

COUNCIL AGM			
Report Title	Announcements or Communications		
Key Decision			Item No.
Ward			
Contributors	Chief Executive		
Class	Part 1	Date: July 15 2020	

Recommendation

The Council is invited to receive any announcements or communications from the Mayor or the Chief Executive.

1. Black Lives Matter

Lewisham prides itself as being an open borough that celebrates our diversity and has a history of standing up against racism. Many residents will have been appalled at the videos from the United States of the killing of George Floyd. Racism and racial inequalities are not just an 'American problem' – racism exists in many parts of society including in the criminal justice system, access to jobs, in the education system and in health.

Fortunately, we live in a community where our residents share our values and support us taking targeted actions. But we won't be able to meet the challenges we face alone and we are pressing the Government to make sure we have the support and resources we need, and that they too take issues of racial inequality in our country forward urgently. We won't rest and stop taking action while inequalities exist.

Black Lives Matter in Lewisham – today and always.

2. Report of the Returning Officer

Councillors Skip Amrani (Catford South) and Tom Copley (Sydenham) both resigned in March 2020. Given restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, by-elections to fill the vacancies are not currently anticipated before May 2021

The Council is asked to record its thanks to both former members for their service.

3. Obituaries

The Council regrets to report the deaths since the last meeting of the following persons with links to Lewisham:

Bill Fitzsimmons

The death took place in March of Bill Fitzsimmons who was the consort to former Councillor Peggy Fitzsimmons when she was Mayor from 1988 -1989.

His funeral took place on Tuesday 31 March at St. Mary's Church, Lewisham High Street, followed by a committal at Beckenham Crematorium.

Christine Grice

The death took place in April of Christine Grice a former senior officer in the Children & Young People Directorate. After retirement from the service she became a Councillor in the Royal Borough of Greenwich representing the Kidbrooke Ward and at the time of her death was Deputy Leader of the Council.

Councillor Sylvia McCartney

The Council has been informed of the death in a nursing home in Cardiff of former Councillor Sylvia McCartney who represented the St Andrews Ward for the Conservative Party from 1968-1972. She was a prominent supporter of local history and wrote a book on the History of Lewisham Silk Mill with John West.

4. Staffing Changes

We wish the best of luck to a number of officers of long standing who have recently left the council, or are due to leave shortly. We plan to invite them back for a proper farewell send off in the Civic Suite when we are able to gather together again.

- **Barrie Neal**, Director of Policy and Governance, left in April 2020.
- **Madeleine Jeffrey**, Director of Housing, retired on 22 May 2020.
- **Derek Johnson**, Business & Civic Manager, retired on 30 June 2020
- **Kath Nicholson**, Director of Law, leaves on 17 July 2020

Following the report to Council in February 2020, we have made a number of exciting appointments – details have been provided to all Members in the latest top tier structure chart that they were sent by the Mayor - and welcome:

- **Pinaki Ghoshal** was appointed as Executive Director, Children and Young People. Pinaki joined us from Brighton and Hove City Council where he was Director of Children's Services. He started in June.
- **Salena Mulhere**, was appointed Assistant Chief Executive. She previously held positions as Lewisham's Scrutiny Manager and more recently in the Policy Hub, where she led on the Local Democracy Review.
- **Suki Binjal**, has joined us this week as the new Director of Law, Governance and HR. She was President of Lawyers in Local Government in 2018/19 and has worked as Director of Law at the Commission for Racial Equality as well as at the LGA.
- **James Lee**, who was previously our interim Director of Strategy, Partnerships & Improvements has been appointed as Director of Communities, Leisure and Partnerships.
- **Fenella Beckman**, who was previously our Head of Economy and Partnerships and interim Head of Private Sector Housing Agency, has been appointed as Interim Director of Housing.
- **Kathy Freeman**, will start as the Executive Director, Corporate Resources on September 14 and she joins us from Camden.

5. Local Government Boundary Commission

The Local Government Boundary Commission has published their final recommendations for new wards in Lewisham. They will be submitted to Parliament and take effect from our next full council elections in May 2022. Full details of the new arrangements, including the boundaries, maps, names and electorates, are [presented by the LGBC on their website](#). This information has also been shared with all councillors, local stakeholders, and those who took part in the consultation. More information can be found on the LGBC's website: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/17020>

6. Mayoress

The Mayor has designated three volunteers from Evelyn Community Store to be the next Mayoress. Dawn Atkinson, Natasha Ricketts and Christina Norman – who all volunteer at the Evelyn Community Store – will work as a team and share the role of Mayoress, to promote the positive impact of volunteering in the community,

The volunteers work with FareShare, a nationwide charity that re-distributes in-date and good quality food to community projects that can use it that would otherwise go to waste. The Evelyn Community Store is open to anyone who lives in the borough of Lewisham that is on benefits or on a low-income. So far, over 100 Lewisham families have been supported in accessing affordable food.

The Council is asked to put on record their thanks for the outgoing Mayoress, Barbara Gray, for her work representing Lewisham in the past year.

7. Reappointment of Mayoral Advisers

The Mayor has reappointed two Mayoral Advisers for the coming municipal year. Barbara Gray will continue as Mayor & Council Adviser on BAME health inequalities and Royston John will continue as Mayor & Council Adviser on BAME career progression. Barbara and Royston are reappointed until the next Council AGM, due to be held in March 2021.

8. Mayor's Charity

The Mayor has reappointed the 999 Club as the Mayor's Charity for this municipal year. Despite some fundraising events being cancelled, including the London Marathon where 10 Lewisham Council runners were due to raise money for the 999 Club, there are still many ways to take part in fundraising activities. To get involved, please visit www.999club.org

9. Councillor Joani Reid

1 Summary

This report seeks the Council's approval of the reason for the continuing non-attendance of Councillor Joani Reid at Council meetings.

2 Purpose of this report

To approve the reason for Councillor Reid's non-attendance at Council meetings

3 Recommendation

The Council is recommended to approve the reason for Councillor Joani Reid's non-attendance at Council meetings and extend her parental leave by a further six months in accordance with the Council's parental leave policy.

4 Background

4.1 Councillor Reid's last attendance at a Council meeting was at the Mayor & Cabinet on 30 October 2019. An initial six month leave period was granted by Council in January 2020.

4.2 Section 85(1) Local Government Act 1972 states that if a member of a local authority fails, throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his/her last attendance, to attend any meeting of the authority, then unless the failure was due to a reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, they cease to be a member.

4.3 If the Council approves the reason for the non-attendance as proposed, Councillor Reid will not cease to be a member on expiry of her further 6 months absence. Were the Council not to approve the reason for absence, a vacancy would arise on expiry of the six month period of absence.

5 Legal implications

These are set out in the body of the report

6 Financial implications

There are no financial implications

7 Conclusion

Council is asked to approve the reason for Councillor Reid's absence as set out in this report.

10. Pokhara

In October 2019 the Mayor & Cabinet approved a report recommending to the Council AGM that a formal friendship agreement between London Borough of Lewisham and the city of Pokhara in the Federal Republic of Nepal be established.

<http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=5643&Ver=4>

The Council is now invited to formally ratify that agreement