



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

THE EAST END TRADES GUILD general meeting was attended by Tower Hamlets Mayoral Candidates yesterday Wednesday May 7<sup>th</sup>.

John Biggs – Labour candidate and Chris Wilford from the Conservatives joined EETG members to discuss the priority issues affecting local small businesses. Lutfur Rahman sent Mickey Ambrose as his deputy to respond to members concerns on rents, rates and planning.

James Truman managing Director of Trumans, Rosanna Leal of Mercadito Productions who hosts the Chilli Festival at Spitalfields Farm and Shanaz Khan, proprietor of CHAAT restaurant on Redchurch Street and Acting Chair of the EETG all gave presentations on the top member's priority issues of rents, rates and planning declaring "We are the beating heart of the East End."

THE EAST END TRADES GUILD is a co-operative of small independent traders working together in the interests of all proprietor-owned-and-run-businesses in the East End.

The Candidates all agreed to the five proposals that were put forward by the EETG Co Chairs;

1. To meet the EETG biannually during the Mayoralty with the first meeting in one month from the elections

Mickey Ambrose on behalf of the Mayor suggested three meeting would be more than sufficient.

2. To continue to work on a joint proposal for an affordable rent strategy using the Sustainable Communities act, which includes the adoption of the leasing code, and have this proposal presented to central government by the end of July

"In Mayor Rahman's written statement he said that it's important that small businesses are protected from rent hikes and that he is committed to working with the EETG to get the best protection possible"

- To commit to working with the EETG on developing a business case for discretionary business rate relief in the manufacturing sector

John Biggs added he likes Idea of a local discretion in reducing business rates with a prospectus to highlight mutual benefit

- To nominate a councillor to take responsibility for small business issues in the borough

John Biggs proposed a Cabinet member for business skills and employment to help rebuild the link between local community and employment which would include small businesses and town centres

- To commit to working with us on a strategy for Tower Hamlets planning infrastructure that recognises the essential contribution of proprietor owned and run businesses in the borough

John Biggs “Keen to look at ways to secure affordable rents and would like to look at using the planning system encourage that to happen”

“ wants to work on the planning system to provide a wider range of businesses to stop tesco metro colonising our borough and sweeping away grocers and other artisan traders”

Chris Wilford said he would like to “Lay down gauntlet to national government as a model for what you can do in an inner London borough by working in partnership with the East End Trades Guild”

The general meeting was well attended by a broad range of businesses including Trumans, Genesis Cinema, Leila’s Shop, Gardners Bags, Luke Jacob Hair Salon, Bina Shoes, M&G Ironmongery, Wood n’ Things.

For further information contact Acting Chair Shanaz Khan who can arrange interviews with businesses , supply photographs, film and further information.

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Information: See also: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4C7hjMCqG4>

<http://eastendtradesguild.org.uk/>