

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the Meeting of the Council of the City of Westminster held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 24th January, 2024 at Westminster Council House, 97-113 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5PT.

PRESENT

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Patricia McAllister

COUNCILLORS

Concia Albert	Iman Less
Gillian Arrindell	Patrick Lilley
Barbara Arzymanow	Alan Mendoza
Geoff Barraclough	Tim Mitchell
Liza Begum	Matt Noble
David Boothroyd	Ellie Ormsby
Ruth Bush	Ralu Oteh-Osoka
Nafsika Butler-Thalassis	Angela Piddock
Melvyn Caplan	Ed Pitt Ford
Maggie Carman	Robert Rigby
Md Shamsed Chowdhury	Rachael Robathan
Laila Cunningham	Tim Roca
Lorraine Dean	Ian Rowley
Tony Devenish	Caroline Sargent
Paul Dimoldenberg	Karen Scarborough
Robert Eagleton	Mark Shearer
Paul Fisher	Selina Short
Jim Glen	James Small-Edwards
David Harvey	Judith Southern
Sara Hassan	Max Sullivan
Elizabeth Hitchcock	Paul Swaddle
Adam Hug	Hamza Taouzzale
Louise Hyams	Jessica Toale
Ryan Jude	Aziz Toki
Amanda Langford	Jacqui Wilkinson
Aicha Less	Jason Williams

APOLOGIES: Councillor Cara Sanquest

The Lord Mayor invited the Council to join her in observing a minute's silence in memory of two former Councillors, Honorary Alderman Anne Mallinson OBE and Gery Bramall, who had both sadly passed away.

1 APPOINTMENT OF RELIEF CHAIRMAN

- 1.1 Motion moved by the Lord Mayor and seconded by Councillor Ellie Ormsby, that Councillor Concia Albert be elected as Relief Chair.
- 1.2 Motion put, and on a show of hands, declared **CARRIED**.

2 MINUTES

- 2.1 The minutes of the proceedings at the Council meeting held on Wednesday 15 November 2023 were, with the assent of the Members present, signed by the Lord Mayor as a true record of the proceedings.

3 LORD MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The Lord Mayor referred to these as set out on the agenda.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

5 STATEMENT ON URGENT MATTERS

- 5.1 There were no urgent matters.

6 COUNCILLOR PRESENTED PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS, IF ANY

- 6.1 There were no petitions or deputations received.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 7.1 Members of the public asked five questions which were responded to by the relevant Cabinet Members. The questions and responses are available on the Council's website.

8 QUESTIONS

- 8.1 The questions, supplementary questions and replies are included as a recording on the Council's website.

9 COUNCILLOR ISSUE

9.1 Housing Repairs in Pimlico

Councillor Jim Glen spoke, and Councillor Liza Begum replied.

10 PARTY BUSINESS

10.1 The Majority Party selected to debate the topic of 'A new public realm CCTV network for Westminster'. The debate would be referred to the relevant Executive Director for consideration when reporting on the subject.

10.2 The Opposition Party selected to debate the topic of 'Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in Westminster'. The debate would be referred to the relevant Executive Director for consideration when reporting on the subject.

11 SAFER WESTMINSTER PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2024-27

11.1 RESOLVED:

That the Safer Westminster Partnership Strategy 2024 -2027 be approved.

12 REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL: COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS (INCLUDING COUNCIL TAX LOCAL REDUCTION SCHEME) AND COUNCIL TAX BASE REPORT

12.1 RESOLVED:

- 1) That the following recommendations for the financial year 2024/25 be approved:-
 - (i) that the Council Tax discount for second homes remains at 0%
 - (ii) that the Council Tax discounts for empty properties, including the discounts that replaced the previous Class A and C Council Tax exemptions, remain at 0%.
 - (iii) that a Long-Term Empty Property Premium continues at the maximum percentages allowed for by the current legislation for the 2024/25 financial year. which includes commencing the premium a year after a property has been empty, rather than the current 2 years.
 - (iv) that the Director of Revenues & Benefits be given delegated authority to determine any individual local discount applications received from Council Taxpayers during the 2024/25 financial year under section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

- 2) That the same Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024/25 which has operated successfully since 2013/14 be approved. The scheme was based on the Default Scheme Regulations, updated to reflect changes made via the Prescribed Requirements Amendment Regulations and with War Disabled Pensions, War Widow, Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation scheme payments disregarded in full when calculating a claimant's income. The same disregards should also apply to Housing Benefit and claims for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP).
- 3) That the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 for the Whole City is 137,295.64 equivalent Band D properties, for Montpelier Square alone 96.96 equivalent Band D properties and for Queen's Park 3,700.40 equivalent Band D properties.
- 4) That the figures set out in paragraph 2.3 above for the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 be used by the Council to make a determination pursuant to the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 5) That it be determined to implement a 100% Second Home Premium for the 2025/26 financial year, which is the earliest date allowed for under the new legislation.

13 NOTICE OF MOTION

Co-operative Councils' Innovation Network

- 13.1 The Majority Party submitted the notice of motion as set out on the agenda. The notice of motion was moved by Councillor Ellie Ormsby and seconded by Councillor Jason Williams.
- 13.2 The Lord Mayor put the motion to the vote and following a show of hands declared the motion **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED:

That

This Council notes that:

- The Co-operative Council's Innovation Network (CCIN) is a Local Government Association (LGA) Special Interest Group and is open to all UK Councils. It is a non-party political organisation.
- The CCIN's stated aim is to drive innovation and reform within the framework of Cooperative values and principles, building an equal partnership with local people.
- By the 9 January 2024, there were already 47 Full Council Members, 24 Associate Members (including 13 Town, Parish & Community Councils),

and 53 Affiliate Members. Co-operative Council Members (excluding GMCA) represent 12.35m citizens and control a budget of £21.4bn.

- Under the new Labour administration, and its Fairer Westminster Strategy, the Council has already made great progress in embedding the 'Co-operative difference' into the way the Council works with its residents. For example, through Westminster's Charter Against Dirty Money, revised Responsible Procurement Strategy, Fairer Economy Plan, Local Area Panels and reform of resident consultation – to name just a few examples of change.

This Council believes that:

- The unprecedented challenges facing the public sector and local communities mean that traditional models of topdown governance and economic growth are no longer fit for purpose.
- We urgently need to create a new approach, and that the founding traditions of the co-operative movement – collective action and co-operation, empowerment and enterprise – offer a foundation for fresh and innovative solutions which can be built on to tackle the challenges of today.
- The Co-operative Values developed by the International Co-operative Alliance should be at the heart of this new approach. The core values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity.

The Council resolves to:

- Play an active role as a new member of the CCIN and be part of a growing and influential network committed to developing a new relationship with citizens.
- Further embed the 'Co-operative difference' into the way this Council works with its residents, and adhere to the principles of the CCIN as part of our Fairer Westminster Strategy:
 - Social Partnership - We will strengthen the cooperative partnership between the Council, citizens, communities and enterprises, based on a shared sense of responsibility for wellbeing and mutual benefit.
 - Co-production - We will develop systems that enable citizens to be equal partners in designing and commissioning Council services and in determining the use of public resources.
 - Democratic Engagement - We will support the active engagement of the full range of residents in decision making and priority setting.
 - Enterprise and Social Economy - We will promote community-based approaches to economic development that focus on supporting the

creation of jobs, social enterprises and other businesses and providing an environment for co-operative and mutual enterprises to thrive.

- o Maximising social value - We will support the development of a framework and criteria for social value, giving substance to the concept, to ensure better local social and economic outcomes.
- o New models of meeting priority needs - In exploring new ways of meeting the priority needs of our communities we will encourage models, such as co-operatives and mutuals, which give greater influence and voice to staff and users in designing and commissioning public services and in determining the use of public resources.
- o Community leadership and a new role for councillors - We will explore ways for the Council to act as a platform for helping the community to contribute to local outcomes, and to re-think the role of councillors as community connectors, brokers and leaders.
- o Innovation - We will embrace innovation in how we work with local communities to drive positive change.
- o Learning - We will capture and 'expand' the experience and learning from individual projects to encourage broader application of cooperative principles across the Network.

The Meeting ended at 9.27pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____