MINUTES

Meeting: London Assembly (Plenary)
Date: Wednesday 1 July 2015
Time: 10.00 am
Place: Chamber, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London, SE1 2AA

Copies of the minutes may be found at: http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/whole-assembly

Present:

Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Chair)
Gareth Bacon AM
John Biggs AM
Victoria Borwick AM MP
James Cleverly AM MP
Tom Copley AM
Andrew Dismore AM
Nicky Gavron AM
Darren Johnson AM
Jenny Jones AM
Stephen Knight AM
Kit Malthouse AM MP
Steve O'Connell AM
Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Murad Qureshi AM
Navin Shah AM
Valerie Shawcross CBE AM
Richard Tracey AM
Fiona Twycross AM

1 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements (Item 1)

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Tony Arbour AM, Andrew Boff AM, Roger Evans AM, Len Duvall AM, Joanne McCartney AM and Dr Onkar Sahota AM.

2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)

2.1 The Assembly received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

2.2 **Resolved:**

That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Item 2, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.

3 Minutes (Item 3)

3.1 **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the 3 June 2015 London Assembly (Plenary) meeting be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Question and Answer Session (Item 4)

Part A:

4.1 The Assembly put questions to Harvey McGrath, Deputy Chair of the London Enterprise Panel (LEP), and Cathy Walsh OBE, Further Education Representative on the LEP.

4.2 The record of the questions put by Assembly Members and the answers given is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Part B:

4.3 The Chair formally moved the motion on the agenda, namely:

"That the Assembly notes the answers to the questions asked."

4.4 **Resolved:**

That the answers to the questions asked be noted.

4.5 At the conclusion of the question and answer session, at 11.41am, and in accordance with Standing Order 2.2(C), the Chair adjourned the meeting until 11.51am in order to allow the Assembly time to consider proposed amendments to motions.

5 Motions (Item 5)

5.1 The Assembly received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

5.2 Andrew Dismore AM moved and Jennette Arnold OBE AM seconded the following motion, altered in accordance with Standing Order 3.6A (1), with the consent of the meeting:

"This Assembly condemns the decision of a number of fringe extreme right wing groups to hold a rally in Golders Green on 4th July, **and welcomes the decision of the Metropolitan Police to impose conditions to move the event away from the area and to limit its time and duration. ~~This is highly provocative and is~~ The decision to hold the rally in Golders Green was** intended to insult and incite hatred against the Jewish community **and, by being held on Shabbat, clearly an attempt to provoke a reaction from local residents.**

"2014 saw a significant rise in **anti-Semitic** attacks in London, including in Barnet where the rally is to be held, and after the deadly events in Paris and Copenhagen targeting Jews and others, London's Jewish community is understandably apprehensive about its security. **Irrespective of its location, this event is** designed to play on those fears and the risk of violence against Jewish residents and businesses is clearly present.

"Whilst the demonstration cannot be banned, this Assembly calls upon the Mayor to support **~~a~~ the** peaceful, community-led **~~counter protest,~~ solidarity plan to decorate Golders Green in green and gold colours on 3 July,** including permitting TfL street furniture to be decorated **~~with green and gold~~** as part of the community's response**. ~~and~~**

"Further, this Assembly calls upon the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to ensure that the most stringent conditions possible are imposed on the far right rally **in its new location,** so as to avoid serious disorder and serious disruption to the local community**, and to continue taking action to close down the anti-Semitic website advertising the event and to prosecute those responsible for it."**

5.3 Upon being put to the vote, the revised motion in the name of Andrew Dismore AM, namely:

"This Assembly condemns the decision of a number of fringe extreme right wing groups to hold a rally in Golders Green on 4th July, and welcomes the decision of the Metropolitan Police to impose conditions to move the event away from the area and to limit its time and duration. The decision to hold the rally in Golders Green was intended to insult and incite hatred against the Jewish community and, by being held on Shabbat, clearly an attempt to provoke a reaction from local residents.

2014 saw a significant rise in anti-Semitic attacks in London, including in Barnet where the rally is to be held, and after the deadly events in Paris and Copenhagen targeting Jews and others, London's Jewish community is understandably apprehensive about its security. Irrespective of its location, this event is designed to

play on those fears and the risk of violence against Jewish residents and businesses is clearly present.

Whilst the demonstration cannot be banned, this Assembly calls upon the Mayor to support the peaceful, community-led solidarity plan to decorate Golders Green in green and gold colours on 3 July, including permitting TfL street furniture to be decorated as part of the community's response.

Further, this Assembly calls upon the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to ensure that the most stringent conditions possible are imposed on the far right rally in its new location, so as to avoid serious disorder and serious disruption to the local community, and to continue taking action to close down the anti-Semitic website advertising the event and to prosecute those responsible for it."

was agreed (with 15 votes cast in favour and one abstention).

5.4 Darren Johnson AM moved and Fiona Twycross AM seconded the following motion:

"This Assembly notes the GLA's recent projects for Crystal Palace Park, including: the collapsed deal with the ZhongRong Group to build a major commercial development on the hill top of Crystal Palace Park, which the Mayor secretly brokered following the London 2012 Games without the involvement of local stakeholder groups[1]; its draft plans to radically redevelop the National Sports Centre and grounds with a significant loss of sporting facilities, which only involved the local sporting community after significant protest[2]; and the park's designation, without a clear rationale, in the London Plan as an Outer London Development Centre.

This Assembly notes that the Mayor is continuing to pursue secretive discussions with companies regarding building on the park's hill top[3], and believes he risks repeating the mistakes of the ZhongRong Group proposals, which resulted in the loss of £4.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund[4] and eighteen wasted months during which community projects were suspended.

This Assembly also welcomes that the local community is progressing plans for a Crystal Palace Neighbourhood Forum[5], and that Bromley Council is working with local stakeholders to establish a community trust to govern Crystal Palace Park[6].

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[1] The Mayor met Mr Ni Zhaoxing at the Games, and officers first held meetings in February 2013. Plans were not made public until October of that year.
http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_275672
[2] See, for example, https://crystalpalacesp.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/press-statement-11-11-14.pdf
[3] http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_282130
[4] http://www.crystalpalacepark.org.uk/2014/heritage-lottery-fund-application-fails/
[5] http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_275673
[6] http://www.bromley.gov.uk/press/article/984/improving_crystal_palace_park_taking_shape

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to end any private discussions about proposals for development on the park, and engage openly and transparently with the emerging community trust and Neighbourhood Forum in developing any future projects for the park and wider area."

5.5 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Darren Johnson AM, namely:

"This Assembly notes the GLA's recent projects for Crystal Palace Park, including: the collapsed deal with the ZhongRong Group to build a major commercial development on the hill top of Crystal Palace Park, which the Mayor secretly brokered following the London 2012 Games without the involvement of local stakeholder groups[1]; its draft plans to radically redevelop the National Sports Centre and grounds with a significant loss of sporting facilities, which only involved the local sporting community after significant protest[2]; and the park's designation, without a clear rationale, in the London Plan as an Outer London Development Centre.

This Assembly notes that the Mayor is continuing to pursue secretive discussions with companies regarding building on the park's hill top[3], and believes he risks repeating the mistakes of the ZhongRong Group proposals, which resulted in the loss of £4.5 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund[4] and eighteen wasted months during which community projects were suspended.

This Assembly also welcomes that the local community is progressing plans for a Crystal Palace Neighbourhood Forum[5], and that Bromley Council is working with local stakeholders to establish a community trust to govern Crystal Palace Park[6].

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to end any private discussions about proposals for development on the park, and engage openly and transparently with the emerging community trust and Neighbourhood Forum in developing any future projects for the park and wider area."

was agreed (with 11 votes cast in favour, three votes cast against).

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[1] The Mayor met Mr Ni Zhaoxing at the Games, and officers first held meetings in February 2013. Plans were not made public until October of that year.
http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_275672
[2] See, for example, https://crystalpalacesp.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/press-statement-11-11-14.pdf
[3] http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_282130
[4] http://www.crystalpalacepark.org.uk/2014/heritage-lottery-fund-application-fails/
[5] http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_275673
[6] http://www.bromley.gov.uk/press/article/984/improving_crystal_palace_park_taking_shape

5.6 Fiona Twycross AM moved and Tom Copley AM seconded the following motion:

"Following International Justice Day for Cleaners (15 June 2015), this Assembly would like to put on record its support for employees in this sector.

Across Greater London, 85 per cent of cleaning jobs are low paid.[7] The cleaning sector is indicative of a wider lack of progress in increasing the number of jobs paying the London Living Wage in London's low-pay sectors since 2008. In June 2009, the Mayor addressed the British Hospitality Association annual lunch, during which he encouraged the sector to adopt the London Living Wage. Since then, no London-based employers in this sector have become accredited.

This Assembly is deeply concerned by the growth of low pay in Greater London. Real wages are now £2,097 a year lower than they were in 2008[8], while the proportion of jobs paying less than the London Living Wage has increased from 13.2 per cent to 19.4 per cent since the Mayor took office, dragging an additional 348,000 workers further into poverty pay.[9] In London, 917,000 jobs now pay less than the London Living Wage.[10]

This Assembly supports the Mayor's vision for the London Living Wage to be the norm by 2020; but we recognise that the city is moving further away from achieving this objective. In his final year in office, we call on the Mayor to refocus his attentions on reversing this trend. We particularly call on him to focus on London's low pay sectors and to increase the Greater London Authority resources available for engaging with employers in these sectors."[11]

5.7 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Fiona Twycross AM, namely:

"Following International Justice Day for Cleaners (15 June 2015), this Assembly would like to put on record its support for employees in this sector.

Across Greater London, 85 per cent of cleaning jobs are low paid.[7] The cleaning sector is indicative of a wider lack of progress in increasing the number of jobs paying the London Living Wage in London's low-pay sectors since 2008. In June 2009, the Mayor addressed the British Hospitality Association annual lunch, during which he encouraged the sector to adopt the London Living Wage. Since then, no London-based employers in this sector have become accredited.

[7] 'Fair pay: Making the London Living Wage the norm', London Assembly Economy Committee, February 2014, p.8
[8] Written question No: 2015/0380, January 2015
[9] Written question No: 2014/5918, December 2014
[10] Written question No: 2014/5918, December 2014
[11] 'Fair pay: Making the London Living Wage the norm', London Assembly Economy Committee, February 2014, p.8
[7] 'Fair pay: Making the London Living Wage the norm', London Assembly Economy Committee, February 2014, p.8

This Assembly is deeply concerned by the growth of low pay in Greater London. Real wages are now £2,097 a year lower than they were in 2008[8], while the proportion of jobs paying less than the London Living Wage has increased from 13.2 per cent to 19.4 per cent since the Mayor took office, dragging an additional 348,000 workers further into poverty pay.[9] In London, 917,000 jobs now pay less than the London Living Wage.[10]

This Assembly supports the Mayor's vision for the London Living Wage to be the norm by 2020; but we recognise that the city is moving further away from achieving this objective. In his final year in office, we call on the Mayor to refocus his attentions on reversing this trend. We particularly call on him to focus on London's low pay sectors and to increase the Greater London Authority resources available for engaging with employers in these sectors."[11]

was agreed (unanimously).

5.8 During the course of the discussion, at 12.30pm the Chair proposed, and it was agreed, that Standing Order 2.9B be suspended to extend the meeting in order to allow the remaining items of business on the agenda to be considered.

5.9 Fiona Twycross AM moved and Stephen Knight AM seconded the following motion, altered in accordance with Standing Order 3.6A (1), with the consent of the meeting:

"This Assembly notes Mayoral Direction 1516 – LFEPA 2016-17 Budget Options – instructing the Authority to 'not redeploy' thirteen fire engines, which are used to support the contingency arrangements during periods of industrial action.

This Assembly is deeply concerned that, despite repeated calls at LFEPA for the thirteen appliances to be returned, the Mayor has proceeded with this combative course of action; especially at the point at which LFB and the FBU ~~**had reached**~~ **were close to reaching** an agreement on the terms of their return.

Furthermore, this Assembly regrets that the Mayor appears intent on the permanent removal of the 13 appliances, despite the fact that alternative budget options have not yet been formally considered by LFEPA, and while considerable work is being undertaken by officers and board members on finding alternatives to additional frontline cuts to meet the Mayor's £11m reduction in the 2016/17 fire service budget.

[8] Written question No: 2015/0380, January 2015
[9] Written question No: 2014/5918, December 2014
[10] Written question No: 2014/5918, December 2014
[11] 'Fair pay: Making the London Living Wage the norm', London Assembly Economy Committee, February 2014, p.8

This Assembly regards the Mayor's Direction as unnecessary, and believes that it demonstrates that the Mayor is not committed to protecting frontline emergency services in the capital. Furthermore, the Assembly believes that the premise upon which the decision appears to have been made is not sufficiently strong to demonstrate that the safety of Londoners will not be jeopardised by his Decision; especially were that Decision the first step towards permanent removal of the thirteen appliances.

This Assembly calls on the Mayor to withdraw MD 1516 and to allow the re-introduction of the 13 appliances to London's streets immediately, returning fire cover to the levels committed to within the fifth London Safety Plan (LSP5)."

5.10 Upon being put to the vote, the revised motion in the name of Fiona Twycross AM, namely:

"This Assembly notes Mayoral Direction 1516 – LFEPA 2016-17 Budget Options – instructing the Authority to 'not redeploy' thirteen fire engines, which are used to support the contingency arrangements during periods of industrial action.

This Assembly is deeply concerned that, despite repeated calls at LFEPA for the thirteen appliances to be returned, the Mayor has proceeded with this combative course of action; especially at the point at which LFB and the FBU were close to reaching an agreement on the terms of their return.

Furthermore, this Assembly regrets that the Mayor appears intent on the permanent removal of the 13 appliances, despite the fact that alternative budget options have not yet been formally considered by LFEPA, and while considerable work is being undertaken by officers and board members on finding alternatives to additional frontline cuts to meet the Mayor's £11m reduction in the 2016/17 fire service budget.

This Assembly regards the Mayor's Direction as unnecessary, and believes that it demonstrates that the Mayor is not committed to protecting frontline emergency services in the capital. Furthermore, the Assembly believes that the premise upon which the decision appears to have been made is not sufficiently strong to demonstrate that the safety of Londoners will not be jeopardised by his Decision; especially were that Decision the first step towards permanent removal of the thirteen appliances.

This Assembly calls on the Mayor to withdraw MD 1516 and to allow the re-introduction of the 13 appliances to London's streets immediately, returning fire cover to the levels committed to within the fifth London Safety Plan (LSP5)."

was agreed (with 12 votes cast in favour and four votes cast against).

5.11 Murad Qureshi AM moved and Navin Shah AM seconded the following motion, altered in accordance with Standing Order 3.6A (1), with the consent of the meeting:

"The London Assembly is concerned that the quality of London's universal postal service is under threat following the Chancellor Exchequer's recent announcement that the Government is to sell its remaining stake in Royal Mail[12]. Shortly after this announcement the Government sold half of its remaining 30 per cent share[13].

~~**When the government began the privatisation of the Royal Mail in 2013 it was poorly managed, rushed, and cost the UK tax payer £180 million.**~~ This Assembly believes that the move to fully privatise the service not only represents a bad deal for tax payers but will also potentially reduce scrutiny and transparency in an organisation that has been serving the public interest since the early 1500s[14]. These concerns are not merely limited to the delivery of the Royal Mail's core services, but are also relevant in respect of the availability of affordable housing in London, as the Royal Mail seeks to divest itself of land assets capable of delivering thousands of homes in the capital[15].

The London Assembly calls on the Mayor to defend London's postal service and ensure Royal Mail's land assets are used to deliver housing across all tenures in the capital by lobbying the government to conduct an open and transparent cost-benefit analysis of selling the remaining 15% stake in the Royal Mail."

5.12 Upon being put to the vote, the revised motion in the name of Murad Qureshi AM, namely:

"The London Assembly is concerned that the quality of London's universal postal service is under threat following the Chancellor Exchequer's recent announcement that the Government is to sell its remaining stake in Royal Mail[12]. Shortly after this announcement the Government sold half of its remaining 30 per cent share[13].

This Assembly believes that the move to fully privatise the service not only represents a bad deal for tax payers but will also potentially reduce scrutiny and transparency in an organisation that has been serving the public interest since the early 1500s[14]. These concerns are not merely limited to the delivery of the Royal Mail's core services, but are also relevant in respect of the availability of affordable

[12] http://www.ftadviser.com/2015/06/04/investments/economic-indicators/royal-mail-privatisation-top-of-chancellor-s-debt-reduction-sUX0WX8FU59TrIh4OYhmPL/article.html
[13] http://news.sky.com/story/1499747/govt-sells-its-15-percent-stake-in-royal-mail
[14] http://www.royalmailgroup.com/Timeline
[15] Julia Kollewe, Royal Mail may reap £662m from planned sale of London sorting office, *The Guardian*, 11.11.14
[12] http://www.ftadviser.com/2015/06/04/investments/economic-indicators/royal-mail-privatisation-top-of-chancellor-s-debt-reduction-sUX0WX8FU59TrIh4OYhmPL/article.html
[13] http://news.sky.com/story/1499747/govt-sells-its-15-percent-stake-in-royal-mail
[14] http://www.royalmailgroup.com/Timeline

housing in London, as the Royal Mail seeks to divest itself of land assets capable of delivering thousands of homes in the capital[15].

The London Assembly calls on the Mayor to defend London's postal service and ensure Royal Mail's land assets are used to deliver housing across all tenures in the capital by lobbying the government to conduct an open and transparent cost-benefit analysis of selling the remaining 15% stake in the Royal Mail."

was agreed (with 13 votes cast in favour and two votes cast against).

5.13 Stephen Knight AM moved and Tom Copley AM seconded the following motion:

"This Assembly notes the Mayor's recent statement that the proposal to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations tenants "will only work for London if it delivers more homes - and more low-cost homes – [and] makes sure that the cash from the sale of any council homes stays firmly in London and is used to build more homes for Londoners" adding that he did not want to see London's "great mixture of socioeconomic groups" displaced as a result of the policy.[16]

This Assembly further notes that the rate of replacement for council homes sold under the Right to Buy scheme since the the maximum discount was increased in 2012 has been closer to one in ten, despite a commitment to ensure that the receipts from every additional home sold would be used to fund its replacement on a one for one basis.[17]

This Assembly is furthered concerned that the way the policy is to be funded – through forcing local councils to sell off their most valuable properties – may result in many new council properties being sold off almost as soon as they are built, instead of being let to local residents in housing need.

This Assembly believes that the proposal to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations tenants in London risks undermining other efforts to increase the supply of new affordable homes across the capital.

This Assembly is concerned by the Mayor's failure to respond to its motion – agreed at Mayor's Question Time on 21 May 2015 – calling on him to commission an assessment of the implications of an extended Right to Buy for housing associations in London.[18]

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[15] Julia Kollewe, Royal Mail may reap £662m from planned sale of London sorting office, *The Guardian*, 11.11.14
[16] See transcript of Mayor speaking in response to MQ2015/1210 ['Right to buy' for housing association tenants in London]: http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s46961/Minutes%20-%20Appendix%202%20-%20Transcript%20of%20Item%204%20-%20Questions%20to%20the%20Mayor.pdf
[17] Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) Briefing Note BN171**:** http://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN171.pdf
[18] See the minutes of the meeting of the London Assembly held on 21 May 2015: http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/mgAi.aspx?ID=18095

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to provide an oral update to the Assembly at the earliest opportunity confirming whether or not he intends to commission an assessment of the implications of extending Right to Buy to Housing Association tenants in London, and if not, to provide a list of reasons for his decision. "

5.14 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Stephen Knight AM, namely:

"This Assembly notes the Mayor's recent statement that the proposal to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations tenants "will only work for London if it delivers more homes - and more low-cost homes – [and] makes sure that the cash from the sale of any council homes stays firmly in London and is used to build more homes for Londoners" adding that he did not want to see London's "great mixture of socioeconomic groups" displaced as a result of the policy.[16]

This Assembly further notes that the rate of replacement for council homes sold under the Right to Buy scheme since the the maximum discount was increased in 2012 has been closer to one in ten, despite a commitment to ensure that the receipts from every additional home sold would be used to fund its replacement on a one for one basis.[17]

This Assembly is furthered concerned that the way the policy is to be funded – through forcing local councils to sell off their most valuable properties – may result in many new council properties being sold off almost as soon as they are built, instead of being let to local residents in housing need.

This Assembly believes that the proposal to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations tenants in London risks undermining other efforts to increase the supply of new affordable homes across the capital.

This Assembly is concerned by the Mayor's failure to respond to its motion – agreed at Mayor's Question Time on 21 May 2015 – calling on him to commission an assessment of the implications of an extended Right to Buy for housing associations in London.[18]

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to provide an oral update to the Assembly at the earliest opportunity confirming whether or not he intends to commission an assessment of the implications of extending Right to Buy to Housing

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[16] See transcript of Mayor speaking in response to MQ2015/1210 ['Right to buy' for housing association tenants in London]: http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s46961/Minutes%20-%20Appendix%202%20-%20Transcript%20of%20Item%204%20-%20Questions%20to%20the%20Mayor.pdf

[17] Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) Briefing Note BN171**:** http://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN171.pdf

[18] See the minutes of the meeting of the London Assembly held on 21 May 2015: http://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/mgAi.aspx?ID=18095

Association tenants in London, and if not, to provide a list of reasons for his decision. "

was agreed (with 13 votes cast in favour and one vote cast against).

6 Mayoral Commitments (Item 6)

6.1 The Assembly received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

6.2 **Resolved:**

That the commitments made by the Mayor, Boris Johnson MP, during London Assembly (Mayor's Question Time) meetings held between June 2014 and June 2015 be noted.

7 Future Meetings of the Assembly (Item 7)

7.1 **Resolved:**

(a) That the Assembly (Plenary) meeting in September be rescheduled from Wednesday 9 September 2015 at 10am to Tuesday 8 September 2015 at 10am;

(b) That the Transport Committee meeting in September be rescheduled from Tuesday 8 September 2015 at 10am to Wednesday 9 September 2015 at 10am;

(c) That the Assembly (Plenary) meeting in September be used principally for a question and answer session in relation to the Airports Commission with Sir Howard Davies, Chairman of the Airports Commission, subject to the publication of the Commission's final report; and

(d) That authority be delegated to the Chair of the Assembly to determine the details of any necessary changes to the September Assembly (Plenary) meeting, in consultation with the Assembly Deputy Chairman and the Assembly's party Group Leaders.

8 Date of Next Meeting (Item 8)

8.1 The next scheduled meeting of the London Assembly would be the Mayor's Question Time meeting which would take place at 10.00 am on Wednesday 15 July 2015 in the Chamber, City Hall.

9 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent (Item 9)

9.1 The Chair, on behalf of the Assembly, congratulated the England Women's football team on their World Cup quarter-final victory and wished them well for their next game.

Changes to Membership of Assembly Committees (Item 9a)

9.2 In accordance with section 100(B)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to accept the above item, which had been circulated under cover of a supplenantary agenda, as an item of urgent business to ensure that the vacancies on the Police and Crime Committee and the Audit Panel would be dealt with at the first opportunity.

9.3 **Resolved:**

(a) That Andrew Dismore AM be appointed as a Member of the Police and Crime Committee for the remainder of the 2015-17 year, to replace John Biggs AM;

(b) That John Biggs AM be appointed as a substitute member of the Police and Crime Committee for the remainder of the 2015-16 year, to replace Andrew Dismore AM;

(c) That Valerie Shawcross CBE AM be appointed as a member of the Audit Panel for the remainder of the 2015-16 year, to replace John Biggs AM;

(d) That John Biggs AM be appointed as a substitute member of the Audit Panel for the remainder of the 2015-16 year, to replace Valerie Shawcross CBE AM; and

(e) That, in accordance with Standing Order 1.6, it be agreed to allow the Audit Panel to appoint its Chair at its next meeting.

Urgent Motion

9.4 In accordance with section 100(B)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to admit an urgent motion in the name of Valerie Shawcross CBE AM to the agenda. In accordance with Standing Order 3.15 B(1), Fiona Twycross AM, summarised the reasons for urgent consideration of the motion, namely that the matter was of concern to all Assembly party Groups and Londoners, and that events relating to the motion would occur before the next London Assembly Plenary meeting. The Assembly then voted unanimously to accept the motion as urgent.

9.5 Valerie Shawcross CBE AM moved and Stephen Knight AM seconded the following motion:

"The London Assembly is alarmed by the current threats facing the quality and long term survival of local newspapers in south London owned and run by the Newsquest Group.

We understand that severe cut backs and restructuring will dramatically reduce both the numbers of reporters and editorial staff, and severely compromise the working conditions and pay of those who remain on the following newspapers:

> The Croydon Guardian, Sutton Guardian, Epsom Guardian, Wimbledon Guardian, Wandsworth Guardian, Balham and Tooting Guardian, Mitcham and Morden Guardian, Kingston Guardian, Surrey Comet, Elmbridge Comet, and the Richmond & Twickenham Times. The News Shopper - for Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley and Bromley.

The populations served by these papers are large - Croydon alone for example is home to over a third of a million people, it covers 3 Parliamentary Constituencies and one London Borough Council. Under Newsquest's proposals, this huge geographical area would be covered by just one reporter. It is difficult to see how this would work on a practical, let alone efficient, level.

Newsquest local newspapers are popular and regarded as a useful and interesting source of local information by the communities they cover. We are therefore surprised that Newsquest seem to be seeking to undermine this. London needs quality local newspapers to ensure democratic scrutiny, accountability, and to encourage an informed and active citizenship.

Further to these concerns, we also understand that some staff, including qualified journalists, are being paid less that the 'London Living Wage' – which takes account of the high cost of living in London and is calculated as the rate of pay at which it is possible to adequately maintain an adequate quality of life here. We call upon the senior management at Newsquest to adopt the 'London Living Wage' and pay staff a livable salary.

Finally, we are alarmed to learn that in future, staff producing these papers may be based outside of London. It's difficult to understand how any publication registered as a local newspaper could be written and produced outside the city it serves. Such a move would be detrimental to the development and economic growth of London. Furthermore, we understand that some staff may be expected to work remotely and alone, without physical access to office facilities or support from colleagues.

This proposed decimation of staff, pay and conditions cannot fail to be detrimental not only to staff themselves but also to the quality of Newsquest products and we believe that this is a misguided and retrograde step.

Recognising the Mayor's duty to promote social development and economic development, as well as his declared objective of increasing the adoption of the London Living Wage, we call

upon the Mayor to urgently write to Newsquest expressing the concerns raised by the London Assembly and seeking assurance for the staff of Newsquest."

9.6 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Valerie Shawcross CBE AM, namely:

"The London Assembly is alarmed by the current threats facing the quality and long term survival of local newspapers in south London owned and run by the Newsquest Group.

We understand that severe cut backs and restructuring will dramatically reduce both the numbers of reporters and editorial staff, and severely compromise the working conditions and pay of those who remain on the following newspapers:

> **The Croydon Guardian, Sutton Guardian, Epsom Guardian, Wimbledon Guardian, Wandsworth Guardian, Balham and Tooting Guardian, Mitcham and Morden Guardian, Kingston Guardian, Surrey Comet, Elmbridge Comet, and the Richmond & Twickenham Times. The News Shopper - for Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley and Bromley.**

The populations served by these papers are large - Croydon alone for example is home to over a third of a million people, it covers 3 Parliamentary Constituencies and one London Borough Council. Under Newsquest's proposals, this huge geographical area would be covered by just one reporter. It is difficult to see how this would work on a practical, let alone efficient, level.

Newsquest local newspapers are popular and regarded as a useful and interesting source of local information by the communities they cover. We are therefore surprised that Newsquest seem to be seeking to undermine this. London needs quality local newspapers to ensure democratic scrutiny, accountability, and to encourage an informed and active citizenship.

Further to these concerns, we also understand that some staff, including qualified journalists, are being paid less that the 'London Living Wage' – which takes account of the high cost of living in London and is calculated as the rate of pay at which it is possible to adequately maintain an adequate quality of life here. We call upon the senior management at Newsquest to adopt the 'London Living Wage' and pay staff a livable salary.

Finally, we are alarmed to learn that in future, staff producing these papers may be based outside of London. It's difficult to understand how any publication registered as a local newspaper could be written and produced outside the city it serves. Such a move would be detrimental to the development and economic growth of London.

Furthermore, we understand that some staff may be expected to work remotely and alone, without physical access to office facilities or support from colleagues.

This proposed decimation of staff, pay and conditions cannot fail to be detrimental not only to staff themselves but also to the quality of Newsquest products and we believe that this is a misguided and retrograde step.

Recognising the Mayor's duty to promote social development and economic development, as well as his declared objective of increasing the adoption of the London Living Wage, we call upon the Mayor to urgently write to Newsquest expressing the concerns raised by the London Assembly and seeking assurance for the staff of Newsquest."

was agreed (unanimously).

10 Close of Meeting

10.1 The meeting ended at 1.21pm.

Chair Date

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