
Cabinet

Minutes of
06 May 2025 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Chair: Councillor Grace Williams

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Ahsan Khan,	Deputy Leader (Housing and Regeneration)
Councillor Clyde Loakes,	Deputy Leader (Climate & Air Quality)
Councillor Naheed Asghar,	Portfolio Lead Member – Inclusive Economy
Councillor Vicky Ashworth,	Portfolio Lead Member – Stronger Communities
Councillor Rosalind Doré,	Portfolio Lead Member - Libraries, Culture and Sports & Leisure
Councillor Paul Douglas,	Portfolio Lead Member – Finance and Resources
Councillor Kizzy Gardiner,	Portfolio Lead Member – Children and Young People
Councillor Khevyn Limbajee	Portfolio Lead Member – Community Safety
Councillor Louise Mitchell	Portfolio Lead Member – Adults and Health

Officers in Attendance:

Linzi Roberts-Egan	Chief Executive
Temitope Ademosu	Strategic Director, Stronger Communities
Ian Buckle	Head of Electoral and Democratic Services
Nicky Crouch	Strategic Director, Children Services
Marc Gadsby	Strategic Director, Adult Services
Joe Garrod	Acting Strategic Director, Place
Rob Manning	Strategic Director, Resources
Jeremy Walling	Assistant Director, Commercial Law

91. Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received.

92. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

93. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 11 March 2025, were approved as a correct record.

94. Citizens' Assembly on Neighbourhood Policing: our joint police-council response to the recommendations

Councillor Limbajee introduced the report and, in doing so, referred to the recent launch of the safer routes pilot which placed youth workers around routes to school. He said that 3 - 6pm was the most dangerous time for young people and that the implementation of the pilot made young people feel safer. Councillor Limbajee then thanked officers and the cross-council support provided. He also gave thanks to councillors involved for their support and advice.

The Leader stated that the work undertaken went some way to meeting the objectives of Mission Waltham Forest. She said that policing had been a significant concern for residents for a substantial period of time. She gave thanks to the Metropolitan Police for the spirit with which they had taken this forward and referred to the positive change in the relationship between Police and residents. The Leader went to thank the Citizens' Assembly Advisory Board for their work as experts and people with lived experience.

Decision

Cabinet noted and agreed the police and council joint commitments and actions that respond to the recommendations set out by members of the Citizens' Assembly on the Future of Neighbourhood policing, described in full in the action plan included as Appendix 1 to the report.

95. London Sexual Health Programme

Councillor Mitchell introduced the report and, in doing so, explained that the partnership encompassed 30 local authorities in London and that the lead-in time was long enough to allow for engagement with all participating boroughs. She went on to say that work, to date, had been excellent with good feedback and comments from service users. Councillor Mitchell then thanked relevant officers for their hard work.

The Leader thanked all involved and was pleased to see that the proposals provided efficiencies through economies of scale.

Decision

Cabinet:

- (1) agreed that Waltham Forest can sign up as a participating authority in the London Sexual Health Programme, a continuation of a pan-London partnership which delivers cost savings to the Council, good outcomes for

residents and benefits regional partnership working arrangements.

- (2) approved the participation of Waltham Forest in the re-procurement of SHL.UK, which will require signing a memorandum of understanding and paying a one-off cross-charge to City of London for procurement costs;
- (3) delegated authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead Member for Adults and Health, to:
 - agree to the contract award on behalf of Waltham Forest Council, pending completion of the procurement process to the satisfaction of participating authorities. The procurement process will take place between June 2025 and March 2026. The contract will commence on 15 August 2026 for a contract term of five years plus two two-year extensions (a maximum term of nine years, ending in August 2035). The spend will be linked to activity and modelled for population growth, estimated at £5.6 million over the nine years for Waltham Forest.
 - agree any future changes to the scope of the contract, pending local review, which could include: online access to contraception; online access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP); online access to condoms.
 - agree any future extensions to the contract, up to the maximum four additional years permitted.

96. Fairer Contributions Policy: Proposal for changes to Minimum Income Guarantee uplift

Councillor Mitchell introduced the report and, in doing so, confirmed that the proposal would affect approximately 50% of those people receiving non-residential care and was a result of a requirement to make £25m savings across the Council over the next 3 years. She explained that the proposal for consultation would bring LBWF in-line with other London boroughs.

The Leader pointed out that the proposal was a very important principle of Council's financial approach and confirmed that any actions taken were with the intention to support the most vulnerable residents.

Decision

Cabinet:

- (1) agreed that a consultation should be carried out on the proposed changes to the Fairer Contributions Policy discretionary uplift applied to the Minimum Income Guarantee, as set out in paragraph 3.14 of the report; and
- (2) noted that analysis of the consultation will be undertaken, and the outcome and recommendations will be brought back to Cabinet for decision in November 2025.

97. Options for the Waltham Forest Catering Services SLA with Schools

Councillor Gardiner introduced the report and, in doing so, confirmed that the Council had reviewed all trading services and identified that the catering contract was amongst the largest which the Council provided to schools in terms of the cost of delivering the service. She explained that the service costed the Council approximately £600K above what it received to deliver the service. Councillor Gardiner explained that part of reason for this was due to schools deciding to make their own catering arrangements. She went on to say that over 200 members of catering staff that worked for the Council would transfer to new providers via TUPE. She confirmed that staff affected understood the need for the decision. Councillor Gardiner added that the service was optional and could be delivered more efficiently without a reduction in quality. She then gave thanks to schools and staff in the school catering service.

The Leader thanked Councillor Gardiner for leading on what was a very difficult process and echoed her words of thanks to schools and staff involved.

Decision

Cabinet:

- (1) noted that the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with schools for the provision of school meals expire on 31st March 2026;
- (2) agreed that the Local Authority cease offering catering services to provide school meals from 1st April 2026;
- (3) noted the support that will be provided to schools to enable them to consider either directly delivering school meals or sourcing an alternative provider; and
- (4) Note the establishment of a working group to oversee the formal approval requirements, HR processes and communications to schools and other key stakeholders, for which the Director of Education will act as Senior Responsible Officer.

98. Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Councillor Khan introduced the report and, in doing so, confirmed that the new policy embedded learning from ombudsman complaints and feedback from tenants and leaseholders.

The Leader said that the report underlined the leadership and efforts of the housing team. She gave thanks to Councillor Khan and the housing team for their work in supporting the Council's regulatory inspection.

Decision

Cabinet:

- (1) approved the proposed Housing Repairs and Maintenance Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report; and

- (2) authorised a delegation to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Lead Member for Housing & Regeneration, and the Director of Governance and Law, to amend the policy in response to new legal requirements, to enable rapid amendment to the policy to comply with new legal requirements as they arise due to the introduction of Awaab's Law.

99. Inclusive Growth and Economy Framework

Councillor Asghar introduced the report and, in doing so, said that she was keen to ensure that every 'front door' to the Council included access to an offer for support. She went on to say that residents in temporary accommodation exceeded 1,500 and added that the longer that people were in temporary accommodation, without access to services, would make them feel less engaged. Councillor Asghar then thanked relevant officers for their hard work.

Councillor Khan stated that the new framework aligned with the values of the Council and set out an action plan for how to address inequality through growth. He added that the plan demonstrated how the Council was driving growth to ensure that everyone would benefit equally from growth. Councillor Khan went on to say that there would be other benefits for residents through investment in town centres and the borough's nighttime economy. He then gave thanks to Councillor Asghar and to relevant officers.

The Leader said that she was pleased to see that equality was at the heart of our plans and said that it was important to consider, in the current situation of poor economic growth, how to best support residents.

Decision

Cabinet:

- (1) approved the Waltham Forest Inclusive Growth and Economy Framework as contained within Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) approved the formation of the Waltham Forest Inclusive Economy Mission Board with key anchor organisation partners; and
- (3) delegated, to the Strategic Director of Stronger Communities in consultation the Portfolio Lead Members for Housing and Regeneration and Inclusive Economy, and the Strategic Director of Place, to make final presentational changes ahead of publication and launch of the framework.

100. Shareholder Committee Membership

Decision

Cabinet agreed that Councillor Vicky Ashworth be removed from the membership of the Shareholder Committee.

101. Leyton Orient

Councillor Doré thanked those in the room and borough for supporting Leyton Orient. She congratulated the team and wishing them the best of luck on 14 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 2.37 pm

Chair's Signature _____

Date _____