

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 20 January 2016 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye (Chair), Abdeslam Amrani, Chris Barnham, Paul Bell, Peter Bernards, Chris Best, Kevin Bonavia, Andre Bourne, David Britton, Bill Brown, Sir Steve Bullock (Mayor), Suzannah Clarke, John Coughlin, Liam Curran, Janet Daby, Amanda De Ryk, Joe Dromey, Damien Egan, Colin Elliott, Alan Hall, Maja Hilton, Simon Hooks, Ami Ibitson, Mark Ingleby, Stella Jeffrey, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Alicia Kennedy, Helen Klier, Jim Mallory, Paul Maslin, David Michael, Joan Millbank, Jamie Milne, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Rachel Onikosi, Crada Onuegbu, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Pat Raven, Joan Reid, Gareth Siddorn, Jonathan Slater, Alan Smith, Luke Sorba, Alan Till, Paul Upex, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brenda Dacres and Councillor Roy Kennedy. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Alicia Kennedy, Crada Onuegbu and Jacq Paschoud.

19. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Walsh declared a disclosable prejudicial interest in Item 12 relating to his employment and he withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Moore declared a disclosable prejudicial interest in Item 12 relating to her employment in Further Education and she withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor John Paschoud declared a personal interest in Item 12 as a person who sometimes derived revenue from the Higher Education sector.

Councillor Morrison declared a personal interest in Item 14 as a member of the LFEPA.

20. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on November 25 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

21. Petitions

None received.

22. Announcements or Communications

Former Councillor Stephen Padmore RIP

The Chair welcomed members of the family of the late former Councillor Stephen Padmore to the meeting including his widow and daughter, former Councillor Sabina Padmore.

The Mayor paid tribute to his 28 years of dedicated service, remembering him as an original figure who made a difference to the lives of hundreds of people. The Mayor depicted him as a groundbreaker for BME representation in public life and that he was unpredictable, funny and challenging.

Councillor Daby recalled she had known him since 2009 and that they shared a common Guyanese background. She said she still had fond memories of the support and encouragement she had received from him.

Councillor Muldoon said he had known Stephen for over 20 years and recalled him as a passionate orator who spoke from the heart and had the capacity to make people think. He paid tribute to the work he had done for Moonshot and for the families of the New Cross fire.

Councillor Maslin reported he had made a personal tribute at Stephen's funeral but that he also wished now to offer a tribute to his political life. He said he had been an amazing politician and incredible organiser who strived to maximise the Labour vote even against token opposition, as he regarded this as a duty to the electorate. He had been an energetic fundraiser who was loved in the community and had been able to speak with passion, power and pace. He believed Stephen regarded politics as almost a close combat sport and that his role and contribution had never been fully appreciated.

All present observed a 1 minute silence in memory of Stephen Padmore.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Councillor Pauline Morrison spoke about the Council's continuing commitment to Holocaust Memorial Day which was to take place on Sunday January 24. She recalled the horror of a personal visit she had made to Auschwitz with Councillor Stamirowski.

Councillor Morrison then introduced the Reverend David Rome who commemorated the event with poem and song before lighting a memorial candle for all victims of holocausts.

All present then observed a 1 minute silence.

Annual London's New Year's Day Parade

The Chair reported Lewisham had finished second in the boroughs section of the Annual London's New Year's Day Parade utilising an 'Animal Magic' theme, and winning a trophy and £7,000 which had been donated to the Mayor's charity.

23. Public Questions

68 questions were received from the following members of the public which were answered by the Cabinet Member indicated. A copy of the questions and answers was circulated separately and can be viewed on the Council website with the meeting papers.

1.	Mike Keogh	Cllr Smith
2.	Yvonne Peart	Cllr Millbank
3.	Patricia Richardson	Cllr Best
4.	Raymond Woolford	Cllr Egan
5.	Moira Kerrane	Cllr Maslin
6.	Dermot McKibbin	Cllr Egan
7.	Keme Nzerem	Cllr Maslin
8.	Stephanie Flower	Cllr Maslin
9.	Sue Amaradivakara	Cllr Maslin
10.	Phil Dawson	Cllr Maslin
11.	Matt Lewis	Cllr Maslin
12.	Karen Staples	Cllr Maslin
13.	Roger Francomb	Cllr Bonavia
14.	Carol Spurling	Cllr Maslin
15.	Roxy Walsh	Cllr Maslin
16.	Katherine Perry	Cllr Maslin
17.	Mark Fairnington	Cllr Maslin
18.	Brian Turpin	Cllr Smith
19.	Natalie Morrice	Cllr Maslin
20.	Lucy Masters	Cllr Smith
21.	John Hamilton	Cllr Millbank
22.	Debbie Knowles	Cllr Maslin
23.	Martin Allen	Cllr Egan
24.	Dr Almuth McDowall	Cllr Maslin
25.	Kate Franklin	Cllr Maslin
26.	Adrian Bradbury	Cllr Smith
27.	Ken Wakeman	Cllr Millbank
28.	Dr Emma Grant	Cllr Maslin
29.	Penelope Prodger	Cllr Maslin
30.	Peter Richardson	Cllr Best
31.	Joanna McMahon	Cllr Smith
32.	Cesar Gimeno Lavin	Cllr Smith
33.	Maryam Moarefvand	Cllr Maslin
34.	Rebekah Fox	Cllr Maslin
35.	Julie Davies	Cllr Maslin
36.	Lucy Large	Cllr Maslin
37.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
38.	Sarah Carter	Cllr Maslin
39.	Andy Carter	Cllr Smith
40.	Ursula Llewellyn	Cllr Maslin
41.	Andrew Ford-Lyons	Cllr Maslin
42.	Mike Keogh	Cllr Daby
43.	Yvonne Peart	Cllr Millbank
44.	Patricia Richardson	Cllr Bonavia
45.	Raymond Woolford	Cllr Onikosi
46.	Moira Kerrane	Cllr Maslin
47.	Dermot McKibbin	Cllr Egan
48.	Carol Spurling	Cllr Bonavia
49.	John Hamilton	Cllr Bonavia

50.	Peter Richardson	Cllr Millbank
51.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
52.	Mike Keogh	Cllr Best
53.	Yvonne Peart	Cllr Millbank
54.	Raymond Woolford	Cllr Onikosi
55.	Dermot McKibbin	Cllr Egan
56.	John Hamilton	Cllr Egan
57.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
58.	Raymond Woolford	Cllr Onikosi
59.	Dermot McKibbin	Cllr Egan
60.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
61.	Dermot McKibbin	Cllr Egan
62.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
63.	Dermot McKibbin	Cllr Egan
64.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
65.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
66.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
67.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin
68.	Matthew Mayes	Cllr Maslin

24. Member Questions

8 questions were received from the following Councillors which were answered by the Cabinet Members indicated. A copy of the questions and answers was circulated separately and can be viewed on the Council's website with the meeting papers.

1.	Councillor Walsh	Cllr Smith
2.	Councillor Hall	Mayor
3.	Councillor Jacq Paschoud	Cllr Best
4.	Councillor Ibitson	Cllr Onikosi/Cllr Smith
5.	Councillor Elliott	Cllr Best
6.	Councillor Walsh	Cllr Maslin
7.	Councillor Ibitson	Cllr Smith
8.	Councillor Walsh	Cllr Millbank

25. Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016-17

Councillor Kevin Bonavia moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Jamie Milne and it was:

RESOLVED that

(1) the outcomes of the consultation as set out be noted;

(2) a local CTRS be retained from 1 April 2016 that passes on any reduction in government funding, reflecting the Council's financial position following the announcement of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in November and the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement (LGFS) in December; and

(3) the deliver additional support to the most vulnerable residents be continued through use of the existing provision within Section 13A(1)(c) of the 1992 Local Government Finance Act.

26. Council Tax Base 2016-17

Councillor Kevin Bonavia moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Jamie Milne and it was:

RESOLVED that

(1) the Council Tax Base calculation for 2016/17, as set out in the annual Council Tax Base government return, be noted;

(2) a Council Tax Base of 78,528.58 band D equivalent properties for 2016/17 be approved;

(3) a budgeted Council Tax collection rate of 96.0% be approved;

(4) the existing policy of a 0% discount for second homes for 2015/16 be continued for 2016/17;

(5) the existing policy of a 0% discount for empty homes Class A (an empty property undergoing structural alteration or major repair to make it habitable) be continued;

(6) the existing policy of a 100% discount awarded for a period of four weeks and then a 0% discount thereafter, for empty homes – Class C (a substantially empty and unfurnished property) be continued;

(7) the existing policy of an empty homes premium of 50% in respect of long term empty properties be continued;

(8) the proposed National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) estimated net yield of £49.143m, based on the NNDR3 for 2014/15, be approved; and

(9) consistent with the approach taken in 2015/16, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) be implemented where 3.0% is passed onto working age CTRS recipients.

27. Financial Regulations and Directorate Schemes of Delegation

Councillor Kevin Bonavia moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Jamie Milne and it was:

RESOLVED that

(1) the latest version of the Financial Regulations be approved;

(2) to approve the Directorate Schemes of Delegation (Appendix 2) as they relate to non-executive functions; and

(3) note be taken that the Mayor has approved the Directorate Schemes of Delegation as they relate to executive functions.

28. Councillor Absence

This item was withdrawn.

29. Motion 1 Proposed Councillor Ibitson Seconded Councillor Hall

The Council agreed to a suspension of Standing Orders to limit all speeches on motions to a maximum of three minutes.

The motion was moved by Councillor Ibitson and seconded by Councillor Hall.

There was then a debate to which Councillor Britton contributed. The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

“Lewisham Council congratulates the Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Choir on their Christmas number one charity single ‘A Bridge Over You’ and commends the choir organisers for the positive effect their musical endeavours have had in terms of raising the profile of the NHS as a whole, boosting morale and raising funds for charity.

To ensure that the choir’s victory continues to flourish in the collective memory of Lewisham and the NHS, and ensure that the national support for our health services shown by the public who supported the choir remains current and prominent, council calls upon the Mayor of Lewisham to undertake the following:

- Write to the choir expressing the council’s thanks for their hard work and congratulations on their success, both in the recording studio and on the wards.
- Invite the choir to perform at the Council AGM.
- Follow the example of Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Chief Executive Tim Higginson in thanking singer Justin Bieber for his support for the choir’s efforts, after his asking fans to buy ‘A Bridge Over You’ gave a major boost to the choir’s quest for the festive top spot and extend a warm welcome to Mr Bieber if he wishes to perform at the council AGM.”

30. Motion 2 Proposed Councillor Walsh Seconded Councillor Dacres

The motion was moved by Councillor De Ryk and seconded by Councillor Brown.

Councillors Moore and Walsh vacated the meeting during consideration of this item.

The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

“This Council believes:

The Government is in the process of fundamentally changing the Higher Education Funding settlement agreed by Parliament by increasing costs to students by the back door. The Government's planned increase in charges, and removal of Maintenance Grants to students from the poorest households will adversely affect the widening participation agenda. These changes are being implemented before the Higher Education White Paper has even been drafted.

Widening Participation isn't about saving a couple of seats at ivory tower institutions for a few exceptionally bright kids from the working classes. Proposals to increase Higher Education costs further and, more fundamentally, to vary the terms of a contract after it's been agreed by parties means a student can now never be sure how much they are going to repay. This will shake the confidence of any future student, particularly those who come from the poorest backgrounds.

The government has also introduced a cut of 24 per cent to the adult education budget this year, which will have had and will continue to have serious ramifications for Further Education provision in England. From IT literacy courses supporting adults aiming to upskill for the workplace, to arts courses providing a safe space for vulnerable adults, adult education provision helps many who missed out on qualifications at school to achieve, retrain, and re-join the workforce.

That whilst we support increasing the domestic supply of nurses and other healthcare professionals training and joining the NHS, the idea that this is achieved by removing NHS bursaries is a flawed one. Whilst we recognise there is only a finite resource available to government to support trainee nurses, there are other resource implications, beyond financial capacity, of increasing trainee nurse places by 10,000 by 2020.

Those representative bodies for the professions have also judged the Government's plans as ill-conceived. Janet Davies Chief Exec of the Royal College of Nurses said: "Removing their bursaries will have a serious impact on them [Nurses] financially and put the future supply of nurses at serious risk.". Carmel Lloyd, Head of Education at the Royal College of Midwifery said: "This is a change that has huge implications for both our student midwife members and an already understaffed maternity service”.

That as a local authority now involved in the London NHS Devolution programme, we must play an ever greater and more active role in NHS workforce policy.

“This Council notes:

Currently, students in England who started university from 2012 will pay 9% of everything earned above £21,000 a year (or £1,750/month pre-tax salary)

once they graduate. In 2010, the Government promised that from April 2017 this repayment threshold would be increased each year in line with average earnings. It has now backtracked on the promise given to students, effectively hiking costs retrospectively. A move that, according to the Government, will mean more than two million graduates will end up paying £306 more each year by 2020-21 if they earn over £21,000.

The current government also plans to scrap maintenance grants for full-time Higher Education students in England from 2016, and replace them with more loans instead. Maintenance Grants support thousands of students from the lowest income households like those in Lewisham every year, and the Government's plan will saddle poorer students with yet more debt. The NUS estimates that 500,000 academically capable students rely on Maintenance Grants currently, and that the cuts mean that more than 40 per cent of students will now graduate with debts of up to £53,000 from a three year university course.

The Government plans remove £800,000,000 of bursaries for nursing students', midwives, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, podiatrists, radiographers, dietetics, ODP's and other students on NHS supported bursaries, replacing them with loans from September 2017, repayable by these students.

UNISON has calculated that a student nurse graduating in 2020 under this new financial regime could leave with debts over £50,000, yet be starting out in the workplace on a salary under £23,000.

This Council resolves:

To support the student nurses, The National Union of Students, and Trade Unions/Associations in the condemnation of this assault on Higher Education, widening participation and the NHS.

To respond to future Government consultations on the removal of NHS Bursaries and the Higher Education Green Paper calling for any changes to tuition fees, loan rates, or the selling off of the Student Loan Book to be debated and agreed by parliament."

31. Motion 3 Proposed Councillor Hooks Seconded Councillor Bourne

The motion was moved by Councillor Hooks and seconded by Councillor Bourne.

The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

"This Council believes:

- Childcare is an essential component of the infrastructure of the modern state.

- High quality, affordable and sufficiently available childcare options are beneficial both to parents (and guardians and other carers) and children, and should be available to all families.
- This Council is proud of our success in supporting children's development with 5 year olds in Lewisham, achieving a good level of development at a higher rate than anywhere else in England. But the position is not so positive in terms of the support we are able to give to working families.
- Many parts of the country have insufficient childcare options to meet the demands of their residents, particularly parents with "non-standard" working hours, and changes to the welfare system are likely to exacerbate this.
- The affordability of childcare is a particular issue – as the cost of childcare continues to rise while wages remain static, the cost of childcare means, for many families, it is not possible for parents and guardians to work.

This Council resolves:

To write to the Secretary of State for Education and request that she:

- (i) make the implementation of a high-quality, flexible and affordable nationwide system of childcare a government priority;
- (ii) develop a strategy to expand the availability of childcare nationally, particularly in light of welfare reforms which will lead to more parents working, and working for longer hours;
- (iii) undertake a thorough assessment of after-school and holiday childcare provision, accounting for the welfare reforms, and devises a strategy for ensuring all parents and guardians can access affordable and quality childcare;
- (iv) extend the review of childcare funding to examine options for reform and look at how childcare can be made more affordable on a realistic and sustainable basis across the country; and
- (v) carry out a national programme raising awareness of childcare options.

32. Motion 4 Proposed Councillor Hall Seconded Councillor Bernards

The motion was moved by Councillor Hall and seconded by Councillor Bernards.

There was then a debate to which Councillors Daby and Upex contributed.

The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

“Council notes with concern the current budget consultation being carried out by the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) proposes the permanent removal of 13 fire appliances including one from Forest Hill fire station. These appliances have been removed from normal service for the last two years to provide contingency cover during the period of industrial action over firefighter pensions.

As the Council noted in the Public Spending in Lewisham report in 2015 the absence of Forest Hill’s second appliance has had a negative impact on the time taken for both the first and second fire crews to arrive across Lewisham.

Since the implementation of Fifth London Safety Plan in 2014 and the closure of Downham fire station, the borough has seen an increase of over half a minute in the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident.

Furthermore, there has been an increase of 41 seconds for the arrival of the second fire engine; this has gone up from 6 minutes 22 seconds in 2012/13 to 7 minutes 4 seconds in 2014/15.

Bellingham and Crofton Park wards have seen increases of over half a minute for the arrival of the first fire engine at an incident. Crofton Park, Forest Hill, Perry Vale and Rushey Green wards have all seen increases of over 1 minute for the second crew to arrive. The second fire engine is important as the first crews cannot enter a building until they have been backed up by a second crew. The intensity of a fire can quadruple in just two minutes.

Council believes the permanent removal of a fire appliance will only lead to further deterioration in arrival times. It is for this reason that the Council supports the alternative budget proposals supported by the majority of LFEPA members which would retain the 13 appliances.

Therefore, this Council calls upon the Mayor of Lewisham to respond to the public consultation and support ‘Option A’ which includes retaining the 13 appliances.”

33. Motion 5 Proposed Councillor Walsh Seconded Councillor Smith

The movers accepted an amendment deleting the originally published text and inserting the wording shown below The motion was moved by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Smith.

There was then a debate to which Councillor Coughlin contributed.

The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

Amendment Proposed by Councillor Walsh and Seconded by Councillor Smith.

Delete all and insert:-

“This Council believes:

1. Boris Johnson as Mayor of London has consistently failed to deal with London’s illegal level of air quality; the situation is so dire now that London breached its annual air pollution limits within the first week of 2016.
2. That alongside CO2 emissions from all motor vehicles being dangerous to health, particulates and Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions from diesel vehicles cause or exacerbate a significant majority of respiration related health issues in London.
3. Most new petrol vehicles are equal to diesel for CO2 emissions, but diesel emissions are significantly more damaging to health than emissions from petrol vehicles. The vast majority of petrol vehicles emit less harmful emissions of nitrogen oxide (NOx) than even the newest diesel vehicles.
4. That as a Council we should support and where possible incentivise local residents in taking positive action to improve our collective environment and health.
5. Finally, this Council recognises that our action on its own cannot tackle the problem of air quality and for this, or any, council to succeed, our policies must be backed up by strong national legislation and the political will of the national government.

This Council notes:

1. A recent air quality analysis of Lewisham was undertaken and presented to the January 2015 Sustainable Development Committee by the London Air Quality Network, that highlighted the particulate (PM10/2.5) impacts and hot-spots across the Borough, and noted the areas where the levels was above the EU-wide legal maxima
2. Diesel emissions have been linked to cancer, heart and lung damage, in addition to a range of other health issues. The World Health Organisation has classified diesel emissions as carcinogenic.
3. That air pollution is an equality factor, where the poorest in our Borough are more likely to feel the effects of it than their better off counterparts.
4. A report commissioned by the GLA last year found that nearly 9,500 people die prematurely each year because of the capital’s dirty air. An ultra-low emissions zone is due to begin in 2020 in London to help tackle the problem – almost 60,000 lives later. Compliance should have been achieved by 2010, and the Supreme Court ruled that compliance had to be achieved as soon as possible.
5. The UK has been in breach of EU NO2 pollution limits for five years now and again last spring was ordered by the Supreme Court to publish an action plan on how to tackle this major health crisis. The resulting government plan was published in December, but London, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool,

Cardiff and Edinburgh and other major cities will still be in breach of NO2 limits for at least another five years, despite the new measures.

This Council resolves

1. To demand that the next Mayor of London takes this issue seriously, and to write to the new Mayor of London & the Government Minister for them to look at how they can speed up plans to reduce this issue, and to put the case forward for a strategy that includes incentivising owners of polluting privately-owned passenger cars to change their vehicles.
2. To take responsibility for saving Lewisham lives, where the current Mayor of London hasn't, by investigating how we as a Council can play our part locally through exploring and bringing forward our own action plan including an impact study of how to incentivise drivers through reductions in Council parking charges (and other means) for less particulate NOx & CO2 polluting vehicles, for scrutiny by the Council, and consultation with local residents."

34. Motion 6 Proposed Councillor Elliott Seconded Councillor Michael

The motion was moved by Councillor Elliott and seconded by Councillor Michael.

The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

"This Council Notes –

- a recent court defeat suffered by the government has highlighted the unfair impact the current, and future, benefits cap will have on already struggling carers. The European Court of Justice ruled that primary care givers who received carers allowance should be exempt from the benefits cap, which currently limits the amount a family can receive to £26,000 a year. This is set to be further reduced to £23,000 in London.
- the Judge, Mr Justice Collins deemed the government's decision discriminatory; he went on to highlight that neither in the impact statement nor what was put before parliament raised the effect on the disabled of a loss of a family carer.
- many primary care givers, the majority of whom are women, feel that they are facing a form of 'discrimination by association', as the current policy recognises those on disability benefits, but fails to exempt people caring for members of their own family who may live in a different property.
- the Chief Executive of Carers UK stated that many carers who provide substantial care to a loved one are struggling to make ends meet, with additional financial worries impacting on their own health. All this in spite of the fact that the economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is estimated to be £119bn per year.

- a past survey by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers found that 53% had borrowed money as a result of their caring role, with 61% having borrowed from a friend or relative and 41% using their overdraft.
- the Disability Benefits Consortium is warning the government that their continued policy is likely to force even more disabled people and their carers to rely on foodbanks. The government's emphasis appears to be focussed on the legality of implementing the benefits cap rather than on how it is excluding full time carers who already make an immense contribution to the government, health service and their disabled loved ones.

The Council resolves –

to show our support for the 7 million UK carers by opposing the unfair benefits cap on full-time carers and join organisations and individuals by lobbying Members of Parliament to amend the Welfare Reform and Work Bill in this regard.”

The meeting closed at 9.37pm