

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 23 January 2019 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, Juliet Campbell, Suzannah Clarke, Patrick Codd, Tom Copley, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Sophie Davis, Amanda De Ryk, Joe Dromey, Alex Feis-Bryce, Aisling Gallagher, Leo Gibbons, Alan Hall, Octavia Holland, Sue Hordijkeno, Coral Howard, Mark Ingleby, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Caroline Kalu, Silvana Kelleher, Louise Krupski, Jim Mallory, Paul Maslin, Joan Millbank, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Jacq Paschoud (Chair), John Paschoud, James Rathbone, Joani Reid, Sakina Sheikh, Jonathan Slater, Alan Smith, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Janet Daby, Councillor Colin Elliott, Councillor Carl Handley, Councillor Sophie McGeevor and Councillor Stephen Penfold.

20. Declaration of Interests

Councillor Hall declared a personal interest in Item 11 as Chair of the Unite Branch for Greenwich, Lewisham and Bexley and as a member of the Lewisham TUC.

21. Minutes

Minute 12 of the November meeting was challenged by Councillor Alan Hall who believed that while accurate, the minute was insufficient, as it did not report his request as Chair of Audit Panel for accurate costs relating to the departure of the former Chief Executive and the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive.

The Chair moved that the minutes as written should be agreed and this was seconded by the Vice Chair. By a vote of 24 to 8 with 14 abstentions it was then:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on November 23 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

22. Announcements or Communications

Holocaust Memorial Day

The Council announced its support for Holocaust Memorial Day on Sunday January 27. Councillor Pauline Morrison introduced the item as Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Committee since its inception. She explained the commemoration had grown to be very inclusive and she confirmed that local Imam Shakeel Beeg and the Olive Tree School would be centrally involved. Councillor Morrison encouraged everyone in attendance to lend support

especially given recent increases in anti-semitism and holocaust denial.

The Council was next addressed by the Lady Mayoress, Liane Segal who gave thanks for her 80 wonderful years as a citizen of this country and being able to witness the birth of great grandchildren.

The Reverend David Rome added that Liane had come here alone from Vienna as a 7 year old child on the Kinder Transport and had survived against great odds. He stated her appointment had been greatly appreciated and served as an illustration of the benevolence of Lewisham Borough.

The Reverend Rome expanded on this year's Holocaust theme of 'Torn from Home' and sang a memorial prayer in English and Hebrew before lighting a commemorative candle. All present then observed a 1 minute silence for all victims of genocides.

New Year's Day Parade

The Chair reported she had been present at the event where Lewisham had finished 5th securing £5,000 for the Mayor's charity and winning two trophies which would be placed in the Mayor's parlour.

Queens New Year's Honours List

The Council recorded its congratulations to former Chief Executive Ian Thomas CBE, retired Dalmain School headteacher, Elizabeth Booth MBE, and to Telegraph Hill resident Nadine Hibbert BEM.

Signing-In Book

The Chair noted the Council signing-in book had been filled after being in continuous use since March 1987. She congratulated two of the original signatories, Councillors Chris Best and Councillor Jim Mallory, who were still members of the Council. She also praised the Officer who had compiled the original entries, Clare Weaser, who was also still serving with the Council.

23. Petitions

Mr Gwenton Sloley presented a petition bearing over 2,000 names expressing concerns regarding the departure of the former Chief Executive, Ian Thomas and demanding clarity on the Mayor's new direction.

Councillor Hilary Moore presented a petition bearing more than 80 names on behalf of the residents of Winn Road which expressed concerns regarding fast moving rat-running traffic through Winn Road SE12 and called for the introduction of effective traffic calming.

24. Public questions

74 questions were received from members of the public which were answered by the Cabinet Member indicated. In the time available 38

questioners were given the opportunity to raise supplementary questions.

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

25. Member questions

4 questions were received from a Councillor 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.

26. Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019-20

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 outcomes of the consultation be noted;
- (2) a local CTRS be retained from 1 April 2019 that passes on any reduction in government funding, reflecting the Council's financial position;
- (3) the retained local CTRS be modified from 1 April 2019 to allow CTR to be awarded to households who are receiving universal credit or housing benefit and who the Council identifies would qualify for support but who have, for whatever reason, failed to complete an application form;
- (4) to continue the delivery of additional support to the most vulnerable residents through use of the existing provision within Section 13A(1)(c) of the 1992 Local Government Finance Act.

27. Council Tax Base 2019 - 2020

Councillor Amanda De Ryk moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Jim Mallory. Following a contribution from Councillor Paul Bell, it was then unanimously:

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the Council Tax Base calculation for 2019/20, as set out in the annual Council Tax Base government return be noted;
- (2) a Council Tax Base of 88,405.1 Band D equivalent properties for 2019/20 be approved;
- (3) a budgeted Council Tax collection rate of 97.0% be approved;
- (4) the continuation of the discretionary Council Tax discount of 100% for care

leavers up to the age of 25 be approved;

(5) the existing policy of a 0% discount for second homes for 2018/19 be continued for 2019/20;

(6) 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;

(7) 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;

(8) the existing policy of an empty homes premium in respect of long term empty properties is increased to 100%, as set out in section six of this report;

(9) the proposed 2019/20 National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) estimated net yield of £67.4m, based on current information available, be noted;

(10) the approval of the final 2019/20 NNDR1 form be delegated to the Interim S151 Officer for submission by the deadline of 31st January 2019.

28. Gambling Statement 2019 - 2022

Councillor Joani Reid moved that the recommendations be approved and this was seconded by Councillor Eva Stamirowski and it was then unanimously:

RESOLVED that the revised Gambling Statement of Principles for 2019-2022 be formally determined and published.

29. Motion 1 Proposed Cllr Gallagher Seconded Cllr Feis Bryce

The motion was moved by Councillor Aisling Gallagher and seconded by Councillor Sakina Sheikh. The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

No human is illegal - against immigration detention in the UK

This council notes

- That the UK has one of the largest immigration detention systems in Europe, and is the only country in the region without a statutory time limit on length of detention. This means people can be held for months or years at a time, with no certainty about when they may be released or deported.
- At any one time, there may be up to 3,500 people in the eight detention centres that exist across the UK.

- Every year around 30,000 people enter immigration detention centres in the UK. Half of those in detention centres have sought asylum in the UK, fleeing conflict and persecution; others include visitors, workers, family members and students¹.
- That the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Refugees and Migration published a report following their inquiry into the use of immigration detention in the UK and concluded that the UK uses detention “disproportionately and inappropriately” and that detention is “expensive, inefficient and unjust”.²
- That the Home Office has agreed to an independent inquiry into abuse in detention facilities within the UK.

This council believes

- Detention negatively impacts individuals’ physical and mental health wellbeing and there have been reports of widespread abuse in detention centres. The majority of people held in detention are eventually released, if they are able to access the right support.
- That the government must end immigration detention now.
- As a sanctuary borough, Lewisham has a duty to speak out against detention practices that breach basic human rights and negatively impact the mental and physical well-being of individuals subjected to it.
- That the ‘hostile environment’ policies are designed to make the UK an unwelcoming place for migrants, and have been condemned as ‘rotten’ and ‘destroying the lives’ of ethnic minority communities in Britain by Tendayi Achiume, a United Nations special rapporteur on racism.

This council resolves

- To endorse the These Walls Must Fall Campaign (<http://detention.org.uk/>)
- To call on the government to implement the recommendations of the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into detention
- To ask our local MPs to support the spirit of the motion, to continue to raise the matter in the House of Commons, and to support changes in current laws and procedures to introduce alternatives to detention
- To seek further support for the motion via the Local Government

¹ See <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/immigration-detention-in-the-uk/>

² See <https://detentioninquiry.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/immigration-detention-inquiry-report.pdf>

Association, and by encouraging other Councils in the UK to raise the issue

30. Motion 2 Proposed Cllr Gallagher Seconded Cllr Dromey

The motion was moved by Councillor Aisling Gallagher and seconded by Councillor Joe Dromey. Following contributions from councillors Alan Hall and Alan Smith, the motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

Supporting Antic workers fighting for a living wage & union recognition

This council notes

- Antic run six bars and pubs within Lewisham, where staff are currently fighting for a Living Wage and union recognition
- One in four people working in Lewisham earn below the real Living Wage – the amount calculated by the Living Wage Foundation based on the cost of living
- Two in three workers in hospitality in London earn below the Living Wage
- Alongside Islington, Lewisham Council were the first council to become an accredited Living Wage Employer in 2012
- The council introduced a business rate incentive in 2016 under which employers who become accredited with the Living Wage Foundation receive a one-off business rates discount

This council believes

- That nobody should have to live in poverty, and that all workers deserve at least the Living Wage. No one living in one of the wealthiest cities in the world should have to work several minimum wage jobs in order to make ends meet at the end of the month
- The Living Wage is good for workers and good for employers, with over nine in ten accredited businesses saying that the Living Wage has benefited their business[1]
- Union recognition within a workplace ensures workers are involved in decision-making within a business, can improve relations between employers and employees, and ensures workers receive a fair share of the wealth they help generate
- The increasing cost of rent, the rising cost of living, and the growth of in-work poverty mean that it is imperative councils should support workers fighting for

fair pay

This council resolves

- To support the Antic staff campaigning for a real Living Wage and union recognition within their workplace, and to invite Antic workers to the Civic Suite to discuss the campaign
- For the Mayor and Chair of Council to write to Antic expressing our support for the campaign, to encourage them to become an accredited Living Wage employer, and request that they recognise Unite the Union in their businesses
- To write to every local authorities where Antic operate to encourage them to back the campaign, to pass similar motions and to send letters of support

[1] See <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/good-for-business>

The meeting closed at 9.13pm