

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the Meeting of the Council of the City of Westminster held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 22nd September, 2021 at Westminster Council House, 97-113 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5PT.

PRESENT

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Andrew Smith

COUNCILLORS

Heather Acton	Adam Hug
Ian Adams	Aicha Less
Barbara Arzymanow	Pancho Lewis
Timothy Barnes	Patricia McAllister
Richard Beddoe	Guthrie McKie
Liza Begum	Tim Mitchell
David Boothroyd	Gotz Mohindra
Susie Burbridge	Eoghain Murphy
Ruth Bush	Matt Noble
Nafsika Butler-Thalassis	Emily Payne
Melvyn Caplan	Papya Qureshi
Maggie Carman	Robert Rigby
Danny Chalkley	Rachael Robathan
Antonia Cox	Tim Roca
Lorraine Dean	Ian Rowley
Tony Devenish	Karen Scarborough
Paul Dimoldenberg	Mark Shearer
Richard Elcho	Selina Short
Murad Gassanly	James Spencer
Jonathan Glanz	Paul Swaddle
Jim Glen	Hamza Taouzzale
Angela Harvey	Aziz Toki
David Harvey	Jacqui Wilkinson

APOLOGIES: Councillors Nickie Aiken, Rita Begum, Iain Bott, Christabel Flight, Peter Freeman, Matthew Green, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Louise Hyams, Shamim Talukder and Judith Warner

1 APPOINTMENT OF RELIEF CHAIRMAN

1.1 It was moved by the Lord Mayor and seconded by Councillor Paul Swaddle that Councillor Angela Harvey be elected as Relief Chairman.

1.2 Motion put and declared **CARRIED**.

2 MINUTES

- 2.1 **RESOLVED:** The minutes of the proceedings at the Council meeting held on Thursday 9 September 2021 were, with the assent of the Members present, signed by the Lord Mayor as a true record of the proceedings.

3 LORD MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The Lord Mayor referred to these as set out on the agenda.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 4.1 There were no declarations.

5 STATEMENT ON URGENT MATTERS

- 5.1 There were no statements on urgent matters.

6 PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS, IF ANY

6.1 (a) Petitions

Councillor Matt Noble presented a petition from the Lisson Green Tenants and Residents Association calling for the return of Greenside Community Hall to community use. The petition was referred to the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health reporting to the relevant Cabinet Member.

(b) Deputations

There were no deputations.

7 QUESTIONS

- 8.1 The questions, supplementary questions and replies are included as a recording on the Council's website.

8 COUNCILLOR ISSUES

8.1 Revitalising St John's Wood High Street in a Post-pandemic World

Councillor Gotz Mohindra spoke and Councillor Matthew Green replied.

Improving Housing

Councillor Richard Elcho spoke and Councillor David Harvey replied.

9 FUTURE POLICY PLAN

- 9.1 The meeting debated the item chosen for debate from the Future Policy Plan by the Majority Party.

Refugee Resettlement

- 9.2 The Majority Party had selected item number 107 on the Future Policy Plan, Refugee Resettlement. The debate will be referred to the relevant Executive Director for consideration when reporting on the subject.

10 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S REVISED STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

- 10.1 The council debated the report. Following debate, the Lord Mayor put the recommendations as set out in the report of the Cabinet Member for Business, Licensing and Planning to the vote and following a show of hands declared:

RESOLVED:

That the Council reviewed, considered and approved the revised Statement of Licensing Policy in accordance with section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003.

11 NOTICE OF MOTION

- 11.1 The Minority Party had selected for debate the notice of motion as set out on the agenda. The notice of motion was moved by Councillor Adam Hug and seconded by Councillor Liza Begum.
- 11.2 Councillor Rachael Robathan moved and it was seconded by Councillor Paul Swaddle that the notice of motion be amended, as follows:

This Council notes that the cost of the Marble Arch Mound has risen to over £6 million and that the ~~delivery of the Mound project has brought international embarrassment to the City of Westminster.~~ Marble Arch Mound was opened too early.

This Council also notes that the Marble Arch Mound is part of a wider £150m West End District project that contains significant spending including the Strand Aldwych and piazzas at Oxford Circus. The Council welcomes the investment into Oxford Street where footfall is down by 50% and recognises the need to support the economy of the area and to protect the one in eight London jobs that the West End delivers.

~~This Council believes that both Council Members and Westminster residents were misled by the political leadership of the Council about will investigate whether the progress of the Marble Arch Mound project. This Council believes that the failure of the Council's shortfalls in project management and the gulf between rhetoric and reality is indicative of a Conservative administration that has been in power for far too long led to the issues related to the delayed opening of the mound as well as the budget overspend.~~

~~This Council further believes that the inability to charge the planned ticket fees and the failure to secure much of the projected sponsorship leaves Westminster taxpayers picking up the £6 million bill for the Mound regrets the overspend, but notes that the free entry has already allowed over 100,000 people to visit the Mound, including a significant proportion of local residents, and welcomes the roles that the additional footfall and the consumer spend of approximately £60 per visitor are playing in the economic recovery of the Oxford Street District.~~

~~This Council welcomes the appointment by the Chief Executive of a team to oversee the investigation into the issues related to the Mound and make any recommendations they deem needed.~~

~~This Council resolves to appoint an independent reviewer to advise and oversee the investigation into the Council's processes, decision making and organisational culture which resulted in this debacle. The Council resolves not to proceed with further major capital investments within the West End District project until all reviews of Council decision making relating to the Marble Arch Mound and associated issues are completed and have received full scrutiny by Members, and until proper remains committed to ensuring good value for money for all projects delivered under the Oxford Street District scheme as well as capital projects as a whole and will ensure that meaningful consultations on future Oxford Street District projects have will taken place with local residents.~~

~~This Council finally resolves to take steps to dismantle and remove the Marble Arch Mound as soon as is practicable in January as originally planned.~~

- 11.3 Following debate, The Lord Mayor put the amendment to the motion to the vote and following a show of hands declared the amendment to the motion **CARRIED**.
- 11.4 The Lord Mayor then put the substantive motion as amended to the vote and following a show of hands declared the substantive motion as amended **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes that the cost of the Marble Arch Mound has risen to £6 million and that the Marble Arch Mound was opened too early.

This Council also notes that the Marble Arch Mound is part of a wider £150m West End District project that contains significant spending including the

proposed piazzas at Oxford Circus. The Council welcomes the investment into Oxford Street where footfall is down by 50% and recognises the need to support the economy of the area and to protect the one in eight London jobs that the West End delivers.

This Council will investigate whether shortfalls in project management led to the issues related to the delayed opening of the mound as well as the budget overspend.

This Council regrets the overspend, but notes that the free entry has already allowed over 100,000 people to visit the Mound, including a significant proportion of local residents, and welcomes the roles that the additional footfall and the consumer spend of approximately £60 per visitor are playing in the economic recovery of the Oxford Street District.

This Council welcomes the appointment by the Chief Executive of a team to oversee the investigation into the issues related to the Mound and make any recommendations they deem needed.

The Council remains committed to ensuring good value for money for all projects delivered under the Oxford Street District scheme as well as capital projects as a whole and will ensure that meaningful consultation on future Oxford Street District projects will take place with local residents.

This Council finally resolves to take steps to dismantle and remove the Marble Arch Mound in January as originally planned.

The Meeting ended at 9.46 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____