



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Cabinet

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** Committee held on **Monday 30th October, 2023**, Rooms 18.01 & 18.02 - 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Adam Hug (Chair), Tim Roca, Aicha Less, Nafsika Butler-Thalassis, Geoff Barraclough, David Boothroyd, Paul Dimoldenberg, Liza Begum, Matt Noble and Cara Sanquest

Also Present: Stuart Love, Bernie Flaherty, James Green, Ezra Wallace, Frances Martin, Gerald Almeroth, Sarah Warman, Sarah Newman

Apologies for Absence: None

1 WELCOME

Cllr Adam Hug welcomed people to the meeting and noted that due to technical issues experienced, there would not be a live stream of the meeting and the minutes would serve as the record

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

3 MINUTES

Cllr Adam Hug, with the consent of the Members present, agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th September were a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4 REVIEW OF HOUSING DELIVERY GOVERNANCE AND ARRANGEMENTS

Cllr Hug introduced the item and invited Cllr Noble to speak to the report.

Cllr Noble noted that this item was the product of an extensive programme of work, with the work undertaken by 31Ten carried out in tandem with the Future of

Westminster Commission, as well as he and the officer team looking at the existing delivery programme.

Cllr Noble noted that the recommendations are brief and that most are either already in place or being taken forward, and where they aren't they were not suitable for Westminster and its existing policies.

Cllr Noble noted that the new governance arrangements will ensure a more strategic vision and bring together stakeholders from across WCC.

James Green highlighted that the key point of the report is a collaborative approach to decision making with a strategic board to run monthly and will give opportunities to Members to contribute to key projects and decisions.

James Green noted that the recommendations were already strongly aligned to work the Council is doing and only a few were a surprise and had since been adopted over the past year, which gave confidence that the Council is doing the right thing to deliver as much affordable housing as possible.

James Green advised that the proposal is to explore a housing working group that sits across the wholly owned subsidiaries and is in essence a joint board that will report into the Shareholder Committee.

Cllr Barraclough highlighted the upcoming work the Council is undertaking which will back up the drive for affordable housing with changing to planning policies and City Plan revisions in the new year.

Cllr Barraclough noted that the initial draft of the Housing Needs Assessment indicated that the majority of new housing provision should be affordable. The final document will be published in the New Year. He added that officers were also working on new policies covering retrofitting and that these would support the building of new affordable housing.

Cllr Hug agreed that the new governance model will help the Council achieve its ambitions.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the following recommendations:

1. Note the findings of the 31Ten report and the Council's proposals for developing their recommendations.
2. Approve the creation of a Member-led Housing Supply Strategic Board (HSSB).
3. Note the proposals for changes to Westminster Builds Board which will be tabled at a future shareholder committee for approval.

5 CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN COMMUNITY ASSETS

Cllr Hug introduced the item and invited Ezra Wallace, Director of Policy and Projects, to speak to the report.

Ezra Wallace noted that voluntary and community sector organisations (VCSOs) play an essential part in contributing to our communities, and the Fairer Westminster strategy is committed to creating an equitable city in which community and voluntary sector organisations are empowered to succeed.

Ezra Wallace highlighted the four investment and acquisition principles which the policy and guidance is based on which are strategic fit with the Fairer Westminster Strategy; additionality – capital investments should lead to positive and lasting change in the community; value for money; and affordability.

Ezra Wallace noted that the policy and supplementary guidance will allow the support the growth and future resilience of VCSOs.

Cllr Butler-Thalassis noted that it was a good policy need quality premises, and this strategy will help them achieve that.

Cllr Boothroyd agreed that as ward councillors and various activity in community, VCS and various groups are essential in providing services and it is reasonable that the council should want to support that so they can continue to deliver.

Cllr Boothroyd noted that there is a lot of existing demand, and the policy is needed to ensure the Council can step in – but only when it's right that it should do so e.g., have the budget.

Cllr Barraclough welcomed the policy and noted that the Council frequently invests in community assets. The new policy framework will allow the Council to respond more quickly to requests from VCS organisations.

Cllr Hug concluded that it was good to have finalised and the Council can play an active role in communities to shape the environment.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the following recommendations:

1. Approve the adoption of the Discretionary Capital Funding Policy
2. Approve the adoption of the Property Investment Strategy Supplementary Guidance
3. Delegate authority to make minor future administrative and drafting amendments to both policies to the Executive Director of Innovation and Change in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Resources.

6 VCS CORE FUNDING

Cllr Hug introduced the report and invited Cllr Butler-Thalassis to speak to the report.

Cllr Butler-Thalassis noted that she was extremely proud that this was happening, and it was the right way to support the sector, highlighting that through providing core funding organisations can build capacity to fundraise and bring in further funding.

Cllr Butler-Thalassis highlighted that £150k is to support fundraising activity, and that a three-year programme gives stability to a sector that supports the most vulnerable and advice services.

Cllr Hug noted his thanks to Cllr Butler-Thalassis and others who have made this happen.

Ezra Wallace noted that the policy was again about building resilience in the voluntary sector, highlighting that the groups hardest to get funding and most at risk are Global Majority and that this is important part of wider package.

Cllr Roca noted his support for the policy.

Cllr Hug concluded noting his support.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approved the following recommendations:

1. Approve the creation of the Westminster VCS Core Funding Programme 2023 – 2026
2. Note the allocation of £3.3 million from Council reserves for the Westminster VCS Core Funding Programme 2023 – 2026
3. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Innovation and Change [following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Voluntary Sector] to award grants.

The Meeting ended at 7.00 pm

CH AIRMAN: _____

DATE _____