

MINUTES OF THE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 18 May 2011
(7:00 - 7:36 pm)

PRESENT

Councillor M Hussain	Councillor J Davis
Councillor J L Alexander	Councillor S Ashraf
Councillor A Gafoor Aziz	Councillor R Baldwin
Councillor G Barratt	Councillor P Burgon
Councillor L Butt	Councillor E Carpenter
Councillor J Channer	Councillor J Cleo
Councillor H J Collins	Councillor R Douglas
Councillor C Geddes	Councillor N S S Gill
Councillor R Gill	Councillor D Hunt
Councillor A S Jamu	Councillor I S Jamu
Councillor E Kangethe	Councillor E Keller
Councillor G Letchford	Councillor M A McCarthy
Councillor J E McDermott	Councillor M McKenzie MBE
Councillor D S Miles	Councillor M Mullane
Councillor J Ogungbose	Councillor T Perry
Councillor B Poulton	Councillor H S Rai
Councillor A K Ramsay	Councillor L A Reason
Councillor C Rice	Councillor L Rice
Councillor D Rodwell	Councillor T Saeed
Councillor A Salam	Councillor L A Smith
Councillor S Tarry	Councillor D Twomey
Councillor G M Vincent	Councillor J Wade
Councillor L R Waker	Councillor P T Waker
Councillor M M Worby	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor S Alasia	Councillor L Couling
Councillor E O Obasohan	Councillor J R White

1. Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair

Assembly **agreed** the appointment of Councillor N Gill as Chair and Councillor Kangethe as Deputy Chair of the Assembly.

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes (30 March 2011)

The minutes of the Assembly meeting held on 30 March 2011 were confirmed as correct.

4. **Appointments to the Political Structure and Other Bodies 2011/2012**

Assembly received a report from the Chief Executive on the appointment of Members to the various elements of the political structure and other internal and external bodies.

Assembly noted:

1. the tabled versions of Appendices A, B, D and E which set out the proposed appointments; and
2. the proposal that membership of the Health & Wellbeing Board include Councillors R Gill and McCarthy as the Portfolio Holders for Children & Education and Regeneration respectively, as well as Councillor Worby for her expertise in health issues.

Assembly **agreed**:

1. the membership of the various Council meetings (Appendix A);
2. the appointment of the Chairs and Deputy Chairs and Lead and Deputy Lead Members (Appendix B);
3. the appointment of the statutory Co-opted Members (Appendix C);
4. the appointment of the representatives on various internal and external bodies (Appendix D); and
5. the appointment of the Trustees of Local Charities (Appendix E)

Assembly noted a number of vacancies referred to in the various appendices, the filling of which will be reported to a future meeting.

5. **King William Street Quarter and Eastern End Thames View Disposal and Delivery Options**

The Divisional Director for Legal and Democratic Services (DDLDS) advised the Assembly that the amended Financial Rules that had been approved at the Assembly meeting in February 2011 contained a provision that in future all land sales and disposals would be subject to Assembly approval. However, according to Regulations under the Local Government Act 2000, the DDLDS advised that these are Executive (Cabinet) functions and should be exercised by the Cabinet. In addition, this followed best practice advice from the Audit Commission.

The Assembly acknowledged this advice and **agreed** to amend the Financial Rules to the extent that all land sales and disposals should remain the subject of Cabinet approval and that the Council Constitution be amended accordingly.

As a consequence of the above decision and on the advice of the DDLDS, Assembly **agreed** it was not necessary to consider the report on the King William Street Quarter and Eastern End Thames View Disposal and Delivery Options, which was therefore withdrawn.

6. **Council Constitution**

Assembly received a report from the Chief Executive on proposed amendments to the Council Constitution.

Assembly **agreed** the proposed changes to the Council Constitution to take immediate effect.

Assembly noted that Part D of the Constitution (the Rules) was being updated and that approval to the relevant changes was anticipated to be reported to Assembly in July 2011.

7. Annual Report of the Cabinet

Assembly received and noted the annual report of the Cabinet presented by the Leader of the Council.

8. Annual Report of the Development Control Board

Assembly received and noted the annual report of the Development Control Board presented by the Chair, Councillor I S Jamu.

Councillor Jamu thanked the Members of the DCB for their hard work and support, and thanked the Divisional Director of Regeneration for guidance provided throughout the year.

9. Annual Report of the Licensing and Regulatory Board

Assembly received and noted the annual report of the Licensing and Regulatory Board presented by the Chair, Councillor L Waker.

Councillor Waker thanked the Members of the Board for their input and officers from Legal and Democratic Services for their support and advice.

10. Annual Report of the Personnel Board

Assembly received and noted the annual report of the Personnel Board presented by the Chair, Councillor Burgon.

Councillor Burgon thanked Masuma Ahmed, the Democratic Services Officer, for her hard work and support to the Board throughout the year.

11. Annual Report of the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee

Assembly received and noted the annual report of the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee presented by the Chair, Councillor Saeed.

Councillor Saeed thanked the Members of the PAASC for their hard work and support, and thanked the Divisional Director of Audit and Risk and Christopher Owens, the Democratic Services Officer for the guidance they had provided to the Committee throughout the year.

Referring to a question as to the level of debt write-offs in Housing Services and the actions to reduce it, the Cabinet Member for Housing advised Assembly that whilst acknowledging that the levels were a concern, officers were working closely with tenants to help them to avoid getting into rent arrears in the first place.

12. Annual Scrutiny Report

Assembly received and noted the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report presented by the Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

The Lead Member for the Health and Adult Services Select Committee, Councillor Twomey, advised Assembly that the last year had been challenging but ultimately successful for the Committee and that in the forthcoming year it would continue to:

- scrutinise health services
- consult with local residents
- fight for the East Dagenham Community Hospital
- monitor progress of the Barking Birthing Centre
- fight any reduction in GPs' out of hours services
- oppose the closure of the Broad Street Walk-in Centre
- challenge proposed A&E cuts

Councillor Twomey would report back to the Assembly following the report of the Independent Re-Configuration Panel to the Secretary of State for Health, which was expected on 22 July 2011.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care thanked the Committee for the work it had done. She further thanked the Committee and the Assembly for their continued commitment to fight the cuts proposed by NHS management.

13. Annual Report of the Standards Committee

Assembly received and noted the Standards Committee Annual Report presented by the Independent Chair of the Committee, Mr Kevin Madden.

Mr Madden highlighted two key issues in the report:

1. The significant reduction in the number of complaints that had been considered by the Committee in the last year, which reflected well on the Council.
2. The proposed legislative change which would abolish the present standards regime. He stated that the Committee had discussed the draft legislation and had found it difficult to imagine the Council operating without some form of code of conduct for Members and felt that the role of the Independent Members had given members of the public confidence in the Council's arrangements for maintaining high standards of conduct. The Committee hoped to take an active part in the consultation that the Monitoring Officer would undertake with Members prior to the legislation becoming effective.

Mr Madden thanked the Members and Independent Members of the Committee for the support they had given him since he had been appointed as Chair, and further thanked Nina Clark, the former Monitoring Officer, Winston Brown, the Legal Partner, and Margaret Freeman, the Democratic Services Officer, for the support and guidance that they had given to the Committee. He stated that the Committee looked forward to working with Tasnim Shawkat, the new Monitoring Officer.

14. Motions

None

15. Leader's Question Time

None

16. General Question Time

None

17. *Councillor Louise Couling

Assembly received a report from the Chief Executive seeking a dispensation in accordance with the provisions of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 for Councillor Couling in respect of non-attendance at designated Council meetings due to ill health.

Assembly **agreed** to grant Councillor Couling a dispensation for a period of four months and that, subject to her not being able to attend a qualifying meeting in the intervening period and her state of health at that time, a further report would be presented to the Assembly at the meeting scheduled for 14 September 2011.

(* The Chair agreed that this item could be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.)