

MINUTES

Meeting: London Assembly (Plenary)
Date: Wednesday 5 November 2014
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:

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

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

- 1.1 An apology for absence was received from Steve O'Connell AM.
- 1.2 On behalf of the London Assembly, the Chairman thanked the Head of Assembly External Relations, Mark Demery, who would be leaving City Hall later in the month, having provided excellent support to Assembly Members in his role for nine years. Mr Demery was also praised by Assembly Members for his work as Chair of the Greater London Authority City Hall branch of the Royal British Legion.

2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)

- 2.1 **Resolved:**
- (a) **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; and**
- (b) **That Kit Malthouse AM's role as a Chair of Hydrogen London be noted additionally as a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Item 4 of the agenda.**

3 Question and Answer Session (Item 3)

Part A:

- 3.1 The Assembly put questions to the Chairman of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, James Cleverly AM, and the Commissioner for Fire and Emergency Planning, Ron Dobson CBE QFSM, on the policies and work of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.
- 3.2 Kit Malthouse AM declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to his role as Chair of Hydrogen London.
- 3.3 The record of the questions put by Assembly Members and the answers given is attached as **Appendix 1**, and written answers are attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 3.4 The written answers to those questions not asked or unanswered during the meeting will be provided by Monday 10 November 2014.
- 3.5 During the course of the question and answer session, at 12.30pm, the Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that Standing Order 2.9B be suspended to extend the meeting in order to allow the remaining questions on the priority order paper to be put to the Chairman of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority and the Commissioner for Fire and Emergency

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Planning, and for the remaining items of business on the agenda to be considered.

Part B:

3.6 The Chair formally moved the motion in the agenda, namely:

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

3.7 Fiona Twycross AM moved, and Len Duvall AM seconded, an amendment to the proposed motion namely:

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

This Assembly also notes that, ahead of recent industrial action, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) not only negotiated in good faith throughout the process but also called off strikes in an effort to bring the dispute to a swift conclusion. However, this Assembly notes that Fire Minister Penny Mordaunt’s failure to work towards a negotiated settlement with firefighters on the issue of pension reform – despite a clear indication that she originally intended to do so – has only inflamed the dispute; a dispute that places the lives of Londoners at risk.

The proposal at the heart of this dispute – that firefighters should work until they are sixty or see their pension reduced – will cut pension payments to the firefighters who routinely risk their lives protecting the capital. This is reflected by the fact that the Government’s review has demonstrated that two-thirds of the workforce would not be able to work beyond 55, given the strenuous demands of the job.

This Assembly believes that the Fire Minister’s desire to ‘take on’ the Fire Brigades Union and reduce pension liabilities has precipitated avoidable industrial action; that this strategy has endangered people and property in London; and, as a consequence, the London Assembly calls on the Mayor to lobby his colleagues in Government to resume negotiations with the aim of reaching a fair settlement with the FBU.”

3.8 Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Fiona Twycross AM, namely:

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

This Assembly also notes that, ahead of recent industrial action, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) not only negotiated in good faith throughout the process but also called off strikes in an effort to bring the dispute to a swift conclusion. However, this Assembly notes that Fire Minister Penny Mordaunt’s failure to work towards a negotiated settlement with firefighters on the issue of pension reform – despite a clear indication that she originally intended to do so – has only inflamed the dispute; a dispute that places the lives of Londoners at risk.

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This Assembly believes that the Fire Minister’s desire to ‘take on’ the Fire Brigades Union and reduce pension liabilities has precipitated avoidable industrial action; that this strategy has endangered people and property in London; and, as a consequence, the London Assembly calls on the Mayor to lobby his colleagues in Government to resume negotiations with the aim of reaching a fair settlement with the FBU.”

was agreed (16 votes cast in favour and 7 against).

4 Petitions (Item 4)

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

4.2 Stephen Knight AM presented a petition with the following prayer:

“We call on the Mayor and Transport for London to increase the frequency of the 481 bus service, which currently only runs hourly.”

4.3 **Resolved:**

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

4.4 Valerie Shawcross CBE AM presented a petition with the following prayer:

“We the undersigned, call upon the Mayor of London to establish a pedestrian crossing and associated road safety features at the junction of the Tulse Hill and Brixton Water Lane, SW2 1DF to improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists and all road users.”

4.5 **Resolved:**

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

4.6 Andrew Dismore AM presented a petition with the following prayer:

“We the undersigned express our dismay at the scheme to convert Premier House from business premises into flats. More than 100 businesses, charities and other organisations are set lose their premises and hundreds of local jobs are at risk. This move is an economic and social double whammy for Edgware, as many other Edgware businesses themselves depend on those who work in Premier House for their own trade. We are surprised that Barnet Council did not obtain an exemption from the relaxation of the planning rules that have caused this to happen and call upon the Council, even at this late stage, to apply immediately to the Government for such an exemption. We call on the Council and the London Mayor to work with those based in Premier House facing eviction to try to avert this economic catastrophe, and if the businesses are not permitted to remain, to assist them in every possible way to relocate locally.”

4.7 **Resolved:**

That the petition be forwarded to the Mayor of London for a response.

5 Motions (Item 5)

5.1 Jenny Jones AM moved and Darren Johnson AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly is alarmed by the decline in species and natural habitats in London and across the UK which was exposed by the State of Nature report, part of a global catastrophe catalogued by the Zoological Society of London and WWF in their Living Planet Report. We recognise the importance of habitats, both in public spaces such as parks and private spaces such as back gardens, which are home to diverse species and are vital for the mental and physical health of Londoners.

This Assembly supports the work of the Mayor through initiatives such as the All London Green Grid to protect and enhance these habitats, but believes further action is required to reverse the decline in the quantity and quality of habitats.

This Assembly therefore welcomes and supports the call of The Wildlife Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for a Nature and Wellbeing Act for England. This will go beyond existing policy and legislation to secure nature’s recovery in a generation and place nature at the heart of how decisions are made about health, housing and other development, education, economic growth, flood resilience and social cohesion in London.

This Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to support this proposal.”

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- 5.2 The following amendment to the motion was moved by Murad Qureshi AM and seconded by Len Duvall AM:

“This Assembly is alarmed by the decline in species and natural habitats in London and across the UK which was exposed by the State of Nature report, part of a global catastrophe catalogued by the Zoological Society of London and WWF in their Living Planet Report. We recognise the importance of habitats, both in public spaces such as parks and private spaces such as back gardens, which are home to diverse species and are vital for the mental and physical health of Londoners.

This Assembly supports the work of the Mayor through initiatives such as the All London Green Grid to protect and enhance these habitats, but believes further action is required to reverse the decline in the quantity and quality of habitats.

The Localism Act 2011 requires the Mayor to produce a London Environment Strategy, including “provisions dealing with the Mayor’s policies and proposals on...biodiversity”. However, this Assembly regrets that there has been no update to the GLA’s approach since the Biodiversity Strategy of 2002 - although a commitment has been made to provide an “update or supplement” to this document. This Assembly hopes the long-awaited update to the Mayor’s approach to biodiversity in the capital will take a comprehensive and thorough approach in tackling the issues that have emerged in the past twelve years. However, the Assembly is sceptical of the Mayor’s commitment to increasing biodiversity in the capital, given that he has weakened protection for open space in London in the latest alterations to the London Plan; changes that will do considerable damage to London’s biodiversity and should be retracted.

This Assembly therefore welcomes and supports the call of The Wildlife Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for a Nature and Wellbeing Act for England. This will go beyond existing policy and legislation to secure nature’s recovery in a generation and place nature at the heart of how decisions are made about health, housing and other development, education, economic growth, flood resilience and social cohesion in London.”

- 5.3 Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Murad Qureshi AM was lost (with 12 votes cast in favour and 12 against; in accordance with Standing Order 2.6B, the Chairman then exercised his second and casting vote, against the proposed amendment, which therefore did not command a majority and was lost).

- 5.4 Upon being put to the vote, the motion in the name of Jenny Jones AM, namely:

“This Assembly is alarmed by the decline in species and natural habitats in London and across the UK which was exposed by the State of Nature report, part of a global catastrophe catalogued by the Zoological Society of London and WWF in their Living Planet Report. We recognise the importance of habitats, both in public spaces such

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This Assembly supports the work of the Mayor through initiatives such as the All London Green Grid to protect and enhance these habitats, but believes further action is required to reverse the decline in the quantity and quality of habitats.

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This Assembly calls on the Mayor of London to support this proposal."

was agreed unanimously.

- 5.5 Stephen Knight AM moved, and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM seconded, the following motion altered in accordance with Standing Order 3.6A (1), with the consent of the meeting:

"This Assembly notes the recent London Assembly Transport Committee report 'Feet First' which reveals that six of London's top 24 pedestrian collision hotspots are in Oxford Street. This Assembly also notes recent evidence from Transport for London (TfL) revealing that pedestrian collisions with buses have actually increased on this road.

This Assembly also notes the recent statement from the Principal Air Quality Scientist of the Environmental Research Group at King's College London that "measurements of NO₂ [nitrogen dioxide] concentration recorded at the Oxford Street roadside air pollution monitoring site were to his knowledge the highest in the world." *This view was endorsed by campaigners who, during a site visit to Oxford Street on 28 January 2014, labelled air quality in the area "a national disgrace".*

This Assembly further notes that compared to the Mayor's advocacy of cycling, the benefits of walking and pedestrian initiatives have been largely overlooked across London. This Assembly is especially concerned by his inaccurate statement at Mayor's Question Time on the 22nd October that VIP Day (Very Important Pedestrian Day) has led to a reduction in footfall.

This Assembly believes the safety and pollution record of Oxford Street, combined with the impact of Crossrail, means that maintaining the status quo or even making minor modifications are not sufficient for the long term success of Oxford Street and the West End economy.

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This Assembly therefore urges the Mayor to immediately support the re-introduction of the highly popular Very Important Pedestrian Day, which should be combined with a programme of weekend pedestrian closures over Summer months based on the successful New York Summer Streets programme.

This Assembly also calls for the Mayor to authorise Transport for London to draw up a number of options to end pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries as well as reduce air pollution in Oxford Street, which should then form the basis of a public consultation which should start before the end of 2015. *This Assembly also calls on the Mayor – in recognition of his statutory environmental duties across London – to establish what steps the City of Westminster are taking to reduce emissions, which will eventually begin to undermine the West End’s attractiveness to Londoners and tourists alike.*

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

“This Assembly notes the recent London Assembly Transport Committee report ‘Feet First’ which reveals that six of London’s top 24 pedestrian collision hotspots are in Oxford Street. This Assembly also notes recent evidence from Transport for London (TfL) revealing that pedestrian collisions with buses have actually increased on this road.

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This Assembly believes the safety and pollution record of Oxford Street, combined with the impact of Crossrail, means that maintaining the status quo or even making minor modifications are not sufficient for the long term success of Oxford Street and the West End economy.

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was agreed (with 16 votes cast in favour and 8 against).

- 5.7 The proposed motion in the name of Andrew Dismore AM, in relation the Mayoral Strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls, had been withdrawn in advance of the meeting.
- 5.8 During the course of the discussion the Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that Standing Order 2.9A be suspended to extend the meeting in order to allow the remaining motions and other items of business on the agenda to be considered.
- 5.9 Fiona Twycross AM moved and Tom Copley AM seconded the following motion:

“The London Assembly welcomes Living Wage Week.

Pay and poverty is an increasingly critical issue in London, as average pay rates continue to fall in the capital. Office for National Statistics data shows that in 2013, average weekly pay was £613 compared to £700 in real-terms (adjusted for RPI) in 2009. This fall in wages has fed the dramatic rise in poverty in this city. The most recent London Poverty Profile found that in-work poverty has increased in London over recent years while the number of jobs paying less than the London Living Wage has also increased sharply since 2007 in both total numbers (from 420,000 to 600,000) and as a proportion of all jobs in this city (from 13% to 17%).

The Mayor has set a laudable target to make the London Living Wage the norm in London by 2020. However, the data shows that we are moving further away from realising this ambition. This Assembly believes the Mayor must make the London Living Wage a much bigger priority for this ambition to be achieved. Firstly, the Mayor should place more resources into his business engagement team to ensure that the benefits of paying the London Living Wage are communicated more effectively to firms operating in London. Should these improved efforts fail to deliver a rapid movement towards a situation where the London Living Wage is genuinely the norm in London, this Assembly believes the Mayor should make the case to the Government for introducing the London Living Wage in the capital on a statutory basis, with a higher minimum wage for London being introduced as an intermediary step.”

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

“The London Assembly welcomes Living Wage Week.

Pay and poverty is an increasingly critical issue in London, as average pay rates continue to fall in the capital. Office for National Statistics data shows that in 2013, average weekly pay was £613 compared to £700 in real-terms (adjusted for RPI) in 2009. This fall in wages has fed the dramatic rise in poverty in this city. The most recent London Poverty Profile found that in-work poverty has increased in London over recent years while the number of jobs paying less than the London Living Wage has also increased sharply since 2007 in both total numbers (from 420,000 to 600,000) and as a proportion of all jobs in this city (from 13% to 17%).

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was agreed (with 16 votes cast in favour and 8 against).

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

“This Assembly denounces the Mayor for his abject failure to tackle the biggest environmental challenges facing London. On every single issue from air pollution to carbon reduction and decentralised energy, the Assembly is appalled by the toxic environmental legacy the Mayor will leave Londoners.

Before he was elected the Mayor vowed to “take action to make London the greenest city in the world”. Six years later, London is set to face fines for illegal levels of air pollution whilst the evidence grows of how toxic pollutants are damaging young Londoners’ health. Despite this, the Mayor rejected calls to use his 2014-15 budget to retrofit London’s bus fleet with the latest emission reducing technology, which could significantly improve air quality in the capital.

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“This Assembly is further disappointed by the Mayor’s current proposals for an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), which have gone back on his earlier commitment to restrict central London “only to those vehicles which have zero or near-zero tailpipe emissions”¹. The Mayor’s initial ULEZ proposals should form only the first stage of a programme to eventually be expanded beyond the initial Congestion Zone boundary, and outline a specific target date for a total ban on polluting vehicles entering central London.”

Meanwhile, in energy security the Mayor is ‘missing his targets’ to build up London’s decentralised energy capacity, a vital measure to ensure future security of supply.² On tackling carbon reduction the Mayor received only 4/10 on progress to date following the Environment Committee’s latest audit.³

The Mayor’s attacks on renewables and support for fracking are symbolic of his regressive approach to London’s environmental challenges. Given this, the London Assembly does not support any fracking activities within the boundaries of Greater London.

This Assembly calls on the Mayor to use his remaining time in office to re-focus his efforts and ensure the GLA’s Environment Team have the resources necessary to make London a more sustainable city.”

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

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Before he was elected the Mayor vowed to “take action to make London the greenest city in the world”. Six years later, London is set to face fines for illegal levels of air pollution whilst the evidence grows of how toxic pollutants are damaging young Londoners’ health. Despite this, the Mayor rejected calls to use his 2014-15 budget to retrofit London’s bus fleet with the latest emission reducing technology, which could significantly improve air quality in the capital.

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¹ Mayor of London, [2020 Vision](#)

² As stated at the [Environment Committee](#) by an officer in March.

³ See the [Committee’s Carbon Report](#) card from July 2014.

⁴ Mayor of London, [2020 Vision](#)

and outline a specific target date for a total ban on polluting vehicles entering central London.”

Meanwhile, in energy security the Mayor is ‘missing his targets’ to build up London’s decentralised energy capacity, a vital measure to ensure future security of supply.⁵ On tackling carbon reduction the Mayor received only 4/10 on progress to date following the Environment Committee’s latest audit.⁶

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This Assembly calls on the Mayor to use his remaining time in office to re-focus his efforts and ensure the GLA’s Environment Team have the resources necessary to make London a more sustainable city.”

was agreed (with 15 votes cast in favour and 8 against).

5.13 Navin Shah AM moved and Nicky Gavron AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly notes with concern the revelation earlier this year by New London Architecture that over 230 tall buildings are in the pipeline for development. The cumulative impact of these developments on London’s skyline is not being thoroughly considered, with the resultant often bland design and irreversible negative impact posing a threat to London’s heritage, character and architectural distinctiveness. 80% of these buildings are residential, mostly luxury flats which will do little to alleviate the housing crisis.

Tall buildings can make a positive contribution to city life and the skyline, but only if they’re in the right places, meet the right needs, and respect the character and identity of the surrounding area. However, the flaws of ill-considered tall buildings have been well demonstrated by the skyline campaign.

The London Plan includes policies on tall buildings, but these are not being properly implemented in planning decisions. There are also examples where height limits established by Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks have been ignored.

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to rethink his approach to tall buildings in London. To protect London’s skyline and arrive at well considered appropriate high rise buildings the Mayor should establish a ‘skyline commission’ made up of design experts from a variety of fields to offer advice on commissioning, have an enabling role and carry out design reviews.

⁵ As stated at the [Environment Committee](#) by an officer in March.

⁶ See the [Committee’s Carbon Report](#) card from July 2014.

The Mayor should also develop more detailed and rigorous masterplanning processes, including engagement of local residents and stakeholders, especially within Opportunity Areas, and implement a clusters policy. There should be a review of existing protected views with the intention of adding new viewing corridors, as well as a recognition that views from all angles – even if not within a protected corridor – should be a planning consideration. The GLA should support the development of a fully interactive 3D computer model of London’s emerging skyline in order to allow development proposals to be visualised within the context of their contribution to the London skyline. Finally, the Mayor should require all developers with proposals for tall buildings to consider other building configurations.”

5.14 Upon being put to vote, the motion in the name of Navin Shah AM, namely:

“This Assembly notes with concern the revelation earlier this year by New London Architecture that over 230 tall buildings are in the pipeline for development. The cumulative impact of these developments on London’s skyline is not being thoroughly considered, with the resultant often bland design and irreversible negative impact posing a threat to London’s heritage, character and architectural distinctiveness. 80% of these buildings are residential, mostly luxury flats which will do little to alleviate the housing crisis.

Tall buildings can make a positive contribution to city life and the skyline, but only if they’re in the right places, meet the right needs, and respect the character and identity of the surrounding area. However, the flaws of ill-considered tall buildings have been well demonstrated by the skyline campaign.

The London Plan includes policies on tall buildings, but these are not being properly implemented in planning decisions. There are also examples where height limits established by Opportunity Area Planning Frameworks have been ignored.

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in order to allow development proposals to be visualised within the context of their contribution to the London skyline. Finally, the Mayor should require all developers with proposals for tall buildings to consider other building configurations.”

was agreed unanimously.

- 5.15 Andrew Dismore AM moved and Nicky Gavron AM seconded the following motion:

“This Assembly notes the Mayor’s representations to the Government in response to their consultation on permitted development rights. This Assembly believes that the Mayor did not go far enough and failed to fulfil his pledge at September Mayor’s Question Time that “Thermonuclear weapons will be used”. This Assembly believes permitted development rights that enable offices to be converted to flats without the need to apply for planning permission should not be made permanent. Bringing in permitted development on office space and other employment uses, such as light industry and warehouses, represents a threat to London’s economic recovery.”

- 5.16 The following amendment to the motion was moved by Andrew Boff AM and seconded by James Cleverly AM:

“This Assembly notes the Mayor’s representations to the Government in response to their consultation on permitted development rights. This Assembly believes permitted development rights that enable offices to be converted to flats without the need to apply for planning permission should not be made permanent. Bringing in permitted development on office space and other employment uses, such as light industry and warehouses, represents a threat to London’s economic recovery.”

- 5.17 Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Andrew Boff AM was lost (with 8 votes cast in favour and 14 against).

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

“This Assembly notes the Mayor’s representations to the Government in response to their consultation on permitted development rights. This Assembly believes that the Mayor did not go far enough and failed to fulfil his pledge at September Mayor’s Question Time that “Thermonuclear weapons will be used”. This Assembly believes permitted development rights that enable offices to be converted to flats without the need to apply for planning permission should not be made permanent. Bringing in permitted development on office space and other employment uses, such as light industry and warehouses, represents a threat to London’s economic recovery.”

was agreed (with 14 votes cast in favour and 8 against).

6 Mayoral Commitments (Item 6)

6.1 Resolved:

That the commitments made by the Mayor, Boris Johnson, during London Assembly Mayor's Question Time meetings held between September 2013 and September 2014 be noted.

7 Petition Update (Item 7)

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

7.2 Resolved:

That the response received to a petition presented at a recent London Assembly (Plenary) meeting be noted.

8 Date of Next Meeting (Item 8)

8.1 The next scheduled meeting of the London Assembly was the Mayor's Question Time meeting which will take place at 10.00am on Wednesday 19 November 2014 in the Chamber, City Hall.

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

9.1 There were no items of urgent business.

10 Close of Meeting

10.1 The meeting ended at 1.35 pm.

Chairman

Date

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