A motion which is not put to the vote at the current meeting may be resubmitted for the next meeting but is not automatically carried forward.

## MOTIONS

Set out overleaf is the motion that has been submitted.

## **12.1 Motion on Tower Hamlets – A Go-To Borough**

**Proposed by:** Cllr Abu Talha Chowdhury

**Seconded by:** Cllr Kabir Ahmed

### **This Council notes:**

- The overwhelmingly positive role that the cooperation and coexistence communities in our borough has played in the identity, spirit and development of Tower Hamlets.
- The integral and invaluable role that migrants, refugees, and asylum-seeking peoples have played in shaping the history and culture of Tower Hamlets.
- That those fleeing tyranny, oppression and war – whether they Jewish communities; Huguenots; the Irish, Caribbean, Bangladeshi, and Southeast Asian communities; or Somali communities and many others – have always been welcomed into this Borough, enriched our community, and thrived.
- That the contribution of these communities to the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of the Borough have changed its identity for the better.
- That in Tower Hamlets, we enjoy very strong community cohesion, with many different groups living side by side. Our Annual Residents Survey found that 87% of residents said that Tower Hamlets is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.
- That these communities have stood together and fought against racism and hatred in every generation: from the Irish, Jewish and working-class cockneys who stood bravely against the fascist Blackshirts in the 1930s; to the Caribbean community that fought against racism in the 50s and 60s; the Bangladeshi and South East Asian community – including the Mayor and many members from across the chamber – who faced down the National Front in the 70s and 80s; and the broad coalition of communities that expelled the EDL in the 2010s.
- That from Wapping to Whitechapel; Bow to Bethnal Green; and Canary Wharf to Limehouse, these communities have made all areas of Tower Hamlets a ‘go-to’ place to be. Through art; cuisine; community projects; history; and the mixing and sharing of cultures, this borough exemplifies the best of London, and is a shining example of how diversity and respect brings out the best of residents and their areas.

### **This Council believes:**

- That recent comments about our borough – underpinned by ignorance; Islamophobia; and division – could not be further from the truth.
- Tower Hamlets has and should always be a borough where the poor, the tired, the oppressed, and the hungry can come and know they will be welcomed and treated with dignity and respect.
- That our borough’s diversity and openness represents the best of humanity, and demonstrates that tolerance, respect, and understanding will always produce caring and cooperative places for people to live.

- That regardless of religion, skin colour, sexual orientation, gender, or belief system, Tower Hamlets will always be a safe place for all its residents.

**This Council resolves:**

- To produce an exhibition showcasing the rich history of diversity, integration and migration to Tower Hamlets, to be showcased in the new Town Hall.
- To invite any individual from Westminster especially those in any doubt to see the positive benefits of this migration and diversity of cultures to come for a tour of Tower Hamlets, to see first-hand the real values that underpin our borough.
- To build on the borough's work with organisations that support and protect the poorest, migrants and refugees.
- To work with communities and external stakeholders to develop and enhance its institutional knowledge in protecting and promoting refugees and asylum-seeking people, strengthen our social inclusion work to build links with marginalised communities, building on the good work of the existing Refugee and Families teams, and to ensure that these new communities can feel as accepted and integrated into the cultural and social fabric of our borough as the scores that preceded them.
- To work with boroughs and authorities across London and the country to protect migrants, refugees, and asylum-seeking people from hostile environments.
- That this administration and Council will continue to promote inclusivity; cooperation; and respect between and amongst all its communities and will always stand up against any division or attacks on our borough.
- To officially state its wish to be designated a 'Borough of Sanctuary' – cementing its commitment to inclusivity, tolerance, and dignity for all people.