



Waltham Forest Town Hall  
Forest Road  
E17 4JF

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## Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday 25 April 2024 at 7.30 pm

**Present:**

**Mayor:** Councillor Roy Berg

**Committee Members:**

Councillors Afzal Akram, Shumon Ali-Rahman, Naheed Asghar, Vicky Ashworth, Elizabeth Baptiste, Tony Bell, Karen Bellamy, Kastriot Berberi, Marsela Berberi, Emma Best, Tom Connor, Catherine Deakin, Andrew Dixon, Rosalind Doré, Paul Douglas, Shabana Dhedhi, Rhiannon Eglin, Marion Fitzgerald, Kizzy Gardiner, Mitchell Goldie, Jenny Gray, Kisha Green, Jemma Hemsted, Whitney Ihenachor, Sazimet Palta Imre, Tim James, Ahsan Khan, Johar Khan, Kira Lewis, Khevyn Limbajee, Sally Littlejohn, Clyde Loakes, Gerry Lyons, Zafran Malik, Anna Mbachu, Miriam Mirwitch, Louise Mitchell, Sam O'Connell, Yusuf Patel, Jack Phipps, Marie Pye, Caramel Quin, Keith Rayner, Catherine Saumarez, Sebastian Salek, Richard Sweden, Steve Terry, Katy Thompson, Terry Wheeler, Jennifer Whilby and Grace Williams

### 72. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Raja Anwar, Kisha Green, Justin Halabi, Crystal Ihenachor, Kay Isa, John Moss, Jonathan O'Dea, Uzma Rasool and Sharon Waldron.

The Council congratulated Councillor Justin Halabi and his partner on the birth of their new child.

### 73. Declarations of interest

None.

#### **74. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 29th February 2024**

The minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on February 29<sup>th</sup> 2024 were AGREED by Council and signed by the Mayor.

#### **75. Announcements from the Mayor, Council Leader, Cabinet members and Chief Executive**

The Mayor spoke of the civic events that he had attended and noted that he was coming to the end of his tenure as Mayor. The Mayor said that he had not realised how involved the voluntary sector had been involved across the borough.

The Mayor had hosted staff tours of the Town Hall, helped produce videos for the Council's TikTok account, visited the Waltham Forest Pet Foodbank, attended a performance at the Big Creative Academy and fund raising initiatives from schools across the borough, in aid of supporting the Mayor's charity. He invited councillors to a charity quiz to be held at the Town Hall on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The Mayor said that the Mayor's charity would be supporting veterans and cadets within the borough.

Councillor Williams made announcements relating to the news that the borough would be displaying a sculpture by Henry Moore for the next four years as part of the new gardens in Fellowship Square, and that the local cinema would be reopening as Forest Cinemas, who would also work with local students and support local film festivals.

Councillor Loakes announced the opening of the new Eco Park, noting that residents could now recycle a wider range of materials, including carpets. He also noted that the latest ULEZ figures had demonstrated a decrease in harmful pollutants, but more work needed to be done to meet health authority targets.

Councillor Limbajee announced that council officers and councillors had been working with the Metropolitan Police to produce a strong response that had decreased incidents and increased enforcement action. This had included improving environmental factors to increase CCTV coverage and writing to households to explain how to report incidents. There had been an 80% reduction in drug-related incidents. He added that a new drug strategy had been launched in February designed to tackle markets, reduce supply, and promote recovery. Councillor Limbajee added that a new borough commander had been appointed and councillors would be invited to meet her and speak about issues within their wards.

Councillor Ashworth announced that the first cohort of students would be beginning courses at the new University of Portsmouth campus. Graduate recruitment would continue until September and officers expected increased numbers after clearing. She thanked officers who had contributed to work to set up the new campus in the borough.

Councillor Douglas announced that Community Ward Funding for the borough had now been confirmed, and ward councillors and residents would be able to apply under the theme on 'Stronger Communities'. Councillor Douglas added that officers

anticipated only one round of funding, but there would be opportunities for ad-hoc bidding if any funding remained.

Councillor Asghar announced that the council would be seeking to make the borough smoke-free by 2030. Smoking rates had decreased each year and smoking tended to widen health inequalities. The council had successfully bid for funding to encourage smokers to move to vaping, focused on men from Eastern European countries. Enforcement teams would also be working more widely to tackle sales of cigarettes to those underage, smoking in indoor public spaces and seizing illegal tobacco.

## **76. Public statements**

The Council received a public statement from Ms Sheri Brown who spoke on the changes to visitor parking permits and contested the decision to only allow online or phone bookings for 60+ parking permits. Councillor Loakes responded to Ms Brown confirming that he would follow up in writing but would also speak with officers and Age Concern.

The Council then received a public statement from Ms Mariam Draaijer, CEO of Joy Riders, who spoke of the impact of the Mini Holland scheme in increasing the uptake of cycling across the borough, and encouraging those from groups who don't traditionally cycle to take this up. Councillor Loakes noted that council had changed the landscape for cycling in the borough and that the council would look to work with the Mayor of London to build more cycle lanes, hangers and low traffic neighbourhoods to help residents walk and cycle around the borough.

## **77. Members' questions**

The Council noted the three questions from Members and received replies as set out the Order Paper in Appendix A.

The following supplementary questions were put to the Portfolio Holders:

### **Councillor Kira Lewis to Councillor Clyde Loakes, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Lead Member – Climate and Air Quality**

What will TfL and the council aim to be achieved over the next 10 years to support residents to get around more easily?

Councillor Loakes responded that there were more opportunities including increasing step-free access across the borough, including station refurbishments to ensure step-access, more cycle lanes, electric vehicle charging points and initiatives to decrease car ownership. He added that active travel was the best way to get around the city.

### **Councillor Sally Littlejohn to Councillor Kizzy Gardiner, Portfolio Lead Member – Children and Young People**

What commitment to our children and young people have the London Mayoral candidates made?

Councillor Gardiner said that both main candidates had committed to building more homes and that the council had made clear commitments for the young people living in the borough.

**Councillor Marsela Berberi to Councillor Khevyn Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member – Community Safety**

How has the Mayor of London responded to this?

Councillor Limbajee noted that there had been a reduction in funding and that the Metropolitan Police were comparatively the lowest funded police force within the UK. The Mayor of London sought to invest in the Crime Prevention Fund.

Councillors Akram, Best, Saumarez, James, O’Connell and Goldie then invoked Council Procedure 12.3 to ask oral questions without notice.

**Councillor Afzal Akram to Councillor Clyde Loakes, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Lead Member – Climate and Air Quality**

A question related to the success of cycle lanes and usage within the borough was asked. Councillor Loakes said that he would provide data on usage in writing.

**Councillor Emma Best to Councillor Khevyn Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member – Community Safety**

A question was asked around returning funding to the Police and Crime Commission. Councillor Limbajee noted that there had been reductions in real-term funding.

**Councillor Catherine Saumarez to Councillor Grace Williams, Leader of the Council**

A question was asked about the transparency of consultations for capital projects such as the new crematorium. Councillor Williams said that she would respond in writing.

**Councillor Tim James to Councillor Khevyn Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member – Community Safety**

A question was asked about the increase of representation of women and BAME groups within the Metropolitan Police. Councillor Limbajee said that he would respond in writing.

**Councillor Sam O’Connell to Councillor Grace Williams, Leader of the Council**

A question was asked to clarify if Citizens Advice would still continue in South Chingford. Councillor Williams said that a consultation was still ongoing.

## **Councillor Mitchell Goldie to Councillor Khevyn Limbajee, Portfolio Lead Member – Community Safety**

A question was asked to confirm which Mayor of London, the Metropolitan Police had been under when it was put into special measures. Councillor Limbajee clarified that placing a police service under special measures was the responsibility of the Home Office and not the Mayor of London.

### **78. Notices of motion**

### **79. Conservative Group Motion**

It was moved by Councillor Emma Best and seconded by Councillor Catherine Saumarez, that:

- Waltham Forest Council stands against any further driving charges to residents in coming years, in particular any pay-per-mile scheme.

There was debate, in which Councillors Loakes and James spoke. Councillor Best exercised her right of reply.

A recorded vote was asked for by the members of the Conservative Group.

For the motion: Councillors A Akram, E Best, M Fitzgerald, M Goldie, J Hemsted, T James, S O'Connell, S Palta-Imre, C Saumarez,

Against the motion; Councillors S Ali-Rahman, N Asghar, V Ashworth, E Baptiste, T Bell, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, C Deakin, S Dhedhi, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, R Eglin, K Gardiner, J Gray, W Ihenachor, A Khan, J Khan, K Lewis, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, A Mbachu, M Mirwitch Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, L Mitchell, K Rayner, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby, G Williams

Abstentions: none.

As a result of voting the Mayor declared the motion in the names of Councillor Best and Saumarez LOST.

### **80. Waltham Forest's new Housing Strategy**

It was moved by Councillor Khan and seconded by Councillor Baptiste to agree the housing strategy and draft delivery plan.

There was debate where Councillors Dixon and Limbajee spoke. Councillor Khan exercised his right of reply.

On being put to the vote the motion was **CARRIED:**

That Council **AGREED**:

- the draft Housing Strategy
- the draft Delivery Plan

## 81. Appointments

Council **agreed** the following appointments

### Pension Board

Jose R Sanchez – Employer Representative  
Abena Rodman-Tay – Employer Representative  
Hannah Brunt – Employee Representative  
Yousaf Hassan – Employee Representative

### Outside Bodies

Joe Garrod replacing Stewart Murray as Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth at Evolve Norse Joint Venture Governance Board meeting.

The Council rose at 8:58pm having completed its business.

**The meeting closed at 8.58 pm**

Chair's Signature



Date

23/5/24.