

MINUTES

Meeting: London Assembly (Plenary)
Date: Wednesday 4 December 2013
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:

Darren Johnson AM (Chair)	Len Duvall AM
Roger Evans AM (Deputy Chairman)	Jenny Jones AM
Tony Arbour AM	Stephen Knight AM
Jennette Arnold OBE AM	Kit Malthouse AM
Gareth Bacon AM	Joanne McCartney AM
John Biggs AM	Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Victoria Borwick AM	Murad Qureshi AM
James Cleverly AM	Dr Onkar Sahota AM
Tom Copley AM	Valerie Shawcross CBE AM
Andrew Dismore AM	Fiona Twycross AM

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

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Boff AM, Steve O'Connell AM, Navin Shah AM and Richard Tracey 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 Agenda Item 2, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.

3 Minutes (Item 3)

3.1 Resolved:

That the minutes of the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting held on 6 November 2013 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 James Cleverly AM, Chairman, London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA) and Ron Dobson, Commissioner for Fire and Emergency Planning, on the work of LFEPA.
- 4.2 The record of the questions put by Assembly Members and the answers given is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Part B:

- 4.3 The Chair formally moved the motion in the agenda, namely:

“That the Assembly notes the answers to the questions asked.”

4.4 **Resolved:**

The answers to the questions asked be noted.

5 Petitions Update (Item 5)

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

5.2 **Resolved:**

That the responses received to petitions presented at recent Assembly (Plenary) meetings be noted.

6 Petition (Item 6)

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

6.2 Roger Evans AM presented a petition, on behalf of Richard Tracey AM, with the following prayer:

“We, the undersigned, call on TfL and Wandsworth Council to make changes to Mitcham Lane so that cycling can be an option for everyone, not just the fit and the brave.”

6.3 **Resolved:**

That the petition be forwarded to the Mayor, as Chairman of Transport for London, the Commissioner for Transport and the London Borough of Wandsworth for a response.

7 Motions (Item 7)

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

7.2 Kit Malthouse AM raised a point of order under Standing Order 4.4B that he did not think that the motion proposed by Andrew Dismore AM was relevant to the business of the Assembly. The Chair responded that, further to advice from officers, he had ruled the motion in order as it called upon the Mayor to take action that was within his remit, noting that the Mayor had already worked with the previous Mayor of New York City, Mayor Bloomberg, and that this matter was therefore properly within the Assembly’s remit.

7.3 Andrew Dismore AM moved and Jenny Jones AM seconded the following motion:

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“This Assembly sends congratulations to Bill de Blasio, newly elected Mayor of New York City.

Commentators have noted that the outgoing Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, leaves a city that “works extremely well if you make somewhere in the six figures”, but one where the “rampant inequality that characterizes every aspect of...life is...a threat to New York’s economic viability and social peace”.

This Assembly notes that there are strong economic parallels between New York and London, where the richest tenth of the population have 273 times the wealth of the bottom tenth; where at 28% the poverty rate is seven percentage points higher than the rest of England; where 57% of adults and children in poverty are in working families; and where 375,000 people were unemployed in London in 2012, up more than 40% since 2007.

Given the scale and similarity of the challenges London and New York face, this Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to work with Mayor de Blasio to identify solutions to the problems caused by high levels of economic and social inequality in the urban context.”

- 7.4 Jenny Jones AM moved and Darren Johnson AM seconded the following amendment to the final paragraph of the motion:

“Given the scale and similarity of the challenges London and New York face, this Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to work with Mayor de Blasio to identify solutions to the ~~problems caused by high levels of economic and social inequality in the urban context~~ **in our cities and the numerous social problems such inequality causes.**”

- 7.5 In accordance with Standing Order 2.6A(2) and with the consent of the seconder and the meeting, Andrew Dismore AM indicated that he would accept the amendment. The debate therefore proceeded on the basis of the revised motion.

- 7.6 The following amendment to the revised motion was moved by James Cleverly AM and seconded by Gareth Bacon AM:

“This Assembly sends congratulations to Bill de Blasio, newly elected Mayor of New York City.

~~Commentators have noted that the outgoing Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, leaves a city that “works extremely well if you make somewhere in the six figures”, but one where the “rampant inequality that characterizes every aspect of...life is...a threat to New York’s economic viability and social peace”.~~

“This Assembly notes that there are strong economic parallels between New York and London, where the richest tenth of the population have 273 times the wealth of the bottom tenth; where at 28% the poverty rate is seven percentage points higher than the rest of England; where 57% of adults and children in poverty are in working families; and where 375,000 people were unemployed in London in 2012, up more than 40% since 2007.

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~~Given the scale and similarity of the challenges London and New York face, this Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to work with Mayor de Blasio to identify solutions to the problems caused by high levels of economic and social inequality in the urban context.~~

Given the scale and similarity of the challenges London and New York face, this Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to work with Mayor de Blasio to tackle some of the shared problems facing the two cities."

7.7 Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of James Cleverly AM was lost (with 6 votes cast in favour and 13 against).

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

"This Assembly sends congratulations to Bill de Blasio, newly elected Mayor of New York City. Commentators have noted that the outgoing Mayor, Michael Bloomberg, leaves a city that "works extremely well if you make somewhere in the six figures", but one where the "rampant inequality that characterizes every aspect of...life is...a threat to New York's economic viability and social peace".

This Assembly notes that there are strong economic parallels between New York and London, where the richest tenth of the population have 273 times the wealth of the bottom tenth; where at 28% the poverty rate is seven percentage points higher than the rest of England; where 57% of adults and children in poverty are in working families; and where 375,000 people were unemployed in London in 2012, up more than 40% since 2007.

Given the scale and similarity of the challenges London and New York face, this Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to work with Mayor de Blasio to identify solutions to the high levels of economic inequality in our cities and the numerous social problems such inequality causes."

was agreed (with 13 votes cast in favour and 6 against).

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

"This Assembly welcomes proposals to introduce Capital Gains Tax for overseas investors in residential property and encourages the government to deliver this measure in its Autumn Statement. This would deliver parity between domestic and overseas buyers, ending the current situation whereby UK-residents are effectively penalised compared to non-residents.

Overseas investment contributes to Londoners being priced out of their city and results in many homes being left empty at a time of acute housing crisis. This Assembly therefore

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believes the government should go further and deter this practice in London, not just create parity between domestic and non-resident buyers. However, we again request that the Mayor commissions research into the impact of overseas investment on London's housing market so that future policy decisions can be based on evidence."

7.10 The following amendment was moved by Tony Arbour AM and seconded by Gareth Bacon AM:

"This Assembly welcomes proposals to introduce Capital Gains Tax for overseas investors in residential property and encourages the government to deliver this measure in its Autumn Statement. This would deliver parity between domestic and overseas buyers, ending the current situation whereby UK-residents are effectively penalised compared to non-residents.

~~Overseas investment contributes to Londoners being priced out of their city and results in many homes being left empty at a time of acute housing crisis. This Assembly therefore believes the government should go further and deter this practice in London, not just create parity between domestic and non-resident buyers. However, In addition, we again request that the Mayor commissions research into the impact of overseas investment on London's housing market so that future policy decisions can be based on *this* evidence."~~

7.11 At 12.30 p.m. in accordance with Standing Order 2.9(A) and with general consensus, the Assembly agreed to extend the length of the meeting in order to complete the business set out on the agenda for the meeting.

7.12 Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Tony Arbour AM was lost (6 votes cast in favour and 13 against).

7.13 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Tom Copley AM, namely:

"This Assembly welcomes proposals to introduce Capital Gains Tax for overseas investors in residential property and encourages the government to deliver this measure in its Autumn Statement. This would deliver parity between domestic and overseas buyers, ending the current situation whereby UK-residents are effectively penalised compared to non-residents.

Overseas investment contributes to Londoners being priced out of their city and results in many homes being left empty at a time of acute housing crisis. This Assembly therefore believes the government should go further and deter this practice in London, not just create parity between domestic and non-resident buyers. However, we again request that the Mayor commissions research into the impact of overseas investment on London's housing market so that future policy decisions can be based on evidence."

was agreed (with 13 votes cast in favour and 6 against).

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7.14 Fiona Twycross AM moved and Valarie Shawcross OBE AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly notes that the Fire Brigades Union is in a trade dispute with the Government over a reduction in firefighters’ pension rights, which could significantly impact on firefighters in the capital.

The Assembly believes that it is time for the Mayor of London to lobby Government to sit down with firefighters and agree a deal to avert further industrial action.

The Assembly considers that the Government’s approach to their pension proposals is highly cynical as their own review has demonstrated that at least two-thirds of the current workforce would be unable to maintain the fitness standards required by the fire service beyond the age of 55. These firefighters would face the prospect of being dismissed or seeing their pension reduced by almost half, which would be particularly onerous for firefighters in the capital where cost of living routinely outstrips the rest of the UK.

The Assembly also believes that the Government should continue with the commitment given by the previous Government, to enable firefighters already on older schemes, to retire at their expected retirement age without seeing large reductions in their pension entitlement.

The Assembly calls on the Mayor to use his influence to persuade the Government to return to negotiations with the Fire Brigades Union to reach an agreed settlement.”

7.15 The following amendment was moved by James Cleverly AM and seconded by Gareth Bacon AM:

“Delete the first, second, third and fourth paragraphs.

And replace with:

“This Assembly notes that the Fire Brigades Union is in a trade dispute with the Government over a reduction in firefighters’ pension rights, which will significantly impact on firefighters in the capital.

The Assembly understands that the Government’s austerity programme has cut into public sector pensions across the board and is sympathetic to firefighters who now face changes to retirement age, contribution rates and commutation arrangements.

The Assembly calls on the Mayor to use his influence to urge both sides to reach an agreement to avert any further industrial action.”

7.16 Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of James Cleverly AM was agreed (with 10 votes cast in favour and 9 against).

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

“This Assembly notes that the Fire Brigades Union is in a trade dispute with the Government over a reduction in firefighters’ pension rights, which will significantly impact on firefighters in the capital.

The Assembly understands that the Government’s austerity programme has cut into public sector pensions across the board and is sympathetic to firefighters who now face changes to retirement age, contribution rates and commutation arrangements.

The Assembly calls on the Mayor to use his influence to urge both sides to reach an agreement to avert any further industrial action.”

was agreed unanimously.

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

“This Assembly welcomes the recent report by the Centre for London, ‘London Rising: the case for a London Minimum Wage’. The Centre for London report uses the Low Pay Commission’s methodology for setting the National Minimum Wage to highlight that a London Minimum Wage could immediately be set 7% higher than the current minimum wage – and in future rise to 20% above the minimum wage – without threatening jobs or economic competitiveness.

As an intermediary step towards establishing a statutory London Living Wage in the capital, we call on the government to implement, and the Mayor to support, the key recommendation that “the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 be amended to require the Low Pay Commission to make recommendations for a London minimum wage”.

Action on wages is now an imperative in London. Average wages fell by 4.9% in 2012, the number of positions paying less than the London Living Wage has increased by 180,000 since 2007 and the national minimum wage is increasingly inadequate compared to the rising costs of energy, rents and transport fares in the capital.

In the past few weeks the Mayor has used his public profile to promote the interests of the top 0.1% of earners. We call on the Mayor to give as much attention to promoting the interests of those on low incomes who are struggling most because of the cost of living crisis. We call on him to support proposals for a London Minimum Wage, ensure the GLA is sufficiently resourced to deliver a meaningful programme of business engagement to promote the London Living Wage and to personally increase his own engagement with business leaders on pay and the London Living Wage.”

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

“This Assembly welcomes the recent report by the Centre for London, ‘London Rising: the case for a London Minimum Wage’. The Centre for London report uses the Low Pay Commission’s methodology for setting the National Minimum Wage to highlight that a London Minimum Wage could immediately be set 7% higher than the current minimum wage – and in future rise to 20% above the minimum wage – without threatening jobs or economic competitiveness.

As an intermediary step towards establishing a statutory London Living Wage in the capital, we call on the government to implement, and the Mayor to support, the key recommendation that “the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 be amended to require the Low Pay Commission to make recommendations for a London minimum wage”.

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In the past few weeks the Mayor has used his public profile to promote the interests of the top 0.1% of earners. We call on the Mayor to give as much attention to promoting the interests of those on low incomes who are struggling most because of the cost of living crisis. We call on him to support proposals for a London Minimum Wage, ensure the GLA is sufficiently resourced to deliver a meaningful programme of business engagement to promote the London Living Wage and to personally increase his own engagement with business leaders on pay and the London Living Wage.”

was agreed (with 11 votes cast in favour and 5 against).

7.20 Murad Qureshi AM moved and Tony Arbour AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly supports the establishment of an independent aviation noise regulator as a way of alleviating the problem of noise pollution in London.

The distress that noise causes communities is well documented in addition to the detrimental impact it can have on both the quality of life and health of millions of Londoners.

This Assembly notes the recent publication of the Flight Path to Growth report and its support for the creation of an independent noise ombudsman. Whilst welcoming this stance, this Assembly restates its opposition to the expansion of Heathrow Airport

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With ever greater numbers of people being affected by aircraft noise it is vital that Londoners can turn to a trusted third party to reduce antagonism in the relationship between communities and airports.

This Assembly urges the Mayor of London, Sir Howard Davies, and the Transport Secretary to look at how a regulator could be established as part of the work of the Airports Commission. Londoners need to have the confidence that aviation noise levels are being monitored in a transparent way and that action will be taken if unacceptable levels of disturbance occur."

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

"This Assembly supports the establishment of an independent aviation noise regulator as a way of alleviating the problem of noise pollution in London.

The distress that noise causes communities is well documented in addition to the detrimental impact it can have on both the quality of life and health of millions of Londoners.

This Assembly notes the recent publication of the Flight Path to Growth report and its support for the creation of an independent noise ombudsman. Whilst welcoming this stance, this Assembly restates its opposition to the expansion of Heathrow Airport

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This Assembly urges the Mayor of London, Sir Howard Davies, and the Transport Secretary to look at how a regulator could be established as part of the work of the Airports Commission. Londoners need to have the confidence that aviation noise levels are being monitored in a transparent way and that action will be taken if unacceptable levels of disturbance occur."

was agreed unanimously.

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- 7.22 Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM moved and Valarie Shawcross CBE AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly expresses its deep concern that the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) pedestrian casualties increased by 15 per cent between 2011 and 2012 and that over the same period pedal cycle KSI casualties increased by 18 per cent.

This Assembly believes such an increase is intolerable and must be reversed.

This Assembly therefore calls for the Mayor and Transport for London to take the following actions:

That the Mayor by January 2014 should provide a full report to the London Assembly on the actions he plans to take as chair of Transport for London to reverse the rise in KSI for both pedestrians and cyclists.

That Transport for London should publish – in full on a quarterly basis – the number of fatal and major accidents involving buses and the worst performing bus companies and routes.

This Assembly also calls on the chair of the London Assembly to write to the leader of Westminster Council urging the council to consider the wider adoption of 20 mph speed limits, with a key priority being its implementation on Oxford Street, which is currently London’s most dangerous street.”

- 7.23 The following amendment to the motion was moved by James Cleverly and seconded by Tony Arbour:

“This Assembly expresses its deep concern that the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) pedestrian casualties increased by 15 per cent between 2011 and 2012 and that over the same period pedal cycle KSI casualties increased by 18 per cent. This Assembly believes such an increase is intolerable and must be reversed.

“This Assembly therefore calls for the Mayor and Transport for London to take the following actions: That the Mayor by January 2014 should provide a full report to the London Assembly on the actions he plans to take as chair of Transport for London to reverse the rise in KSI for both pedestrians and cyclists.

“That Transport for London should publish – in full on a quarterly basis – the number of fatal and major accidents involving buses and the worst performing bus companies and routes.

~~This Assembly also calls on the chair of the London Assembly to write to the leader of Westminster Council urging the council to consider the wider adoption of 20 mph speed limits, with a key priority being its implementation on Oxford Street, which is currently London’s most dangerous street.”~~

- 7.24 Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of James Cleverly AM was lost (with 5 votes in favour and 13 against)
- 7.25 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, namely:

“This Assembly expresses its deep concern that the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) pedestrian casualties increased by 15 per cent between 2011 and 2012 and that over the same period pedal cycle KSI casualties increased by 18 per cent.

This Assembly believes such an increase is intolerable and must be reversed.

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That Transport for London should publish – in full on a quarterly basis – the number of fatal and major accidents involving buses and the worst performing bus companies and routes.

This Assembly also calls on the chair of the London Assembly to write to the leader of Westminster Council urging the council to consider the wider adoption of 20 mph speed limits, with a key priority being its implementation on Oxford Street, which is currently London’s most dangerous street.”

was agreed unanimously.

8 Date of Next Meeting (Item 8)

- 8.1 The next scheduled meeting of the London Assembly was the Mayor’s Question Time meeting due to take place at 10.00am on Wednesday 18 December 2013 in the Chamber, City Hall.

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

- 9.1 The Chair agreed, in accordance with section 100(B)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), to admit a motion as an item of urgent business, in order that the issue set out in the motion could be dealt with by the Assembly at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.2 In accordance with Standing Order 3.12B(1) the Chair invited Len Duvall AM to make an oral statement of up to one minute in length as to why the Assembly should consider the motion.

- 9.3 In accordance with Standing Order 3.12, the Chair asked the Assembly to decide whether to permit consideration of the motion in the name of Len Duvall AM.
- 9.4 Upon being put to vote, the Assembly agreed to consider the urgent motion in the name of Len Duvall AM.

Urgent Motion

- 9.5 Len Duvall AM moved and Jenny Jones AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly calls upon the Mayor of London to make urgent representations to the Home Secretary over the treatment of Isa Muazu whilst he was held at Harmondsworth detention centre.

The Assembly believes the treatment of Mr. Muazu has been appalling. Mr. Muazu was deemed not fit to fly by his doctor yet, on 29 November, he was still stretchered onto a chartered private plane and flown to Nigeria, where the authorities did not give permission for the plane to land. Mr. Muazu has now been returned to the UK and is back in Harmondsworth detention centre. Not only is this treatment unjust but £180,000 of taxpayers money was wasted on this chartered flight that served no purpose.

The courts and the legal process are the best place to resolve cases like this, but we remain concerned about the appropriateness of his detention and attempted deportation when Mr Muaza was in need of medical treatment. This Assembly believes Mr. Muazu, who is reported to be “seriously ill”, should be receiving medical treatment in an appropriate medical facility. This Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to intervene to ensure that Mr. Muazu is treated with humanity, which he has not received from the government to date.”

- 9.6 Upon being moved, the motion in the name of Len Duvall AM, namely:

“This Assembly calls upon the Mayor of London to make urgent representations to the Home Secretary over the treatment of Isa Muazu whilst he was held at Harmondsworth detention centre.

The Assembly believes the treatment of Mr. Muazu has been appalling. Mr. Muazu was deemed not fit to fly by his doctor yet, on 29 November, he was still stretchered onto a chartered private plane and flown to Nigeria, where the authorities did not give permission for the plane to land. Mr. Muazu has now been returned to the UK and is back in Harmondsworth detention centre. Not only is this treatment unjust but £180,000 of taxpayers money was wasted on this chartered flight that served no purpose.

The courts and the legal process are the best place to resolve cases like this, but we remain concerned about the appropriateness of his detention and attempted deportation when Mr Muazu was in need of medical treatment. This Assembly believes Mr. Muazu, who is reported to be “seriously ill”, should be receiving medical treatment in an appropriate medical facility. This Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to intervene to ensure that Mr. Muazu is treated with humanity, which he has not received from the government to date.”

was agreed (with 13 votes cast in favour and none against).

10 Close of Meeting

10.1 The meeting ended at 1.14 pm.

Chair

Date

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