



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Westminster Scrutiny Commission

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Westminster Scrutiny Commission** held on **Wednesday 1 July 2020 at 6.30pm**, via TEAMS.

Members Present: Councillors Karen Scarborough (Chairman), Iain Bott, Nafsika Butler-Thalassiss, Tony Devenish, Adam Hug and Gotz Mohrindra.

Also Present: Councillor Rachael Robathan (Leader of the Council), Stuart Love (Chief Executive), Aaron Hardy (Policy and Scrutiny Manager) and Sarah Craddock (Senior Committee and Governance Officer).

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 There were no changes to the membership.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meetings held on 10 July 2019 and 16 April 2020 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

4 THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

4.1 Councillor Rachael Robathan (Leader of the Council) provided a verbal update and responded to questions on matters of corporate interest, which included:

- the success of the Council's three emergency Lockdown priorities: maintaining frontline services for vulnerable residents, maintaining the effective running of Westminster and utilising the huge community spirit by creating Westminster Connects.
- the implementation of the Movement Strategy which allows people to move around Westminster safely.

- the implementation of the Hospitality Strategy to help the industry reopen whilst maintaining the right balance for residents and increasing the number of City Inspectors in the West End.
- the success of accommodating rough sleepers and providing them with wrap around care, accommodation pathways and jobs.
- the possibility of a second Lockdown in Westminster and the new London wide co-ordinator role introduced to manage local London Lockdowns.
- the Government's 'Build Build Build' Programme and the delivery of affordable housing.
- the significant financial impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Council with an updated budget going to the November Council meeting.

4.2 The Leader of the Council explained how the Westminster Connects Model could continue with strong connections with the voluntary sector. She further explained how the Renewal Team had been established to support the recovery and renewal of Westminster's communities which included promoting and boosting Westminster's economy and the continuation of improving the air quality in the City.

4.3 With regards to Gender and BAME pay gap, the Chief Executive explained that there had been progress increasing the number of women in senior leadership roles and the proportion of women paid in the upper quartile had increased. Work had also been undertaken regarding intersectionality. The Committee noted that more qualitative information was needed to understand why two thirds of the leavers in the year were women and exit interviews and focus groups would be introduced to understand any underlying issues that needed to be addressed. The Chief Executive further explained that the organisation had used its diversity data to ensure equal access on all its manager development programmes and fairness in annual pay award step-up process.

4.4 **ACTIONS:**

1. That the latest Tier 2 COVID-19 data regarding Westminster from Government/Public Health be sent to Members.
2. That the Leader/Chief Executive send updated details on what the Council was doing for businesses as part of the economic recovery.

5. ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT

- 5.1 The Commission received the Annual Scrutiny Report covering the period May 2018 to November 2019.
- 5.2 The Commission noted the decision taken not to update the annual report to include the first six months of 2020 to avoid disrupting the annual reporting cycle. The Commission further noted that there had also been several changes to the structure of scrutiny in 2020 and it was considered clearer to present these in a separate annual report.
- 5.3 The Commission welcomed the Annual Scrutiny Report and requested that any outstanding Actions from the previous meetings be completed.
- 5.4 **ACTION:** That the details of the formulas and indicators of “need” in respect of the funding structure for local authorities be provided to Members.
- 5.5 **RESOLVED:** That the Annual Scrutiny Report covering the period May 2018 to November 2019 be approved.

6. 2020-2021 Work Programme

- 6.1 The Commission discussed their future Work Programme and requested that it would be useful if any topical issues that they may not necessarily be aware of be included in future reports. Members further discussed the possibility of holding the next meeting of the Commission in early October.
- 6.2 Members further requested that the Commission invite stakeholders, community groups and businesses to their meetings, either in person or via the use of technology such as TEAMS, to ensure better co-ordination of work throughout Westminster and to avoid potential duplication.
- 6.3 The Commission supported receiving future reports on the progress being made in implementing the recovery and renewal of Westminster’s communities.
- 6.4 **RESOLVED:**
1. That any topical issues that Members may not necessarily be aware of be included in future reports.
 2. That a report setting out ways to increase public participation in Policy and Scrutiny committee meetings by using technology be submitted to the next meeting.
 3. That the Commission receive reports updating them on the progress being made in implementing the recovery and renewal of Westminster’s communities.

7. TERMINATION OF MEETING

7.1 The meeting ended at 7.47pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____