

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRS

THURSDAY, 28 JULY 2011 AT 6.00 PM
COMMITTEE ROOM 1, TOWN HALL, JUDD STREET, LONDON WC1H 9JE

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MEMBERS

Councillors Meric Apak (L), John Bryant (LD), Jenny Headlam-Wells (L),
Jonathan Simpson (L) and Don Williams (C)

L = Labour, C = Conservative, LD = Liberal Democrat, G = Green

Issued on: 20th July 2011

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRS - 28 JULY 2011

THERE ARE NO PART II REPORTS

AGENDA

Wards

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

To elect a Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

3. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

4. DEPUTATIONS (IF ANY)

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY)

6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

All Wards

To note the terms of reference as follows;

'To discuss the Leader's annual statement to the Council and other relevant cross cutting matters arising from the business of the Cabinet.'

8. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 6)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2010.

9. THE LEADER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT TO FULL COUNCIL

All Wards
(Pages 7 - 12)

Report of the Leader of the Council.

To consider the Leader of the Council's Annual Statement to Full Council.

The Leader of the Council made his Annual Statement to Full Council

on 27th June 2011. The attached Statement sets out - in the context of the future financial challenges - the administration's thinking for the year ahead, and the values it intends to work by.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

AGENDA ENDS

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THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **JOINT CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY, 7TH OCTOBER 2010** at 6.30 p.m. in the Committee Room 2, Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Meric Apak (Chair)
Councillor John Bryant
Councillor Lorraine Revah
Councillor Don Williams

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Nash Ali – Leader of the Council
Councillor Angela Mason – Deputy Leader of the Council

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED –

THAT Councillor Meric Apak be elected as Chair of the Committee for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Councillor Sean Birch and Councillor John Bryant for lateness. Councillor Angela Mason apologised as she had to leave the meeting early.

3. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

4. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There was none.

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE JOINT CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED –

THAT the Terms of Reference of the Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee be noted.

8. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2009 be agreed.

9. THE LEADER'S ANNUAL STATEMENT TO FULL COUNCIL

Consideration was given to a report of the Leader of the Council.

Councillor Nash Ali, Leader of the Council, directed the Committee to the contents of his annual statement, made to Full Council on 28th June 2010, and added the following key points:

- The council had now ended the sale of council homes to private speculators.
- A new approach would be taken by the authority in considering applying the London Living Wage when a new contract was awarded, if appropriate.
- A successful Green Summit had been held on 17th July 2010, which announced the provision of a green communities fund to help communities to take action to deliver environmental sustainable projects and to work with the council on these matters.
- Restored the funding for UK on line which would help people gain better and simpler access to council services on line.
- The authority was one of the first in the country to place a record of all of its expenditure over £500 on line so this information could be viewed by anyone.
- Members had started looking into the groundbreaking approach of possibly sharing the council's Chief Executive, a senior management team, and services with the London Borough of Islington.
- Arising from the Government's proposed public spending cuts, the authority had started the process of considering how it would reduce its public expenditure and service provision by approximately £80 -100 Million. This would be done through a process of building partnerships with colleagues across the public and private sector and a constructive dialogue with the people of Camden. The council would ensure it sought to follow the guiding principles of protecting front line services; protecting Camden's social mix and

community diversity: protecting the most vulnerable members of the community; and preserving the environment and the core entitlements relating to housing, education, care and employment.

- The authority would have to consider the impact that the changes to housing and child benefit would have on the people of Camden along with the effect on the borough's service provision.
- The council would have to look at the impact of the Government's cut in the funding of the council's Building Schools for the Future programme on the boroughs schools infrastructure.

Councillors Nash Ali and Angela Mason gave the following responses to Members questions:

- The Green Summit had been a very successful event with over a 100 Camden residents and representatives from community groups and organisations participating in interactive workshops and group based discussions. The summit had resulted in the establishment of the Green Community Fund with a budget of £50,000; made proposals to the Local Strategic Partnership to create a sustainability sub-group comprising public, private and third sector partners, to focus on our key strategic sustainability priorities; and to hold a second Green Summit in January 2011 to update and share ideas about developing vision for a sustainable, low carbon borough for Camden.
- The council was also considering the Friends of the Earth target of reducing borough-wide carbon emissions by at least 40% by 2020 and had commissioned a carbon reduction study into the feasibility and implications.
- The ideas from the summit along with the findings from the 40% feasibility study would be considered as part of the revision of Camden's environmental sustainability delivery plan, which would be considered at the second Green Summit in January 2011.
- The council was looking at the options available to it regarding the insulation of its housing stock through the findings of a feasibility study. Resources were not available to extend scheme to private sector dwellings.
- The council would look at achieving the London Living Wage through its contract provision process only on a case by case basis, as legally no such blanket policy could be applied. The Mayor of London and the Greater London Authority both supported the principle of the London Living Wage, though members recognised that they would only move forward on this should it be in the best interests of the borough.
- The council was currently undertaking a joint procurement for its school meals contract with the London Borough of Islington. The impact of applying the London Living Wage to this contract would now be considered, though it was anticipated that by undertaking a joint borough procurement process the cost of the contract to each borough would be less than the existing contract.
- The cabinet would look at a number of different approaches in the way it will need to adjust its expenditure arising from the Government's cuts. This would include undertaking the planned efficiency measures already identified, re-thinking the way services are delivered and the sharing of services with other public sector bodies.

- The savings arising out of the possible sharing of senior managers and services with the London Borough of Islington would take time to be achieved as this was a complicated and sensitive process. A report would be submitted to the cabinet on 20th October that would outline the initial issues that had been identified, with a further report being considered by the cabinet in January 2011 which would contain more detail regarding the way forward. It was hoped that at this stage more information would be available regarding the possible savings that could be made over the next 4 years by undertaking this approach, along with the risks and exit strategy should such an approach be required.
- The final decision on whether or not to proceed with the approach of sharing senior managers and services would only be progressed if it was in the best interests of both Camden and Islington.
- The joint arrangement with the London Borough of Islington was being considered because it offered an opportunity to save resources. The cabinet would look at any such options of working with other public sector agencies that could assist in making savings.
- If such an approach was to be taken forward then senior managers would still be expected to have a clear understanding of the local communities that they serve and local councillors would continue to play a vital role in holding them to account.
- A special joint scrutiny committee meeting would take place on 30th November 2010, when all the scrutiny committees would be able to consider the budget and its implications in detail. The scrutiny committees would have a presentation from the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Director of Finance, members would be able to question them, have a joint discussion before either individually or collectively putting forward comments for the cabinet to consider.
- The Leader agreed to look into whether a health impact assessment should be undertaken as part of the budget making process and would share his views with Members.

ACTION BY: Leader of the Council

- The Leader would discuss with Councillor Pat Callaghan, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health, the progression of the Camden Care Forum and would share his views with Members.

ACTION BY: Leader of the Council

- The cabinet had already started a process of engaging with voluntary sector groups regarding the scale of the possible impact of the required savings. Councillors would play a very active role in helping to get the message about the financial challenge into the community, along with seeking the views of people regarding efficiency measures and where savings could be made. The councils Area Action Groups would play a very important role in helping set up these types of discussions.
- The council would also use the internet as a means of sharing information with the public about what the Government cuts would mean for the Borough.

The Leader would be speaking to people and listening to their views on the way forward for Camden.

- The Leader expressed his concerns regarding the Government’s proposals to cut housing benefit levels and the impact that this would have on the people in receipt of benefit living in Camden. The Council had already made a formal response to the Parliamentary Work and Pensions Committee on this matter. Should the proposals be taken forward then it was likely that some Camden residents would be forced out of the borough, as the price of accommodation in Camden was considerably higher than the proposed level of housing benefit. The people directly affected by these proposals tended to be the most vulnerable members of the community.
- Further work was being done regarding the numbers of people that would be directly affected by the proposals and this information would be shared with Members.

ACTION BY: Finneguela O’Brien

- London Council’s were making representations to the Government to argue for London to be made a special case.
- The Local Strategic Partnership had a role to play in helping shape the delivery of services in the borough.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was none.

The meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END

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THE LEADER'S STATEMENT TO FULL COUNCIL 27 JUNE 2011

Thank You, Mr Mayor

It is a privilege to serve as leader of the Council for a second year. Having been brought up in Camden, I know the life opportunities which are created by our communities, our schools and our Council.

I thank all members of Cabinet – old and new - who have worked so tirelessly to deliver change in the face of the worst financial crisis in Camden's history.

Special thanks to Cllr Jonathan Simpson. Last May, Jonathan was crowned Camden's first "Rock n Roll" mayor. Over the last year, he has established Camden as Britain's unchallenged Rock n Roll capital, and shown us that there is always a "bright side of life"!

We also lost 2 exemplary Councillors last year, Cllr Dave Horan and Cllr Martin Davies. Dave served as a councillor for 20 years, including in my ward, Regent's Park. From Dave I learnt how hard our ward members expect us all to work on their behalf! We should all remember their dedicated record of public service.

Camden's success is based on our enduring values.

- We believe in the dignity and worth of all our residents
- We recognise that the Council works best when it is closest to our communities
- We celebrate the unique social mix in our borough. How together, whatever our class, ethnicity or locality we can work together to make Camden a place where we are all proud to live,
- There is such a thing as community. By the strength of our common endeavour, we can achieve more as a community than we can achieve alone, whether as individuals or as a Council.

Camden's rich fabric of social provision reflects those values. Our services have come under unprecedented attack over the last 12 months. Whilst we have campaigned to protect these services, we have had no choice but to take the painful decisions necessary to secure a balanced budget.

We have not shied away from making those hard decisions. However, our values have guided us in reshaping the council for the future.

Rather than dwell on what we have achieved over the past twelve months, perhaps the most difficult twelve months in Camden's history, I rather want to look to the future.

I want Camden to be in the vanguard of building a new model for local government that will deliver better outcomes for all.

I will focus on three themes that really matter to me and I believe matter to Camden: leadership, Democracy and Community

NEW APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP

Camden has always been a leading council, working closely with our partners and the community to find new ways to improve services for residents and businesses. Innovation and partnership working are in our DNA. But I want to share our vision for a new approach – one that will deliver innovative solutions on the ground for both individuals and communities.

We want Camden to be recognised as a strong, strategic leader in the community. The ConDem's so-called Big Society model assumes councils should just self-destruct. We know that the Council is a critical force to harness the energy and resources for our local communities. *But the uniqueness of a council and of Camden is it's democratic mandate to work with all our residents and stakeholders to deliver improved lives and better outcomes for everyone that lives, works and visits here.* I am excited about the journey on which we have embarked to achieve this vision.

Our independent Education Commission is a genuine conversation bringing together the voices of all the people who care about "life chances". It will enable us to speak with authority when negotiating

with this ConDem government which is hell bent on fragmenting the education system.

Our Shaping Services initiative is a new way of working with our Camden communities at a local level. Colleagues have participated in these community workshops. We have seen the energy and creativity which we can harness with local service providers, community groups and other partners. These conversations have generated 10 innovative projects to explore new ways of working – from looking at more integrated community provision to addressing youth disengagement.

We are already thinking about how and where this conversation should grow:

- Our Green Summits,
- the new Business Board;
- a Health and Wellbeing Board;

establishing new platforms for partnership working where we harness all our collective energy to address longstanding challenges for the borough.

Our Community Investment Programme brings together our vision for community development with a capital investment programme that will generate £235m of capital receipts up to 2015. We will invest in the future of our communities.

REVITALISING DEMOCRACY

Democracy is also in our DNA. Camden has a proud history of political protest and vibrant local communities who want to be involved in the provision of local services.

There is a danger that the difficult times ahead may lead to cynicism and disengagement from the political process.

In Camden, we must rather revitalise and modernise our democratic institutions.

Our role as ward councillors matters. We were voted in by our local communities. Local people want involvement in what we do on their behalf. They want us to be more accountable.

I want us to reach the less vocal majority of residents by invigorating community participation. We will strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones to reach those who usually don't participate in civic activity.

Change is underway. We have built on the work of the previous administration developing Area Forums into Area Action Groups. These cost less, attendance is going up and they provide all councillors with an opportunity to collaborate with their communities.

We have recently launched We are Camden, an innovative national pilot showing how technology can reach some of the less vocal majority of our residents and communities through new on-line open forums.

Later this year, we will launch a new Housing Strategy for Camden. A key feature will be a new voice and greater collaboration with our tenants.

I am committed to ensuring that the Council does its best for, and acts as the voice for Camden. At a regional level we have been at the table in the preparation for the 2012 London Olympics to ensure that we get the best deal possible for Camden.

DELIVERY BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

I now turn to the community. In these unprecedented times of public service cuts we must do things differently if we are to minimise the negative impact on our communities.

In Camden we have a proud innovative tradition to service delivery. Our vibrant voluntary and community sector has always been a key partner. I want us to go further and faster with this - promoting new and exciting models of service delivery by the community for the community.

Again, the ConDem government talk of new ways of running services and points to their concept of the Big Society, In Camden, we know that to make this happen, people and organisations need help to get started. The Council will play a role in both leading and supporting them.

We have already identified opportunities to support new models. Responsibility for running Queen's Crescent Market is to be transferred to a social enterprise to be set up by the Queen's Crescent Community Association.

Our focus will be on supporting the community to run services where it is feasible to do so – but we will ensure democratic accountability and we will manage any risks. I believe that this is the right way forward.

Over the next year, the council will lead the way in exploring other areas:

- Alternative provision with community groups for three of our libraries;
- looking at re-provision of two Children's Centres; and
- reviewing options for future play provision.

We are committed to doing more where this makes sense. And we will invest in strengthening the voluntary sector, enabling it to face the challenges of today.

Camden's People's Fund is part of this investment - providing transition funding to give people and organisations longer to adjust to funding reductions and to enable them to find new ways to preserve valued services.

I'm pleased to announce that the first allocations from the Fund have been made:

- £300k to help organisations providing support for older people to redesign their services;
- £150k to help organisations to provide good neighbour schemes;

- £40k for social clubs working with those with Learning disabilities and
- £9k to support youth diversion.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Mr Mayor, I repeat those key words: leadership, democracy and community.

Tonight, I have outlined the path the Labour administration has set for Camden: to be at the forefront of building a new model for local government that will deliver better outcomes, protecting and enhancing all that is good in the Borough.

At the same time, we will not forget Camden's tradition of political protest, We will fight those policies that we believe are harmful to our communities. Particularly the housing and welfare reforms which will cause such devastation for those who live in London.

We must all speak out for Camden if we are to preserve the borough's rich social mix.

As Leader, I will be driven by my love of this borough and my desire to do the best for all the citizens of Camden.

COUNCILLOR NASIM ALI
Leader of the Council
June 2011