

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**  
**(ORDINARY MEETING)**  
**WEDNESDAY 13 JULY 2016**  
**LATE QUESTION**

**QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR ANOOD AL-SAMERAI**

Does the Leader of the Council think it is appropriate and respectful to the people of this borough to refer to some residents as ‘well-to-do social cleansers’?

**RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE**

*Note: In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.8.8, this question has been redirected to the cabinet member for adult care and financial inclusion.*

I would like to apologise for this inappropriate remark which I made in a private email to a constituent in response to correspondence between a number of individuals including an opposition councillor.

I think it is important to acknowledge the context in which it was made, which was in response to some very offensive remarks about social housing tenants, which suggested that building new social housing would lead to an increase in “anti-social behaviour from gangs...drug dealing and burglary”, as well as noting concern that “new social buildings will house single mothers and children.”

I was frankly outraged that instead of challenging these offensive comments, the opposition member actually agreed with the extremely offensive characterisation of social housing tenants, responding: “Excellent, explains the position perfectly.”

This administration is committed to delivering the new council homes that our residents need and I think it is outrageous that opposition members would back a campaign that seeks to deny homes to people on lower incomes.