

# MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 22 January 2020 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Damien Egan (Mayor), Obajimi Adefiranye, Abdeslam Amrani, Tauseef Anwar, Chris Barnham, Paul Bell, Peter Bernards, Chris Best, Kevin Bonavia, Andre Bourne, Bill Brown, Suzannah Clarke, Patrick Codd, Tom Copley, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Sophie Davis, Amanda De Ryk, Joe Dromey, Colin Elliott, Aisling Gallagher, Leo Gibbons, Alan Hall, Carl Handley, Octavia Holland, Sue Hordijenko, Mark Ingleby, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Caroline Kalu, Silvana Kelleher, Jim Mallory, Sophie McGeevor, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Lionel Openshaw, Jacq Paschoud (Chair), John Paschoud, Stephen Penfold, Kim Powell, James Rathbone, Jonathan Slater, Alan Smith, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski and James-J Walsh.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Juliet Campbell, Councillor Coral Howard, Councillor Louise Krupski, Councillor Paul Maslin, Councillor Joan Millbank, Councillor Hilary Moore, Councillor Joani Reid, Councillor Sakina Sheikh and Councillor Susan Wise.

## 49. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations.

## 50. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on November 27 2019 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## 51. Petitions

Councillor John Paschoud presented a petition on behalf of Perry Vale ward resident Kirsten Brooks bearing 275 names. The petition called on the Council to continue providing a staffed School Crossing Patrol on Cranston Road and to actively investigate other measures to make the road safer for children and other pedestrians.

Councillor Chris Best presented a petition signed by 40 residents of Elderton Road. The petition complained about littering and fly tipping in Elderton Road and presented the Council with a seven point improvement plan.

## 52. Announcements or Communications

(1) *Report of the Returning Officer*

The Council recorded its congratulations to the three local MPs, Janet Daby, Vicky Foxcroft and Ellie Reeves who had all been re-elected in the December 2019 General Election

*(2) George Francis RIP & New Cross Fire Anniversary*

The Council received news of the death of George Francis the long serving Chair of the New Cross Fire Parents Committee. Council noted that the 39th anniversary of the tragedy was marked by a service outside the Civic Suite.

All present observed a minute of silence in memory of George Francis.

*(3) Holocaust Memorial Day*

The Council confirmed it would be supporting Holocaust Memorial Day on Sunday January 26 and welcomed the Reverend David Rome to the meeting.

The Mayor introduced this item as Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Committee. He recorded his thanks to the previous Chair, Councillor Pauline Morrison who had given 17 years service to the Committee.

Reverend Rome addressed the meeting highlighting three individuals from the BBC 'Best of Men' programme. He recited a memorial prayer and light a candle on behalf of the victims of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides.

All present observed a two minute silence in memory of all victims.

*(4) Queen's New Year's Honours List*

The Council received an announcement about the Queen's New Year's Honours List is also for information.. The Council recorded its congratulations concerning the awards which were as follows:

Aileen Buckton MBE  
David Michael MBE  
Lesley Seary CBE  
Rob Whiteman CBE  
Wlodka Robertson BEM  
Emma Worley MBE

*(5) New Year's Day Parade*

The Council welcomed the announcement about the New Year's Day Parade and the prize secured by the Lewisham entry which went to the 999 club.

*(6) Mayor's Charity and Mayor's Winter Appeal*

The Mayor reported on fund raising activities and thanked the residents of Lewisham for their tremendous generosity.

*(7) Launch of Lewisham Disabled People's Commission*

The Deputy Mayor updated the Council on developments concerning Lewisham Disabled People's Commission.

*(8) LGBT History Month*

The Deputy Mayor highlighted activities taking place to support LGBT History Month.

*(9) Councillor Joani Reid*

The Council warmly congratulated Councillor Joani Reid, who had given birth the day before at St. Thomas' Hospital to a 7lb baby girl.

The Chair moved, as a matter of urgency, a recommendation granting Councillor Joani Reid a leave of absence from Council duties. This was seconded by Councillor Pat Codd and agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED that Councillor Joani Reid be granted a six month leave of absence from Council duties.

**53. Public questions**

36 questions were received from members of the public which were answered by the Cabinet Member indicated. No questioner wished to raise a supplementary question.

A copy of the questions and answers was circulated separately and can be viewed on the Council website with the meeting papers.

**54. Member questions**

3 questions were received from 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.

**55. Setting the Council Tax Base, the NNDR Tax Base & Discounts for Second Homes and Empty Homes**

Councillor Amanda De Ryk moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Jim Mallory and it was then unanimously:

RESOLVED that:

(1) the Council Tax Base calculation for 2020/21, as set out in the annual Council Tax Base government return, attached at Appendix A, be noted;

(2) a Council Tax Base of 90,099.3 Band D equivalent properties for 2020/21 be approved;

- (3) a budgeted Council Tax collection rate of 97.0% be approved;
- (4) no changes be made to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for 2020/21, that eligible claimants make a minimum contribution of 25% towards their council tax;
- (5) the continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount of 100% for care leavers up to the age of 25, as set out in section five, be approved;
- (6) the existing policy of a 0% discount for second homes for 2019/20 be continued for 2020/21, as set out in section five, be approved;
- (7) 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, as set out in section five, be approved
- (8) 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, as set out in section five, be approved;
- (9) an increase the Long Term Empty Properties homes premium as set out in the 2019/20 Council tax Base Report, from 50% to 100% from 1 April 2020, for properties empty between 2 and 5 years, and 200% for those empty for over five years with further incremental increases in future years, as set out in section five, be approved;
- (10) the proposed 2020/21 National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) estimated net yield of £68m, based on current information available, be noted; and
- (11) the approval of the final 2020/21 NNDR1 form be delegated to the Interim S151 Officer for submission by the deadline of 31st January 2020.

## **56. NHS Commissioning Arrangements**

Councillor Chris Best moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor John Muldoon and it was then unanimously:

RESOLVED that:the establishment of a new post of Director of Integrated Care and Commissioning at a level of remuneration on the JNC 2 salary scale (currently up to £114,132 per annum), be approved.

## **57. Motion 1 Unaccompanied Migrant Children, Proposed Cllr Bonavia Seconded Cllr Gallagher**

The motion was moved by Councillor Kevin Bonavia and seconded by Councillor Aisling Gallagher. Following contributions from Councillor Obajimi Adefiranye and Alan Smith, the motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

*Protecting the rights of unaccompanied children seeking family reunion*

“This Council notes with great concern the Government’s decision to abandon its commitment to ensure that unaccompanied children continue to have the right to family reunion with relatives already resident in the United Kingdom following the withdrawal from the European Union. No child should be surviving alone in camps and carparks in Europe when they have family here who can care for them, or local authorities like Lewisham who are ready to offer them a home.

This Council believes in creating a Borough of Sanctuary which welcomes and supports refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants fleeing conflict and persecution. In June 2019 the Council committed to welcoming an additional 100 unaccompanied child refugees under the charity Safe Passage International’s “Our Turn” pledge. In addition, many Lewisham residents have welcomed children through current family reunion rules under the European Union Dublin III Regulation and there will be local families affected by this Government’s decision.

We are dismayed at the prospect that any child who has a parent, sibling, uncle, aunt or grandparent in our borough may be prevented from joining them. Legal family reunion is one of the few safe and legal routes for children who would otherwise remain on their own thereby exposing themselves to danger and exploitation, or risk their lives in order to reach a place of safety with their family.

This Council resolves to:

(1) Urge the Government to guarantee in law its existing obligation to ensure children have the same or improved rights to family reunification in the UK following Brexit

(2) Invite the Government to work with the Council to deliver its commitment to welcome an additional 100 unaccompanied child refugees and so give more children a chance to rebuild their lives in a place of safety.”

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.