

MINUTES

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CROWNDALE CENTRE, 218 EVERS Holt STREET, LONDON, NW1 1BD AT 7.00 PM MONDAY, 7TH MARCH, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT

The Mayor, Councillor Sabrina Francis (in the Chair), and;

Lorna Russell	Georgia Gould	Simon Pearson
Steve Adams	Abdul Hai	Luisa Porritt
Nasim Ali OBE	Adam Harrison	Abdul Quadir
Meric Apak	Jenny Headlam-Wells	Nazma Rahman
Danny Beales	Nancy Jirira	Lorraine Revah
Douglas Beattie	Heather Johnson	Roger Robinson
Nayra Bello	Samata Khatoon	Tom Simon
O'Shanahan	Oliver Lewis	Jonathan Simpson
Siân Berry	Rishi Madlani	MBE
Marcus Boyland	Angela Mason	Gio Spinella
Patricia Callaghan	Jenny Mulholland	Shiva Tiwari
Leo Cassarani	Henry Newman	Paul Tomlinson
Oliver Cooper	Awale Olad	Sue Vincent
Richard Cotton	Richard Olszewski	Anna Wright
Julian Fulbrook	Andrew Parkinson	

MEMBER ABSENT

Councillors Maryam Eslamdoust, Thomas Gardiner, Maria Higson, Alison Kelly, Gail McAnena, Georgie Robertson, Nadia Shah, Ranjit Singh, Stephen Stark and Peter Taheri

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 Council and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

1. GUIDANCE ON HYBRID MEETINGS

RESOLVED –

THAT the guidance on hybrid meetings be agreed.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

The Mayor reminded Members of the advice of the Borough Solicitor in respect of Item 10(a), which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In relation to Item 10(c) Treasury Management Strategy, Councillor Madlani declared an interest as his employer was referenced in the report, and he left the room during consideration of the item.

4. SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OR OTHER RELEVANT OFFICERS, AND ANY OTHER MEMBERS WHO THE MAYOR HAS AGREED MAY MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT

Broadcasting of the meeting

The Mayor announced that the meeting was being broadcast live to the Internet and would remain available for viewing for twelve months, after which it could be made available upon request. Anyone addressing the meeting was deemed to be consenting to having their contributions recorded and broadcast, and to the use of those sound recordings and images for webcasting and/or training purposes.

Waiver of Procedure Rules

The Mayor proposed, and it was agreed, that in order to reduce the possibility of transmission of Covid-19, Council Procedure Rule 22 be waived so that Members did not have to sign the attendance book, and that Members may remain seated when addressing the Council. It was also proposed, and agreed, to allow one hour for consideration of Item 10(a) and that the tabled amendments to the budget would be taken under this item.

Final Council meeting of the year

The Mayor remarked that this was the last meeting before the local elections and thanked Members for their service over the previous four years. She wished those who were stepping down all the best for the future and wished good luck to those who were standing again.

Single Parents' Day

The Mayor announced that 21st March was Single Parents' Day and she thanked Gingerbread, her nominated mayoral charity, for the work that they did in supporting single parent families.

Queen's Green Canopy Campaign

The Mayor reported that Camden would be taking part in a national campaign to plant a tree to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on Friday 11th March at 10am at Brunswick Square Gardens, which would mark the seventieth day of the year in which the Queen marked the seventieth anniversary of her accession.

Death of former Councillor John McDonald

Finally, the Mayor announced to death of former Councillor John McDonald. Councillors Callaghan, Spinella and Simon said a few words in tribute to Mr McDonald and then those present stood for one minute's silence.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Eslamdoust, Gardiner, Higson, Kelly, McAnena, Robertson, Shah, Stark and Taheri. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Newman, Singh and Tiwari.

6. DEPUTATIONS AND PETITIONS

There were no deputations or petitions.

7. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS

Councillor Georgia Gould, the Leader of the Council, made a statement to those present. Councillor Cooper, Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Porritt, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, and Councillor Berry, Leader of the Green Group, then made statements in response. Councillor Gould then made some final remarks.

The Leader and Cabinet Members then took questions from Members as follows:-

- Councillor Parkinson asked the Cabinet Member for Investing in Communities, Culture and an Inclusive Economy about density of housing allowed for at the site of the O2 Centre in Finchley Road in the Council's Site Allocations Local Plan and whether he would agree to withdraw the plan immediately. Councillor Beales

responded that the developer's plans for the O2 Centre site were currently in the consultation phase and would be considered at Planning Committee later in the year in the light of the Council's agreed planning policies. In relation to the Draft Site Allocations Local Plan, the consultation period had been extended in light of residents' views on the significance of this site and so the Plan had limited weight as it had not yet been agreed. He added that the government's housing delivery test was extremely difficult for a council like Camden to meet. In response to a supplementary question, Councillor Beales reiterated that the planning application for the O2 site was the developer's plan and not the Council's, though the Council had engaged with the developer at pre-application stage in the usual way to endeavour to maximise community benefit from the proposal.

- Councillor Olad asked the Leader of the Council whether she would agree that the only progressive alternative to the Conservatives was the Labour Party. Councillor Gould responded that she would.
- Councillor Jirira asked the Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden about what communication had gone out to residents and businesses about the new education and enforcement officer in West Hampstead and Fortune Green high streets. Councillor Harrison responded that there had been communications to residents who lived in flats above shops in West End Lane, Mill Lane and Fortune Green Road, and all businesses in West End Lane had been visited and provided with guidance about rubbish collections. Those business who did not have waste collection contracts and were disposing of their waste inappropriately were being issued with fixed penalty notices. In response to a supplementary question about changes to waste collection times, Councillor Harrison responded there was an additional collection in the afternoon.
- Councillor Headlam-Wells asked the Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families how much the Council had invested in education in the last 10 years and how much would be invested as part of the new Education Strategy. Councillor Mason responded that £2.8m was invested annually in Camden Learning, plus a further £400,000 to support the Education Strategy. The Council had also invested in the new Rhyl Community Primary School and the conversion of the former Carlton School site into a centre providing early years and other support. £100,000 had been invested to provide trauma informed training in schools and strong relationships had been formed between the Council and schools. In response to a supplementary question, Councillor Mason commented on the transformation of children's services and the reduction in the number of children coming into care, due to investment in early help, partnership working and the development of Camden's model of social work, using the Council's values to inform its practice. She concluded that her fears were that there would not be enough money to continue the work and that the welfare safety net was broken and the impact of the cost of living increase would be very severe.

8. BUSINESS FROM THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF 24TH JANUARY 2022

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor.

RESOLVED –

THAT the report be noted.

9. APPOINTMENTS TO FORMAL COUNCIL BODIES

Consideration was given to a report of the Borough Solicitor, and to a nomination made by Councillor Boyland at the meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT Councillor Maria Higson replaces Councillor Cooper as a member of the Planning Committee; and
- (ii) THAT Councillor Nazma Rahman be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee.

10. REPORTS FROM THE CABINET, THE AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE, THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND OTHER COUNCIL COMMITTEES

10(a) 2022/23 REVENUE ESTIMATES AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

Consideration was given to the report on the agenda and to the reference set out in the supplementary agenda, which were introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation.

Councillor Olszewski then proposed the recommendations set out in the reference from the Cabinet, as follows:-

THAT the Council:

- (i) Notes the information set out in this report.
- (ii) Notes that the Council has not received any feedback following the consultation with Non-Domestic Ratepayers, and notes the equality impact assessment in Appendix E of the report.
- (iii) Agrees:
 - (a) The council tax requirement for the year 2022/23 of £126,002,421.
 - (b) The calculations for determining the council tax requirement for the year 2022/23 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as set out in Appendix A of the report.

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- (c) To note that the Greater London Authority (GLA) precept set out in this report is £395.59 for Band D and as shown for all bands in Appendix B of the report, and is subject to Greater London Authority approval of the budget on 24 February 2021.
 - (d) That the Council sets the amount of council tax for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix B of the report and notes that this will mean a Camden element of council tax of £1,396.34 (2.99% increase) for Band D residents not in Garden Squares.
 - (e) That the Council hereby determines that its basic amount of council tax for the financial year 2022/23 is not excessive as outlined in Paragraph 2.25 of the report.
 - (f) The budget summary as set out in Appendix C of the report.
 - (g) The Garden Squares levy requirements received for each Garden Square Committee for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix B of the report.
- (iv) In relation to fees and charges:
- (a) Agrees the new fees and charges and those increasing above 5% discussed in Appendix D1 and listed in Appendices D2 to D4 of the report.
 - (b) Delegates authority to the relevant Director to decide increases to existing fees and charges up to a maximum of 5% or to keep them at the same amount, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.
- (v) Notes in Paragraphs 2.51 to 2.57 of the report the planned use of reserves, and in Paragraph 2.58 of the report the adequacy of reserves as stated, and that no major allocations of general balances are being considered at this stage.

The Conservative Group then moved the following amendment, which was proposed by Councillor Andrew Parkinson and seconded by Councillor Oliver Cooper:-

Confirmation by the Executive Director Corporate Services that amendment is balanced

“The Executive Director Corporate Services confirms that, should the amendments be agreed, the assurances required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 with regard the adequacy of the reserves and the robustness of the estimates have been met and, therefore, that this still constitutes a balanced budget for 2022/23. The Executive Director Corporate Services or other officers have not been able to give these proposals the depth of consideration and due diligence to be able to recommend this as a course of action or to assess the financial impacts of the proposals beyond 2022/23. It has not been possible to make a full and comprehensive assessment of the impact of these proposals (such as those linked to the future use of our buildings or the impact on the existing workforce) and the associated implementation issues and risks.

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It should also be noted that the full economic and social impact of the Covid pandemic into 2022/23 is not yet known. The social and economic impact of any ongoing measures to address the pandemic may adversely impact the viability of the proposals.”

Making Camden listen

Proposal	£000
Introduce a participatory democracy online voting platform	150 ^A
Introduce five area-based community councils	180
Create Participation and Engagement Fund	100 ^B

^A £120,000 of which is recurring, and £30,000 is a one-off cost for 2022/23 and not recurring

^B One-off cost for 2022/23, not a recurring cost

Making Camden cleaner

Proposal	£000
Restore weekly bin collections	924
Make garden waste collection free of charge	256
Trial smart bins at 90 hotspots to manage street waste	30 ^A
Provide separate nappy collection bins	20
Sponsor the development of web tools to improve recycling	51 ^B
Open Regis Road reuse and recycling centre for one evening a week	12
End the discount for early payment of fly-tipping fines	(40)
Increase fines for littering to the legal maximum	(82)
Introduce fines for littering from a motor vehicle	0 ^C

^A £30,000 of recurring savings, off-set by a one-off cost in 2022/23 of £61,000

^B One-off cost for 2020/21, not a recurring cost

^C Costs and receipts net out to zero

Making Camden greener

Proposal	£000
Invest in clearing Camden’s drains and gullies to prevent flooding	50
Install 1,000 electric car charging points per year for next two years	488 ^A
Make cycling part of PE lessons in every school	268 ^B
Reduce the impact of roadworks by charging to close roads with	(216)

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a lane rental scheme on trial basis	
Suspend routine precautionary pollarding of street trees	(137)
Create pocket parks with new Pocket Park Fund	105
Expand HomeRun app to all state schools in Camden	76
Remove school run traffic with a grant to restore a school bus service	50
Engine idling fines increased to £80	(1)
Double spending on enforcement of engine idling prohibitions	0 ^c

^A One-off cost for 2022/23, with a further one-off cost for 2023/24

^B £125,000 of which is recurring, and £143,000 is a one-off cost for 2022/23 and not recurring

^C Costs and receipts net out to zero

Making Camden safer

Proposal	£000
Open a police base in Hampstead	312 ^A
Open a police base in Swiss Cottage	312 ^A
Fund deployment of anti-burglary forensic liquid across the borough	166
Install CCTV in crime hotspots	97
Give Council Tax Reduction to special constables	48

^A £104,000 of which is recurring, and £208,000 is a one-off cost for 2022/23 and not recurring

Helping Camden learn

Proposal	£000
Launch free coding clubs in every state school	300
Extend Swiss Cottage Library opening hours and open on Sundays	59
Make annual grants of £50,000 in Camden's community libraries	50

^A £389,000 of which is recurring, and £399,000 is a one-off cost for 2021/22 and not recurring

Improving Camden's places

Proposal	£000
Spread the streateries success with a Streateries Fund	153 ^A
Regenerate local centres with new Urban Village Heritage Fund	51

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Create a dedicated Pop Up Shops Fund	102
Install 10 publicly-accessible defibrillators	16 ^B
Introduce a specific street licence for trading from red phone boxes	38
Open two outdoor gyms	53 ^C

^A £51,000 of which is recurring, and £102,000 is a one-off cost for 2022/23 and not recurring

^B £1,000 of which is recurring, and £15,000 is a one-off cost for 2022/23 and not recurring

^C £2,000 of which is recurring, and £51,000 is a one-off for 2022/23 and not recurring

Supporting Camden's communities

Proposal	£000
Introduce floating car clubs	(200)
Increase parking enforcement in streets sensitive to traffic	(500)
Send information packs to residents when they move in	84
Resume postal notifications of planning applications	31
Grant 100% discretionary business rates relief to all music venues run by non-profit community interest companies	0 ^A
Introduce dedicated mental wellbeing grants	82

^A There are currently no CIC music venues in Camden, so no cost in 2022/23, but costs expected in future years

Maximising revenue and reducing fraud

Proposal	£000
Renting out top two floors of 5PS	(800) ^A
Use two-thirds of unused (void) parking spaces on estates for paid-for parking and two-thirds of unused (void) garages for paid-for storage and transfer £500,000 to the Housing Revenue Account	(1,702) ^A
Charge for pre-app advice that licensing team gives on planning applications	(50)
Increase planning fee revenue	(50)
Investment in fraud detection	0 ^B
Increase income from film service by 50%	(41)

^A £1,181,000 recurring revenue, off-set in 2022/23 by a one-off cost of £381,000

^B In addition, revenue of £500,000 to the Housing Revenue Account budget, which is not in this budget

^C Net savings expected to be realised in 2023/24

Making Camden more efficient

Proposal	£000
Fix Camden's website	61 ^B
Develop a consolidated Camden app	51 ^B
Shared digital with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea	(1,533)
Shared HR services with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea	(199)
Shared legal services with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea	(235)
Shared strategy and change services with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea	(317)
Shared procurement services with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea	(141)
Additional reduction in agency and consultancy spend	(210)
Reduce spending on Camden's external communication department by 50%	(680)
Freeze councillor allowances for a year and reverse previous increase in Cabinet members' allowances	(140)
End funding for trade union facility time	(155)
Scrap Camden magazine	0 ^C
End grant to Love Camden	(18)

^A £120,000 of which is recurring, and £60,000 is a one-off cost for 2022/23 and not recurring

^B One-off cost for 2022/23, not a recurring cost

^C Officers estimate that savings from scrapping the magazine would be offset by alternative advertising costs

Cutting Council Tax and balancing the budget

Proposal	£000
Sum of budget adjustments	(2,508)
Freeze Core Council Tax (reduction of 1.99% compared to Budget)	2,507
Budget surplus in 2022/23	1
Recurring surplus to be realised in 2023/24	1,769

Explanatory notes

Making Camden listen

Introduce a participatory democracy online voting platform – We would launch a participatory platform – like in Madrid and Kyiv – that allow residents to vote on each and every decision made by Camden Council. Decisions with a sufficiently high level of opposition (both in total votes and total % of votes cast) would have to be debated by full council or else withdrawn by the decision-maker. This would create significantly greater transparency of the decisions, increase awareness of decisions that Camden makes, and prevent bad decisions being adopted.

Create five area-based Community Councils – We would create five area-based committees within the council that would make decisions for local-area decisions affecting their locality, including local environmental, planning, streetscape, and investment decisions. They would be styled as “Community Councils” after the area-based committees previously used in Southwark, but they would not be community councils as defined by statute. As in Southwark, these Community Councils would be composed of the local councillors for the area. The main cost would be additional committee service time, although it would offer more locally joined up and directly accountable government, which would likely lead to efficiencies after the first year.

Create Participation and Engagement Fund – We would create a £100,000 endowment for independently promoting participation and engagement. In the first instance, this would replace the Council’s own-resources promotion of its CIP estate regeneration, to ensure estate ballots are meaningful and independent, and residents are not told that they must support the proposal if they vote, as has alleged to be the case.

Making Camden cleaner

Restore weekly bin collections – Camden is almost alone in London in collecting many residents’ bins less than once a week – indeed, most residents in Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Islington have theirs collected more than once a week. The demand in Camden has only grown due to Covid, with more people spending more time at home now and into the future. Camden’s dirty streets – with the most fly-tipping incidents of any council in the country – are testament to the results. Despite claims that it would boost recycling, recycling has still not returned to the levels it was at in 2010, when bins were collected twice a week. Furthermore, the cuts to bin collections in 2017 has been followed by a quadrupling of costs associated with cleaning up fly-tipping. Restoring weekly collections for all residents would substantially reduce this cost, but this saving is not factored in here.

Make garden waste collection free of charge – Camden’s charge for garden waste is among the highest in the country: twice the national average. Because charging to collect garden waste reduces recycling rates and discourages good environmental stewardship, the Government has proposed banning councils for charging for garden waste collection for 2023/24. We would scrap the charge for garden waste collection immediately and make it free again, regardless of the action taken by the Government.

Trial the introduction of smart bins in 90 litter hotspots – Littering continues to blight our streets. We will trial 90 new smart bins in litter hotspots. These robot-bins use solar power to compact waste – increasing internal capacity ten-fold – as in the City of London and Westminster. They also provide real-time information on

capacity, enabling emptying schedules to be timed to occur when bins are nearing capacity. This trial scheme therefore has the potential to deliver significant savings in the future, as experienced by other local authorities such as Islington and Windsor & Maidenhead.

Provide separate nappy collection bins – Residents are not issued with separate bins for nappies: forcing some parents to keep them unhygienically. We would provide nappy bins to all parents that take up the service.

Sponsor the development of web tools to improve recycling – We would invest to facilitate the existing database of what can be recycled to be accessed by a form on the website, via an app, via Alexa and other virtual assistants, etc, so that users can easily find out whether any given item can be recycled. In future years, this can then be licensed across other areas to raise money and more than make up the cost and generate a trading profit to reinvest in prompting recycling.

Open Regis Road reuse and recycling centre for one evening a week – Regis Road recycling centre is open only until 4:15pm every day. This can make it difficult for non-professionals to use it. We would open the recycling centre one evening a week to make it easier to use it. Savings from reduced fly-tipping are not factored in.

Increase fines for early payment of fly-tipping fines to the maximum – Camden is one of very few councils in the country to discount fines for fly-tipping so heavily when paid early: effectively making the fine £200 for most fly-tippers, not the maximum £400. Many councils, such as Barnet and Haringey, do not discount at all for early payment, and we propose Camden does likewise.

Increase fines for littering to the legal maximum – Camden imposes fines of just £100 for littering, rather than the £150 maximum. Westminster and Haringey impose the full £150 fine, and we propose Camden does likewise.

Introduce fines for littering from a motor vehicle – In 2018, councils were given powers to fine car owners if litter was thrown from their car, whether or not it could be proven that they were driving. Camden has not yet used this power, and we would introduce fines to clamp down on littering.

Making Camden greener

Invest in clearing Camden's drains and gullies to prevent flooding – Camden has suffered a number of serious flash floods in the last two years. A large part of that has been the poor maintenance of Camden's street drains and gullies by the Council, which is responsible for them. This would increase the budget available to clear drains and gullies by approximately 25%, prevent them silting up again, and avoid flash flooding.

Install 1,000 electric car charging points per year for next two years – Camden has one of Inner London's smallest networks of electric car charging points, with half as many chargers per capita as Wandsworth and Kensington & Chelsea, and one third as many as Westminster. Within two years, we would install 2,000 ordinary speed charging points in lamp-posts to facilitate charging in large numbers of residents' parking bays (which would, because they would be widespread, be able to be retained as residents' parking bays accessible to all vehicles). These figures reflect costs after grants were received by other councils, including London boroughs and Brighton & Hove.

Make cycling part of PE lessons in every school – Despite political commitments to become the most cycling-friendly borough, the proportion of Camden residents cycling every week has fallen since 2010. Compared to other London boroughs, Camden has slipped from having the 5th-most people cycling every week of any borough to the 12th-most. This proposal would fund the teaching of cycling as part of PE in every school to build up competence, social norms, and commitment to cycling. For the cost of a single cycle lane, 10,000 Camden pupils can be taught to cycle – which would be far more effective at promoting cycling.

Street Works Lane Rental Scheme – We would introduce a trial lane rental scheme to charge utility companies and others up to £2,500 a day to close the busiest roads or lanes of roads to conduct roadworks. TfL has had this power since 2012, and it has reduced serious disruption from roadworks on the roads covered by 54% and increased the number of works where companies work together by 65%. Not only would this deliver significant savings, but it would incentivise utilities companies to coordinate works: reducing congestion, inconvenience to residents, and air pollution. Surrey, East Sussex, and West Sussex, have each introduced or decided to introduce schemes. Surrey estimates it would raise £2.7m. The scheme in Surrey was approved to cover 7.5% of the road network, not the 5% that Camden's Cabinet member incorrectly claims is the maximum, and an Inner London location like Camden would likely be permitted to apply it to a larger proportion of roads.

Suspension of routine precautionary pollarding – Routine precautionary pollarding strips our trees of their leaves on a biennial basis. In line with the policy in Barnet Council, we would suspend this routine pollarding, and employ pollarding only in cases where streets were specifically designed and planted with pollarding in mind or where individual case management requires. This will lead to significant environmental benefits.

Pocket Park fund – Empty construction sites and plots on land owned by Camden Council are a stain on our local street scene, and miss out on creating great spaces for people to enjoy. We will fund the creation of two pocket parks to transform neglected spaces into thriving green spaces – improving our environment and mental and physical health.

Expand HomeRun app to all schools in Camden – School run traffic has been reduced by a third in Wiltshire and Buckinghamshire by the use of the HomeRun app – developed by Camden residents – which both facilitates car pooling and gives schools the data to encourage parents to stop driving to school. Use of the HomeRun app by South Hampstead High School and University College School has cut use of cars for the school run by a third, too, but its effectiveness would be higher if it covered all schools. We would contract with HomeRun to deploy it across every school in Camden.

Provide grant to match-fund a school bus service – We would provide a grant to sustain a school bus scheme for pupils coming from out of the borough if each school underwrites the rest. This would significantly reduce the number of cars on the road.

Engine idling fines increased to £80 – While Camden issues fines of just £20 for deliberate engine idling, Westminster imposes £80 fines using a road traffic order – and due to the success there, other councils are following suit. This is not intended as a revenue-raising proposal, but it is likely that a small surplus would arise.

Double spending on enforcement of engine idling prohibitions – Investment in catching deliberate engine idlers, especially in the vicinity of schools is money well spent. Together with the increased fines, it would not cost anything (net) to increase enforcement in known hotspots.

Making Camden safer

Open a police base in Hampstead – Fortune Green Road station is becoming crowded with more police officers due to the national government's recruitment drive, yet is not convenient for most residents that its officers patrol to visit. We would therefore provide a grant under the Police Act to the Met to open a new police base in Hampstead. This would host the Safer Neighbourhood Team and provide a contact point, in Hampstead Village, where Camden is a large freeholder of commercial properties. If a unit is not available, a base could alternatively be opened at the Royal Free Hospital, which is open 24/7 and has already offered use of currently-unused space for free.

Open a police base in Swiss Cottage – As above, we would provide a grant under the Police Act to the Met to facilitate the opening of a police base in Swiss Cottage. This budget is sufficient to open a base in a commercial unit at Swiss Cottage, but there is a suitable location at Swiss Cottage civic centre, which is preferred and would be cheaper.

Fund deployment of anti-burglary forensic liquid across the borough – When more than 50%-55% of homes in an area is signed up to the MetTrace programme using forensic liquid, burglaries can be reduced by over three-quarters. However, the Met has only budgeted to provide 440,000 across London, or just 12% of London homes, which would be insufficient to eradicate burglary. We would provide a grant under the Police Act to distribute liquid more widely and get as much of Camden as possible above 50% saturation, and thus make Camden a burglary-free borough. This programme would be provided for five years.

Install CCTV in crime hotspots – We would install CCTV cameras in hotspots across the borough, with 40 extra cameras installed each year. This will build up a much more joined up picture of areas where crime and anti-social behaviour is of greatest concern, and reduce the sense of impunity that many criminals feel in those locations.

Give Council Tax Reduction to special constables – Special Constables have the same powers as police officers and are a valuable tool to support officers. They currently receive free travel on London transport, but otherwise no financial incentive, making them a cost-effective part of the force and a means of keeping the police workforce grounded in the Peelian tradition of local civilian policing. We would provide a 50% reduction in Council Tax for special constables. This would both incentivise and promote the scheme, and thus lead to more sign-ups and more policing resources.

Helping Camden learn

Roll out free computing and coding clubs in every state school – Camden committed in 2014 to having a coding club in every school, but it does not yet. Moreover, take-up of coding club places by low-income households is reportedly

limited because of the cost to parents. This proposal would create a coding club in every school and make them free for all participating children.

Extend Swiss Cottage Library opening hours and open on Sundays – Swiss Cottage Library is by far Camden’s largest and most used library, but is not open on Sundays and is open much shorter hours than Pancras Square. We would extend its hours to match Pancras Square (8am to 8pm Monday to Saturday) and open it on Sundays. This would enable more children and students to study over weekends and in evenings, as well as those retraining in a new career in light of Covid.

Make annual grants of £50,000 in Camden’s community libraries – We would make available £50,000 of grants to the three community libraries within Camden – Belsize Community Library, Primrose Hill Library, and Keats Library in Hampstead. This supports community institutions that are under financial pressure, as well as ensuring they can provide longer hours of opening to allow people to study and learn as we recover from Covid.

Improving Camden’s places

Streateries fund – The Streateries established in 2020 were an enormous success. But unlike in Westminster, where the bill was paid by the council, those in Camden were funded by local councillors funding them by Hampstead Town, Belsize, and Frognaal & Fitzjohns councillors through local CIL in Belsize Village and South End Green, where they proved to be successful. We will support the creation of six further al fresco dining areas across the borough, where they have popular support, providing much needed support for our hospitality sector and strengthening local communities.

Introduce urban village heritage fund to regenerate one village centre a year – Our neighbourhood retail centres are more important than ever, with more people shopping locally. There is a direct link between creating an attractive shopping environment and increased footfall, as demonstrated by the recent successes of Belsize Village. We would offer grants to parades or clusters of shops in our small urban villages in conservation areas – such as South End Green, York Rise, Marchmont Street, and Regents Park Road – where some shopfronts do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area. The newly-improved character-enhancing frontages would then be written into conservation area appraisals: locking in the attractive appearance long-term. This will transform the built environment, creating new jobs and improving the viability of local businesses.

Dedicated pop-up shop fund – Camden’s high streets are struggling, with some – including the town centre at Swiss Cottage and Finchley Road – at risk of falling below the critical mass required to sustain themselves. At the same time, many Camden residents have set up new businesses at home or online. We will create a dedicated fund of £100,000 to support new pop-up shops to fill empty units on high streets with short-to-medium term tenants. Grant funding would be available to support property costs, marketing, and compliance required due to the leap for the business into having physical retail premises for the first time.

Install 10 publicly-accessible defibrillators – Camden has one of the smallest networks of defibrillators in the country, with just one publicly-accessible defibrillator in the entirety of the north of the borough. We would fund their installation at

convenient locations. We would further support use of DMC or HRA funds to install them in TRA Halls where appropriate.

Introduce a specific street licence for trading from red phone boxes – Camden has been inconsistent with its licensing for people trading from repurposed red phone boxes, with some traders expected to buy a full street trading pitch licence, rather than a kiosk licence. This threatens the viability of trading from red phone boxes: thus expediting the loss of these heritage assets. This amendment creates a new class of kiosk licence specifically for red phone boxes where no goods are stored or displayed outside the box: ending this lack of clarity and creating flexibility in the setting of different terms and conditions.

Open two outdoor gyms – The closure of gyms has impacted people’s mental and physical wellbeing. In addition, some gyms have closed and some residents’ financial resources become too stretched for membership, so many will be unable to return to gyms for the foreseeable future. We will provide for two new outdoor gyms – enabling those unable to access a gym a space to exercise locally.

Supporting Camden’s communities

Introduce floating car clubs – We would introduce a floating car club licensing scheme. Camden has a low take-up rate of car club membership, leading to higher car ownership, higher costs to households, and lower convenience for those that need occasional access to cars. In the report introducing the 2019 Camden Transport Strategy, the council committed to commission research on the subject, but this has not happened. In Wandsworth, where a floating car club has been introduced, the licensing of floating car clubs has raised £201,000 of net revenue, and Camden has marginally more homes without access to a car or van.

Increase parking enforcement in streets particularly sensitive to traffic – Camden’s published kerbside management policy is the same on all streets. We would adopt tougher parking enforcement practices in 300 streets specifically designated as being particularly sensitive to traffic. It would increase the marshal presence in these areas and reduce the observation times for light and heavy goods vehicles, without any change for cars. This would reduce congestion and disruption due to loading/unloading. In Westminster, it is also estimated to raise £1m in net revenue, and Camden could expect to raise half as much. This revenue would be ringfenced for the provision of transport and environmental services, as required under the Road Traffic Regulation Act.

Send information packs to residents when they move in – When people move (as detected by new registration for Council Tax), residents would be sent an information pack that would be automatically tailored to their circumstances, and incorporating key information. This would include local amenities to their home, key contacts in the council, their local police contact, when and how to leave out waste, how private tenants can enforce housing rights, and how to download relevant apps and sign up to relevant email mailing lists. The importance of this has been reiterated by the low registration rate with GPs for private tenants – which will likely mean a lower vaccination rate.

Resume postal notifications of planning applications – The ending of postal notifications left residents unable to respond to consultations. The service could be automated and fulfilled through a commercial mail room to reduce costs. The net

cost that could be achieved is £30,000 more than the cost of street signs, which the council has to erect if it does not provide postal notifications and which are often vandalised or removed and generate far fewer responses from relevant neighbours.

Grant 100% discretionary business rates relief to all music venues run by non-profit community interest companies – The government has just introduced a 50% reduction in business rates for small music venues, while Westminster City Council just introduced 100% Rates relief for music venues run by community interest companies (CICs). This proposal would mirror Westminster's policy. There are no CIC music venues in Camden, but we expect favourable tax treatment to encourage some take-up in future years.

Introduce dedicated mental wellbeing grants – Coronavirus has had a significant impact on residents' well-being. It is estimated that there are over 50,000 new cases of moderate-severe depression and 37,000 new cases of moderate-severe anxiety in adults without pre-existing mental health conditions. To address this, we will create a new dedicated fund to embed mental wellbeing best practice in organisations for which it has not been a core responsibility to support initiatives that support mental wellbeing, reduce social isolation, and support the prevention of suicide and self-harm in those most likely to be affected.

Maximising revenue and reducing fraud

Renting out top two floors of 5 Pancras Square – Much of the prime office space within 5 Pancras Square remains underutilised, and space within it, especially within hotdesking, could be consolidated to create space for a commercial tenant unless and until that space is needed again. In light of Covid, Camden should furthermore conduct an appraisal of further space it does not need to use – and while some businesses need less space, Camden's offices are in an enviable and expensive location and will be of demand to many. Camden officers have increased the estimated revenue from this to £400,000 per floor: in line with our original estimates.

Use two-thirds of unused parking spaces and garages on estates and transfer £500,000 to the Housing Revenue Account – Currently, 2,191 spaces on housing estates are never used: leading to recent proposals by the council to create a presumption in new planning guidance that they be removed in redevelopment. However, unless and until they are, these assets should be used. We would grant a concession to a full parking operator (e.g. JustPark) for two-thirds of the empty spaces, so there remains a surplus of spaces for infrequent use. From the estimated £2,000,000 net income from this, £500,000 would be granted to the Housing Revenue Account for capital investment on estates, e.g. CCTV and electric vehicle charging, although the exact allocation of that is out of scope of the General Fund budget. We would use two-thirds of unused garages and sheds for storage purposes.

Charge for pre-app advice that the licensing team gives on planning applications – The City of Westminster has recently begun charging for advice that its licensing team renders through the pre-app planning process. This is not done in Camden, which only charges for pre-app advice rendered for a licensing application.

Increase planning fee revenue – Add new planning fees for fast-track determination, amendments to planning applications prior to determination, and validation advice. The first would be suitable for non-major development, and for the

payment of a fee, the Council would guarantee to determine the application within an enhanced time period. The second would relate to modifications to an application that require re-consultation, and would cover the additional costs incurred in doing so. The third would charge for advice on validation requirements and how to ensure that these are met. This would raise revenue for the planning service, and lead to faster outcomes without any change in the outcomes.

Investment in fraud detection – Housing fraud costs Camden £238 per annum per household in the borough. However, Camden recovers just a third as many council houses due to fraud as Southwark does. An increase in Housing Investigations Team resources to detect fraud, recover social housing, and recover Proceeds of Crime would yield millions of pounds in revenue and recovered social housing. It is considered to be revenue neutral in year one, but raise several million a year by the end of the three-year period. Most of these longer-term savings would be realised by the Housing Revenue Account, but there would be savings to the General Fund through – for example – lower temporary accommodation costs.

Income from film service to increase by 50% – Camden recoups relatively limited sums from its film service contract compared to other councils. This can be increased significantly, which will furthermore increase the desirability of Camden's film locations and put more of its neighbourhoods on the map. Covid has reduced the ability to do this, and so the realised increased revenue has been reduced from £105,000 to £40,000 a year (and cautiously retained at that level despite the recovery of the film industry), and future years should see this return to that previous, higher level.

Making Camden more efficient

Fix Camden's website – We would hire a web consultant to address problems with the website, including restoring elements of the Camden website that have been deleted, adding more synonyms to pages' metadata to aid searching, and ranking pages more clearly so the pages deemed by Camden to be most important come higher up the search results. This would reduce further service delivery costs, although this is not factored in here.

Develop a consolidated Camden app – Camden has at least three apps – Clean Camden for reporting waste, Camden StreetSafe for reporting rough sleeping, Camden Recycling Rewards to encourage recycling – and others, such as RingGo and Libby, that it uses for service delivery. Use of these apps is limited because of the sheer number of them and the lack of any centralised location for them. We would consolidate services where possible into a single app, which would improve take-up. It would eventually also lower service delivery costs, although this is not factored in here.

Shared digital with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea – Camden aimed to share digital services with Haringey and Islington until 2019, before this collapsed due to Camden and their inability to share services. However, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea have had shared digital services for several years, and thus would be able to incorporate Camden. Their digital costs are considerably lower than Camden's, and sharing digital services would save Camden £1.5m a year.

Shared HR, legal, strategy and change, and procurement services with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea – In addition to digital costs, Camden

should look to share back office services with boroughs that have done similar. Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea already share HR, legal, strategy and change, and procurement services, and Camden should look to join that arrangement.

Additional reduction in agency and consultancy spend – We would reduce spending on agency and consultancy by 1%, including through the capacity enhancements through other proposed amendments. For example, sharing services with other boroughs creates economies of scale that mean occasional increases in workload can be managed within existing resources without needing agency or consultancy staff.

Reduce spending on Camden's external communication department by 50% – Camden spends more on its external communications department than almost any other council in the country. Given the thriving local press, this is not necessary. Savings of 50% would reduce Camden's expenditure to approximately the level of other London boroughs. There is scope for some of these services to be shared with Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea in line with above services.

Reverse previous increase in the Leader and Cabinet's allowances – In this period where so many residents are experiencing economic hardship, we believe that councillors should shoulder some of the burden. We would reverse the recent huge increases to the Leader and Cabinet members' special responsibility allowances. We would oppose any increase in councillors' allowances this year, which will likely yield further savings, but these are not budgeted for.

End funding for trade union facility time – Camden spends more subsidising the internal administration of trade union activities than 94% of councils in England. We would end financial funding for this trade union facility time. This would not affect the performance of trade union duties, which relate to the job (e.g. negotiations, disciplinary matters, training for the trade union role) and are required by law to be paid for (and so not included within facility time, which primarily relates to internal union administration).

Scrap Camden magazine – Camden is fortunate to have two local newspapers and a number of microsites. It has extensive other opportunities for important information to be disseminated. However, its *Pravda* mouthpiece of the Cabinet is still published anyway. Under pressure from Conservative councillors over the last decade to reduce the cost of this newspaper, Camden now estimates this would not save taxpayers' money, as information would need to be communicated in other ways. We nonetheless believe those alternatives are better, and would support local newspapers, and ensure information was balanced, not just be PR for Camden's political leadership.

End grant to Love Camden – Camden is blessed with among the most media coverage of its culture and events of any area in the world. Not only is a separate website a misuse of taxpayers' money, but it inappropriately competes with local newspapers: undermining their commercial viability. We would end this grant.

Councillor Olszewski indicated that he did not accept the amendment.

The Liberal Democrat Group then moved the following amendment, which was proposed by Councillor Luisa Porritt and seconded by Councillor Tom Simon:-

Listening and responding to residents' priorities

Overview of the financial context

Camden is thankfully emerging out of the Covid-19 pandemic. It looks as though the worst of that crisis is behind us, but more challenges lie ahead. The cost-of-living crisis underway before President Putin invaded Ukraine looks set to sharpen, leading to higher energy costs for already struggling Camden residents.

The Conservative Government's decision to introduce a stealth tax rise on National Insurance contributions does not help those already finding it hard to get by. No person should have to choose between heating and eating, but that is the sad reality many face. Despite this, we know that if the Government changed its mean-spirited stance on accepting Ukrainian refugees our whole borough would welcome them – just like we have for the Afghan people.

At a time of great uncertainty, adequate central Government funding is badly needed to support local councils so they can support communities. Councils have been placed in an impossible position, as demographic changes add pressure to services like social care - while large parts of our community still need financial support to recover from the pandemic. Add to this the impact of Brexit on the availability of social care and NHS workers, now is not the time to starve councils of funds they need.

Yet the Conservative Government has built into its funding an assumption local councils will raise taxes by the full amount to deliver services, rather than giving sufficient support to foot the bill. Any party that claims they can freeze council tax in such circumstances is being mendacious.

Residents nevertheless tell us the Labour-run Council is not listening to them on key issues affecting them and their local area – particularly in the north-west of the borough. Whether it is people waiting months for basic repairs to council homes, the backlog in planning decisions, rubbish piling up on our streets or the rise of homeless people seen sleeping on streets in and around West Hampstead, Finchley Road and King's Cross stations, residents rightly say and feel some of the Council's basic functions are not working as they should.

They also think the Council lacks sufficient ambition to engage all its citizens in tackling the climate emergency at the speed required, are concerned about the futures and safety of young people, especially women and girls, and want a better decision-making structure to ensure everyone's voices in our borough are heard.

This year's Liberal Democrat amendment continues to focus on priorities that matter most to residents and looks to a future where everyone in Camden can realise their potential. Our amendment offers practical solutions using modest financial adjustments to the Council's budget. If we ran Camden Council, there is much more we would change about its approach.

Summary of amendments

Our amendments cover five key residents' priorities:

1. Ending homelessness and delivering quality, affordable homes
2. Tackling the climate emergency and the cost-of-living crisis
3. Cleaning up our borough's streets
4. Protecting and strengthening Camden's communities
5. Investing in children and young people's futures

Specific changes the Camden Liberal Democrat Group propose are as follows.

Ending homelessness and delivering quality, affordable homes

As with all our previous budget amendments since 2019, our amendment restores funding for homelessness and temporary accommodation services. The impact of Labour's cumulative and rising real terms cuts to these services since implementing the 2019/20 to 2021/22 Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is shown by the shameful performance of our borough, compared with others in London, when it comes to tackling homelessness.

Homelessness in Camden has increased by 7% since 2018, whereas across London it has fallen by 3%.¹ In the past year, the number of homeless people in Camden has doubled – a larger increase than anywhere else in the UK.² The latest Government snapshot found 97 rough sleepers in Camden on just one night in autumn 2021. In the past year, at least one homeless person in Camden has died each month – more than in Manchester, Nottingham and Cardiff combined.³

Experts in the voluntary and third sector do not believe these shocking statistics can be attributed solely to the withdrawal of the 'Everyone In' scheme introduced during the pandemic – though it is regrettable the Government has not extended the programme.

As Matt Turtle, founder of the Museum of Homelessness, told the *Camden New Journal*: "They are getting it right in other boroughs, they need to do better in Camden." That Amnesty International and Liberty Human Rights have had to write to the Council, accusing it of breaking human rights for how it treats rough sleepers, shows the seriousness of the Labour Council's failures in this area.

¹ Measured by the total number of households assessed and owed a prevention or relief duty. 'Renewing our community vision: from Camden 2025 to We Make Camden and The Way We Work', Report of the Leader of the Council, from [papers presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2022](#), p.90

² According to the latest Government snapshot and as reported in the *Camden New Journal*: '[Sharp rise in people sleeping on streets](#)', Friday 4 March 2022

³ '[At least one homeless death a month in Camden, figures show](#),' *Camden New Journal*, 9 December 2021

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While GP Dr Gary Coleman's outreach efforts to Camden's homeless population have proven lifesaving, resulting in an improvement in this group's life expectancy from 47 years in 2015 to 54 today,⁴ we are concerned that the specific cut to Health and Support Provision for the Street Population over the course of the Council's MTFs risks reversing this trend.

Camden Liberal Democrats are pleased that almost two and half years since their CEO first called for it, New Horizon Youth Centre were finally able to open the first and only emergency accommodation service in London designed and run specifically for young Londoners experiencing homelessness. We campaigned for this change since it was first raised in the Council Chamber in November 2018. However, we are concerned that the hostel does not have a permanent home, and we urge the Council to continue working with New Horizon to sustain this much-needed provision.

We note the impact of the slow pace of the Council's response and ongoing failures, however. In the year to February 2021, an appalling total of 16 people in Camden died in council-provided temporary accommodation.⁵ Data provided by the Council on overcrowding is limited, but we know from the 2011 Census that almost 20% of Camden's social rented homes were overcrowded.⁶ And the Council's recent reports show that more than 70% of those currently living in overcrowded accommodation in Camden are Black, Asian, and ethnic minority residents, demonstrating the racial injustice inherent in this problem.

We note that new temporary accommodation sites at Camden Road and Chester Road respectively are yet to be completed. In the meantime, homeless residents from all over Camden supported by our Belsize ward councillors at the former England's Lane Residence have largely been moved out of the borough because the Labour Council chose to give up the lease on this building early.

Finally, Liberal Democrats believe that everyone has a right to live in a safe, good quality, and affordable home. We therefore renew our call for the Council to set aside a fund to support victims of the Building Safety Crisis in Camden's private rented sector. This is needed due to the continuing absence of sufficient support from the Conservative Government nationally. It is also regrettable that the Labour Mayor of London and the Labour Group on the Greater London Assembly recently refused to support a Liberal Democrat amendment to set up a London-wide support hub.

⁴ ['GP practice helping hundreds of rough sleepers shortlisted for the London Homelessness Awards,'](#) *Evening Standard*, 10 September 2021

⁵ ['Candles lit in tribute as figures show 16 homeless deaths in one year,'](#) *Camden New Journal*, 26 February 2021

⁶ 'Renewing our community vision: from Camden 2025 to We Make Camden and The Way We Work', Report of the Leader of the Council, from papers presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2022, p.90

Tackling the climate emergency and the cost-of-living crisis

To achieve the target of limiting global warming to 1.5°C rather than it rising to 2°C, United Nations Environment Programme estimates suggest that each Camden resident would need to reduce their emissions by 35% by 2030.⁷ To improve the quality of residents' homes, tackle the cost-of-living crisis and address our environmental emergency, we propose doubling the annual budget under the Council's Housing Renewal Assistance Policy for insulating and improving energy efficiency in Camden homes. This will help to reduce the risk of residents being forced to choose between heating and eating, lower dependency on Russian gas and help individuals to make progress on reducing their emissions.

Further, to make it easier for Camden residents to make healthier choices for themselves and our planet, we would introduce a fund to increase the speed of the rollout of cycle hangars across the borough – guaranteeing 50 more could be funded Camden-wide in 2022/23. As Transport for London's financial future remains uncertain due to the Conservative Government's refusal to provide adequate, long-term funding for our capital's transport network, the Liberal Democrats think it is essential for the Council to lock in any funding for cycle hangars from its own resources that it can now. As local Liberal Democrat councillors, we will continue to use our Local Community Infrastructure Levy funds to increase the number of hangars in the wards we represent.

We welcome the Council taking a more creative approach to raising local funds to tackle the climate emergency through the introduction of the upcoming Community Municipal Investment (CMI) fund. This is the type of creative thinking needed to help councils address their funding challenges in the absence of sufficient central Government funding to address the climate crisis. We would also like to see our local communities being better empowered to come up with their own initiatives that work in their areas using some of this funding. Liberal Democrats therefore suggest that for the next CMI round a small pot of c. £100,000 should be set aside for community organisations and the voluntary sector to bid for funding for projects to tackle climate change in their area. Given electric vehicles still contribute to emissions, we need to be encouraging residents to invest in a greener future than simply substituting their diesel or petrol cars.

CO2 emissions in Camden remain higher than the London average. In 2018, annual emissions of CO2 were four tons per person in Camden compared to 3.4 in London, and 3.6 in 2019 compared to 3.2 in London.⁸ This shows we need to go further and

⁷ 'Renewing our community vision: from Camden 2025 to We Make Camden and The Way We Work', Report of the Leader of the Council, from papers presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2022, p.90

⁸ The figures for London appear as -3.4 and -3.2 respectively in the paper, but we have amended this on the assumption it should be a positive figure. 'Renewing our community vision: from Camden 2025 to We Make Camden and The Way We Work', Report of the Leader of the Council, from papers presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2022, p.90

faster to tackle climate change in our borough, particularly the devastating impact it has on our air quality.

We are delighted that the Council has finally adopted the Liberal Democrat target proposed two years ago of planting 600 more trees across the borough, despite our amendment being rejected at the time on the basis that it would be difficult to achieve this in practice.

Last year, we called on the Labour-run Council to go even further and plant 800 new street trees in a single year. We repeat that call with this amendment, as the time to address this crisis is rapidly running out. We note the Camden Labour administration's resistance to matching the ambition of neighbouring Labour-run Hackney, where 2,500 street trees are set to be planted this winter alone.⁹ This is part of a wider and commendable plan in place since 2018 to plant 5,000 new street trees by 2022, alongside over 30,000 new trees and saplings in the borough's parks and open spaces.

Liberal Democrats also call on the Labour Council to raise its game and push developers to plant more trees when bidding for land through the planning system. For example, the planning application for the O2 centre site is currently envisaging a loss of trees as a result of the development.¹⁰ And the developers have conceded the proposals don't deliver the amount of green open space required for a development of this size.¹¹ More generally, we believe the Council needs to be much firmer with developers in demanding net zero targets for every new development.

Liberal Democrats will also continue to use our presence on the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee to press for greater protection of mature trees, for example through the extension of Tree Protection Orders (TPOs), given their greater effectiveness at carbon dioxide absorption compared to saplings. It is high time the Government reformed the outdated law around TPOs, to allow planning authorities to give proper weight to the value of mature trees in reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

Cleaning up our borough's streets

One of the biggest bugbears of the residents we represent in Belsize and Fortune Green is the amount of litter on our streets, and especially the policy of asking residents in flats above shops, and businesses, to put their rubbish in bags on the streets for collection. Recently, the administration has been putting in place sticking plaster measures, from literally putting stickers on waste and recycling to painting pink squares on the street. Labour's recent amendment to a Liberal Democrat motion highlighting the problem with its waste contract resorted to calling residents 'miscreants' rather than pledging to help them understand the collection rules. These responses fail to tackle the root cause of the problem, which is Labour's failing waste contract.

⁹ ['Further 2,500 street trees to be planted this winter'](#), Hackney Council news, 11 November 2021

¹⁰ Para 13.25 of the Planning Statement for Application Ref 2022/0528/P.

¹¹ Para 10.42 of the Planning Statement for Application Ref 2022/0528/P.

That's why Liberal Democrats propose to fund a Senior Policy Officer to undertake a review of Camden Council's waste contract – specifically the “bin bags on the streets” policy - in the next municipal year. Other major cities and other Boroughs must have solutions that don't leave their high streets covered in black bin bags. This is a far more fiscally and environmentally sound way to address the problem, unlike the Conservative proposal to restore weekly bin collections which would be an expensive, inefficient use of the Council's resources and take us in the wrong direction on the climate crisis. We all need to play our part by reducing, reusing, and recycling more.

While the review is being undertaken, over one year we would add five Senior Education and Enforcement Officers, like those recently introduced in West Hampstead, to mitigate the impact of the current contract, by communicating positively with residents, and engaging with residents and community groups. This should result in temporary improvements, while a lasting solution to Labour's failing waste contract is found.

Protecting and strengthening Camden's communities

In addition to making our streets cleaner, Camden residents want our streets to feel and be safer. Perceptions of safety in the community, as measured by feeling safe in your neighbourhood after dark, are lower in London than the UK overall, with 60% of people saying they felt safe or very safe in London in 2021 and 64% across the UK.¹² The Council has not provided Camden-specific data on this, as the Liberal Democrats pointed out and called for at the last meeting of the Resources and Corporate Performance Committee. Nevertheless, for on average 40% of residents to not feel safe after dark is clearly unacceptable.

The stranger murders of Sarah Everard; who was kidnapped, raped, and killed by a serving police officer, Sabina Nessa; Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman; among many others, sparked a national conversation last year about male violence towards women and girls – including here in Camden. Later in the year, we learned of the stories of Denise Keane-Simmons; set on fire and killed by her estranged husband, and Nicole Hurley; a Primrose Hill resident and beloved member of her community, whose boyfriend has been charged with stabbing her to death.

Many Camden residents have spoken out about their fear of travelling alone at night and many will also know what it is like not to feel safe in their own homes. In 2021, there were 2,207 recorded incidents of domestic violence in Camden, and many more we will not have heard about. One Camden councillor bravely disclosed to the *Camden New Journal* their trauma about being raped and the need to better promote the services available to victims. Walkouts took place at Highgate School and

¹² 'Renewing our community vision: from Camden 2025 to We Make Camden and The Way We Work', Report of the Leader of the Council, from papers presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2022, p.88

Parliament Hill School last year, with current and former students citing a ‘culture of rape’.

Society is waking up to the urgent need to address the root causes of violence towards women and girls. This work must start from an early age if we are to have any hope of eradicating misogyny. Camden Liberal Democrats propose expanding the scope of the six new permanent, full-time youth officers we would fund in the Youth Violence and Exploitation Team to tackle violence against women and girls in schools.¹³

We recognise that the problem of youth violence more generally in Camden has not gone away. That is why we would fund officers to add resource to this important team, helping to make our borough safer for all young people and support them with opportunities for the future. Regrettably, in December 2021 the Conservative Government closed the Kickstart apprenticeship scheme designed to help young people find employment opportunities. It is therefore no longer possible to put forward our proposal from last year to top up the wages of vulnerable young people in Camden applying to this scheme and pay them London Living Wage.

To make sure both young and old have somewhere to learn and connect, we repeat our call from last year to invest in Camden’s community libraries. The pot of more than £100,000 we have allocated would allow libraries to bid for funds for one-off projects, whether that is running events to bring the local community together in their area or upgrades to their equipment.

Investing in children and young people’s futures

Finally, Camden’s children and young people are its future. Although there have been components of the Labour administration’s ‘We Make Camden’ participatory democracy work for young people, only £1,800 of its overall £272,000 budget has been dedicated to giving them a voice about Camden’s future.

Liberal Democrats propose allocating more than half of the initial We Make Camden budget, £145,000, into establishing a new ‘We Make Young Camden’ project. This would ensure that the voices of young people from across our borough’s communities are heard and that they are empowered to determine what their areas need. A good starting point, for example, could be to engage them on the O2 centre application and find out what they want to see from this potentially transformative project for NW6 and NW3.

Camden’s Youth Council could also be given some of the funding to engage young people on a wide range of issues affecting Camden’s future and give them a forum to determine what they need to help them realise their potential.

¹³ There is strong evidence for this approach. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/works-prevent-violence-against-women-girls-summary-evidence/>

How these investments would be funded

Working patterns have changed fundamentally due to trends sped up by the Covid-19 pandemic. Most businesses and organisations have moved to a more flexible or 'hybrid' way of working, including the Council itself. Camden Liberal Democrats think the opportunity for staff to work more flexibly is welcome, while recognising that they still need spaces to come together and connect. In the longer run, we would like to see the Council looking at a new way of structuring these spaces so that officers are more rooted in local communities across the borough and closer to the residents they serve.

In the short term, the Council has an opportunity to generate income from its underused buildings at 5 Pancras Square now and from autumn 2022 at The Crowndale Centre - once the refurbishment of the Town Hall at Judd Street is completed. We therefore propose renting out a modest three floors of the 14-storey building at 5 Pancras Square from the beginning of the 2022/23 financial year, and two floors of the Crowndale Centre from halfway through the year (October 2022).

Beyond 2022/23, the Council could look at moving staff to smaller hubs around the borough and renting out more space in these large buildings. This has the potential to generate substantial rental income for further investment in residents' priorities.

Finally, to support our proposals we have recommended a one-off small transfer from reserves of £205,000. We note that a range of uncertainties about the wider economic and financial environment means transferring a larger sum than this would not be advisable at present.

Table of amendments

Liberal Democrats Budget Amendments	
<u>Expenditure</u>	22/23 £000
Restore funding for Improving Health and Support Provision for Street Population	15
Restore funding for homelessness prevention	102
Partially restore funding for adult hostels	307
Restore funding for temporary accommodation service management	161
Support for leaseholders affected by the cladding and wider building safety crisis	250
Double the annual budget under the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy for insulating and improving energy efficiency in homes	200
Add 50 cycle hangars across the borough	175

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Increase tree planting across the borough to 800 trees	153
Add one Senior Policy Officer to undertake a review of Camden Council's waste contract	60
Add five Senior Education and Enforcement Officers to improve performance of the waste contract across the borough while it is being reviewed	270
We Make Young Camden	145
Add six new full-time youth officers to the Youth Violence and Exploitation Team and expand scope to tackle violence against women and girls in schools	253
Funding for community libraries	114
Total Expenditure	2,205
Income	
Rent out two floors of The Crowndale Centre from halfway through Year 1	- 800
Rent out three floors of 5 Pancras Square	- 1,200
Total Income	- 2,000
Transfer (to)/from reserves	205

The Executive Director Corporate Services confirms that, should the amendments be agreed, the assurances required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 with regard the adequacy of the reserves and the robustness of the estimates have been met and, therefore, that this still constitutes a balanced budget for 2022/23.

The Executive Director Corporate Services or other officers have not been able to give these proposals the depth of consideration and due diligence to be able to recommend this as a course of action or to assess the financial impacts of the proposals beyond 2022/23.

It has not been possible to make a full and comprehensive assessment of the impact of these proposals (such as those linked to the future use of our buildings or the impact on the existing workforce) and the associated implementation issues and risks.

It should also be noted that the full economic and social impact of the Covid pandemic into 2022/23 is not yet known. The social and economic impact of any ongoing measures to address the pandemic may adversely impact the viability of the proposals.

Councillor Olszewski indicated that he did not accept the amendment.

The Green Group then moved the following amendment, which was proposed by Councillor Sian Berry and seconded by Councillor Lorna Russell:-

The Executive Director Corporate Services confirms that, should the amendments be agreed, the assurances required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 with regard the adequacy of the reserves and the robustness of the estimates have been met and, therefore, that this still constitutes a balanced budget for 2022-23.

The Executive Director Corporate Services or other officers have not been able to give these proposals the depth of consideration and due diligence to be able to recommend this as a course of action or to assess the financial impacts of the proposals beyond 2022-23.

It has not been possible to make a full and comprehensive assessment of the impact of these proposals (such as those linked to the future use of our buildings or the impact on the existing workforce) and the associated implementation issues and risks.

It should also be noted that the full economic and social impact of the Covid pandemic into 2022-23 is not yet known. The social and economic impact of any ongoing measures to address the pandemic may adversely impact the viability of the proposals.

Overview

Camden's communities have faced unprecedented challenges over the last two years, with the Covid-19 pandemic having had a devastating social and economic impact on our residents, businesses, and voluntary sector.

This inevitably served to exacerbate the existing challenges they are already facing, following more than a decade of government cuts and now the prospect of a rising cost of living crisis.

In the face of this adversity, we have been impressed that our communities have all remained resilient and strong, but we know that they need our support more than ever.

We have therefore designed our budget amendments with this in mind, focusing on four simple yet impactful changes that will produce the following benefits for our communities:

- Empowering residents to have a greater say over the future of their own neighbourhoods through a new £100,000 Resident Empowerment Fund
- Supporting the recovery of our voluntary sector through the introduction of a new £1 million Transitions Support Fund
- Keeping the Council accountable and saving revenue in the long term by bringing more services in-house
- Making our streets healthier and greener by raising the diesel surcharge and speeding up the introduction of a Corporate Parking Levy

Resident Empowerment Fund

The last decade has seen a huge growth in the size and scale of developments emerging across our borough, all of which have lasting impacts on the communities around them – for better or for worse.

Our residents know their communities best, which is why it is important that we work closely with them to shape the future of their own neighbourhoods and ensure that every new development meets their collective needs.

This should particularly be the case with the Council's own Community Investment Programme (CIP); in order to transform our communities and housing for the better, CIP development projects must have the support and buy-in from these communities and residents from the outset.

We are therefore concerned about the top-down model of development used for the CIP, which has meant that many of its projects have been approved without community support and, significantly, against community interests.

While the requirement for resident ballots for such CIP projects is a positive initiative, we believe that there needs to be a fairer playing field for residents who wish to oppose demolition plans, as large amounts have been spent by the Council to secure a 'yes' vote.

More widely, in the planning system, residents seeking to oppose or propose changes to large developments have no access to independent expert support to assess the impact of plans or develop alternatives.

We believe that there would be huge benefits if there were a source of truly independent funding for residents seeking to empower themselves to engage fully in these processes.

This amendment therefore proposes that a **Resident Empowerment Fund is created, initially with £100,000 of investment** taken for one year from the reserves, with the intention of longer term sustainability provided by future savings made from bringing some of our services in-house.

In the case of estate ballots, residents would be able to use this fund to independently commission the advice and advocacy support they need, in which they could have full confidence.

In the case of major planning applications, expert analysis and verification of claims by developers could be achieved in a truly independent way, which would aid the Planning Committee in its decision making and create the ability to get expert help to devise credible community-led people's plans for large development sites.

Representative resident groups affected by large developments would also be able to bid for grants from this fund. As a result, they would be genuinely empowered to influence changes that affect their homes and their lives in our borough.

Transitions Support Fund

Our voluntary and community sectors are the backbone of our borough, playing an essential role in bringing us all together and supporting the most vulnerable people in our society. This has never been more important as we recover from the damaging effects of the pandemic.

Yet, we know that the pandemic has taken a heavy toll on these sectors, most of whom have suffered a significant loss of income as a result of closures and cancelled activities. At the same time, community demand for their core services has been unparalleled.

We welcomed the Council's establishment of the Community Impacts Resilience Fund and its associated support grants, to provide much-needed financial assistance to our voluntary and community organisations to help them meet their day-to-day running costs and to build upon newly formed partnerships in the wake of the pandemic.

However, these funds will only go so far in supporting our vast third sector, with each organisation only able to bid for £15,000 from the primary Recovery Fund. To ensure that all of our voluntary and community organisations are able to bounce back from the pandemic and continue to flourish long into the future, we must go further to support them.

Furthermore, while we supported the steps taken by the Council to pause collecting rents from our community centres during the height of the pandemic, we are concerned that they are now being asked to repay their arrears, on top of their existing rent payments. At the same time, Camden is proposing to restructure their rental arrangements, with several community centres facing an increase in rent.

This comes at a time when most have not yet recovered from the financial impact of the pandemic, and we worry that it could take many years for them to return to pre-pandemic levels of income.

Therefore, we are proposing the **creation of a £1 million Transitions Support Fund, which we would use to cancel the rent arrears of all of Camden's 26 strategic VCS partners**, and provide ongoing discretionary rent support, so that they are able to flourish again without the burden of debt hanging over them.

Any additional leftover funding would be used to top up the Community Impacts Resilience Fund, to enable more organisations to bid for discretionary grants in order to help them with day-to-day support.

We propose that this Transitions Support Fund is funded from the Council's reserves, noting that this only represents 6.75% of the total general reserve as it stands today.

In-house service provision

Recent figures show that Camden Council is currently spending around £1 billion on outsourcing its services to private contractors – a figure that has significantly increased over the last decade.

While we appreciate that there can be efficiency and cost saving benefits to outsourcing services, particularly with larger contracts and / or those that can be shared with other local authorities, we are concerned that Camden is not securing best value for money for all of its services.

We strongly believe that insourcing can provide significant cost savings for local authorities in the longer term, which is much needed in the current financial environment. Recent evidence shows that Southwark Council saved £4.35 million after bringing its customer services back in-house in 2013. Meanwhile, between 2010 and 2014, Hackney Council saved £600,000 by bringing its recycling services back in-house, as well as £300,000 by bringing its housing management service in-house.¹⁴

Furthermore, we believe that services delivered by in-house contractors are typically more reliable than services delivered by private contractors, as well as much more accountable to residents.

Indeed, we have concerns about the quality of some of the services that are currently being delivered by private contractors in our borough, many of whom are hard to get hold of and can be slow to come out to fix issues. The quality of work being carried out can also be variable.

We know that residents want to see their services being run locally by people that understand their community and can respond quickly in a crisis – not unaccountable private companies – and so we must listen to them.

¹⁴ Public Finance, [Coming home: local government insourcing](#), 2019

We therefore believe that Camden should take steps now to move towards an in-house first model, reviewing all outsourced contracts during this financial year. All current contracts will be assessed according to quality, performance, value for money, and staff terms and conditions, in order to explore whether they can be insourced.

Indicatively, we propose that the following services are brought in-house at least by the end of the 2023-24 financial year, covering any early contract termination costs while bringing long term savings which can be used to make our other provisions sustainable into the future. We believe that several more contracts could be insourced following the review:

- **Housing - mechanical and electrical:** current 5-year contract with Gem Environmental Building Services LIML. Total value **£5,400,000**
- **Housing - mechanical and maintenance:** current 4-year contract with SCCI Alphatrack Ltd. Total value **£5,000,000**
- **Parking enforcement:** current contract with NSL. Total value **£82,998,000**
- Street cleansing services: part of current contract with Veolia Environmental Services (UK) PLC. Total value **£6,134,800**
- **TOTAL VALUE OF THESE CONTRACTS: £99,532,800**
- **Environmental enforcement:** This is a cost-neutral service, with an estimated annual income value of around **£400,000** that is split 70/30 between Kingdom and Camden

In order to calculate potential savings, we could look simply at the overall profits made by each of these companies compared with their turnovers and estimate the additional value to Camden from those figures. We believe that all these contracts are covered by Camden's Living Wage commitments and that there will be no significant increase in staffing costs due to in-house provision. We will, however, wish to increase the quality of service and conditions for staff through greater investment in each of the services.

We recognise that the year to 2021 reflected in recent financial data was not a typical year for any company but we have used this data to make a broad estimate of potential savings.

Recent financial reports from Veolia show an EBITDA margin (relation of earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation to turnover) in Q3 2021 of 15.4% with approximately one tenth of the EBITDA achieved through cost-cutting measures.¹⁵ The annual report for 2020 from NSL shows an EBITDA margin of 4.1%.¹⁶ The annual financial statement and accounts for SCCI Alphatrack to 2021 show a profit before taxation of £2,389,374 on an overall turnover of £23,170,668, a margin of 10.3%.¹⁷ The annual accounts for Gem Environmental Building Services

¹⁵ Veolia, [Financial information](#)

¹⁶ NSL, [Financial information](#)

¹⁷ SCCI Alphatrack, [Filing history](#)

Ltd to 2021 show a profits before taxation of £306,592 on an overall turnover of £17,248,710, a margin of 1.8%.¹⁸

Taking an average of these four estimates of profit margins (8%), reducing this by half to allow for quality improvements, and applying these savings across the total of each of these four contracts, we estimate that insourcing these services will save Camden at least **£4 million in annual revenue** over the long term, while delivering better services for our residents and communities, and better terms and conditions for our workers. Please note that these are our own estimates, and we recognise that we are unlikely to achieve any savings in the 2022-23 annual year, but we believe we should begin to start the insourcing process this year in order to achieve greater savings in the longer term.

For the Kingdom Environmental Enforcement contract, we would bring this in-house by directly employing the six officers provided for, at an overall cost of approximately £300,000. The annual income value of this contract is £400,000 so this could result in an annual income starting next year of around £100,000.

Healthier and greener streets

Lastly, we have long been concerned about rising air pollution across London, with reports suggesting that 9,400 premature deaths in the city are attributed to air pollution, with a cost of up to £3.7 billion a year to the health service.¹⁹

We welcome the expansion of the Mayor of London's ULEZ to the north and south circulars, which now covers our whole borough, but we remain concerned that many areas in Camden have dangerously high levels of nitrogen dioxide that are well above the legal limit. These include Euston Road, Camden Road, Brill Place, and Tottenham Court Road.

To tackle this danger to health, we believe that increasing parking charges for the most polluting vehicles would be an effective way to help further reduce pollution from road transport in Camden.

We propose **increasing the diesel parking surcharge to 50% of the standard charge**, across all categories except market trader vehicles. Because diesel vehicles tend to emit much higher levels of nitrogen dioxide, this would be an effective incentive for owners to switch to cleaner vehicles or, if these are second cars, to give them up altogether.

The Council consulted on this measure in 2020, proposing to introduce the higher diesel surcharge rates from the 2021-22 financial year.²⁰ These changes are still not proposed by Camden for this year, and our amendment would remove this delay in

¹⁸ Gem Environmental Building Services Ltd, [Filing history](#)

¹⁹ London Councils, [Air pollution and the effect on our health](#)

²⁰ Camden Council, [Parking Permit and Charges Review 2020](#)

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making an effective policy change to cut the levels of dangerous pollution in the air residents breathe.

An estimate of the increased revenue achievable in 2022-23 through this measure is shown in the table below. However, the increased incentive to switch cars away from diesel should mean that the increased revenue would decrease in future years.

We further believe it is important to incentivise commuters to use public or green transport to travel to their workplace, rather than to drive. We are therefore proposing to invest an additional £50,000 to accelerate the introduction of a Corporate Parking Levy, which would bring in an annual charge for the 2,500 car parking spaces that are provided by employers in Camden before the end of the financial year 2022-23.

If implemented, this would help to reduce car travel to work and increase levels of walking, cycling, and use of public transport. In turn this would work towards reducing congestion, improving air quality and public health, enhancing accessibility, and reducing road traffic casualties. Importantly, it would also generate significant revenue to support further green transport improvements.

We believe this measure has taken far too long to be planned in detail by the current administration, and this investment would help finalise options for the planned charge and conduct a statutory public consultation on this scheme, ready for it to be introduced without further delay.

Both the new diesel surcharges and any revenue from a Corporate Parking Levy would be legally ringfenced for use within the transport budget.

With the additional revenue achieved in 2022-23, we propose to fund 10 secure cycle parking hangars per ward at a cost of £3,350 each, as well as 3 fast charge electric vehicle charging points per ward at a cost of £13,920 each. The costs for these both include bulk discounts.

Across Camden, this would see the installation of 200 new cycle hangars and 60 new fast charge electric vehicle charging points during the coming year, helping to support real alternatives to driving polluting vehicles in our borough.

Calculated impact of this part of our amendment in 2022-23:

	2022-23 Est number of transactio ns (based on trend)	Camden 2022-23 diesel surcharge	Camden revenue total estimate*	New Green diesel surcharge - increase to 50%	New Green revenue total estimate*	Increase due to Green amendme nt
Paid for parking per hour (tariff	617,865	0.99	£831,200	2.31	£1,933,022	£1,101,823

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3)						
Resident permits (tariff 2)	7,529	51.19	£304,853	119.05	£708,961	£404,108
Business permits	302	43.25	£14,276	200.24	£66,092	£51,816
		TOTAL REVENUE S	£1,150,329		£2,708,075	£1,557,746

The 2022-23 Camden figures above assume an uplift of 3.4% on all 2021-22 charges with no change in charging structure. *Revenue totals based on average revenue per transaction, weighted against the new sample tariff example cited, in the same proportion to the average as in previous years.

New green transport infrastructure investment:

Item	Unit cost	Number	Number per ward	Subtotals*
Rapid charge points	13,920	60	3	£835,200
Bike hangars	3,350	200	10	£670,000
Corporate Parking Levy consultation and planning	50,000	1	n/a	£50,000
			TOTAL COST	£1,555,200

Overall budget amendment balances:

Amendment item	Cost 2022-23	Savings - future years	Source of funding/savings	Funding 2022-23
Resident Empowerment Fund	£100,000		General fund reserve	£100,000
Transitions Support Fund	£1,000,000		General fund reserve	£997,000
In-house service provision		~£4,000,000 per year		
Healthier and	£1,555,000		Increased diesel	£1,558,00

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greener streets			parking surcharges	0
TOTAL	£2,655,000			£2,655,000

Councillor Olszewski indicated that he did not accept the amendment.

Councillors then responded to the Cabinet Member's statement and to the amendments proposed by the Conservative Group, the Liberal Democrat Group and the Green Group, after which Councillor Olszewski made some final remarks.

A recorded vote was then taken on the Conservative Group amendment.

The following Members voted in favour of the amendment:

Councillors Adams, Cooper, Newman, Parkinson and Spinella

The following Members voted against the amendment:

Councillors Ali, Apak, Beales, Beattie, Bello O'Shanahan, Berry, Boyland, Callaghan, Cassarani, Cotton, Francis, Fulbrook, Gould, Hai, Harrison, Headlam-Wells, Jirira, Johnson, Khatoon, Lewis, Madlani, Mason, Mulholland, Olad, Olszewski, Porritt, Quadir, Rahman, Revah, Robinson, Russell, Simon, Simpson, Tiwari, Tomlinson, Vincent and Wright.

The following Members abstained:

Councillor Pearson

The amendment was lost.

A recorded vote was then taken on the Liberal Democrat amendment.

The following Members voted in favour of the amendment:

Councillors Jirira, Porritt and Simon

The following Members voted against the amendment:

Councillors Adams, Ali, Apak, Beales, Beattie, Bello O'Shanahan, Boyland, Callaghan, Cassarani, Cooper, Cotton, Francis, Fulbrook, Gould, Hai, Harrison, Headlam-Wells, Johnson, Khatoon, Lewis, Madlani, Mason, Mulholland, Newman, Olad, Olszewski, Parkinson, Quadir, Rahman, Revah, Robinson, Simpson, Spinella, Tiwari, Tomlinson, Vincent and Wright.

The following Members abstained:

Councillors Berry, Pearson and Russell

The amendment was lost.

A recorded vote was then taken on the Green amendment.

The following Members voted in favour of the amendment:

Councillors Berry, Pearson and Russell

The following Members voted against the amendment:

Councillors Adams, Ali, Apak, Beales, Beattie, Bello O'Shanahan, Boyland, Callaghan, Cassarani, Cooper, Cotton, Francis, Fulbrook, Gould, Hai, Harrison, Headlam-Wells, Johnson, Khatoon, Lewis, Madlani, Mason, Mulholland, Newman, Olad, Olszewski, Parkinson, Quadir, Rahman, Revah, Robinson, Simpson, Spinella, Tiwari, Tomlinson, Vincent and Wright.

The following Members abstained:

Councillor Jirira, Porritt and Simon

The amendment was lost.

A recorded vote was then taken on the recommendations from the Cabinet.

The following Members voted in favour of the recommendations:

Councillors Ali, Apak, Beales, Beattie, Bello O'Shanahan, Boyland, Callaghan, Cassarani, Cotton, Francis, Fulbrook, Gould, Hai, Harrison, Headlam-Wells, Johnson, Khatoon, Lewis, Madlani, Mason, Mulholland, Olad, Olszewski, Pearson, Quadir, Rahman, Revah, Robinson, Simpson, Tiwari, Tomlinson, Vincent and Wright.

The following Members voted against the recommendations:

Councillors Adams, Cooper, Jirira, Newman, Parkinson, Porritt, Simon and Spinella

The following Members abstained:

Councillors Berry and Russell

The vote was carried and it was therefore

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the information set out in the report be noted;
- (ii) THAT it be noted that the Council has not received any feedback following the consultation with Non-Domestic Ratepayers, and the equality impact assessment in Appendix E of the report be noted;
- (iii) THAT the following be agreed:
 - (a) The council tax requirement for the year 2022/23 of £126,002,421.
 - (b) The calculations for determining the council tax requirement for the year 2022/23 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as set out in Appendix A of the report.
 - (c) To note that the Greater London Authority (GLA) precept set out in this report is £395.59 for Band D and as shown for all bands in Appendix B of the report, and is subject to Greater London Authority approval of the budget on 24 February 2021.
 - (d) That the Council sets the amount of council tax for 2022/23 as detailed in Appendix B of the report and notes that this will mean a Camden element of council tax of £1,396.34 (2.99% increase) for Band D residents not in Garden Squares.
 - (e) That the Council hereby determines that its basic amount of council tax for the financial year 2022/23 is not excessive as outlined in Paragraph 2.25 of the report.
 - (f) The budget summary as set out in Appendix C of the report.
 - (g) The Garden Squares levy requirements received for each Garden Square Committee for 2022/23 as shown in Appendix B of the report.
- (iv) THAT in relation to fees and charges:
 - (a) The new fees and charges and those increasing above 5% discussed in Appendix D1 and listed in Appendices D2 to D4 of the report be agreed.
 - (b) Authority be delegated to the relevant Director to decide increases to existing fees and charges up to a maximum of 5% or to keep them at the same amount, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.
- (v) THAT the planned use of reserves in Paragraphs 2.51 to 2.57 of the report, and the adequacy of reserves as stated in Paragraph 2.58 of the report be noted, and that it be noted that no major allocations of general balances are being considered at this stage.

10(b) RENEWING OUR COMMUNITY VISION: FROM CAMDEN 2025 TO WE MAKE CAMDEN AND THE WAY WE WORK

Consideration was given to the report on the main agenda and the reference on the supplementary agenda, which were introduced by the Leader of the Council.

Following comments and questions, Councillor Gould briefly summed up and then it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the borough strategy 'We Make Camden', as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved subject to the following (as recommended by the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee):
 - For the purposes of equality and inclusivity, refugees be highlighted as an important population that *We Make Camden* covers
 - For the purposes of equality and inclusivity, people with disabilities be highlighted as an important population that *We Make Camden* covers.
- (ii) THAT the Council's organisational response 'The Way We Work', as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved;
- (iii) THAT it be agreed to commit to an annual State of the Borough report, supporting an approach to measuring the progress towards our community vision; and
- (iv) THAT authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and any relevant Cabinet Members, to make minor corrections or drafting changes to 'We Make Camden' and 'The Way We Work'.

10(c) TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Consideration was given to a report on the main agenda and a reference on the supplementary agenda, which were introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation.

Following comments and questions, Councillor Olszewski briefly summed up and then it was

RESOLVED –

THAT the following be agreed:-

- (i) The Borrowing Strategy as set out in paragraphs 2.11 to 2.20 and Appendix 2 of the report;

- (ii) The operational boundaries and authorised limits in Appendix 2 (treasury indicator 2) of the report;
- (iii) The prudential and treasury management indicators set out in the tables presented in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report;
- (iv) The Investment Strategy as set out in paragraphs 2.21 to 2.31 and Appendix 3 of the report;
- (v) The creditworthiness policy and credit rating criteria as set out in Appendix 3 (Table 6) of the report;
- (vi) The investment instruments categorised as specified and non-specified in Appendix 4 of the report; and
- (vii) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for depreciating assets set out in Appendix 5 of the report.

10(d) CAPITAL ESTIMATES AND CAPITAL PIPELINE PRIORITIES

Consideration was given to a report on the main agenda and a reference on the supplementary agenda, which were introduced by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation.

Following comments and questions, Councillor Olszewski briefly summed up and then it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the capital resources to be made available over the next 5 years (2022/23 – 2026/27) be approved, as detailed in paragraph 2.43 and Appendix B3 of the report;
- (ii) THAT the capital investment needs detailed in Appendix B1 of the report to be included in the Council's Capital Programme, totalling £59.4m, be approved;
- (iii) THAT the revised overall capital investment in the borough of £1.069bn for the period 2022/23 – 2026/27 be approved;
- (iv) THAT the potential future capital ambitions summarised in Appendix B2 of the report be approved to be included in the Council's 'pipeline' of capital projects, totalling £149.1m (which may be individually incorporated into the Capital Programme as detailed business cases are developed and feasibility assessments are concluded – subject to Cabinet approval); and

- (v) THAT the climate investments detailed in paragraphs 2.52 to 2.54 and Table 3 of the report that will be funded by the Council's proposed Community Municipal Investment (CMI) be approved.

10(e) PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

Consideration was given to the report on the main agenda and to a reference on the supplementary agenda, which were introduced by the Chair of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

Following questions and comments from Members, Councillor Quadir summed up and then it was

RESOLVED –

THAT the proposed pay policy statement for 2022/23, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed.

10(f) REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Consideration was given to the report and the reference from the Standards Committee, which were introduced by the Chair of that Committee.

Following questions and comments from Members, Councillor Cotton summed up and then it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) THAT the proposed new Councillor Code of Conduct set out at Appendix 4 to the report be approved, subject to rewording obligation 9.5 from

I will not bring, sponsor or support trivial or malicious complaints against other councillors using the Code of Conduct.

to

*I will not bring, sponsor, **assist**, support **or encourage** trivial **and/or** malicious complaints against other councillors using the Code of Conduct; and*

- (ii) THAT authority be delegated to the Borough Solicitor to make all necessary changes to the Constitution.

11. ANNUAL JOINT REPORT OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Consideration was given to the report, which was introduced by Councillors Revah, Beattie and Parkinson.

Following questions and comments from Members, Councillor Beattie and Councillor Olad made some closing remarks.

12. ADDRESSING FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY IN CAMDEN - UPDATE TO COUNCIL

This item was not considered due to back of time.

13. MOTIONS

This item was not considered due to lack of time.

14. OPEN SESSION

This item was not considered due to lack of time.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE MAYOR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no urgent business.

The meeting ended at 10.00pm.

CHAIR

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MINUTES END