

PRESENT

Members of the Council

THE MAYOR, CLLR. DAVID LINDSAY
THE DEPUTY MAYOR, CLLR. JANET EVANS

ADAM, Mona
ADDENBROOKE, Sarah
ADOURIAN, Hamish
AHMED, Mona
ARETI, Aarien
BAKHTIAR, Mohammed
BENTON, Toby
BURNS, Laura
CAMPBELL, Elizabeth
DENT COAD, Emma
ELNAGHI, Marwan
FAULKS, Catherine
GARDNER, Joanna
HAMMOND, Greg
HARGREAVES, Gerard
HUDD, Preety
HUSBAND, James
IDRIS, Walaa
ISSE, Dahabo
KEMAHLI, Cem
KNIGHT, Lucy

LANE, Will
LARI, Sina
MARSHALL, Quentin
McVEIGH, Sof
NORTH, Lloyd
NUR, Abdullahi
PASCALL, Will
RENDALL, Josh
ROSSI, Marie-Therese
SCHMETTERLING, Dori
SIMMONS, Claire
TAYLOR-SMITH, Kim
THALASSITES, Johnny
VERBOVEN, Tim
WADE, Linda
WEALE, Mary
WEEDEN-SANZ, Roberto
WILL, Emma
YANKSON, Sidney
ZVEDENIUK, Sonia

Agenda

The Mayor invited those present to stand in silence for 72 seconds to remember all those who lost their lives in the Grenfell tragedy.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Mayor reported that minutes had been amended subsequent to publication to correct the spelling of Lexham Mews and record Cllrs Rendall and Will's attendance and Cllr. Hammond's apologies. Subject only to this, the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 12 October 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

2. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor reported the death in service of Ian Turner, who worked as a Senior Capital Projects Manager, Family Services. Cllrs. Faulks, Will, Rendall, Pascall and Elnaghi expressed their personal condolences and spoke of his professionalism, commitment and success in delivering new schools and other projects of benefit to local children.

3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Ali, Bennett, Graham, Jedut and Thaxter.

Apologies for lateness were received from Cllrs Evans, Verboven, Hargreaves, Wade, Simmons, and Weeden-Sanz

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

5. PUBLIC SPEAKING

Flooding/sewer capacity

Bobbie Vincent-Emery spoke about the effects of the 12 July 2022 flooding, in which the Counters Creek sewer had also overflowed and affected a number of premises. The contractors had yet to complete all the repairs. She informed Council of the contributory factors, namely: Thames Water's failure to build an additional sewer; the dipped and broken paving that served to guide the waters, which the Council's Highways officers had addressed. She asked when would the Council undertake a survey in the low lying and flood-prone areas of the Borough to assess the formation of roads, pavements and kerbs which channel rainwater into ground floors and basements of buildings, and would action be taken to alter and resurface the roads and pavements which make buildings vulnerable to flooding?

Cllr. Cem Kemahli, Lead Member for the Environment, replied thanking Bobbie for raising the issue. He stated that it was unacceptable for residents to face such issues but was happy that Council officers had provided a solution. The rainfall that night was eight times greater than the capacity of Thames Tideway-super sewer. It is for Thames Water to ensure it has the capacity to cope with changing rainfall patterns. He agreed that the Council should undertake a survey to identify places that may be vulnerable to such flooding as well as considering measures such as raising kerbs or other natural defences. He undertook to consult with Council officers to clarify what modelling has been done to assess flood risk and if this can be mitigated. He also indicated he would be in touch with the questioner.

Cllr. Dent Coad also thanked Bobbie for bringing this matter to Council, as her ward, St.Helens, had also suffered from Counters Creek overflowing during the heavy rain. She referred to the 2007 flooding of Holland Road. She informed Council that concerns about rainwater flooding homes and businesses had been raised at a meeting regarding the public realm works at St. Helen's Gardens. Cllr Dent Coad stated that flood prevention had to be the number one consideration in this and future schemes.

Legacy to Young People in North Kensington

Samia Badani congratulated the new Chief Executive on her appointment and looked forward to meeting her. She quoted the Royal Borough's motto: 'Quam bonum in unum habitare' – 'What a good thing it is to dwell in unity' but noted that the tragedy of 14 June 2017 had exposed the disparities in income, health and opportunities. This had produced a period of reflection by residents, councillors and Council officers as well as her questions and comments at Council meetings over the past five years as a witness of the tragedy.

She emphasised the work that was necessary at grassroots level and called for more trust in residents, who the Royal Borough did not celebrate sufficiently. She referred to the Greater London Authority and for the need for services for the community delivered by the community, although some had been obstructive. While she was celebrating the community's ownership of the vision for the future not the community space itself, she invited Council to thank all the residents who have supported the community, especially those in the five north Kensington wards. She asked Council if it was now time to change the motto to 'Quam bonum in unum laborare' – 'What a good thing it is to work in unity' and if Councillors would join in a round of applause.

On 16 September 2022 a young man and local leader, Omar al-Baghdadi, bereaved in the Grenfell Tragedy, lost his life. She asked that the Council commit to build a legacy, along with the young people and the community, in Omar's name?

Cllr. Catherine Faulks, Lead Member for Family and Children's Services, thanked Samia for all that she had done for the community and in challenging the Council and for request for a legacy for Omar. She welcomed the work of the community groups that had sprung up after the Grenfell tragedy, for example LCAT (Latimer Community Art Therapy) and the Grenfell Project. Councillor Faulks referred to the the highest percentage of outstanding schools in the country as an example of the positive legacy for young people. To address the attainment gap, the Council had set up the Grenfell Education Fund to help keep young people in education, training, and skills. She referred to the Council having the highest funded youth clubs in the country. The Council was looking to work with mental health professionals to address the needs of young people affected by Grenfell. Finally Cllr. Faulks offered to meet Samia to discuss these matters further.

Cllr. Simmons thanked Samia and offered her sincere condolences to Omar's family. She thanked Samia along with the colleagues, volunteers and partners involved in The Space for the vital support they have provided to families in North Kensington over the last five years. She commented on how the Council had still not learnt or changed sufficiently in the wake of Grenfell and how it had failed the residents of North Kensington after that tragedy. Cllr. Simmons added that councillors had sought to raise the failings at Council and Scrutiny on many occasions over the past five years, with the Council owing a debt of gratitude to Samia and those who had provided a community-led model of service delivery and recovery from 2017 onwards. She expressed her request that the Council's Leadership would respond to the request to honour Omar's memory.

Samia suggested that the Council review its rules for public participation at Council meetings as she felt these appear to be inflexible and might be impeding engagement.

Purchase of visitors' parking permits

Rona Delves Broughton asked Council if visitors' permits could be purchased by the residents of Kensington Square. The proximity of shops in the High Street meant that the insufficient parking meters in Thackeray Street and Kensington Court. Tradesmen, such as those undertaking urgent repairs, are unable to park and so cannot complete the work. Visitors' permits are available in Westminster, Lewisham and West Kensington. She indicated she had raised the issue with the Queen's Gate ward councillors and listed occasions when tradesmen had not been able to find parking and had gone away leaving urgent repairs uncompleted.

Cllr. Cem Kemahli, Lead Member for the Environment, replied and thanked Rona for sharing her experiences. He stated that the Council was exploring options and he had met with the pay-by-phone parking operator earlier that day. He added that the key need was to share the Borough's limited space efficiently and would follow up with the Queen's Gate and Redcliffe councillors. After Covid, the Council has additional flexibility and he hoped to provide more news once the necessary consultation had been completed.

Cllr. Dent Coad recognised the pressure on parking spaces around Kensington Square, even for permit holders and commented that there had been a public car park once off Kensington Square. She noted the benefits of permits not only for tradesmen but also for homecare workers. While it was still important that the Council controlled traffic around its remaining development sites, through traffic control orders, it was vital that emergency workers or carers were able to park.

Experiences of a refugee from Ukraine

Mariia Turska told councillors about her experience as a Ukrainian refugee, having come to the UK four months ago and being emotionally scarred by having to leave her home to come to a country she had not visited before. She arrived with many questions about her teenage daughters' future and how they would all fit in with the sponsor family. She praised her sponsor family for the support they had provided. It took one and half months to find a school places, but the children now attend Holland Park School where they receive daily support from tutors and mental health carers. Mariia spoke of how she was happy to be in the country, where she felt safe. All the people she had met in the UK had been helpful and she wanted to say thank you to everyone.

Cllr. Catherine Faulks, Lead Member for Family and Children's Services, replied and stated how moved she was by the comments given that few could know the trauma Mariia and her family were still facing, given that her husband was still in Ukraine. Cllr. Faulks was delighted that the Council was providing help and she hoped that Mariia was also receiving the appropriate support and information for jobs and activities for her children, particularly during the summer. She thanked her for sharing her experiences with Council.

Cllr. Dent Coad thanked Mariia and added that many councillors were from refugee backgrounds. Cllr. Dent Coad was pleased that the system had worked and offered solidarity with her and her family and complimented her on bringing up her daughters.

6. PETITIONS

No petitions were presented.

7. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND RESPONSE BY LEADER OF THE MINORITY PARTY (STANDING ITEM)

The Mayor invited the **Leader of the Council** to address the meeting.

Good evening, Mr. Mayor, I hope you are feeling better after your recent illness. I am glad you can be here this evening.

First of all I'd like to say how pleased I am to see our new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at the helm. I advocated for his leadership in the summer, and although it took us a bit longer than expected, we got there in the end.

We have already opened channels to this new Government and we will continue making the case for our residents, for this borough, and for London.

To secure investment and support for jobs, for Grenfell and Covid recovery, and to help us meet housing pressures and tackle the cost of living for thousands of people here in the borough.

Mr. Mayor, As we head into winter we are faced with challenges but also opportunities. From Sloane Square to High Street Kensington to Earls Court where I have been this afternoon, landowners, BIDs and local communities are all rightly excited about Christmas – and busy switching on light and preparing for a busy month, and we hope that people will shop locally and support our high streets and businesses in the borough.

On the other hand we also know how many families are struggling with their finances... many for the very first time as energy prices and inflation begin to bite. I just want people to know that this Council is here to help.

Alongside charity and voluntary partners, we are working very hard to provide support and access to financial advice and support. We are distributing Government grants, and we are helping businesses with their costs. We have ambitions of continuing to keep tax low, and to keep fees low.

This Council's management of its money – being careful with it – means we can reduce the burden on residents through taxes and fees. It is something we take pride in, being careful with taxpayers' money.

This week we have launched our Warm Spaces initiative, including an online map. We are aiming to bring together vital support with community spirit.

We have spaces that are not only available to people who need them, but also provide opportunities to learn new skills, and meet new people, or old friends.

We saw during the pandemic how our communities work together and with the Council to support people who really need it.

I hope all councillors here this evening will support us and relay information – available on our website – and from the leaflet in front you – to people right across the borough.

Mr Mayor, I spend a lot of time out in our communities. This week I visited Marlborough School and had an inspirational conversation with the teaching staff there.

They are looking at ways to not only be a school, but a venue within a community – it epitomises the way this borough works when at its best.

This Council helped to fund a brand-new school, teachers work hard to educate the next generation and give them the opportunities in life, and the school is becoming a focal point for the whole community, with activities running into evenings and over the weekends.

That is local government in action. Laying the groundwork for something better. All the time, every day. Right now we are consulting via a series of Let's Talk K&C events on our Council Plan, this will be the road map to meet our challenge of becoming the best council. We are focused on this, so we can play our part and encourage others to contribute to a borough that is greener, safer, fairer.

We are, building more homes, providing safer housing, creating and improving amazing public spaces and working towards a borough that is net zero by 2040. And continually improving our customer services and customer care, for residents, businesses, and visitors. We are united on this. These benches behind me will all contribute to that aim, we are focused on the challenges ahead.

Mr Mayor, despite these challenges, I hope that Christmas brings togetherness and provides a chance to see friends and family. The New Year provides us all with an opportunity to refresh and get ready to step up our efforts again in 2023. Thank you

The Mayor invited the **Leader of the Opposition** to address the meeting.

Mr. Mayor, 'Jeremy Hunt's autumn statement will cost middle Englanders £20,000'.

Not my analysis, but that of the Economics team at 'The Times'. Rising inflation and fuel costs, and frozen tax thresholds reversing the previous Chancellor's cuts mean people will be paying the most since the post-war period.

The Head of the Institute of Fiscal Studies says 'We are reaping the costs of the long-term failure to grow the economy, the effects of an ageing population and high levels of past borrowing . . .'. 'We are in for a long, hard, unpleasant journey'.

We are also, officially, in recession. This is not a crisis made in Russia. It is a crisis made in Downing Street.

According to the Times it 'will drive the worst two-year fall in real household incomes on record'.

Meanwhile we will have to wait yet longer for the 'oven ready social reform' promised by PM Johnson in 2019, three long years ago and yet to see the light of day, but now promised for October 2025 – at least a year after the next General Election.

Increases in funding via the Better Care Fund that supports people discharged from hospital and heading home are frankly derisive and will do nothing to tackle the abysmal shortage in nursing or indeed care workers.

The Schools budget rise will barely pay for the current lack in teaching materials, and certainly not for the free school meals so desperately needed to feed the millions of children going hungry every day.

And the 'rise' in the Energy Price Guarantee – basically a rise in what we have to pay, not in funding – will finally topple the finances of those with precarious household budgets already. Another unwelcome 'rise' is that predicted for

unemployment, an entirely predictable outcome of the failing economy, Brexit-hounded business and industry fleeing the country, the skills gap in so many areas while we refuse to fill the gap with skilled workers from abroad.

As the leader of the Local Government Assn Labour, Cllr. Shaun Davies, puts it: 'the Conservatives crashed the economy, and now we're all paying the price. The recession wasn't made in Russia – it was made in Downing Street'. We are the only G7 country with an economy smaller than pre-pandemic, and successive Chancellors and PMs have the blood of economic failure on their hands.

Grant funding is being hit hard by inflation and interest rates, and the government's lifting of the need for a plebiscite to rise Council Tax rates from 2 to 3% seems alarming, while the local Government Chronicle estimates that Council Tax would have to be raised by 20% just to meet current pressures.

So how is RBKC proposing to tackle this financial Armageddon? Squeezing more out of our voluntary sector contracts, for less. 'Working with volunteers to take on lower level, non-complex care packages'. – frightening!

When I see that one proposal is to 'reduce the number of residential placements made out of borough' – it seems there is zero acceptance of the long-term campaign of this Council to eradicate every single Council owned and borough-based residential care home, selling off the sites for vast profit and sending our vulnerable loved ones miles out of reach. This applies to Learning Disability, Mental health and care homes for our elderly.

Further cuts to ASC staff, day centres and reablement services will follow – and couldn't come at a worse time when one of our Home Care contractors has failed a CQC inspection. And at the other end of the spectrum, brutal cuts to youth offending services will surely have knock-on effects that don't bear thinking about.

Despite these failures, we are proposing to remove unspent funds from our Economic Development Team, as it hasn't been used to bolster local business and help them survive tumultuous times ahead.

These proposals, Mr. Mayor, were put together weeks before the Autumn Statement. Our finance team must be having nightmares in anticipation of the Local Government Settlement announcement on 21 December. And we in the Labour Group will be adjusting our own alternatives, that will focus on caring for our most vulnerable neighbours, hard-pressed families, and on supporting food banks, baby banks and warm banks.

Mr. Mayor, the prospect for those of us who are NOT wallowing in unearned wealth is dire. We need new ways of governing, and of caring, that puts our poorest and most vulnerable people before the care-free pleasures and pastimes of extreme wealth.

Christmas is coming. Let's make it mean something this year.

8. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Mayor confirmed that the order of business would be as printed on the agenda.

9. REPORTS FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

There were no reports from the Leadership Team.

10. REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL-SIDE COMMITTEES

There were no reports from the Council-side Committees.

11. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COUNCIL BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Cllr. Weeden-Sanz spoke in reply to the Leadership Team's Net Zero 2030 Report and Response, which had been referred to Council by the Environment Select Committee. As Cllr. Bennett, Committee Chair, could not be present, Cllr. Weeden-Sanz, Vice Chair of the Committee read out the Chair's statement, which thanked him for speaking to the report.

Cllr. Weeden-Sanz noted the daunting global challenge of minimising the impact of climate change and how it could make individuals feel powerless to make a difference or reluctant to make changes when others did not do likewise. He pointed out that change required for individuals to take responsibility for doing things within their own control. The Council had a great role to play along with enough individuals, local and national governments to prevent irreparable damage from Climate Change. He noted the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in January 2020 and, under the previous Chair – Cllr. Pascall – the Committee commenced a review progress towards the pledge that the Council would become net zero by 2030.

He stated that the report was informed by briefings, internal and external policy documents and site visits. Cllr. Weeden-Sanz highlighted that the report identified practical and financial challenges the Council would face making its buildings net zero along with a wider, ambitious programme including insulating buildings, altering procurement policies, providing finance and making strategic decisions about carbon off-setting. He commended Cllr. Pascall, other Members and officers for their work on the report and welcomed the fact that the Leadership Team had accepted all the report's recommendations, some of which had already been implemented. As well as the Council's pledge for 2030, the Select Committee would also continue to address the 2040 Borough-wide pledge.

Cllr. Pascall spoke to the report, declaring an interest as his three sons would be materially affected by the Council's response to the report. He drew Members' attention to the seven key recommendations and the Leadership Team's responses and thanked all those who had provided evidence as well as the officer who had produced the final report. He noted that all business streams in the Council, its contractors and partners. He set out in detail the operation of the carbon offset hypothecation for any non-carbon zero Council activity that would apply from 2030, which would be used to fund improvements to Council stock until all are carbon zero. He stated that, following the COP 22 Conference and the consequence of the invasion of Ukraine, the Council should strengthen its commitment to achieving the 2030 target with the practical issues set out in the Leadership Team's response being hurdles to be overcome rather than obstacles. Cllr. Pascall acknowledged the scale of work required within the Housing Property team to deliver approximately £100m of alterations. Making more properties meet the ECB B rating would not only help meet the climate change goal but also help to address residents' fuel poverty concerns. He commended the report to Members.

Cllr. Hammond spoke to the report and congratulated both the Committee and Cllr. Pascall for producing it. He addressed recommendation five that dealt with double glazing for listed building and how this related to the 2040 target, as this

had been raised with him by a significant number of residents. He welcomed the Council's consultation on changing policy, which he and colleagues had publicised widely, and he urged others to do likewise.

Cllr. Lari spoke to the report and commended Cllr. Pascall and those who had worked on it. He drew Members' attention to the section about the damage caused by petrol-powered vehicles along with encouraging staff to use other means of travel; however, he was disappointed by the Council's lack of action on cycle lanes. He quoted a report commissioned by the Council from the Centre for London, which stated that introducing east-west cycle routes would contribute both to the Royal Borough's and the Mayor of London's net zero goals. In light of both reports, he invited the Council to rethink its policy of removing cycle lanes and to take the radical action necessary to address the climate crisis.

Cllr. Cem Kemahli, Lead Member for the Environment, replied noting that one Member had reminisced about the loss of a car park and now a colleague was pressing for cycle lanes! He thanked Cllr. Pascall and the Environment Select Committee for the report. He noted that Cllrs Pascall and Weeden-Sanz were passionate about the environment along with the report's comment that the Council had cut carbon emissions by 52% since 2008. The Council had committed £14m to modify schools and operational buildings, while Cllr. Kim Taylor-Smith is seeking to improve the housing stock and a £10m Green Fund has been introduced. He informed Council that there were plans to introduce an electric waste fleet, fabric-first retrofitting of Council-owned housing and more food waste collection. Cllr. Kemahli acknowledged the amount of work to be done, especially as time was lost over Covid. He stated that the Leadership was responding to all the recommendations and as per Cllr. Hammond's comments had commenced work on recommendation five and that he would welcome working with the Committee on this issue.

The report was received and noted.

12. QUESTIONS TO LEAD MEMBERS

(i) By Cllr. Linda Wade

Statistics recently released state that Kensington and Chelsea rates as the second worst borough for crime in the Capital after Westminster, with figures of 138 per 1000. Irrespective of where you live, residents are suffering from under-policing. This failure is creating a lack of confidence in the police to protect communities, businesses and visitors. In the recent round of allocation to the BCU, we as a borough received no additional police officers. What action is the Lead Member taking to ensure that we can obtain more?'

Cllr. Will stated that she had raised this top priority matter regularly with the Borough Commander and that she would continue to do so. The matter had also been raised by Cllr. Campbell, Leader of the Council and the Member of Parliament for Kensington but that the Police Service answers to the Mayor of London. She added that the Borough was third with 159 per 1000 by weighted population and 25th by total volume. Hammersmith and Fulham was fourth with similar figures and policing levels. She explained that residents were now reporting crime, as requested. Visible policing is reduced when officers are deployed for protests or other duties outside the borough, known as abstraction, particularly to Westminster. The Council is using its own Community Safety Team and wardens to protect communities.

Cllr. Wade asked a supplementary question relating to how the Lead Member would influence the Borough Commander concerning abstraction and so improve the response times, which were longer than the targets.

In reply, Cllr. Will stated she did not have the latest figures to hand, given that previously the wrong figures had been presented in a question, but she would check them outside the meeting and, if the response times have lapsed, raise it with the Borough Commander.

(ii) By Cllr. Greg Hammond

Cllr. Hammond asked the Lead Member to update the Council on Transport for London's bus route changes affecting the Borough.

In reply, Cllr. Kemahli stated that the Borough had been successful in that only two of the twenty routes proposed for cuts or re-routing would be affected with none being cut. He informed Council that 2,000 residents from West London had responded to the London-wide consultation out of 21,000 submissions.

Cllr. Hammond asked a supplementary question about why the Mayor of London, tended to favour bus cuts and that there would still be inconvenience to residents from the route changes and would the Lead Member continue to campaign for better services.

In reply, Cllr. Kemahli stated that he would continue opposing bus changes, such as one that might divert shoppers from the King's Road to Battersea Power Station. The Council would also oppose other Mayor of London proposals such as a clean air zone in Hammersmith and Fulham.

13. MATTERS OF LOCAL CONCERN RAISED UNDER STANDING ORDER 11

Cllr. Gardner spoke about the closure of the Westbourne Grove Medical Centre following the sudden death of Dr. Chin. Over 7,000 people now have to register elsewhere, and she was concerned about how it was already difficult for people to obtain appointments with GPs. She asked if the Adults and Social Care Select Committee could scrutinise the short- and long-term planned GP coverage to ensure residents have access to local care, particularly with new building developments.

Cllr. Hudd welcomed the formation of the new Campden House and Johnson House residents' associations in Campden ward. She thanked those residents and Cllr. North for organising them. She informed Council how the engaged and diverse residents' groups made Campden ward dynamic and that the Lead Member for Finance would be attending the Johnson House launch event. She looked forward to working with both the new associations.

Cllr. Burns paid tribute to former councillors Berill-Cox and Jackson, her predecessors in Chelsea Riverside. She drew attention to the Ward's issues, opportunities and challenges, particularly the consultation until 24 January 2023 on phase two of the Battersea Bridge improvements. She urged residents to respond as pedestrian safety is an issue. She had been saddened by the fatality of Jack Ryan in 2021 and had welcomed the phase one works. She thanked Cllr. Thalassites, local residents and the petition organiser for their work on that scheme.

The Mayor congratulated Cllr. Burns on her maiden speech.

Cllr. Bakhtiar spoke about the wide-spread use of council estates for the sale of drugs, often to outsiders who arrive by car or moped. Residents, including children, are exposed to the smell of 'weed' being smoked by neighbours. No action has been taken even though crime hotspots have been reported. He requested the Council install CCTV to deter criminals and make the areas safer.

14. MOTIONS FOR MAIN DEBATE

(i) Pedestrian Danger and Nuisance from mopeds in Colville Ward

It was moved by Cllr. Isse and seconded by Cllr. Benton that:

'The stretch of Kensington Park Road between the junctions of Elgin Crescent and Blenheim Crescent has been closed to through traffic to encourage outside eating, and yet is plagued with mopeds delivering hot food, who often set up camp in this area causing anti-social behaviour. Their continued presence creates a bad atmosphere in the area, especially for the retail shops in that street already suffering from the presence of outside seating that obscures their windows.

Despite parts of Portobello Road market being closed to traffic at weekends, mopeds continually drive down the road going the wrong way, ignoring the road closure completely. Mopeds also speed across the pedestrian area at Tavistock Piazza from Basing Street, using this a short cut onto Portobello Road. There is sheltered accommodation for elderly residents at this location, and this is extremely dangerous.

This behaviour by moped drivers is a serious hazard to pedestrians.

This Council calls on the Lead Member for Planning, Place & Environment to ensure that the Council takes steps to help local residents and businesses to fight this conduct from moped drivers, with support from the local traffic enforcement officers and with the installation of an enforcement camera to automatically ticket vehicles ignoring the sign. This would deter the moped drivers ignoring the signs and driving up and down the road, loitering and causing antisocial behaviour to the residents.'

A debate ensued with contributions from Cllrs Bakhtiar, Verboven, Thalassites, Taylor-Smith, Schmetterling and Kemahli.

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

THE DEPUTY MAYOR, CLLR. JANET EVANS, IN THE CHAIR

(ii) Council Support for Refugees

It was moved by Cllr. Ahmed and seconded by Cllr. Adam that:

'War means refugees and asylum seekers and the tragedy in Ukraine has brought that starkly to light. There has been a huge sense of solidarity as well as practical help for those displaced from Ukraine and forced to seek refuge which has been extremely positive, and we welcome the council's efforts with the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme which has meant that these individuals are now safely housed.

However, while Ukrainian refugees have rightly benefited from the emotional as well as practical support that comes with joining a family home this is in stark contrast to the experiences of asylum seekers. In Kensington and Chelsea there are currently 510 adults and 68 children seeking asylum, of mainly middle eastern and north African background languishing destitute in contingency hotels with none of the rights afforded to those fleeing war in Ukraine.

While those arriving from Ukrainian are given safe passage and welcomed into homes, asylum seekers predominantly from Syria and Iraq have faced unimaginable traumas just to arrive on our shores only then to be left destitute in an indefinite torturous lockdown in contingency hotels described as inadequate.

Medical professionals, lawyers and humanitarian organisations have all raised concerns over the dire conditions in contingency hotels run by the private contractor, Clearsprings who provide the service in this borough. There have been failures to assess people's needs prior to placement in the hotels, failure to provide access to legal advice, lack of adequate medical cover and psychological support all while being forced to live on 40 pounds a week.

All this motion seeks to achieve is for asylum seekers placed in our Borough to live in dignity, rather than in conditions that worsen their health and well-being and that asylum seekers are afforded the same rights as those fleeing from the ward in Ukraine. It is unacceptable to say this is a Home Office responsibility, they are placed in our borough and this council has an opportunity to show real leadership and set an example to other local authorities by addressing the needs of this extremely vulnerable and neglected group.

This Council calls on the Leadership Team to commit to the following

- (1) Carry out a basic fact-finding exercise with a full review of the Contingency hotels and services available to asylum seekers and the quality of the care provided by Clearsprings (a requirement of the London Asylum Procurement Framework)
- (2) Social care provision and Wellbeing Support currently only safeguarding measures are provided
- (3) development of a package of support for asylum seekers who are asked to move on from contingency hotels and support to remain in the borough if requested.

An amendment to the motion was moved by Cllr. Taylor-Smith and seconded by Cllr. Areti:

War means refugees and asylum seekers and the tragedy in Ukraine has brought that starkly to light. There has been a huge sense of solidarity as well as practical help for those displaced from Ukraine and forced to seek refuge which has been extremely positive, and we welcome the council's efforts with the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme which has meant that these individuals are now safely housed. ~~However, while~~ Ukrainian refugees have rightly benefited from the emotional as well as practical support that comes with joining a family home ~~this is in stark contrast to the experiences of asylum seekers. In Kensington and Chelsea there are currently 510 adults and 68 children seeking asylum, of mainly middle eastern~~

~~and north African background languishing destitute in contingency hotels with none of the rights afforded to those fleeing war in Ukraine.~~

We also welcome asylum seekers who are placed here by the Home Office, and who commission their accommodation through an agent, independently of the Council. ~~While those arriving from Ukrainian are given safe passage and welcomed into homes, asylum seekers predominantly from Syria and Iraq have faced unimaginable traumas just to arrive on our shores only then to be left destitute in an indefinite torturous lockdown in contingency hotels described as inadequate.~~

These families and individuals are placed in 'contingency hotels' whilst their asylum claim is processed. These placements should only be used before more suitable 'dispersed' accommodation is sourced, although asylum seekers are spending much longer in contingency hotels than they should be due to the constraints of the housing market and growing, competing demands for accommodation nationally.

~~Medical professionals, lawyers and humanitarian organisations have all raised concerns over the dire conditions in contingency hotels run by the private contractor, Clearsprings who provide the service in this borough. There have been failures to assess people's needs prior to placement in the hotels, failure to provide access to legal advice, lack of adequate medical cover and psychological support all while being forced to live on 40 pounds a week.~~

We are aware there are concerns about the length of stay of asylum seekers in our Borough and would value further conversations with the Home Office to ensure an appropriate and sustainable approach to the accommodation and support for those seeking asylum who have been placed in the Borough.

We also note that the asylum seekers are entitled to access education and health services in-line with the general population.

~~All this motion seeks to achieve is for asylum seekers placed in our Borough to live in dignity, rather than in conditions that worsen their health and well-being and that asylum seekers are afforded the same rights as those fleeing from the ward in Ukraine. It is unacceptable to say this is a Home Office responsibility, they are placed in our borough and this council has an opportunity to show real leadership and set an example to other local authorities by addressing the needs of this extremely vulnerable and neglected group.~~

This Council calls on the Leadership Team to commit to the following:

- ~~(1) Carry out a basic fact finding exercise with a full review of the Contingency hotels and services available to asylum seekers and the quality of the care provided by Clearsprings (a requirement of the London Asylum Procurement Framework)~~
- ~~(2) Social care provision and Wellbeing Support currently only safeguarding measures are provided~~
- ~~(3) development of a package of support for asylum seekers who are asked to move on from contingency hotels and support to remain in the borough if requested.~~

- 1) Lobby central government to ensure this Council receives sufficient funding to meet the sometimes complex and multifaceted needs of the asylum seekers cohort.
- 2) Call on the Government to ensure that all refugees and evacuees living in the Borough who have a legal right to stay in the country, and those who are awaiting confirmation of their status, are treated with equal respect and care.
- 3) Encourage more residents to volunteer as hosts for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

A debate ensued with contributions from Cllrs Schmetterling, Wade, Bakhtiar, Zvedeniuk, Pascall, Will, Hargreaves and McVeigh.

The amendment to the motion was then put to the vote by the Deputy Mayor, declared carried and became the substantive motion.

'War means refugees and asylum seekers and the tragedy in Ukraine has brought that starkly to light. There has been a huge sense of solidarity as well as practical help for those displaced from Ukraine and forced to seek refuge which has been extremely positive, and we welcome the council's efforts with the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme which has meant that these individuals are now safely housed. Ukrainian refugees have rightly benefited from the emotional as well as practical support that comes with joining a family home.

We also welcome asylum seekers who are placed here by the Home Office, and who commission their accommodation through an agent, independently of the Council.

These families and individuals are placed in 'contingency hotels' whilst their asylum claim is processed. These placements should only be used before more suitable 'dispersed' accommodation is sourced, although asylum seekers are spending much longer in contingency hotels than they should be due to the constraints of the housing market and growing, competing demands for accommodation nationally.

We are aware there are concerns about the length of stay of asylum seekers in our Borough and would value further conversations with the Home Office to ensure an appropriate and sustainable approach to the accommodation and support for those seeking asylum who have been placed in the Borough.

We also note that the asylum seekers are entitled to access education and health services in-line with the general population.

This Council calls on the Leadership Team to commit to the following:

- 1) Lobby central government to ensure this Council receives sufficient funding to meet the sometimes complex and multifaceted needs of the asylum seekers cohort.
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- 3) Encourage more residents to volunteer as hosts for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.'

The substantive motion was then put to the vote by the Deputy Mayor and was declared carried.

THE MAYOR, CLLR. DAVID LINDSAY, IN THE CHAIR

The Mayor announced that, given that it was already 9.15pm there would not be sufficient time to discuss the remaining motions, which would therefore be carried forward to the next ordinary meeting.

15. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

No appointments were made at this meeting

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No other matters were dealt with at the meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Mayor

DRAFT