

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the Meeting of the Council of the City of Westminster held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 4th March, 2020 at Westminster Council House, 97-113 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5PT.

PRESENT

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Ruth Bush

COUNCILLORS

Heather Acton	Adam Hug
Ian Adams	Louise Hyams
Barbara Arzymanow	Aicha Less
Timothy Barnes	Pancho Lewis
Geoff Barraclough	Andrea Mann
Rita Begum	Patricia McAllister
David Boothroyd	Guthrie McKie
Iain Bott	Tim Mitchell
Ruth Bush	Gotz Mohindra
Nafsika Butler-Thalassis	Eoghain Murphy
Melvyn Caplan	Matt Noble
Maggie Carman	Emily Payne
Danny Chalkley	Robert Rigby
Lorraine Dean	Rachael Robathan
Tony Devenish	Tim Roca
Paul Dimoldenberg	Ian Rowley
Christabel Flight	Karen Scarborough
Peter Freeman	Mark Shearer
Murad Gassanly	Selina Short
Jonathan Glanz	Andrew Smith
Jim Glen	James Spencer
Matthew Green	Paul Swaddle
Lindsey Hall	Shamim Talukder
Angela Harvey	Hamza Taouzzale
David Harvey	Judith Warner
Elizabeth Hitchcock	Jacqui Wilkinson

1 APPOINTMENT OF RELIEF CHAIRMAN

- 1.1 It was moved by the Lord Mayor and seconded by Councillor Paul Swaddle that Councillor Lindsey Hall be elected as Relief Chairman.
- 1.2 Motion put, and on a show of hands, declared **CARRIED**.

2 MINUTES

2. **RESOLVED:** The minutes of the proceedings at the Council meeting on Wednesday 22 January 2020 were, with the assent of the Members present, signed by the Lord Mayor as a true record of the proceedings.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 There were none.

4 STATEMENT ON URGENT MATTERS

- 4.1 There were no statements on urgent matters.

5 CABINET REPORT – 10 FEBRUARY 2020

- 5.1 The report of the Cabinet on 10th February 2020 was submitted. Paragraphs 1-6 were considered together.
- 5.2 Councillor Rachael Robathan spoke in favour of the recommendations set out in the Cabinet report which was seconded by Councillor Melvyn Caplan.
- 5.3 Following debate, to which Councillor Robathan replied, the Lord Mayor put the amendment to the recommendations in paragraph 1 of the Cabinet report moved by Councillor Adam Hug and seconded by Councillor David Boothroyd to a vote and on a show of hands there voted:

For amendment one: Councillors Barraclough, Begum, Boothroyd, Butler-Thalassis, Carman, Dimoldenberg, Hug, Less, Lewis, Mann, McAllister, McKie, Noble, Roca, Talukder and Taouzzale.

Against amendment one: Councillors Acton, Adams, Arzymanow, Barnes, Bott, Caplan, Chalkley, Dean, Devenish, Flight, Freeman, Gassanly, Glanz, Glen, Green, Hall, Angela Harvey, David Harvey, Hitchcock, Hyams, Mitchell, Mohindra, Murphy, Payne, Rigby, Robathan, Rowley, Scarborough, Shearer, Short, Smith, Spencer, Swaddle, Warner and Wilkinson.

Absence or not voting: The Lord Mayor and Councillors Aiken, Beddoe, Burbridge, Bright, Cox, Elcho, Qureshi and Toki.

- 5.4 The Lord Mayor declared amendment one to be **LOST**.
- 5.5 The Lord Mayor advised that the voting was on the unamended recommendations in paragraph 1 of the Cabinet report 2020-2021. The Lord Mayor put the recommendations of the Cabinet in paragraph 1 to the vote and on a show of hands there voted:

For the recommendations: Councillors Acton, Adams, Arzymanow, Barnes, Bott, Caplan, Chalkley, Dean, Devenish, Flight, Freeman, Gassanly, Glanz, Glen, Green, Hall, Angela Harvey, David Harvey, Hitchcock, Hyams, Mitchell,

Mohindra, Murphy, Payne, Rigby, Robathan, Rowley, Scarborough, Shearer, Short, Smith, Spencer, Swaddle, Warner and Wilkinson.

Against the recommendations: Councillors Barraclough, Begum, Boothroyd, Butler-Thalassis, Carman, Dimoldenberg, Hug, Less, Lewis, Mann, McAllister, McKie, Noble, Roca, Talukder and Taouzzale.

Absence or not voting: The Lord Mayor and Councillors Aiken, Beddoe, Burbridge, Bright, Cox, Elcho, Qureshi and Toki.

- 5.6 The Lord Mayor declared the recommendations in paragraph 1 of the Cabinet report **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

City for All

1. That the City for All plan priorities set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted and approved.

Council Tax

2. That the council tax for a Band D property be agreed at £448.21 for 2020/21, an increase of £8.67 (2.00%) for the Adult Social Care precept and £6.20 (1.43%) for general purposes;
3. That, subject to 2) above, the council tax for the City of Westminster, excluding the Montpelier Square area and Queen's Park Community Council, for the year ending 31 March 2021, be as specified in the Council Tax Resolution in Appendix H of Appendix 1. That the Precepts and Special Expenses be as also specified in Appendix H to Appendix 1 for properties in Montpelier Square and the Queen's Park Community Council;
4. That the formal resolution for 2020/21 attached at appendix H to Appendix 1 including the council tax requirement of £59.477m be agreed;
5. That the proposed Greater London Authority precept (Band D) of £332.07 comprising of an increase of £10.00 for the Police element and a further £1.56 for the non-Police element be noted; [NB: Please note that the Greater London Authority precept has now been confirmed]
6. That the Council continue the Westminster Community Contribution to allow the most expensive (Band H) properties in the City to voluntarily contribute towards supporting discretionary services that support the three priorities of youth services, helping rough sleepers off the streets and helping people who are lonely and isolated;

Revenue Budget

7. That the views of the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Task Group as set out in Appendix J to Appendix 1 be noted.
8. That the proposed General Fund net budget requirement of £179.977m summarised at Appendix C to the report and shown by service (Executive Leadership Team) in Appendix G to Appendix 1 be agreed;
9. That the savings and growth proposals for 2020/21 to 2022/23 set out in appendix G to Appendix 1 is approved;
10. That the Equality Impact Assessments included in appendix I to Appendix 1 be received and noted to inform the consideration of the budget;
11. That the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020/21 and 30-Year Housing Investment Plan also presented to Cabinet on 10 February 2020 and that recommends the HRA budget and rent levels for 2020/21 be noted.

Capital Programme

12. That the Capital Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25, forecast position for 2019/20 and future years' forecasts summarised up to 2033/34 report also presented to Cabinet on 10 February 2020 that recommends the Council's capital programme and financing be noted.

Reserves, Balances and Budget Estimates

13. That the reserves policy as set out in section 10 to Appendix 1 be noted.
14. That the views of the Section 151 Officer with regards to estimates underpinning the proposed budget changes and reserves levels in paragraph 10.21 in Appendix 1 be noted.
15. That £5m is earmarked in reserves for investment in green initiatives to support the Climate Emergency declaration;

Treasury Management and Investment Framework

16. That the Treasury Management Strategy report for 2020/21 including the annual investment strategy, borrowing limits and prudential indicators as set out in appendix H to Appendix 1 be noted.
17. That the 2020/21 Integrated Investment Framework report also presented to Cabinet on 10 February 2020 which sets out future investment decisions be noted.

- 5.7 The Lord Mayor put the recommendations in paragraph 2 of the Cabinet report, Capital Strategy Report 2020-2021 to 2024-2025, Forecast position for 2019-202 and Future Years' summarised up to 2033-2034 to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendations **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

That full Council:

1. Approved the capital strategy as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
 2. Approved the capital expenditure for the General Fund as set out in Appendix 2 to the report for 2020/21 to 2024/25 and future years to 2033/34.
 3. Approved that all development and investment projects, along with all significant projects follow the previously approved business case governance process as set out in section 8 of the report attached as Appendix 2.
 4. Approved that no financing sources, unless stipulated in regulations or necessary agreements, are ring fenced.
 5. Approved the council plans to continue its use of capital receipts to fund the revenue costs of eligible proposals (subject to full business cases for each project). This comes under the MHCLG Guidance on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (FCR).
 6. Approved the financing of the capital programme and revenue implications as set out in section 13 of the report attached as Appendix 2.
 7. Approved the financing of the capital programme being delegated to the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to provide sufficient flexibility to allow for the most effective use of Council resources.
- 5.8 The Lord Mayor put the recommendations in paragraph 3 of the Cabinet report: Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2020-2021 and 30 Year Housing Investment Plan to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendations **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

That full Council:

1. Approved the HRA revenue budget for 2020-21 as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.
2. Noted the HRA 5-year revenue budgets for 2020-21 to 2024-25 as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

3. Noted the HRA 30-year revenue budgets for 2020-21 to 2049-50 as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.
4. Approved the HRA 5-year Capital Programme for a total of £895.99m as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.
5. Noted the 30-year Capital Programme for 2020-21 to 2049-50 as detailed as set out in Appendix 3 to the report).
6. Noted a rent increase of 2.7% from April 2020 as applicable under the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016.
7. Noted the HRA reserves and balances for the 5-year Business Plan as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

5.9 The Lord Mayor put the recommendations in paragraph 4 of the Cabinet report: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020-2021 to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendations **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

1. Approved the Treasury Management Strategy Statement;
2. Approved the borrowing strategy and borrowing limits for 2020/21 to 2024/25 set out in Appendix 4 to the report.
3. Approved the prudential Indicators set out in section 8 of the report attached as Appendix 4.
4. Approved the Annual Investment Strategy and approved investments as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.
5. Approved the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

5.10 The Lord Mayor put the recommendations in paragraph 5 of the Cabinet report: Integrated Investment Framework 2020-2021 to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendations **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

That the full Council:

1. Approved and implemented the Integrated Investment Framework set out in Appendix 5 to the report.
2. Approved the target for the overall return on Council investments should aspire to match inflation;
3. Approved the benefits of investing in the Pension Fund should be used as a benchmark when evaluating other investments;

4. Adopted the asset allocation percentages set out in the Framework and work towards achieving these;
 5. Agreed that the overarching objective of this Framework is to achieve an overall return on Council investments aspiring to match inflation and to reduce costs and liabilities, whilst maintaining adequate cash balances for operational purposes, and not exposing the capital value of investments to unnecessary risk;
 6. Approved that investments allocated to out-of-borough property developments should be considered individually and should outweigh the benefits of investing in-borough (which can have a number of non-commercial benefits, e.g., place making) and in a diversified property portfolio (acquisitions will be made out of borough only on an exceptional basis). Individual decisions should be subject to Cabinet Member approval;
 7. Approved that the property and alternative asset allocation should focus on in-borough, with out of borough options being explored on an exceptional basis and subject to Cabinet Member approval;
 8. Approved the Investment Executive to implement, monitor and report on the investment strategy.
- 5.11 The Lord Mayor put the recommendations in paragraph 6 of the Cabinet report: Pay Policy 2020-2021 to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendations **ADOPTED**.

RESOLVED:

That the full Council:

Approved the Pay Policy for 2020 – 2021 attached as Appendix 6 to the report.

6 GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE - 26 FEBRUARY 2020

Members' Allowances Scheme 2020-2021

The Lord Mayor put the recommendations in paragraph 1 of the General Purposes Committee report to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendation adopted.

RESOLVED:

1. Agreed that the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2020-2021 set out in Appendix 1 to the report from 1 April 2020 subject to the amendment that both deputy leaders of the minority party be eligible to receive the associated allowance for the post.

2. Agreed that the Members' Allowances (Basis and SRA) for 2020-2021 be increased further in line with any salary increase for Council staff that may be agreed above 2% by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Constitutional Issues: Reduction in the number of Policy and Scrutiny Committees

The Lord Mayor put the recommendation in paragraph 2 of the General Purposes Committee report to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendation adopted.

RESOLVED:

1. Agreed to the reorganisation of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees, which includes reducing them in number from 5 to 4, with the same proportionality and allocation of seats as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
2. Agreed to reduce the membership of the Westminster Scrutiny Commission by one majority party seat to reflect the reduction in the number of Committee chairmen.
3. Authorised officers to adjust the terms of reference and names of the Policy and Scrutiny Committees to reflect the changes in the Cabinet Member reporting lines as shown in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Meeting ended at 9.15 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____