



City of Westminster

Council Agenda

Title: **Council Meeting**

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 20th September, 2023**

Time: **7.00 pm**

Venue: **Westminster Council House, 97-113 Marylebone Road,
London, NW1 5PT**

Members: **All Councillors are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting
for the transaction of the business set out.**

In line with legislation Committee members will attend the meeting in person. This meeting will be live streamed through the Council's website.

Limited admission to the public gallery is available from 6.30pm. Please telephone if you are attending the meeting in a wheelchair or have difficulty walking up steps. There is wheelchair access via the Sammy Ofer Centre.

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Officer, Janis Best, Committee and Councillor Support Manager.

**Email: jbest@westminster.gov.uk Tel: 07971 920521
Corporate Website: www.westminster.gov.uk**

1. APPOINTMENT OF RELIEF CHAIRMAN

To appoint a relief Chairman.

2. MINUTES

To sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on 28 June 2023.

3. LORD MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

1. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Saturday 5 August she attended the Jamaican High Commission Annual Independence Service of Praise and Thanksgiving at Westminster Chapel.
2. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Tuesday 8 August she attended the Citizenship Ceremonies at Old Marylebone Town Hall.
3. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Thursday 10 August she attended a Fortnum & Mason Lunch at Fortnum & Marson, Piccadilly
4. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Friday 11 August she attended the Middlesex & NW London Army Cadet Force Final Parade and Presentation at the Royal Air Force Museum.
5. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Thursday 17 August she attended a meeting with the Young Westminster Foundation in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.
6. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Thursday 17 August she attended the UN World Humanitarian Day Evensong at Westminster Abbey.
7. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Thursday 24 August she attended the Westminster City Council Silver Sunday Afternoon Tea in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.
8. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Thursday 24 August she attended the Westminster Youth Council South Asian Heritage Month Celebration in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.
9. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Monday 4 September she attended a meeting with the Carers Network in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.

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10. The Lord Mayor to report that, on Monday 4 September she attended a meeting with The Passage in the Lord Mayor's Parlour.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

5. STATEMENT ON URGENT MATTERS

With the approval of the Chair of the meeting, the Leader of the Council may make a statement on an urgent matter and the Leader of the Opposition will have an equivalent right of reply.

6. COUNCILLOR PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS, IF ANY

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Lord Mayor will invite members of the public who have been chosen to present their question or petition. After which the relevant Cabinet Member or Committee Chair will respond.

8. QUESTIONS

The Lord Mayor will call Members who have indicated that they wish to ask a question after the Leader of the Opposition has asked her questions.

9. COUNCILLOR ISSUE

Councillor Louise Hyams – 'Social Housing in St. James's'

10. PARTY BUSINESS

To consider any items for debate.

**11. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:
COUNCILLORS PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY**

To receive, consider and debate, if chosen, the following report which contains recommendations to the Council for approval and adoption.

(To Follow)

**12. REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:
POLICY AND SCRUTINY REVIEW**

(To Follow)

To receive, consider and debate, if chosen, the following report which contains recommendations to the Council for approval and adoption.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Majority Party Motion – The Gordon Hospital and a Lack of Acute Mental Health Provision in South Westminster

To be moved by Councillor Nafsika Butler-Thalassis and seconded by Councillor Lorraine Dean.

The mental wellbeing of our residents is of the utmost importance to this Council. We are concerned about the loss of Westminster's 51 acute mental health beds since the temporary closure of the Gordon Hospital at the beginning of the Covid pandemic and the consequences this has had for our residents and our staff. We are concerned that patients have to wait much longer to access an acute bed, often in unsuitable environments such as in A&E. When a bed is finally found, it is outside Westminster, and sometimes very far from Westminster which contributes to the isolation of mental health patients from their families and communities.

The temporary closure of the Gordon Hospital has put immense pressure on other parts of the system. St Charles, the acute mental health hospital in Kensington & Chelsea is finding that Kensington & Chelsea patients are having to move out of borough to make way for Westminster patients. St Mary's hospital is having to host several mental health patients at a time for up to 24 hours in beds that are needed for patients who are physically ill. The police are finding that their resources are tied up in escorting mental health patients in A&E for up to 24 hours instead of fighting crime.

The closure of the Gordon Hospital affects all our communities both directly and indirectly. However the closure of this acute provision has a particular impact on communities least able to access alternative support, such as those who are street homeless and those households in multiple deprivation.

There is no indication that the need for acute mental health beds is reducing. Our data shows that in 2022/23

our staff assessed 1070 people, 49 people more than in 2021/22. Of those 1070 people, 777 were referred for acute hospital care, which is 103 more people than in 2021/22.

We call on the NHS to reopen acute mental health beds in South Westminster to ensure that the acute mental health needs of our residents are met. We very much value community mental health services but we don't believe that community mental health services should be funded at the expense of acute hospital beds. We need both types of services to support patients with different needs and at different stages of their patient journey. This is the view we will be expressing formally to the NHS when they open their consultation in the Autumn.

(b) Majority Party Motion – Ecological Emergency

To be moved by Councillor Ryan Jude and seconded by Councillor Cara Sanquest.

This Council recognises the importance of a healthy and biodiverse environment that ensures the wellbeing of all who live, work and study here and support Westminster's future prosperity. This Council also acknowledges the 2019 State of Nature report, which found that 15% of UK species are classified as threatened with extinction, and 2% are already extinct.

Westminster declared a climate emergency in 2019. The Council notes that the ecological and climate emergencies are intertwined, as burning fossilised carbon places stress on the ecosystems which regulate the climate. If habitats are compromised or destroyed, this has impacts not only on the decline of local species but also on resilience for more extreme weather events such as heatwaves and floods.

In Westminster, there are 33 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), which cover 22% of the City's land footprint. Some are located on council land, while others are owned by other landowners, such as The Royal Parks. However, the most recent Open Space Audit data that is available found that only 39% of Westminster SINCs demonstrated 'average to rich' or 'rich' species diversity. As well as in our green spaces, there is also significant ability to improve the biodiversity in our built

environment and through our planning system. There is an opportunity to learn more about the state of nature in the City of Westminster, and to improve general awareness of and develop actions to reverse biodiversity loss in our City.

We therefore pledge to provide leadership and work with all organisations, departments, partners and our communities to do all that is within the Council's power to reverse the decline in biodiversity and deliver measurable biodiversity net gain within Westminster.

The Council also notes the importance of the work of the newly instated Climate Assembly and the following Cabinet decision to:

- Note the final recommendations from the Westminster Citizens' Climate Assembly.
- Approve the initiation of a programme of cross-council work, led by individual Cabinet Members, to develop responses to each recommendation of the Climate Assembly, identifying what action is possible or where the Council may need to influence stakeholders to take them forward.
- Agree that all recommendations brought forward for implementation will be subject to further financial and legal consideration and, where necessary, individual Cabinet or Cabinet Member decisions will need be undertaken.

In addition to this, the Council will:

- (1) Declare an ecological emergency, which recognises the global ecological emergency and the local impact this has on the communities and businesses we serve, expanding upon the climate emergency declared in 2019;
- (2) Pledge to act during the first year of the Motion being accepted, to secure future measurable biodiversity net gain for Westminster, building on recent achievements such as the 'Greening Westminster' fund, the 'No Mow May' initiative, local projects which support communities to take action to improve biodiversity, the ban on the use of Glyphosate, the Wild Gardens competition and other initiatives;
- (3) Publish a strategy, within the first year of the Motion being accepted, outlining our approach to improving

biodiversity within Westminster, which will formally bring together and build upon work happening across the council to support biodiversity net gain;

- (4) Undertake and publish a Green Infrastructure Audit, to assess the current condition and quality of green spaces in Westminster, including our 33 SINC locations in the City;
- (5) Proactively look for opportunities to work in partnership with local groups and stakeholders, to ensure we are all working together to address the ecological emergency;
- (6) Pledge to develop plans for further action in the second year of the Motion being accepted and beyond, based on a full assessment of the scientific evidence on how best to achieve this goal;
- (7) Declare its full support for the Climate and Ecology Bill, and to write to all MPs with constituencies that contain Westminster City Council wards, to encourage them to also support the Climate and Ecology Bill.

In recognition of this ecological emergency Westminster City Council will:

- Make Council housing estates, parks and open spaces more hospitable to a wide range of plants and animals.
- Encourage community engagement with habitat creation through community gardens, improving biodiversity in our streets and pocket parks.
- Identify how the City's open spaces function as part of a Westminster ecological network and prioritise areas for protection and enhancement.
- Work in partnership with institutions, schools, businesses and community groups, to raise awareness and encourage wider biodiversity action across the City through public engagement and advice to residents and businesses on how to protect and enhance habitats within their neighbourhoods.
- Ensure the delivery of biodiversity enhancements through our planning policy and development control functions.
- Review and increase ambition on the Council's target to increase tree canopy cover by 10% by 2050, including working with Westminster Tree Trust to make it easier for residents to propose tree planting. Work

with communities to increase tree planting, and where street trees are not appropriate, install green walls, hedges and planters for smaller trees.

- Design new council housing for net gain of biodiversity and opportunities in the form of integral swift boxes and biodiverse green roofs.

**64 Victoria Street
London, SW1E 6QP
12 September 2023**

Chief Executive

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the Meeting of the Council of the City of Westminster held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 28th June, 2023 at Westminster Council House, 97-113 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5PT.

PRESENT

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Patricia McAllister

COUNCILLORS

Concia Albert	Iman Less
Gillian Arrindell	Patrick Lilley
Barbara Arzymanow	Alan Mendoza
Geoff Barraclough	Tim Mitchell
David Boothroyd	Matt Noble
Ruth Bush	Ellie Ormsby
Nafsika Butler-Thalassis	Ralu Oteh-Osoka
Melvyn Caplan	Angela Piddock
Maggie Carman	Robert Rigby
Laila Cunningham	Rachael Robathan
Lorraine Dean	Tim Roca
Paul Dimoldenberg	Ian Rowley
Robert Eagleton	Cara Sanquest
Paul Fisher	Caroline Sargent
Ed Pitt Ford	Karen Scarborough
Jim Glen	Mark Shearer
David Harvey	Selina Short
Sara Hassan	James Small-Edwards
Elizabeth Hitchcock	Judith Southern
Adam Hug	Max Sullivan
Louise Hyams	Paul Swaddle
Ryan Jude	Jessica Toale
Aicha Less	Hamza Taouzzale
	Jason Williams

APOLOGIES: Councillors Liza Begum, Md Shamsed Chowdhury, Tony Devenish, Amanda Langford, Aziz Toki and Jacqui Wilkinson

1 APPOINTMENT OF RELIEF CHAIR

1.1 Motion moved by the Lord Mayor and seconded by Councillor Ellie Ormsby, that Councillor Patrick Lilley be elected as Relief Chair.

1.2 Motion put, and on a show of hands, declared **CARRIED**.

2 PRESENTATION OF PAST LORD MAYOR'S BADGE AND VOTE OF THANKS

- 2.1 Councillor Tim Roca moved the Vote of Thanks to Councillor Hamza Taouzzale and his Consort, Ms Soad El-Gharras. Councillor Iman Less spoke to second the motion.
- 2.2 Motion put, and on a show of hands, the Lord Mayor Declared the motion **CARRIED** following which Councillor Taouzzale replied.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Council resolved to record a Vote of Thanks to Councillor Hamza Taouzzale for the distinguished service rendered by him as Lord Mayor and to his Consort, Ms Soad El-Gharras for the constant and invaluable help given by her as the Lord Mayor's Consort.
2. We assure them of our gratitude for, and high appreciation of, the dignity and ability with which they have carried out their many duties in accordance with the highest traditions of the City and this Vote of Thanks be inscribed under the Common Seal and presented to them.

3 MINUTES

- 3.1 The minutes of the proceedings at the Council meeting held on Wednesday 17 May 2023 were, with the assent of the Members present, signed by the Lord Mayor as a true record of the proceedings.

4 LORD MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

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

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 5.1 There were no declarations of interest.

6 STATEMENT ON URGENT MATTERS

- 6.1 There were no urgent matters.

7 COUNCILLOR PRESENTED PETITIONS OR DEPUTATIONS, IF ANY

- 7.1 Councillor Paul Swaddle presented a petition from local residents requesting that Labour Cabinet Members donate their recent 45% increase in allowances to charity. The petition was referred to the relevant Chief Officer for reporting to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform.

- 7.2 Councillor Ed Pitt Ford presented a petition from local residents to support the Sussex Street playground in Pimlico. The petition was referred to the relevant Chief Officer for reporting to the Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality.

8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 8.1 Members of the public presented two petitions and asked three questions which were responded to by the relevant Cabinet Members. The questions and responses are available on the Council's website.

9 QUESTIONS

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

10 COUNCILLOR ISSUE

10.1 Preserving the Character of the West End

Councillor Jessica Toale spoke, and Councillor Geoff Barraclough replied.

11 PARTY BUSINESS

- 11.1 No items were selected for debate.

12 REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE: MEMBER ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2023-2024: AMENDMENT

- 12.1 The Lord Mayor put the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee report to the vote and on a show of hands declared the recommendations adopted.

RESOLVED:

That Full Council approved the Amended Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023-2024 which included amending the number of SRAs payable to Cabinet Members from six to seven and Deputy Leaders of the Opposition from one to two.

13 NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 13a – Fairer Westminster

- 13.1 The Majority Party had selected for debate the notice of motion as set out on the agenda. The notice of motion was moved by Councillor Ellie Ormsby and seconded by Councillor James Small-Edwards.
- 13.3 During the debate it was noted that Councillor Lorraine Dean raised a point of personal explanation and Councillors Selina Short and Ralu Oteh-Osaka raised points of order.
- 13.2 Following the debate, The Lord Mayor put the motion to the vote and following a show of hands declared the motion **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED:

That this Council notes that:

- This administration was elected with a commitment to build a Fairer Westminster. Creating a more equitable economy and society in Westminster, which puts our residents and communities first. It notes the principles and plans set out in the 2023/24 Fairer Westminster Delivery Plan.
- The Council has recently become a signatory to the Unison Ethical Care Charter, making a commitment to improving protections for care workers and improving outcomes for service users. It has also created a unique Dirty Money Charter with the New West End Company (NVEC), the Heart of London Business Alliance (HOLBA), the Fair Tax Foundation and others to call for national change to tackle economic crime and corruption, whilst doing what we can here in Westminster.
- Westminster is proud of its vibrancy and diversity, and its history of welcoming refugees and displaced people from around the world fleeing conflict, climate change, inequality, discrimination and violence. On the latest published figures, Westminster is home to 763 people who are here on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, 997 asylum seekers of which 851 are in Home Office Contingency hotels, 7 refugee families resettled through the UK Resettlement and Afghan Resettlement pledge, and we are responsible for 54 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and 212 former unaccompanied asylum-seeking children care leavers.
- Council of Sanctuary designation is awarded by the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network to institutions that are welcoming to those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries, and protecting the rights of all migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. There are 33 members in total (10 in London, including recently in Camden where this designation was adopted unanimously) and 11 that have achieved the full award (1 in London).
- Councils can have a significant impact on their local area by promoting better mental health. Westminster takes its responsibility to care for its

residents' mental health seriously and recognises the impact it can have.

- Councillors represent their community and where possible Councillors, as a whole, should reflect the diversity of their community, particularly those with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation). The Co-operative Party's Diverse Councils Declaration sets out ideas for increasing diversity in local government by suggesting ways to remove barriers standing in the way of a more diverse and inclusive democracy.

This Council believes that:

- Our vision for a Fairer Westminster must extend to the most vulnerable in the borough, including our refugee, asylum seeking and migrant communities.
 - We have a duty of care towards children, and vulnerable and trafficked adults in our borough.
 - We must continue to go above and beyond business as usual to support migrant communities. The journey to become a Council of Sanctuary will solidify this commitment.
- As a local authority we have a crucial role to play in improving the mental health of everyone in our community and tackling some of the widest and most entrenched inequalities in mental health.
 - Mental health should be a priority across all the local authority's areas of responsibility.
 - All councillors, whether members of the Cabinet or Scrutiny, and in our community and casework roles, can play a positive role in championing mental health on an individual and strategic basis.
- We should seek to take proactive steps to ensure our councillors are representative of the diverse communities they serve. A more representative democracy is a more inclusive democracy, which enables increased participation and more informed decision-making.

This Council resolves to:

- Launch the journey to become a Council of Sanctuary by joining City of Sanctuary's local authority network and demonstrate its values of 'Inclusive, Openness, Participation, Inspire, and Integrity'.
 - Continue to welcome and support refugees and migrants in the borough and stand in solidarity with them.
 - Challenge anti-migrant sentiment where we find it.
 - Work to ensure that Central Government provides adequate resources to local government to properly support refugees and displaced people in our City including funding for care, advice, housing and skills and employment support.
 - Find more opportunities across the Council to celebrate our refugee and migrant communities, tell their stories, and promote their voices.

- Work with local community, voluntary sector, health, and education partners, including those with lived experience, to shape Westminster's borough of sanctuary ambition.
- Sign the Local Authorities' Mental Health Challenge run by Centre for Mental Health.
 - Continue to support the Mental Health Member Champion in their role.
 - Support positive mental health in our community, including in local schools, neighbourhoods and workplaces.
 - Work to reduce inequalities in mental health in our community.
 - Work with local partners to offer effective support for people with mental health needs.
 - Tackle discrimination on the grounds of mental health in our community.
 - Proactively listen to people of all ages and backgrounds about what they need for better mental health.
- Commit to being a Diverse Council:
 - Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy.
 - Demonstrate an open and welcoming culture to all, promoting the highest standards of behaviour and conduct.
 - Recommend a Diverse Council Action Plan to political groups for adoption ahead of the next local elections.
 - Work towards the standards for member support and development as set out in the LGA Councillor Development Charter and Charter Plus.
 - Demonstrate a commitment to a duty of care for councillors by:
 - Providing access to counselling services for all councillors;
 - Having regard for the safety and wellbeing of councillors whenever they are performing their role as councillors; and
 - Taking a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment of members including through social networks.
 - Provide flexibility in Council business by regularly reviewing and staggering meeting times where appropriate and feasible.
 - Ensure that all members are able to take up the support to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it or those reliant on the support of others to fulfil their duties.
 - Review the Council's parental leave policy setting out members' entitlement to maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave and relevant allowances to ensure it as inclusive and fair as possible.
- Support the delivery of our commitments under Westminster's Dirty Money and the Unison Ethical Care Charter.

Motion 13b – Restoring the 75% cut of new build intermediate housing for key workers

- 13.3 The Opposition Party had selected for debate the notice of motion as set out on the agenda. The notice of motion was moved by Councillor David Harvey and seconded by Councillor Robert Rigby.
- 13.4 Councillor Matt Noble moved and it was seconded by Councillor Geoff Barraclough that the notice of motion be amended, as follows:

Provision of Restoring the 75% cut of new build intermediate housing for Key Workers Motion

~~This Council deplores the absence of ambition or results from the previous administration on cut of up to 75% in new build intermediate housing aimed at key workers in the City of Westminster. This includes allowing developers on numerous schemes to contribute less than policy-compliant numbers or payments towards affordable housing. since this Administration took charge, and seeks for the Cabinet to reinstate the key worker homes to the build programme.~~

The Council welcomes therefore the review and actions undertaken by the new administration which has resulted in 337 council homes at social rent being added to the Council's development pipeline while still delivering 378 homes for intermediate rent. Together with partners this means 561 new intermediate homes for Westminster.

This Council also welcomes upcoming reforms to the City Plan and the new Affordable Housing SPD that will help support the delivery of more truly affordable housing by the private sector, such as reforming intermediate rent levels to make them more affordable to those on lower household incomes than under the previous administration.

This council notes that Grosvenor and Peabody will be converting 193 social rent units in Mayfair and Belgravia to intermediate rent over the coming years, expanding the number of intermediate homes to which the Council has nomination rights but reducing access to social rent homes.

This Council also notes that according to the latest figures there are 100 key workers on the waiting list for an intermediate rent home, with the new administration taking steps to improve priority for key workers within the system and improving marketing to them.

We want a Fairer Westminster "city for all" that builds not just homes but communities. That has to include our hard-pressed key workers who will benefit from the Council's provision of both seldom qualify for social rent housing and intermediate rent homes ~~or otherwise be able to afford to live in Westminster.~~ Without our key workers living here, this is not a fairer Westminster.

- 13.5 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**.
- 12.4 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:

Provision of new build intermediate housing for Key Workers Motion

This Council deplores the absence of ambition or results from the previous administration on housing aimed at key workers in the City of Westminster. This includes allowing developers on numerous schemes to contribute less than policy-compliant numbers or payments towards affordable housing.

The Council welcomes therefore the review and actions undertaken by the new administration which has resulted in 337 council homes at social rent being added to the Council's development pipeline while still delivering 378 homes for intermediate rent. Together with partners this means 561 new intermediate homes for Westminster.-

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We want a Fairer Westminster-that builds not just homes but communities. That has to include our hard-pressed key workers who will benefit from the Council's provision of both social rent housing and intermediate rent homes-in Westminster. Without our key workers living here, this is not a fairer Westminster.

The Meeting ended at 9.40pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____

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