

## **CTRA Consultation Response to LBTH Community Governance Review**

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council received a valid petition on 23 July 2018 from local residents requesting the creation of a new parish council, 'Spitalfields Town Council', within the two wards of Spitalfields and Banglatown and Weavers.

Please find below the official response to the consultation questionnaire, which forms the first part of the consultation, by Columbia Tenants and Residents Association.

### **1. Do you support the proposal to create a parish council ('Town Council') for the Spitalfields area?**

Answer: No

#### **Please give the reasons for your response**

Answer: As a Tenants and Residents Association based in Weavers Ward adjacent to the boundary of the proposed Spitalfields Town Council we fear that this would lead to our residents having less of a say over the development of the area.

Brick Lane stands between the City and the rest of Tower Hamlets it is an important and iconic part of the East End. City borders are starting to encroach on this area and we worry that with less unity across Tower Hamlets this process will be accelerated and Brick Lane's cultural and historical identity will be lost.

The proposed parish borders include two contentious new building projects in Norton Folgate and Bishopsgate Goodsynd. These developments will have a big impact on our residents and should be decided by all affected parts of Tower Hamlets not just those within the borders of this proposed town council unit. We worry that the reason for setting up the new council is in part motivated by a plan to gain control over the planning application of these developments.

The area mapped out to become a new town council has a high concentration of businesses paying business rates, this money would therefore be lost to the rest of Tower Hamlets and we feel that this would potentially lead to higher council tax rates for our residents.

### **2. Do you support the proposed boundaries for the parish council ('Town Council')?**

Answer: No

#### **Please give the reasons for your response**

Answer: We have noticed that the border plan does not properly reflect the natural outline of the Spitalfields parish; many residential areas on the borders have been left out, notably the larger social housing estates. We worry that these omissions have been a conscious decision and a way to exclude residents from this administrative unit. We also worry that it would lead to residents of these areas having no say in the running of the more commercial areas on their doorsteps.

- 3. If a parish council is created, the petitioners propose that it is called 'Spitalfields Town Council'. What do you think?**

Answer: While we do not support this new Town Council being formed. We do feel that that the proposed name will expunge Banglatown and its cultural identity.

- 4. If a parish council is created, the petitioners propose that it is divided into at least three electoral wards. What do you think?**

Answer: It is our understanding that to make this new town council viable additional councillors will be required than currently cover this area. This will obviously lead to extra cost to the public purse.