

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 17 May 2023 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Damien Egan (Mayor), Yemisi Anifowose, Tauseef Anwar (Chair), Chris Barnham, Paul Bell, Peter Bernards, Andre Bourne, Natasha Burgess, Juliet Campbell, Suzannah Clarke, Will Cooper, Laura Cunningham, Liam Curran, Brenda Dacres, Sophie Davis, Amanda De Ryk, Sian Eiles, Ese Erheriene, Billy Harding, Stephen Hayes, Coral Howard, Edison Huynh, Mark Ingleby, Mark Jackson, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Eva Kestner, Louise Krupski, Jack Lavery, Aisha Malik-Smith, Joan Millbank, Hilary Moore, John Muldoon, Oana Olaru, Rosie Parry, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Stephen Penfold, Kim Powell, James Rathbone, James Royston, Rudi Schmidt, Aliya Sheikh, Sakina Sheikh, Liam Shrivastava, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski, Hau-Yu Tam, James-J Walsh, Luke Warner and Susan Wise

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chris Best, Councillor Bill Brown, Councillor Ayesha Lahai-Taylor and Councillor Carol Webley-Brown

ALSO PRESENT: Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer, Head of Governance and Committee Services, Committee Officer.

1. Minutes

The Speaker of the Council MOVED, the Deputy Speaker SECONDED and it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council AGM meeting held on 29 March 2023 be confirmed and signed as a true and accurate record.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Announcements or Communications

Peggy Fitzsimmons

The Speaker announced the death of former Lewisham Councillor Peggy Fitzsimmons. He welcomed Peggy's friends and family to the meeting.

The Mayor said that he was deeply saddened to hear of the death of his former colleague. Peggy was a councillor in Lewisham from 1986 – 2014 and served as Mayor in 1988. He spoke about her genuine warmth and kindness towards her fellow councillors, recalling that she had been a fierce advocate for the rights of older people and founded the positive aging council. He expressed his thanks for all she had done for the borough.

Councillor Muldoon gave some examples of how Peggy improved services for the older residents of the borough. Her late husband Bill had been her consort. He had

served in the guards and Peggy became involved in the Allerford Road ex-service men's club.

Peggy spent her working life in the NHS and in retirement, took part in an appeal to raise funds for a CT Scanner at Lewisham Hospital. During retirement she continued to campaign for pensioners' rights and ensured that their contribution to society was recognised and valued. Cllr Muldoon outlined some of Peggy's achievements in Lewisham and said that she was a true and faithful servant of the people of Lewisham.

A minute's silence was then held in remembrance of Peggy Fitzsimmons.

Right to Buy Back

The Deputy Mayor said that it was important that Lewisham provided access to affordable housing for all residents who needed it the most. In March 2021, the GLA launched the Right to Buy Back Scheme. Lewisham received funding and was able to buy back 100 ex-council homes. Due to the success of this scheme, Lewisham received further funding and 17 more ex-council properties were bought. It was hoped that more properties could be bought so that Lewisham could continue to improve the lives of Lewisham residents.

South Circular Road – Consultation

Councillor Krupski announced that the TFL consultation on proposed changes to the south circular road was open until 5 June. She encouraged everyone to give their comments on the proposals to ensure the best design was created for the needs of Lewisham residents.

Mayor's Charity

The Mayor thanked everyone for the support that his chosen charity, Young Lewisham Project, had received in 2022/23. He presented a cheque for £36,000 to the charity. Representatives of the charity thanked everyone for their support and outlined the resources they were able to fund and links they had made to different organisations including Lewisham. The Mayor announced that Councillors Harding and Royston both succeeded in running the marathon and the money raised was donated to his chosen charity.

Councillor Ingleby, the borough's cycling champion, reported that he would be cycling in The Ford Essex Ride London 100 from Tower Bridge to Essex and back on Sunday 28 May to raise funds for the Young Lewisham Project and Lewisham foodbank. He asked members to sponsor him.

The Mayor announced that his charity this year would be Lewisham Food Bank. All money raised would go to providing food for residents in need in this borough. Two representatives from the charity made a presentation to members of the Council with the aid of slides. They spoke about how the project started, what they offer to people in need, and how numbers had increased since it started in 2012.

4. Petitions

Councillor Rathbone presented a petition on behalf of residents in Aislibie Road in Lee, calling upon the Council to clear up dilapidated land at the rear of 334 Lee High Road which was in private ownership but because of neglect was causing a nuisance for residents.

5. Public Questions

53 questions were received and written answers supplied.

Some questioners that were present at the meeting asked supplementary questions, and these were answered by the relevant Cabinet Members.

6. Member Questions

6 questions were received from Members and written answers supplied. Some Members asked supplementary questions and these were answered at the meeting.

7. Changes to calendar of meetings

It was MOVED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that

- (i) Full Council be moved from 5 July to 12 July to avoid the LGA Conference which was scheduled for 4-6 July;
- (ii) Consequently, Standards Committee be moved from 12 July to 28 June; and
- (iii) A further meeting of full Council be held on 17 January 2024 to enable a number of budget-related matters to be considered ahead of the main Budget decision which was due the following month.

8. Motions

Motion 1 Proposed Academisations of the Leathersellers' Federation and Conisborough College

Councillor Penfold introduced the motion and Councillor Eiles supported the motion

It was MOVED by Councillor Penfold, SECONDED by Councillor Eiles and RESOLVED that the Council resolves to:

1. immediately write to The Leathersellers' Federation Governing Board and the unions involved to express our concern at the current situation and to urge the Board and the unions to negotiate, urging both parties to be flexible, so that a negotiated settlement can be reached and to offer the good officers of the Council to assist with negotiations between the Board and the unions;

2. re-emphasise in our communications the importance of the education strategy that all our schools have adopted, and that while we might have disagreements about governance, we and Lewisham schools remain committed to a partnership delivering for our children;

3. Alongside the secondary school application process, to use the first anniversary of the education strategy and the recruitment of a new Head of Lewisham Learning to publicise the successes being delivered by the strategy;

4. use all avenues of communication and influence, with the Department for Education and others, so far as possible, to ensure that, if it is to join a multi academy trust, Conisborough College is able to join a multi-academy trust that shares the values of our local school system, is committed to working with Lewisham Council and community, and can continue to work within the structure of partnership that Lewisham schools have established; and that no further schools within Lewisham are made subject to compulsory academy orders

The meeting ended at 8:55pm.