

# MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 2 October 2019 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Damien Egan (Mayor), Councillors 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, Sophie Davis, Amanda De Ryk, Joe Dromey, Colin Elliott, Aisling Gallagher, Leo Gibbons, Alan Hall, Carl Handley, Octavia Holland, Coral Howard, Mark Ingleby, Caroline Kalu, Silvana Kelleher, Louise Krupski, Jim Mallory, Paul Maslin, Sophie McGeevor, Joan Millbank, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Lionel Openshaw, Jacq Paschoud (Chair), John Paschoud, Stephen Penfold, Kim Powell, James Rathbone, Joani Reid, Sakina Sheikh, Jonathan Slater, Alan Smith, Eva Stamirowski, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brenda Dacres, Councillor Sue Hordijenko, Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin and Councillor Luke Sorba.

## 26. Declaration of Interests

No declarations were made.

## 27. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the two meetings held on July 24 2019 and the meeting held on September 11 2019 be confirmed and signed as correct records.

## 28. Petitions

No petitions were presented.

## 29. Announcements or Communications

### *1. Janet Senior*

The first announcement reported the imminent retirement of Acting Chief Executive, Janet Senior. Tributes for her more than thirty years of dedicated service were paid by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Councillor Adefiranye and Councillor Mallory. A presentation of flowers and a gift were made to her on behalf of the Labour Group.

Responding briefly, the Acting Chief Executive said it had been a pleasure to work for Lewisham and that she would miss the Council.

### *2. Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award*

Councillor Bonavia reported on a Council success in gaining national recognition and he thanked the staff who had been involved.

### *3. Black History Month*

The Mayor spoke promoting Black History Month which had been successfully launched the day before.

### *4. Age Against the Machine, Festival of Creative Ageing*

The Deputy Mayor reported the final event was to take place on the following Sunday at the Trinity Laban.

### *5. London Borough of Culture in 2021*

Councillor Bourne encouraged all present to support the event and publicise the special bid website.

### *6. Chair of the Lewisham Disabled People's Commission*

Councillor Slater outlined the efforts being made to increase Accessibility.

### *7. Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy*

The Mayor announced bids could now be made for the funds that were available.

### *8. Mayor's Business Awards*

The Mayor encouraged members to promote the awards.

### *9. Mayor's Award for Volunteering*

The Mayor asked members to submit nominations from their wards.

### *10. Wellbeloved Butchers on Tanners Hill Deptford*

The Council congratulated this business on its remarkable longevity and association with Lewisham.

## **30. Public questions**

58 questions were received from members of the public which were answered by the Cabinet Member indicated. Within the time available all 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.

## **31. Member questions**

2 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.

### **32. Statement of Accounts 2018-19**

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

RESOLVED that

- (1) the adjustments to the financial statements in the Audit Findings Reports be noted;
- (2) the Action Plans set out in the reports be approved;
- (3) the Letters of Representation on behalf of the Council be approved;
- (4) the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) be approved; and
- (5) the 2018/19 audited Statement of Accounts (including Main accounts, Group accounts and Pension Fund accounts) be approved.

### **33. Friendship agreement Pokhara**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

### **34. Action by Chair of Council**

The Chair moved that the recommendation be approved and this was seconded by the Vice Chair and it was then unanimously:

RESOLVED that the action taken by the Chair of Council be noted.

### **35. Motion 1 Fairtrade Lewisham**

The motion was moved by Councillor James Walsh and seconded by Councillor Joan Millbank. The motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

**This council notes that:**

- 2019 marks 25 years since the FAIRTRADE Mark was launched in the UK.
- Since 1994, consumer demand for Fairtrade has grown thanks to the efforts of grassroots campaigners, and pioneering Fair Trade businesses.
- There are now over 600 Fairtrade Communities in the UK and more than

2,000 globally.

- As a result of Fairtrade commitments from mainstream brands and retailers, the UK Fairtrade market is now one of the biggest in the world.
- Global Fairtrade sales last year generated £142 million in Fairtrade Premium. Farmers in 73 countries have invested this money in their communities, increasing business productivity and contributing to the achievement of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Despite this positive news, exploitation remains rampant in global supply chains. More than 40 million people are trapped in modern slavery, including forced labour, and 152 million young people in child labour. Hundreds of millions more are earning less than a living income or wage.

**This council believes that:**

- Fairtrade and the wider Fair Trade movement has a significant contribution to make towards ending exploitation in global supply chains and achieving the SDGs.
- The recently agreed International Fair Trade Charter should be welcomed, with its vision of transforming trade to work for people and planet.
- The Fairtrade principles of paying a 'premium' that is wholly managed by farmers and workers themselves, and of minimum prices to protect producers from market volatility, are crucial to systemic change.
- Public bodies, including local authorities, should support ethical procurement policies, using their purchasing power to support Fairtrade and ensure their supply chains, at home and abroad, are free of exploitation, including modern slavery.
- Companies operating through global supply chains should go further and take steps to require the payment of living wages and achievement of living incomes for all.

**This council resolves to:**

- Renew its commitment to achieving 'Fairtrade Community' status.
- Actively promote Ethical Trade locally, through support for local groups, in the media including social media, and events, including during Fairtrade Fortnight.
- Support local Fairtrade Schools and Universities, and actively promote Fairtrade teaching materials in local schools and educational institutions.
- Celebrate and incentivise businesses championing Fairtrade products in the local community.

- To ask the Mayor and Cabinet to review its procurement policy, including its catering offer, to ensure that ethically procured produce is chosen wherever possible, and that Ethical Trade considerations are included as a preference in any contracts going out to tender.

### **36. Motion 2: A fully funded, proper pay-rise for Local Government workers**

The motion was moved by Councillor Bill Brown and seconded by Councillor Silvana Kelleher. Following a contribution from Councillor Paul Bell, the motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

#### **This council notes**

- Government has endured central government funding cuts of nearly 50% since 2010.
- Between 2010 and 2020, councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 they have received from central government.
- The 2019 LGA survey of council finances found that 1 in 3 councils fear they will run out of funding to provide even their statutory, legal duties by 2022/23. This number rises to almost two thirds of councils by 2024/2025 or later.
- The LGA estimates councils will face a funding gap of £8 billion by 2025.
- Faced with these cuts from central government, the local government workforce has endured years of pay restraint with the majority of pay points losing 22 per cent of their value since 2009/10.
- At the same time as seeing their pay go down in real terms, workers experience ever increasing workloads and persistent job insecurity. Across the UK, an estimated 876,000 jobs have been lost in local government since June 2010 – a reduction of 30 per cent. Local government has arguably been hit by more severe job losses than any other part of the public sector.
- There has been a disproportionate impact on women, with women making up more than three quarters of the local government workforce.

#### **This council believes**

- Our workers are public service super heroes. They keep our communities clean, look after those in need and keep our towns and cities running.
- Without the professionalism and dedication of our staff, the council services our residents rely on would not be deliverable.

- Government funding has been cut to the extent that a proper pay rise could result in a reduction in local government services.
- The government needs to take responsibility and fully fund increases in pay; it should not put the burden on local authorities whose funding been cut to the bone.

**This council resolves to**

- Support the pay claim submitted by Unite, GMB and UNISON to the Government, on behalf of council and school workers for a £10 per hour minimum wage and a 10 per cent uplift across all other pay points in 2020/21.
- Call on the Local Government Association to make urgent representations to central government to fund the NJC pay claim
- Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State to call for a pay increase for local government workers to be funded with new money from central government.
- Meet with local NJC union representatives to convey support for the pay claim.
- Encourage all local government workers to join a union

**37. Motion 3 Free School Meals for NRPF children**

The motion was moved by Councillor Chris Barnham and seconded by Councillor Sakina Sheikh. Following a contribution from Councillor Stephen Penfold, the motion was then put to the vote and declared to be unanimously carried.

RESOLVED that the following motion be agreed:

**Council notes:**

1. Children in years 3 and above cannot receive free school meals (FSMs) if their parents are migrants with leave to remain subject to a “no recourse to public fund” (NRPF) condition, or are undocumented.
2. These are often some of the poorest and most vulnerable children in schools. Across the country, many report going hungry; where meals are provided, parents could receive bills they cannot afford to pay.
3. Lewisham schools and many other schools across the country use their discretion to ensure that children do not go hungry, but without any extra funds to meet the costs.
4. North East London Migrant Action (NELMA), with the support in the labour and trade union movements of Labour Campaign for Free Movement

(LCFM), are campaigning for all children who need them to receive FSMs and to end NRPF policies.

**Council believes:**

1. No child should go hungry in school because of their parents' immigration status.
2. We oppose the inhumanity and racism of such "hostile environment" policies.
3. Free school meals should be a basic right for ALL children who need them
4. NRPF policies undermine all workers: when migrant workers are afraid that losing their job means their children will go hungry or they will have no social security to fall back on, they are more vulnerable to mistreatment by exploitative employers, undermining pay and conditions for all of us.

**Council resolves to:**

1. Send our support to NELMA and LCFM for the campaign to repeal this and all the discriminatory NRPF-related policies, and for local authorities to meet the need for FSMs in the interim.
2. Lobby government to this end to provide the funding for children on FSM.
3. Continue to work with Lewisham Schools to ensure that NRPF children that would otherwise be entitled to FSM are provided with them and to consider issuing guidance to schools, if necessary, until the Government fund local authorities to provide such meals.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm