



Waltham Forest Town Hall
Forest Road
E17 4JF

Council

Minutes of
22 May 2025 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Mayor: Councillor Tony Bell

Councillors:

Afzal Akram, Raja Anwar, Naheed Asghar, Vicky Ashworth, Elizabeth Baptiste, Karen Bellamy, Tony Bell, Kastriot Berberi, Marsela Berberi, Roy Berg, Emma Best, Catherine Deakin, Shabana Dhedhi, Andrew Dixon, Rosalind Doré, Paul Douglas, Rhiannon Eglin, Marion Fitzgerald, Kizzy Gardiner, Mitchell Goldie, Jenny Gray, Jemma Hemsted, Crystal Ihenachor, 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, John Moss, Sam O'Connell, Jonathan O'Dea, Yusuf Patel, Jack Phipps, Marie Pye, Caramel Quin, Uzma Rasool, Keith Rayner, Sebastian Salek, Richard Sweden, Steve Terry, Katy Thompson, Sharon Waldron, Terry Wheeler, Jennifer Whilby and Grace Williams

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were recorded from Councillors, Ali-Rahman, Green, Halabi and Ilsa.

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Election of Mayor

The passing of Anna Alcock, Waltham Forest resident and community advocate, previous Pride of Waltham Forest Winner and artist was announced. A moment of silent reflection was observed.

It was moved by Councillor Williams, and seconded by Councillor Best that, Council **records** its sincere thanks to Councillor Sharon Waldron for the eminent service she has rendered as Mayor of this Borough during the Municipal Year 2024-25, and to her consort Sandra Rigobert and her spiritual guide Pastor Birkett Bennet, for the able manner in which they have discharged their duties.

The Mayor reflected on her year in office and her many engagements and praised the work and support of the team of people around her.

Councillor Rosalind Doré nominated Councillor Tony Bell as Mayor for 2025-2026, highlighting his commitment to the community, his kindness, and his passion for culture and nature. Councillor Rhiannon Eglin seconded the nomination, emphasising Councillor Bell's attentiveness, dedication, and focus on sustainability.

Councillor Tony Bell was unanimously elected as the Mayor of the London Borough of Waltham Forest for 2025-2026.

The incoming Mayor delivered his inaugural speech, focusing on his mayoral theme of fellowship and nature. He announced his chosen charities: Highams Park Food Hub, Haven House, and Walthamstow Wetlands. He also highlighted the 60th anniversary of the borough's creation.

4. Minutes of the Council meeting held on 24th April 2025

Council **agreed** the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on Thursday 24th April 2025.

5. Announcements from the Mayor, Council Leader, Cabinet Members and Chief Executive

The Council **recorded a vote of thanks** to Ian Buckle, the departing Head of Electoral and Democratic Services, recognising his invaluable expertise and professionalism.

Council **noted** the Schedule of Motions to Council:

17 July 2025: Labour

16 October 2025: Conservative

11 December 2025: Labour

26 February 2026: None (Special: Budget)

23 April 2026: Labour
21 May 2026: None (Special: AGM)

6. Leader's report

Council **received** the Leaders report.

Councillor Grace Williams presented her report, focusing on fellowship in nature. She highlighted the importance of foster care and reflected on the 80th anniversary of VE Day. She also discussed the council's commitment to equalities, its work as a borough of sanctuary, and its efforts to support residents through economic growth and improved public services.

Councillor Emma Best responded to the Leader of the Council's report. She expressed concerns about the Citizens Assembly, renter's rights, wealth inequality, parking charges, and the level of affordable housing.

Councillor Williams exercised her right of reply, defending the council's record on equalities and affordable housing, and addressing Councillor Best's concerns about the Citizens Assembly and the council's role as a landlord.

7. Appointment of committees and other council bodies for 2025/26

It was moved by Councillor Steven Terry, seconded by Councillor Mitchell Goldie and **unanimously agreed** that Council:

- a) **appointed** standing committees for the municipal year 2025-26
- b) **determined** the number of seats on all committees
- c) **determined** the allocation of seats on committees to party groups in accordance with the political balance rules.
- d) **appointed** councillors to sit on committees in accordance with nominations made by the Group Whips
- e) **appointed** the chairs and vice-chairs of committees for 2025-26
- f) **appointed** councillors to serve on the other council bodies listed within Appendix 1 as detailed in **Appendix B** of the order paper with the following amendments;
 - i. Councillor Keith Rayner to be removed from the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee
 - ii. Councillor Caramel Quin to be removed from the Childrens and Families Scrutiny Committee.
- g) **noted** the memberships of the Boards of Directors of the Local Authority Trading Companies
- h) **agreed** the terms of reference of standing committees for 2025- 26 shall be as set out in the Council's constitution
- i) **agreed** that all councillors will be appointed as supernumerary members to substitute when a named member of a committee is unable to attend a meeting, in accordance with the Council's scheme for the appointment of

substitute members; Group Leaders and/or Group Whips being able to agree substitutions in respect of members of their party groups;

- a. that in respect of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Executive members may be substituted only by other members of the Executive;
- b. that in respect of the Coordinating Scrutiny Committee, Chairs of Scrutiny Committees may only be substituted by vice-chairs, with other members of the committee to be substituted by any other non-executive member;
- c. and that in respect of any Scrutiny Committee, Executive members cannot serve as substitutes.
- d. (Note: The supernumerary arrangements do not apply to the Cabinet)

8. Appointment of representatives to outside bodies for 2025/26

It was moved by Councillor Steven Terry, seconded by Councillor Mitchell Goldie and **unanimously agreed** that Council:

- **agreed** to appoint representatives of the Council and other persons to serve on bodies and organisations in accordance with the nominations made by the Party Whips as shown in **Appendix C** to this Order Paper.

9. Programme of meetings for 2025/26

It was moved by Councillor Steven Terry, seconded by Councillor Mitchell Goldie and **unanimously agreed** that Council:

- (a) **approved** the Programme of Meetings for 2025/26.
- (b) **agreed** that the Chief Executive in consultation with the party Whips be authorised to agree any subsequent changes to the programme arising from clashes of membership following the appointment of committee memberships at this meeting.
- (c) **agreed** to move the Planning Committee on the 7th October 2025 to the 14th October 2025.

10. Scheme of delegation

It was moved by Councillor Clyde Loakes, seconded by Councillor Jack Phipps and **unanimously agreed** that Council:

- (a) **agreed** the delegation of non-executive functions (as defined by the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (amended) to officers as set out in:
 - i. The Council's Constitution and
 - ii. The General Scheme of Delegation appended to the report.

- (b) **agreed** that all officers with delegated powers have power to further delegate those powers to other officers under s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972 or as provided for by any other legislation and may agree a scheme of delegation to officers for their service areas.
- (c) **delegated** to the Director of Governance and Law the power to make and publish the necessary changes to the Constitution and Scheme of Delegation to give effect to these decisions.

The meeting closed at 9.14 pm

Chair's Signature _____

Date _____