

CROYDON COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday 1st July 2013 at 6.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR YVETTE HOPLEY - PRESIDING.

Councillors Arram, Avis, Ayres, Bains, Bashford, Bee, Bonner, Butler, Buttinger, Chowdhury, Clouder, Collins, Cromie, Cummings, Fisher, Fitze, Fitzsimons, Flemming, Gatland, George-Hilley, Gray, Godfrey, Hale, Hall, Harris, Hay-Justice, Hoar, Hollands, Jewitt, Kabir, Kellest, B Khan, S Khan, Kyeremeh, Lawlor, Lenton, Letts, Mansell, Marshall, D Mead, M Mead, Mohan, Neal, Newman, O'Connell, Osland, Parker, Pearson, Perry, H Pollard, T Pollard, Quadir, Rajendran, G Ryan, P Ryan, Selva, Scott, Shahul-Hameed, Slipper, Smith, Speakman, Thomas, Watson, Wentworth, Winborn, Woodley and Wright.

Absent: Councillors Chatterjee, Gray and Jewitt.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (agenda item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Richard Chatterjee, Donna Gray and Karen Jewitt.

2 MINUTES (agenda item 2)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 20th May 2013 be signed as a correct record.

3 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST (agenda item 3)

All Members of the Council confirmed that their interests as listed in their Declaration of Interests Forms were accurate and up-to-date.

4 URGENT BUSINESS (agenda item 4)

None

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS (agenda item 5)

The Mayor announced that following requests from community groups, residents and the press for more up to date information about the work of the Mayor, she had set up a Twitter account (@MayorOfCroydon). The Mayor thanked officers (Margot Rohan, Democratic and Legal Services) for her

assistance in setting up this account.

The Mayor reported that the next two charity events were
2nd July – Aspect of Opera which was sold out and
17th August – Summer at Heathfield and all were welcome to attend.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Fisher advised that Councillor Margaret Mead had an announcement to make.

Councillor Margaret Mead advised that she had great pleasure in presenting the MJ Award for 'Award for Innovation in Social Care'. This award was for the staff in adult social services lead by the Executive Director Hannah Miller. 43 authorities competed for this prestigious award, 6 were shortlisted and Councillor Mead was pleased to announce that Croydon's team won. The award was for a number of different projects including, managing demand, improving outcomes, reablement, helping people to stay at home, carers support work, preventing hospital admission and also acknowledged Croydon Care Solutions the Council's local authority trading company and the POP bus. Councillor Mead thanked and congratulated all the staff involved saying that their work had now been recognised nationally.

Councillor Jane Avis added her congratulations on behalf of the Labour to the staff on winning the award.

6 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (agenda item 6)

Under the provisions of the Council Procedure Rules (Croydon Constitution, Part 4A), written questions had been submitted and written replies were given by the relevant Cabinet Member. These were placed in the Chamber and Public Gallery, oral supplementary questions were asked by members of the public and oral replies were provided by the relevant Cabinet Members.

Oral Supplementary questions were asked by:

PQ031-13 Mr J Thompson
PQ036-13 Mr J Cartwright
PQ037-13 Mr M Samuel
PQ040-13 Mr A Rendle
PQ043-13 Mr D White
PQ044-13 Mr R Canning
PQ046-13 Mr D O'Donnell
PQ047-13 Ms J Prince
PQ048-13 Mr P Sowan

In each case there was an oral reply from the relevant Cabinet Member.

[Note the written Public Questions and written replies can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/agenda]

7 PETITIONS TO BE PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS TO COUNCIL
(agenda item 7)

Petitions were presented formally by Councillors as follows in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

- a) A petition presented by Councillor Maria Gatland on behalf of residents regarding of Junction Road, South Croydon.
- b) A petition presented by Councillor Maggie Mansell on behalf of residents regarding of Tylecroft Mews.

These petitions were referred to the relevant Cabinet Members. In accordance with the Council's Constitution the reply to this petition will be included in the agenda for the next Council meeting.

8 RESPONSES TO PETITIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL (agenda item 8)
There was no business under this item

9 BUSINESS REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY & STRATEGIC OVERVIEW COMMITTEE (agenda item 9)

Councillor Steve Hollands, Chair of Scrutiny & Strategic Overview Committee, presented a written report to Council summarising the proceedings of that Committee since the last ordinary meeting of the Council, including matters considered by the Scrutiny Sub-Committees.

The following Councillors asked questions
Councillor Buttinger – regarding work programme for the coming year and input from outside organisations.
Councillor H Pollard – regarding Call-ins and whether they were constructive.

In each case the Chair of the relevant committee gave an oral reply.

Council **RESOLVED** that the report of the Scrutiny & Strategic Overview Committee be noted.

10 AUDIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013
(agenda item 10)

The Council received a report on the work of the Audit Advisory Committee during 2012/13.

RESOLVED

- a) That the Annual Report be noted; and
- b) That the Council's Constitution be amended to increase the number of independent, non-voting members of the Audit Advisory Committee from one to two.

11 COUNCILLORS' OPEN SESSION ON WARD MATTERS (agenda item 11)

Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed speaking about **Broad Green Ward** a deprived ward in the north of the borough, where residents and businesses have concerns about a number of issues. Crime and anti-social behaviour, residents being afraid to go out in case their homes were burgled, vehicle crime and fly tipping were all concerns. She went on to speak about the campaign for a police station to be located in London Road and the need for a mobile CCTV unit to be used to address these issues rather than traffic enforcement. She also raised the issue of overcrowding families in temporary accommodation and the impact of benefit cuts and the bedroom tax were having on the poorest families in Croydon.

Councillor Jeet Bains spoke about **Coulsdon West Ward** and the redevelopment opportunities that were coming to the ward and the borough. He spoke about the Coulsdon Masterplan and the consultation that had taken place, the Cane Hill development where 650 new homes were to be built, as well as the developments in Lime Green Road and the Red Lion car park. These developments would be a major boost in homes, infrastructure and school and he spoke of his delight at the community engagement with the Council.

Councillor Terry Lenton spoke about **Coulsdon East Ward** and an article written by Councillor Chris Wright in the Croydon Advertiser that extolled the virtue of the many self-help groups that flourish in Coulsdon East. She went on to say that Cllr Wright had been too modest to say that he had started many of the groups and was the driving force behind them. He was a founding member of the Friends of Bradmore Green Pond, a long established group that help keep the pond free of invasive weeds. These self-help groups work with many different partners to achieve remarkable results, examples of these include The Green Flag Award for maintenance of Farthing Downs in partnership with the City of London with the friends of Farthing Downs, Happy Valley Green Flag is volunteers working with the Downs Project supported by surrounding local authorities. The Friends of Croydon Copse have been helped by London Wildlife to clear the area so that the ancient meadow can now be seen. She went on to say that the Council couldn't afford to maintain Malpit Lane Bowling Green but again local residents have helped to save the Bowling Green. In summing up Cllr Lenton thanked Rachel Millard of the Croydon Advertiser for her support in positive reporting of the Ward.

Councillor Mark Watson spoke about **Addiscombe Ward** where he has lived for 20 years; it is an area with good transport links, and good sense of community spirit, attractive Victorian terraced houses that whilst not large provided good space and gardens. He went on to speak about issues of concern such as poor and expensive housing, inappropriate developments, street cleaning and increased traffic on residential roads. He went on to say that developments need to be in keeping with the area and more social housing was needed. The population of the Ward has increased and the sub dividing of the houses had an adverse impact on residents. He spoke of a need to have a register of landlords that would ensure decent quality of homes. He also spoke about the cluttered streetscene due to the number of recycling and refuse bins where properties had been subdivided, poor street lighting and street cleaning.

Councillor Jason Cummings spoke about **Heathfield Ward** the largest in area in Croydon and covers many areas of parkland. From the view point at Shirley Hills the view across Croydon can see across Croydon and far beyond. He went on to speak about the difficulties facing the Country and the borough but said that Shirley residents had much to be optimistic about. The view from Shirley Hills encompasses much of London and its iconic buildings, closer to home the tram runs through Heathfield and the Hammerson/Westfield development will bring new jobs and houses. Progress in Croydon has already been made with the new bridge at East Croydon station in place and Bernard Weatherill House. Future projects include the refurbishment of Fairfield Hall and rebuilding of sports facilities and new schools give hope and optimising to residents.

Following each Ward matter the Cabinet Members replied orally to matters raised.

12 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules (Part 4A 3.34) the recommendations from Corporate Services Committee relating to the revised Tenders and Contracts Regulation were deferred for debate (agenda item 15) Written notice had been received from Cllrs Fitzsimons, Letts and Hall who moved a referral debate.

13 BUSINESS REPORT OF THE LEADER INCORPORATING COUNCILLORS' WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS

The Leader presented the Business Report summarising the proceedings of the Cabinet since the last meeting of the Council, including matters considered by Cabinet Committees.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules, written questions had been submitted in advance by Council Members and written replies had been given by the relevant Cabinet Members. The questions and answers had been placed in the Chamber. Supplementary questions were asked by Members of the Council and replies were given by the relevant Cabinet Members.

Each Cabinet Member was asked in turn if they had anything to add to their report. Questions were then invited from the Chamber for each Cabinet Member who replied orally to the questions on specific paragraphs or submitted questions.

The following Members asked questions on the Business Report

Cabinet Member

Leader – Councillors Newman, Kellett, Bonner, Arram, Bee, Neal, Hall, Cummings, Butler Woodley and Godfrey

Councillor D Mead – Councillors Chatterjee, H Pollard, Mansell, Parker and Chowdhury

Councillor T Pollard - Councillor Speakman, Godfrey, Kellett, Smith and Bee.

Councillor Perry – Councillors Gatland and George-Hilley

Councillor M Mead - Councillors Avis, Marshall, Mansell, Buttinger, Hall and Lenton

Councillor O'Connell – Councillors Hall, Neal and Osland
Councillor Thomas – Councillors Arram, Collins, Kellett, Avis, Kyeremeh, Cummings and Avis.

At 8.55 the Leader moved a procedural motion 1.11.9 to move to the next item of business. This was seconded and agreed by Council.

The recommendations contained in the business report were put and it was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the business report of the Leader and Cabinet;
2. Approve the Cabinet recommendations set out in the Leaders Business Report
 - Children and Young Peoples Plan refresh for 2013-16 and
3. Note the rotation of the 'batting order' for Cabinet Members questions in the business report.

14 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE DEFERRED FOR DEBATE

In accordance with Council procedure rules (Part 4A 3.49-3.51) the recommendations contained in the Corporate Services Committee report Revised Tenders and Contracts Regulations were debated.

The following Councillors spoke for the deferral of the recommendations:

Councillors Fitzsimons opened the debate saying that procurement is an essential function of local government and over the last few years services have been outsourced by both political groups. This document is one of Croydon most important documents as it has an impact on all parts of the Council and all parts of its community. He went on to speak about the principles outlined in the document but that the range and scope are extremely limited and miss out vital principles that should be included. He then outlined issues that should be included such as Croydon's commitment to be a good employer, staff to get a London living wage and reasonable terms and conditions, green procurement, and that the environmental issues were outdated. Some good things in the document include social value and a new commitment to community right to challenge are supported.

Councillor Letts in seconding the referral said that the changes in regulations were a missed opportunity to introduce ground breaking approach in which contracts were awarded on the basis that services purchased were of significant social value with the employees receiving a London living wage.

Councillor Hall said there was much to welcome in the report but that is was not fit for purpose. He went on to say that having to register for Contracts on the portal using the internet can be difficult and not user friendly and suggested that the Regulations need more work to empower local communities.

The following Councillors spoke against the deferral of the recommendations, Councillor Buttinger as chair of the Corporate Services Committee expressed her surprise that opposition members had not raised questions about the proposed Regulations at the meeting or voted against the report.

Councillor Tim Pollard repeated Cllr Buttinger's comments. He said that the Council is a good employer and all staff were on the London living wage, that it was a green council and that the Social value and Commissioning had been through the Cabinet process. He also spoke about the difference in government grants that Croydon receive to Lambeth and was therefore unfair to compare the two boroughs.

Councillor Dudley Mead said that Council, with a limited time for debate, was not the place to discuss the report and that the opposition should have raised their concerns at the Corporate Services Committee meeting where time is not limited. He went on to say that procurement and the Tenders & Contracts regulations were statutory based documents and thanked officers for their hard work over many months in bringing the document to committee.

Following the debate the motion to defer the recommendations back to Corporate Services Committee was put and lost. Council **RESOLVED** to approve the revisions to the Tenders and Contracts Regulations.

16 MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

Two motions were submitted for debate in accordance with Council Procedure Rules as follows:

1. Motion for Debate

Proposed by Councillor Clare George-Hilley
Seconded by Councillor Mike Fisher

"This Council supports the private member's bill to enable a referendum about Britain's membership of the European Union, that is being brought forward by Conservative MP James Wharton and regrets that the Conservative party is the only major party in favour of allowing the public to vote on an in/out referendum."

Councillor George-Hilley opened the debate saying that the EU has transformed into something that is detrimental to this country and that the Conservative Party were saying that people should have a vote on Britain's continued membership. She went on to say that many thought that the country was not getting value for money from the EU and that 75% of our law is dictated by a non-elected EU.

An Amendment was moved by Councillor Tony Newman and Seconded by Councillor Jane Avis as follows:

After – this Council **DELETE** 'supports' and **INSERT** 'notes'

DELETE everything after 'the only major party' and **INSERT** 'playing party politics with the jobs and livelihoods of 3.5 million Britain's.'

The amended motion read:

"This Council notes the private members bill to enable a referendum about Britain's membership of the European Union, that is being brought forward by Conservative MP James Wharton and regrets that the Conservative Party is the only major party playing party politics with the jobs and livelihoods of 3.5 million Britain's."

Councillor Newman in moving the amendment he said that the original motion had little reference to Croydon and that withdrawing from the EU would cost jobs across the country.

Councillor Woodley speaking for the amendment said she was astonished that the motion was about Europe and not Croydon when local issues such as youth unemployment, food banks, street cleaning, resolving the housing problem and the proposed incinerator could have been discussed.

Councillor Parker speaking for the original motion said that Europe was not always unifying but that this motion was an opportunity to send a message that the people of Croydon wanted a say on the future of Europe.

Councillor Avis seconded the amended motion but said the debate should be about issues such as rising child poverty and payday loans. She welcomed Croatia into the EU.

Councillor Fisher speaking for the original motion spoke of the sixteen thousand new jobs that will be created in Croydon over the next 5 years. He went on to say that opposition didn't talk about the funding to Europe of £7 billion a year, and asked 'why not give the people the democratic right to discuss and vote on the continued membership of the EU.'

Following the debate a show of hands was requested.

The amended motion was **put** and **lost**. For 30, against 32

The original motion was **put** and **carried**.

2. Motion for Debate:

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Collins
Seconded by Councillor Alison Butler

"This Council deplores the filthy state of our streets and Councillor Thomas's 'hands off' approach to the threatened Croydon wide bin collectors strike. We call on Councillor Thomas, if necessary, to leave this chamber and facilitate further talks between the outsourced private contractors and the staff to seek a resolution to this

impending crisis. This Council further supports Labour's policy of paying all our workers a fair and decent living wage."

Councillor Collins opened the debate stating that the bin crisis was built on the arrogance of the Conservative Party not getting involved with a contractor that takes on a public service. He went on to speak about the Veolia reluctance to increase wages and unhappiness of the staff. The dispute was going to ACCAS and if the talks fail then an increase in fly tipping and overflowing bins would be seen across the borough. In summing up he said that when labour return to power in 2014 the contract would be revised.

Councillor Thomas, speaking against the motion said that it was an interesting debate motion and asked if the opposition were expecting the strike to be called. He went on to say that the dispute was between Veolia and their work force and the proposed increase was 2% rise this year, 2% next year and better sick terms, and only 7% of the workforce voted for a strike. It was good news that both sides were meeting but he pointed out that the union has no mandate to strike. In summing up he said that Labour should be condemning strike action.

Councillor Shafi Khan speaking for the motion stated that it was people who raised the issues of street cleaning, bulky waste charges and an increase in fly tipping that were affecting all parts of the borough.

Councillor Speakman speaking against the motion said that the strike action had been called off and referred to previous union action and the effect on the country. He went on to say that everyone supported a call for proper and decent wages

Councillor O'Connell speaking against the motion pointed out that Labour had set the Veolia contract. He repeated that Veolia had made an offer of 2% and that the union has no had a mandate to strike. He questioned if fly tipping being was reported by opposition members to the correct places.

Councillor Butler in seconding the motion acknowledged that UNITE was made up of 1.5m working and they did contribute to the Labour party. She went on to say that recycling had been introduced by Labour and that nobody wanted to see a strike. However Croydon residents pay their Council Tax for the collection of waste and the Council has a moral responsibility to employ a fairly paid workforce.

Following the debate the motion was **put and lost**.

17. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting terminated at 22:12.

Full copies of the Council agenda, reports and appendices are available in the Members Library and on the Council website at www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/minutes/committees