

PRESENT

Members of the Council

THE MAYOR: CLLR. WILL PASCALL

THE DEPUTY MAYOR: CLLR. WALAA IDRIS

ADDENBROOKE, Sarah
ADOURIAN, Hamish
ALI, Kasim
ARETI, Aarien
ATKINSON, Robert
BAKHTIAR, Mohammed
BERRILL-COX, Adrian
BLAKEMAN, Judith
CAMPBELL, Elizabeth
CHAUHAN, Dr Max
CYRON, Anne
DENT COAD, Emma
ELNAGHI, Marwan
EVANS, Janet
FAULKS, Catherine
FREEMAN, Robert
HAMMOND, Gregory
HARGREAVES, Gerard
HEALY, Pat
HENDERSON, Ian
HUSBAND, James
JACKSON, Alison
KEMAHLI, Cem

LARI, Sina
LINDSAY, David
MASON, Pat
McVEIGH, Sof
MILLS, Julie
NAIL, Nadia
PRESS, Monica
RENDALL, Josh
ROSSI, Mari-Therese
ROUND, Laura
SCHMETTERLING, Dori
SPALDING, Malcolm
TAYLOR-SMITH, Kim
THALASSITES, Johnny
THAXTER, Portia
WADE, Linda
WASON, Ian
WEALE, Mary
WILL, Emma
WILLIAMS, Charles
WOODGER, Maxwell

1. ELECTION OF MAYOR

The Mayor, Cllr. Marie-Therese Rossi, in the chair.

The Mayor said that it would be appropriate for the meeting to start by standing in silence for 72 seconds to remember all those who lost their lives in the Grenfell tragedy.

Councillors, officers and members of the public stood to observe the 72 second silence.

It was then moved by Cllr. Rendall and seconded by Cllr. Hargreaves:

that Cllr. Pascall be elected Mayor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for the ensuing year.

The motion was put to the vote and the Mayor declared that the vote was in favour of Cllr. Pascall.

The elected Mayor, having been introduced by Cllr. Rendall and Cllr. Hargreaves, made and subscribed the statutory declaration of acceptance of Office and was invested with the Chain and Badge of Office.

The Mayor, Cllr. Pascall, in the chair.

2. APPOINTMENT AND INVESTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The Mayor appointed Cllr. Walaa Idris as Deputy Mayor and invested her with the Badge of Office.

Cllr. Idris addressed the Council.

3. APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN

The Mayor appointed Rev. Emma Dinwiddy Smith as his Chaplain.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 APRIL 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Mayor.

5. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

With great sadness, the Mayor reported the death of former Cllr. David Hudson on 29 April who had served from 1986-2002 as a Member for Brompton Ward.

The Mayor said that he was honoured and excited to have been chosen as Mayor for the coming year. He looked forward to building on the excellent work of his predecessor and ensuring the Mayoralty continued to play a major role in bringing communities and the Council together. He added that he was aware of the enormous challenges in representing the borough and would ensure that the legacy of the Grenfell tragedy was at the forefront of his Mayoralty. He also spoke of his desire to be inclusive and work with everyone across the borough. From the start of his Mayoralty, the Mayor said he would cease using the Mayoral Jaguar, which would be sold, and use an electric vehicle thus making a modest contribution to improving the Borough's air quality. He concluded by saying that he aimed to launch his Charity on 20th June at 6.30pm in the Mayor's Parlour.

6. VOTE OF THANKS TO RETIRING MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

It was moved by Cllr. Freeman, seconded by Cllr. Atkinson, and

RESOLVED -

That the hearty thanks of the Councillors of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea be tendered to Cllr. Marie-Therese Rossi and Cllr. Mohammed Bakhtiar

for the valuable services which they had rendered to the Royal Borough and to the Council during their terms of office as Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively; and that the Council record its high appreciation of the able manner in which they had performed the many duties of their offices.

The Mayor thereupon invested Cllr. Rossi with her Past Mayor's Badge.

Cllrs. Rossi and Bakhtiar responded.

At 6pm the Mayor adjourned the meeting until 6.30pm.

7. PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Mayor said that the Council was keen to encourage public involvement in this meeting. Up to one hour had been set aside for questions from Residents and responses from the Council. The format was for those Residents who had registered to speak for up to five minutes and for there to be up to two minutes for a short reply from the Lead Member and also from a spokesperson from the opposition. The effectiveness of this format would be reviewed to ensure such sessions were as well run and productive as possible.

The Mayor added that this Council meeting was taking place a day before an election. Therefore, he reminded Members of the pre-election guidance: during debate and when answering questions Members must avoid comments that would affect or influence public support for a political party or a candidate.

The Mayor introduced Dr. Catherine Howe from the Democratic Society who facilitated the session. A summary of the speeches is set out below:

Speaker 1 – Abdurahman Sayed

Mr Sayed spoke about a plot of land opposite Al-Manaar Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre on Acklam Road. Mr Sayed said that in July 2006 the Council's Cabinet had granted Al-Manaar first option on the land. However, Al-Manaar had been unable to raise the £2million required for the 999-year lease and the offer was withdrawn in 2015. Since May 2018, Al-Manaar had met with Councillors and officers, including with Cllr. Kim Taylor-Smith, for discussions. Al-Manaar was now in a more financially secure situation and Mr Sayed therefore asked the Council to reconsider the original lease agreement.

Cllr. Taylor-Smith said that Acklam Road was one of four sites given a grant by the Mayor of London to deliver new social housing. Given the high regard that the Council had for Al-Manaar, Cllr. Taylor Smith said that the best action would be to continue discussions to see whether the benefits of what was being provided to the Council by the Mayor of London, the Council's housing objectives and Al-Manaar's objectives for community space could all be met. Cllr. Taylor-Smith could not comment on whether the 2006 figure of £2 million could still be offered, given the Council's requirement to provide best value. Cllr. Taylor-Smith thanked Mr Sayed for coming.

Cllr. Bakhtiar expressed his support for Al-Manaar, reminding the Council of the work that Al-Manaar did for the community. Cllr. Bakhtiar said that Mr Sayed had transformed Al-Manaar over the past three years and thanked him for coming.

Speaker 2 – Tabassum Awan

A volunteer for Al-Manaar and a trustee of the Westway Trust, Ms Awan outlined the activities that Al-Manaar undertook, citing many examples of the good work carried out by the community centre. Ms Awan briefly described Al-Manaar's plans for the land, including: a hub community kitchen; an alternative medicine and wellness centre; a community nursery; a vocational training and adult training centre and a business and career centre. Ms Awan asked the Council to support the requests of the centre, arguing that Al-Manaar needed to be supported to continue with its varied and far-reaching community work.

Cllr. Cyron thanked Mr Sayed and Ms Awan for speaking, congratulated Al-Manaar on its awards, thanked Ms Awan for becoming a trustee of the Westway Trust and also thanked Cllr Press for her work at the Westway Trust. Cllr Cyron welcomed Cllr Elnaghi to the Westway Trust and offered her full support to Al-Manaar.

Cllr. Mason, as a Councillor for Golborne Ward, endorsed the requests that the speakers had made and thanked them for attending. He said that Al-Manaar had built up respect on this Council, and nationally, for the work it carried out. Cllr. Mason said that Al-Manaar, having served the community for 25 years, would be best placed to decide what should happen with the land.

Speaker 3 – Eve Allison

Ms Allison spoke on behalf of 15 women who were attending the meeting. They were facing potential eviction and had created a petition which gained 2,000 signatures in two weeks. Ms Allison read a speech prepared by the residents as they feared that making themselves known would put them at risk of eviction. In the speech, the residents asked the Council to protect the 29 almshouses in Lansdowne Walk. The residents requested that the Council designate the buildings as an Asset of Community Value, for social and community use. Ms Allison said that the Elizabeth Sheppard Trust was established in 1855 to take care of residents who were no longer able to look after themselves, but now their homes could be sold. Ms Allison said that when residents put their names on the waiting list, they thought their houses would be safe, but they had in fact become more vulnerable.

Cllr. Thalassites thanked Ms Allison for raising this distressing issue. Cllr Thalassites said that buildings in residential use could not be designated as Assets of Community Value. However, he would meet with residents to see how the Council could help.

Cllr. Mason thanked Ms Allison for attending, saying that regardless of whether the buildings could be designated as Assets of Community Value, the Council could publicise their opposition to landlords that evict their tenants, including private landlords and Housing Associations. Cllr. Mason said that it would cost the Council nothing to be vocal in their opposition to this but would shame the companies responsible.

Speaker 4 – Joseph Batty

Mr Batty introduced himself as Senior Community Development and Engagement Officer at Kensington and Chelsea Social Council (K&CSC) and outlined the K&CSC's work. Mr Batty expressed K&CSC's desire to be involved in the Governance Review currently being carried out. Mr Batty said that, due to the initial speed of the decision, K&CSC felt remote from the decision and had therefore invited Ed Hammond from the Centre for Public Scrutiny to discuss the changes. While initially pleased with Mr Hammond's recommendations, K&CSC had some issues which were submitted to the Review Panel but were never discussed. Mr Batty said that K&CSC were committed to see North Kensington have control of a meaningful budget and wanted to be the architects in the reshaping of their community. He asked that the recommendations put forward in the K&CSC papers be considered by the Council.

Cllr. Campbell thanked Mr Batty for attending the Council's Borough and Area Governance Review consultation sessions but was unaware of any missing papers. Cllr. Campbell confirmed that, as Co-Chair of the panel, all of the papers that were presented to the panel had been discussed. She said that she and Mr Batty might disagree on the amount of power that should be devolved, but that she also wanted people to be at the centre and to hold the Council to account.

Cllr. Mason said that he had found the paper that Mr Batty submitted. He said the paper ended by saying that the Council's recommendations would not reflect the radical changes that were suggested by the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Cllr. Mason said that real devolution to ward level was not being considered and that the devolution that was being offered already existed. Cllr. Mason told Mr Batty that, as the Council won't decide until its meeting on 24 July, Mr Batty had time to lobby again.

Speaker 5 – Diana Rendall

Ms Rendall talked about traffic nuisances, particularly noise and speeding of super cars. Ms Rendall said that a working group had sat on Monday, chaired by Cllr. McVeigh, and that she hoped that those meetings would continue and lead to some actions being taken to address this ongoing problem. Ms Rendall asked that the Council support any recommendations that emerge from the working group.

Cllr. Thalassites thanked Ms Rendall for coming in and confirmed that a new resident-led working group had been formed by Cllrs. McVeigh, Weale and Idris. Cllr. Thalassites said that officers would be drafting a paper to look at this issue and offer potential solutions.

Cllr. Mason gave his support to the working group but said that follow up work must take place to make sure that recommendations were implemented. Cllr. Mason said that police cuts had reduced the authorities' ability to deal with the problem and urged Ms Rendall to be persistent.

Speaker 6 - Danny and David Lidgate

The Lidgates presented the view of the Holland Park Traders' Association on the new proposals for a TfL cycle highway, claiming that the proposals would cause shop

closures around Holland Park due to reliance on daily deliveries and lack of customer parking. They cited recent paving works undertaken by the Council, which saw sales drop by 10-15%. The Lidgates suggested that removing one lane would cause congestion, which would make crossing the road harder and therefore adversely affect passing trade. They also suggested that increased congestion, and the loss of trees, would contribute towards poor air quality. They therefore asked for support from the Council.

Cllr. Thalassites thanked Danny and David for their comments on the TfL and City for London cycle way. He said that councillors had met with residents and heard their concerns. Cllr Thalassites said that leaflets had been delivered to the four most affected wards and that a public meeting would be held 30th June to gather residents' views. This would be fed back to TfL before the Council formally responded to the proposals.

Cllr. Dent Coad said that in 2015 the Council had refused to allow the super cycle road to be built along High Street Kensington, to the disappointment of cyclists. It had also not introduced 20mph speed restrictions in residential areas. She said that the Notting Hill Improvement Group fought to improve the environment by planting trees but now all 18 are to be cut down, though TfL said they were willing to replace these with more trees.

The Mayor thanked all speakers for taking the time to come and address the meeting.

8. PETITIONS

Cllr. Mills presented a petition with the following prayer:

"We, the undersigned, petition the Council of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to use its best endeavours to protect our 29 homes located in the Alms Houses also known as the Sheppard Trust which are situated in Lansdowne Walk, London, W11 3LN. Several of these 29 flats have been there since the 1950s. We, the present residents and beneficiaries are vulnerable, elderly women or limited means with roots throughout the Royal Borough.

We must not be moved against our will out of the area.

We implore the Cabinet and Councillors to instruct its Planning Department to designate all Sheppard Trust houses on Lansdowne Walk as 'Assets of Community Value' to protect the buildings by designating that they have social community use thereby demonstrating the value Kensington and Chelsea places on housing its elders within the heart of the community and the importance that its long term residents bring to the rich diversity of the borough."

Cllr. Mills also read a letter in support submitted by Hon. Alderman Buckmaster.

Pursuant to Standing Order 10 the petition was referred to the Executive for consideration and reply.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies of absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllrs. Bennett, Marshall, O'Connor and Palmer.

Apologies of lateness

Apologies for lateness were submitted by Cllr. Round.

10. REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The reception of the report was moved by Cllr. Campbell and seconded by Cllr. Lindsay.

(i) Governance Review

The Mayor drew the Council's attention to the two Amendments which had been circulated. Referring to Standing Order 15, the Mayor said that Amendment No.2 had been received just after the deadline for submission of Amendments to reports. It was then moved by Cllr. Lindsay and seconded by Cllr. Lari that under Standing Order 42, the Council to suspend Standing Order 15 on this occasion to allow Amendment 2 to be considered.

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

It was then moved by Cllr. Lindsay and seconded by Cllr. Lari that in accordance with Standing Order 42, Standing Order 30 be suspended to allow the Leader and Cllr Mason up to 10 minutes each for their speeches on the Governance review.

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

The Mayor then said that after the speeches by the Leaders on this matter, the two Amendments would be moved and seconded. There would then be a general debate on the governance review among Members before the votes on the Amendments and on the recommendations in the report.

Cllr. Campbell spoke of the improvements which the proposals in the report would bring. Council decisions were becoming more open, with greater resident involvement. The Council would be experimenting with the format of meetings to get people more engaged, thereby creating tougher scrutiny. Cllr. Campbell said that next year there would be a new Youth Parliament and a Charter for Public Participation. She said that the Council would be changing the way it published its key decisions by putting these on the Forward Plan earlier and increasing their relevance. She spoke of changes to the way scrutiny works, introducing proposals for a new Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Cllr. Mason replied that Labour had campaigned to change scrutiny, but past Executives had refused to listen. He raised several questions about the proposed new scrutiny system:

- Would it be an improvement on the current system?
- How would it answer the issues that residents face?
- How it would work and whether it was ready to go live?
- Whether it was designed to deal with issues that people want to scrutinise and/or issues that Committees are legally obliged to scrutinise?

He said that City Living Local Life was already a devolved budget and therefore did not represent devolution. Cllr. Mason concluded by saying that the Labour Group would wait to see the final proposals in July before deciding whether to support them.

Amendment No. 1

It was then moved by Cllr. Rendall and seconded by Cllr. Evans:

“This Council notes the plans for a period of consultation prior to the meeting of Council on 24 July in relation to the detail of new arrangements for scrutiny, and prioritisation of the scrutiny work programme. This consultation will take place through a residents’ conference, all existing Scrutiny Committees, and a public appeal for views and priorities.

In order to ensure that this consultation is as effective as possible, this Council resolves to agree the following amendments to the recommendations in the report of the Administration Committee as follows:

- i) Not to elect a Chair and Vice Chair designate of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at this meeting;*
- ii) To appoint a Panel of four non-Executive members (three majority party and one minority party members) to oversee the process of consultation and for the Administration Committee to bring back proposals to the Council meeting on 24 July having considered the results of that consultation;*
- iii) To consider as part of the consultation how all non-Executive members can have the opportunity to serve on one Scrutiny Committee, if they so wish.”*

Amendment No. 2

It was then moved by Cllr. Ali and seconded by Cllr. Dent Coad:

“Good scrutiny comes from working collectively and efficiently with our residents taking the time it needs to get a representative outcome. The Council will achieve a better scrutiny system by improving engagements with residents to develop a deep understanding of local people’s needs and aspirations. This must form part of a wider programme of community engagement and empowerment that will bring the benefits of true participation.

However, very few residents were engaged and consulted for the new scrutiny programme, in fact, less than 1.9% of about the 160,000 residents of RBKC were consulted during four Council Plan consultations in a short period of time. The resident input to the Borough & Area Governance Review Panel hearings was also small in number, and many of their ideas were ignored.

Therefore, this consultation process is not adequate to deliver a scrutiny programme fit for a 21st Century local authority as it does not reflect the voices and concerns of the borough-wide residents.

In order to ensure that this consultation is as successful as possible, this Council resolves to agree the following amendments to the recommendations in the report of the Administration Committee:

- To consult with more residents in the borough and increase the number of residents consulted for the new scrutiny programme from less than 2% to 15-20% of the 160,000 residents that will furthermore ensure proportional representation of all the wards in the borough.*
- To extend the period of the boroughwide consultations to March 2020.*
- To appoint a panel of four non-Executive members to oversee the process of the consultation before starting to pilot whatever new scrutiny arrangements emerge from this process, from May 2020 for 2 years, with a review to be scheduled after 18 months.”*

Debate then followed among Members. The following key points were made:

- The Borough and Area Governance Review panel had met in public seven times to discuss changes.
- Ward forums were welcomed and local spending priorities would involve residents in the heart of decision-making.
- There was a need for change to the scrutiny process.
- Scrutiny committees currently had overloaded agendas and recommendations were rarely made.
- Disappointment was expressed that there were only plans for a residents' panel in Notting Dale ward. Panels should also be set up for other wards.
- The Labour Group had not put forward any Members for the scrutiny panel as it was understood that meetings would be during the day not evening.
- The Council should take another 7 to 8 months to consider the proposals.
- The proposals would build on the best parts of scrutiny. New scrutiny arrangements would be more resident facing and dynamic.
- Scrutiny committees should do more work outside the Town Hall.
- Many key decisions did not need to go through scrutiny committees which had overloaded agendas. Increasing consultation to 15-20% of residents as suggested in Amendment 2 defied credulity.
- Changes to budget scrutiny would be of particular benefit.
- Delaying the introduction of the proposals was not ideal but more residents should be consulted.

The time being 8.20pm, it was moved by Cllr. Lindsay, seconded by Cllr. Lari and

RESOLVED – that Standing Order 24.01 be suspended and that the meeting terminate no later than 9.30pm.

In summing up and addressing the points raised, Cllr. Campbell said that discussions had been ongoing for a year and there would be time to come up with further proposals before the July Council meeting. There should be no further delay. There would be a review of the new system after a year.

Amendment No.1 was then put to the vote and was declared by the Mayor to be carried, with the Labour Councillors and Liberal Democrat Councillor abstaining.

Amendment No.2 was then put to the vote and was declared by the Mayor to be lost.

RESOLVED (with the Labour Councillors and Liberal Democrat Councillor abstaining) - that the five recommendations in paragraph 1.2, as amended by Amendment No.1, be adopted.

(ii) Proposed Appointments Policy

RESOLVED - that the recommendation in paragraph 2.3 be adopted.

(iii) Change to the Planning Committee

RESOLVED - that the recommendation in paragraph 3.2 be adopted.

11. APPOINTMENTS TO THE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND COMMITTEES

The list of Lead Members had been circulated round the Chamber. Cllr. Lindsay informed the Council that Cllr. Faulks would have responsibility for library services. The Council noted the appointments.

The nominations to Committees standing in the names of Cllrs. Lindsay and Lari and circulated at the meeting were before the Council.

RESOLVED -

That the appointments to Committees be agreed.

12. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

The nominations standing in the names of Cllrs. Lindsay and Lari and circulated at the meeting were before the Council.

RESOLVED -

That the appointments be agreed.

OTHER URGENT MATTERS

None.

The meeting ended at 8.50pm.

Mayor

DRAFT