

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **JOINT CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **WEDNESDAY, 19TH OCTOBER, 2022** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 2, Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT

Councillors Awale Olad (Chair), Linda Chung, Jenny Headlam-Wells, Samata Khatoon, Awale Olad and Lorraine Revah

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED

THAT Councillor Awale Olad be appointed as Chair for this meeting only.

2. GUIDANCE ON HYBRID MEETINGS

RESOLVED

THAT the guidance on hybrid meetings be noted.

3. APOLOGIES

None, all Members of the committee were present.

4. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

No declarations were made.

5. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)

There were no deputations.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced,

‘In addition to the rights by law that the public and press have to record this meeting, I would like to remind everyone that this meeting is being broadcast live by the Council to the Internet and can be viewed on our website for twelve months after the meeting. After that time, webcasts are archived and can be made available upon request.

If you have asked to address the meeting, you are deemed to be consenting to having your contributions recorded and broadcast, including video when switched on, and to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.’

The Chair also announced that item 11 would be considered before item 10.

7. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

8. TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED

THAT the terms of reference for this meeting be noted.

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED

THAT the minutes of the meeting on the 3rd March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

10. UPDATE ON THE STATE OF THE BOROUGH REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Strategy and Design.

The proposal for the State of the Borough report had been discussed with the Council when the Leader had presented her Annual Statement in March of this year. This report to the scrutiny committee Chairs provided an update on what the State of

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the Borough Report would look at. The first Camden State of the Borough report would be published in March 2023 and presented to Full Council in April.

The Joint Chairs of Scrutiny welcomed the report and agreed that all the scrutiny committees would consider the State of the Borough report before it was published. The Chairs particularly welcomed the opportunity to hear from residents about what it was like to live in the borough and their experiences of Camden's services.

The following points were made in response to questions from the scrutiny committee Chairs during their consideration of the report:

- That there would be a soft launch of the 'Good Life Camden' project (paragraph 1.9 of the report) in March, alongside the State of the Borough report.
- There would be a multidimensional approach to gathering information from residents about their experiences of living in the borough.
- That because this committee met twice a year, the Scrutiny Committee Chairs would need to consider how best to progress the work on hearing from residents.

RESOLVED –

- i) THAT the further development of the State of the Borough report and process be noted,
- ii) THAT the State of the Borough report would be considered at each of the individual scrutiny committee meetings in February 2023,
- iii) THAT the scrutiny committee Chairs would explore how the State of the Borough report could inform the development of scrutiny committee work programming.

11. JOINT CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - JOINT WORK PLANNING AND MID-YEAR REFLECTION SESSION

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Strategy and Design that set out the work programmes of the individual committees during this municipal year so far. The report included the upcoming issues planned for each of the scrutiny committees and the current plans for their scrutiny panels. A brief overview of the emerging programme of work in response to the cost of living crisis was also provided for the joint chairs to consider how this could best be supported and scrutinised across their committees.

During consideration of the report the Scrutiny Committee Chairs discussed the following points:

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- That the Health and Adult Social Scrutiny Committee would welcome opportunities to hear from residents at their meetings. It was important to capture their experiences, the reality of their lives and their views about the services offered in the borough. Themed meetings with a specific focus was an option that could be explored.
- Analysing data that measured resident engagement levels and who used services would be a useful source of information.
- That the Housing Scrutiny Committee would welcome the opportunity to hear from residents and have more engagement from them at meetings.
- There were some concerns from the scrutiny committee chairs about the training for new Councillors and questions about what measures were in place to support and assist members in their scrutiny roles.
- That the scrutiny committee chairs valued the attendance and contributions of the Executive Directors and directors at their meetings
- What was Camden doing as a Council on a list of issues - the Cost of Living Crisis; rising energy prices/providing warm spaces; retro fitting homes; food security for residents struggling to feed themselves and their families. Could we be working more closely with local businesses on these issues? What work was taking place with Transport for London for people struggling with the cost of fares? That all of the scrutiny committees should be considering how the Cost of Living Crisis was impacting the areas within the remit of their committees.

The following information was provided in response to the points raised by the Scrutiny Committee Chairs:

The Peer review of Camden had identified that, there was more that could be done corporately to hear from residents and about their experience of life in the borough. A wide range of work was taking place to address this and bring the voice of residents into decision making. This included work on the Citizen Assembly, Data Charter and a programme of engagement was planned to hear from residents about their experiences of Cost of Living issues. Scrutiny Committee Chairs would need to look at their works plans and how the voice of residents could be incorporated into the work of their committees. There would need to be further consideration of how the committee chairs had oversight of this work.

Work as committee members was a continuing learning experience through case work and there was much to learn about the complexities of the borough and the Council as a large organisation. Refreshing the buddy system that had been put in place for new members could be helpful for members. Also it would be useful to hear from new Members about what further support they needed in their scrutiny committee roles.

With regard to specific questions on retrofitting homes, the cost of living and Transport for London - the last meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Committee had considered a report on the retrofitting of the Council residential properties and officers would be responding to the issues that had been raised. A brief overview of

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the emerging programme of work in response to the Cost of Living Crisis had been included in the report to Joint Chairs and the Cost of Living Crisis would be the themed debate at the next Full Council meeting. The Culture and Environment Committee had scrutinised a great deal of Transport for London's work (TFL) in Camden and holding them to account on road and transport issues across the borough had been a large part of the committee's work programme.

Having reflected on the scrutiny committee activity in 2022/23 to date -

RESOLVED –

THAT the forward plans set out in Table 1 of the report be noted, and that the scrutiny committee chairs would further consider their joint working outside of this meeting on areas for development or training.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END