

Council Assembly (Ordinary Meeting)

MINUTES of the Council Assembly held on Wednesday 16 March 2016 at 8.15 pm at Chamber, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, More London, London SE1 2AA

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor for , Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE (Chair)

Councillor Evelyn Akoto
Councillor Anood Al-Samerai
Councillor Jasmine Ali
Councillor Maisie Anderson
Councillor James Barber
Councillor Radha Burgess
Councillor Sunil Chopra
Councillor Fiona Colley
Councillor Stephanie Cryan
Councillor Nick Dolezal
Councillor Karl Eastham
Councillor Gavin Edwards
Councillor Tom Flynn
Councillor Lucas Green
Councillor Renata Hamvas
Councillor Barrie Hargrove
Councillor Jon Hartley
Councillor Helen Hayes
Councillor David Hubber
Councillor Peter John OBE
Councillor Ben Johnson
Councillor Samantha Jury-Dada
Councillor Eleanor Kerslake
Councillor Sarah King
Councillor Anne Kirby
Councillor Sunny Lambe
Councillor Octavia Lamb
Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE

Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall
Councillor Richard Livingstone
Councillor Rebecca Lury
Councillor Vijay Luthra
Councillor Jane Lyons
Councillor Eliza Mann
Councillor Hamish McCallum
Councillor Darren Merrill
Councillor Victoria Mills
Councillor Michael Mitchell
Councillor Jamille Mohammed
Councillor Adele Morris
Councillor David Noakes
Councillor Damian O'Brien
Councillor James Okosun
Councillor Leo Pollak
Councillor Sandra Rhule
Councillor Martin Seaton
Councillor Rosie Shimell
Councillor Andy Simmons
Councillor Michael Situ
Councillor Charlie Smith
Councillor Cleo Soanes
Councillor Kath Whittam
Councillor Bill Williams
Councillor Mark Williams
Councillor Ian Wingfield

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There were no announcements.

1.2 NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE MAYOR DEEMS URGENT

There were no late items of business.

At this juncture, the Mayor formally moved the programme motion that had been circulated around the chamber.

The programme motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That the timings for the evening be as follows:

Time	Business
	Ordinary Meeting
20:15 – 20:20	Preliminary business and announcements
20:20 – 21:00	Late Question and Members' Question time
21:00 – 21:20	Reports
21:00 – 21:05	Item 3.1 Pay Policy Statement
21:05 – 21.20	Item 3.2 – Constitutional Issues 2015/16
21:20 – 21:50	Motions
	Motion 1 – Building more affordable homes in Southwark
	Motion 2 – Transport improvements
	Motion 3 – Low water pressure in Bermondsey
	Motion 4 – East Street Market
21:45 – 21:50	Voting on motions

Time	Business
	Extraordinary Meeting
21:50 – 22:00	Item 2 – Freedom of the Borough
22:00	Council assembly concludes

Note: Any time left remaining on any item will be rolled into the next items.

2. That the ordinary meeting be conducted as follows:

Item 2.1 Members Question Time

- Late question
- Members question time (total time 30 minutes).

Item 3.1 Pay Policy Statement

Debate to include:

- Mayor to formally move the report
- No amendments received
- Vote on substantive motion.

Item 3.2 Constitutional Issues 2015/16 - Report back on Motions, Supplemental Questions, Council Tax Base, Council Assembly Dates and Calendar of Meetings 2016/17 and payment to cabinet members for loss of office

1. The meeting to give its consent to the withdrawal of recommendation 7 of the report, as this is to be considered by the constitutional steering panel in April 2016.
2. Debate to include:
 - Chair of the constitutional steering panel, Councillor Sarah King, to move the report (5 minutes)
 - Amendment to be moved and seconded
 - Report and Amendment to be debated as a single debate subject to time limit (All speakers 3 minutes each). Once the time limit has been reached a separate vote will be taken on the amendment and the substantive motion.

Item 4 General Motions

1. General motions to be taken in the order set out in agenda:
 - Building more affordable homes in Southwark

- Transport improvements
- Low water pressure in Bermondsey
- East Street Market.

2. Each motion to have a single debate, subject to the time limit. Once time limit reached any outstanding motions/amendments to be voted upon.

1.3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

The Mayor reminded everyone that all councillors had been granted a dispensation by the monitoring officer to vote on the members' allowances aspect of item 3.2 Constitutional Changes 2015/16.

There were no disclosures of interest.

1.4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Neil Coyle, Catherine Dale, Helen Dennis, Paul Fleming, Lisa Rajan, Johnson Situ, and Kieron Williams. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Hamish McCallum.

1.5 MINUTES

(See supplemental agenda 1, pages 1 – 15)

RESOLVED:

That the open minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

2. ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS

2.1 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

(See pages 1 - 5 of the main agenda and the blue and yellow papers circulated at the meeting)

There was one late question to the leader of the council, the written response to which was circulated on blue paper at the meeting. No supplemental questions were asked of the leader of the council.

There were 34 members' questions, the written responses to which were circulated on yellow paper at the meeting. There were 16 supplemental questions.

3. REPORTS

4. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

(See pages 6 – 19 of the main agenda)

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.11.2, the report was formally moved by the Mayor.

The recommendations contained within the report were put to the vote and declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That the council's pay policy statement, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed.

4.1 CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES 2015/16 - REPORT BACK ON MOTIONS, SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS, COUNCIL TAX BASE, COUNCIL ASSEMBLY DATES AND CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2016/17 AND PAYMENT TO CABINET MEMBERS FOR LOSS OF OFFICE

(See pages 20 – 47 of the main agenda)

As part of the programme motion the meeting had agreed to the withdrawal of recommendation 7 of the report.

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 2.11.1, Councillor Sarah King, chair of the constitutional steering panel, moved the revised report.

The Mayor stated that there was one amendment to the report.

Councillor David Hubber, seconded by Councillor James Barber, moved Amendment A.

Following debate (Councillors Peter John, Fiona Colley, Rosie Shimell, Nick Dolezal and Adele Morris), Councillor David Hubber made a point of order, which was noted by the Mayor.

Councillor Sarah King exercised her right of reply to the debate.

Amendment A was put to the vote and declared to be lost.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

In accordance with council assembly procedure rule 1.15.5 the following members requested that their vote against the substantive motion be recorded:

Councillors Anood Al-Samerai, James Barber, David Hubber, Ben Johnson, Maria Linforth-Hall, Jane Lyons, Eliza Mann, Hamish McCallum, Michael Mitchell, Adele Morris, David Noakes, Damian O'Brien, James Okosun and Rosie Shimell.

RESOLVED:

Report back on motions

1. That the change to council assembly procedure rule (CAPR) 2.10.6) in respect of reporting back on motions at council assembly be agreed (see paragraph 19 of the report).

Procedural change - supplemental questions

2. That the current practice of producing transcripts of supplementary questions and responses for members' questions, public questions and questions on reports at council assembly be replaced with the uploading of audio files on the council's website (see paragraphs 20 - 24 of the report).

Council tax base

3. That the changes to Part 3A: Council Assembly and Part 3B: Cabinet Role and Functions set out in paragraph 19 of the report in respect of the council tax base and the designation of this decision as an executive function be agreed (see paragraph 28 of the report).

Council assembly dates 2016/17

4. That the list of dates for meetings of council assembly in the council calendar for the 2016/17 municipal year be agreed (see paragraphs 30 – 34 of the report):
 - Ordinary meeting – Wednesday 13 July 2016
 - Ordinary meeting / Leader's Public Question Time – Wednesday 5 October 2016 (*Note: Alternative date is Wednesday 12 October 2016, subject to venue availability*)
 - Ordinary meeting – Wednesday 30 November 2016
 - Budget and council tax setting – Wednesday 22 February 2017 (*Note: Statutory meeting*)
 - Ordinary meeting / Cabinet Member Public Question Time – Wednesday 22 March 2017 (*Notes: (1) This meeting is scheduled earlier than usual to avoid last week before school holidays; (2) Alternative date is Wednesday 15 March 2017, subject to venue availability*)
 - Annual meeting – Saturday 13 May 2017 (*Notes: (1) Statutory meeting; (2) Alternative date is Saturday 20 May 2017, subject to venue availability*)
5. That officers review the feasibility of holding separate leader's public question time and cabinet member public question time events on the same evening as the remaining council assembly dates based on the experience in March 2016 and report to the constitutional steering panel.
6. That the calendar of council meetings for the 2016/17 municipal year as shown at Appendix 1 be noted, subject to the changes to standards committee, audit and governance committee and cabinet as set out in paragraphs 35 to 39 of the report be agreed.

Payment to cabinet members for loss of office

7. That the addition of the following paragraphs to the Member Allowances Scheme in the Constitution be agreed:

“Payment to cabinet members for loss of office

49. Members entitled to a full band 3 or full band 4 Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) will be entitled to a payment for loss of office when they cease to be eligible for a full band 3 or 4 allowance.
50. Members must have served at least one year in Cabinet to claim a payment for loss of office. Members are eligible to claim a payment for loss of office no more than once in any 4 year council term.
51. The level of payment is set at 4 weeks of the full band 3 or band 4 SRA plus 1 week for every year in continuous full time service. The maximum level any member can receive is 13 weeks of the full band 3 or band 4 SRA.
52. The Standards Committee (or its relevant sub-committee) will adjudicate on any dispute as to entitlement and any allegation of abuse, and shall be authorised to determine any reduction or withholding of a loss of office payment.
8. That paragraph 33 of the Member Allowances Scheme in the Constitution be amended so it makes specific reference to payment to cabinet members for loss of office and reads as follows:
33. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Member Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the council is required to publish details of any basic and special responsibility allowances paid to councillors during each financial year along with details of the allowances scheme which applied at that time. This statutory notice also includes details of subsistence, travel and carer's allowance. In addition the council publishes further information regarding members' expenses. Any payments to cabinet members for loss of office will also be published.”

Consequential changes

9. That the proper constitutional officer be authorised to make any necessary consequential changes to the constitution as a result of the above.

4.2 MEMBERS' MOTIONS

(See pages 48 – 52 of the main agenda)

MOTION 1 – BUILDING MORE AFFORDABLE HOMES IN SOUTHWARK *(See page 49 of the main agenda)*

Councillor Adele Morris, seconded by Councillor Ben Johnson, moved the motion.

The Mayor stated that there was one amendment to the motion.

Councillor Lucas Green, seconded by Councillor Jasmine Ali, moved Amendment B.

Following debate (Councillors Mark Williams, Maisie Anderson, Anood Al-Samerai and Richard Livingstone), at 9.45pm the Mayor stated that the time for consideration of motions had expired and the meeting would move to the vote on all the outstanding amendments and motions listed under item 4.2.

Amendment B was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That council assembly:

1. Notes the escalating housing crisis in London and Southwark and the desperate need for more genuinely affordable housing for residents.
2. Further notes the negative impact that policies in the Conservative government's Housing and Planning Bill will have on the construction of new affordable homes and access to existing affordable housing. These policies include:
 - Extending the right to buy to housing association tenants.
 - Requiring councils to sell vacant high-value properties to fund the extended right to buy policy.
 - Introducing a 'Pay to Stay' scheme, where households with an income over £40,000 pay a higher rent to stay in their council or housing association home.
 - Forcing local authorities to reduce tenants' rents by £1 a week and thereby reducing the council's housing budget by £62.5m.
 - Extending the definition of 'affordable housing' to Starter Homes and requiring councils to promote them.
 - A reduction in the annual benefit cap for families to £23,000 in London making private rented housing even more unaffordable.
3. Acknowledges the steps the administration is taking in Southwark to solve the housing crisis, including building 11,000 new council homes over thirty years, the first 1,500 of which will be delivered by the end of 2018.
4. Condemns the previous Conservative/Liberal Democrat government for cutting the affordable housing grant by 70%, making it more difficult for councils to build much-needed affordable homes.

5. Believes that the scale of the housing crisis requires additional help from the Mayor of London to build new social rented housing in Southwark and other boroughs.
6. Calls on the cabinet to support plans for the future Mayor of London to:
 - support councils and housing associations to build homes for social rent
 - support councils to enforce clear, new rules to maximise the affordable housing in new developments
 - support Londoners struggling to rent private by providing Homes for London Living Rent and improving Londoners' experience of private renting by enabling London councils to strengthen renters' rights over tenancy lengths, rent rises, and the quality of accommodation
 - provide homes to buy for Londoners, including for first-time buyers, by building new homes on land owned by the Mayor and tying in long-term planning for new and affordable homes with new transport infrastructure, including the Bakerloo Line extension.

Note: This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

MOTION 2 – TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS *(See page 50 of the main agenda)*

The time limit for the consideration of motions having been reached, Councillors Renata Hamvas and Tom Flynn were deemed to have formally moved and seconded the motion.

Councillors Damian O'Brien and James Barber formally moved and seconded Amendment C.

Amendment C was put to the vote and declared to be lost.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That council assembly realises how essential good public transport is for residents in Southwark to carry out their day to day lives.
2. That council assembly recognises that transport fares are one of the biggest costs many households in the borough face.
3. That council assembly also is aware of the significant transport problems on trains across south east London, including overcrowding at London Bridge, Peckham Rye and Canada Water Stations, proposed ticket office closures, and unacceptable delays, cancellations and lack of capacity on the Govia Thameslink's Catford loop affecting passengers at

Nunhead, Peckham Rye, Denmark Hill, and Elephant and Castle and reiterates its call for Transport for London (TfL) to run all rail services in south east London in order to have a properly integrated transport system.

4. That council assembly acknowledges this administration's commitment to prioritising sustainable journeys, including walking and cycling, to help minimise the environmental impact of transport and make this borough a safer, cleaner and healthier place to live and work.
5. That council assembly believes that our city needs a Mayor who will stand up for Londoners and deliver affordable, reliable public transport, and therefore welcomes London Mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan's commitments to:
 - Freeze all TfL Underground, Docklands Light Railway and Overground and travelcard fares for four years, freeze bus fares following a first-year cut in fares, and introduce a one-hour bus ticket;
 - Push TfL to take on more London commuter rail services so that responsibility for all transport within London lies with the Mayor;
 - Ensure that London councils are given a central role in planning London's transport infrastructure;
 - Champion new measures to encourage cycling and walking and prioritise 'Quiet Ways' to broaden London's safe cycle network, completing the roll out of the existing town centre cycling improvement plans; and make it easier and safer for our residents to cycle around the borough.

Note: This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

MOTION 3 – LOW WATER PRESSURE IN BERMONDSEY *(See page 51 of the main agenda)*

The time limit for the consideration of motions having been reached, Councillors Hamish McCallum and Eliza Mann were deemed to have formally moved and seconded the motion.

Councillors Anood Al-Samerai and Ben Johnson were deemed to have formally moved and seconded Amendment D.

Councillors Kath Whittam and Andy Simmons were deemed to have formally moved and seconded Amendment E.

Amendment D was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

Amendment E was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:

That council assembly:

1. Notes with concern ongoing reports from residents and businesses about low water pressure affecting residents across the borough, which is causing problems for residents with daily essentials, including boilers, showers and washing machines.
2. Further notes that Thames Water has acknowledged that the low pressure is a deliberate strategy to reduce burst water mains in the area.
3. Believes that it is unacceptable that thousands of Southwark residents and businesses, especially those on higher floors, should have to suffer a reduction in water pressure while still being required to pay for a full service.
4. Notes that the council has raised this issue with Thames Water and that Thames Water has apologised for the impact on residents and has agreed to increase water pressure in Rotherhithe following an investigation into over 150 properties in the area.
5. Welcomes the announcement last week from Thames Water that it has increased water pressure in the area following pressure from local councillors and after an additional survey found that the problem was much more extensive than originally thought.
6. Further notes that the council has installed booster pumps in 25 council buildings to improve water pressure.
7. Calls on the cabinet to:
 - ensure that all residents living in blocks where the council is the freeholder also benefit from this return to normal water pressure; and
 - continue working with Thames Water to resolve low water pressure issues for residents across the borough.

Note: This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

MOTION 4 – EAST STREET MARKET *(See page 51 of the main agenda)*

The time limit for the consideration of motions having been reached, Councillors Lorraine Lauder and Samantha Jury-Dada were deemed to have formally moved and seconded the motion.

Councillors Rosie Shimell and Maria Linforth-Hall were deemed to have formally moved and seconded Amendment F.

Amendment F was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:

1. That council assembly celebrates the rich diversity, cultural heritage and many opportunities within the East Street Market, which is one of London's oldest, largest and busiest markets and has been used by local people for decades.
2. That council assembly recognises that improvements are needed to revive the market, to encourage new traders into empty shop units and to create an easier and more sociable shopping experience for the public, including improvements to street cleaning around the market and blocks surrounding East Street.
3. That council assembly welcomes the £207,000 awarded to East Street Market from Southwark Council and the Greater London Assembly (GLA) to regenerate and develop the market.
4. That council assembly calls on the cabinet to work closely with market traders and local businesses to encourage a stronger working partnership and to bring forward improvements to the market which build on the character of the market, encourage growth, and help attract a wider range of customers.

Note: This motion will be referred as a recommendation to the cabinet for consideration.

5. AMENDMENTS

Amendments are set out in supplemental agenda 2, pages 1 – 6.

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm.

CHAIR:

DATED: