

# London Councils

Minutes of the London Councils Leaders' Committee held on 21 March 2017  
Cllr Claire Kober chaired the meeting

## **Present:**

BARKING AND DAGENHAM  
BARNET  
BEXLEY  
BRENT  
BROMLEY  
CAMDEN  
CROYDON  
EALING  
ENFIELD  
GREENWICH  
HACKNEY  
HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM  
HARINGEY  
HARROW  
HAVERING  
HILLINGDON  
HOUNSLOW  
ISLINGTON  
KENSINGTON & CHELSEA  
KINGSTON  
LAMBETH  
LEWISHAM  
MERTON  
NEWHAM  
REDBRIDGE  
RICHMOND UPON THAMES  
SOUTHWARK  
SUTTON  
TOWER HAMLETS  
WALTHAM FOREST  
WANDSWORTH  
WESTMINSTER  
CITY OF LONDON  
LFEP A

Cllr Dominic Twomey  
Cllr Richard Cornelius  
Cllr Teresa O'Neill OBE  
Cllr M. A. Butt  
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Cllr Patricia Callaghan  
Cllr Tony Newman  
Cllr Julian Bell  
Cllr Doug Taylor  
Cllr Denise Hyland  
Mayor Philip Glanville  
Cllr Sue Fennimore  
Cllr Claire Kober  
Cllr Sachin Shah  
Cllr Roger Ramsey  
Cllr David Simmonds CBE  
Cllr Steve Curran  
Cllr Janet Burgess  
Cllr Nicholas Paget-Brown  
Cllr Kevin Davis  
Cllr Lib Peck  
Mayor Sir Steve Bullock  
Cllr Stephen Alambritis  
Cllr Ken Clark  
Cllr Jas Athwal  
Cllr Lord True  
Cllr Peter John OBE  
Cllr Ruth Dombey OBE  
Cllr Sirajul Islam  
Cllr Clare Coghill  
Cllr Ravi Govindia CBE  
Cllr Nicky Aiken  
Mr Mark Boleat  
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## **Apologies:**

BARKING AND DAGENHAM  
BROMLEY  
CAMDEN  
HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM  
HILLINGDON  
ISLINGTON  
NEWHAM  
TOWER HAMLETS  
WALTHAM FOREST

Cllr Darren Rodwell  
Cllr Stephen Carr  
Cllr Sarah Hayward  
Cllr Stephen Cowan  
Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE  
Cllr Richard Watts  
Mayor Sir Robin Wales  
Mayor John Biggs  
Cllr Chris Robbins

Officers of London Councils were in attendance.

### **1. Apologies for absence and announcement of deputies**

The apologies and deputies listed above were noted.

### **2. Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

### **3. Minutes of Leaders' Committee meeting held on 7 February 2017**

The Chair pointed out that London Councils' response to the National Funding Formula for schools and high needs consultation had been submitted in the previous week.

Leaders' Committee agreed the minutes of the Leaders' Committee meeting held on 7 February 2017.

### **4. Local Government Finance update: Spring Budget 2017 and 100% Business Rates Retention**

The Chair introduced the item saying it was a progress report for noting.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note:

- The key announcements in the Budget that related to London local government and
- The progress being made on a London pilot pool for 2018-19 that would require a decision by the autumn.

### **5. Transforming Health and Care through Devolution**

Cllr Kevin Davis (Conservative, Health, Kingston) introduced the item saying that two key issues were being faced:

- Developing an overarching narrative as to what Health in London should look like and what future powers were needed
- Having achieved the success of securing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), to establish what its future would be. Some pilot boroughs were already carrying out

elements of it which the MoU contained, while others would need to be supported in coming to terms with the potential to evolve their role.

Cllr Peter John (Labour, Business, Skills and Brexit, Southwark) made reference to the deal that L. B. Hackney had already signed and asked how the tension between health and social care would be resolved with the CCG (Care Commissioning Group) structure looking upward to the DoH and social care looking downward, locally.

Mayor Philip Glanville (Labour, Hackney) pointed out that a significant amount of money had been pooled under his borough's agreement and devolution was already being taken forward. Local Health and Wellbeing Boards had been built into the structure.

Cllr Richard Cornelius (Conservative, Barnet) argued that there should be an ambition to exercise far greater influence over large areas of local health and social care in London.

Cllr Steve Curran (Labour, Hounslow) felt that a culture change was needed and Cllr Denise Hyland (Labour, Greenwich) concurred and said that the huge challenge of gaining greater responsibility in this area in a period of significant budget cuts needed to be properly considered.

Cllr David Simmonds CBE (Conservative, Hillingdon) saw a real co-ordinating role for London Councils to play.

Cllr Davis responded by saying that part of the overarching narrative was that there were different ways of dealing with acute and primary care in boroughs and that the MoU did not fully tackle those issues, focusing more on Section 75 powers.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the report.

## **6. The Housing White Paper**

Mayor Sir Steve Bullock (Labour, Housing, Lewisham) introduced the item saying:

- The Government's change of direction on tenure expressed in the White Paper *Fixing Our Broken Housing Market* was welcomed although, inevitably, some aspects of the White Paper did not go so far as boroughs generally would wish
- It said little about boosting Construction Skills which was almost as big a problem as money or land

- Work was going forward on the possibility of a collaborative vehicle designed to secure additional investment over and above existing (rather than instead of) and more detail would be forthcoming in the next few weeks and months
- It was a huge challenge to be building 50,000 units a year by the end of the current Mayor's term but even that was likely to be insufficient compared to need

Cllr Ravi Govindia (Conservative, Wansdsworth) offered some additional points:

- The role design played in making high density more visually acceptable was missing from the White Paper
- On Construction Skills, boroughs needed to understand better the role of off-site construction work
- More needed to be done with public land, the NHS estate being a classic example of land with planning permission that was not being built on.

Cllr Julian Bell (Labour, TEC, Ealing) - while welcoming the White Paper - expressed his concern over the its proposal to extend "equivalent" rights - including the right to buy - to tenants in "new affordable properties" built by council-backed housing companies or joint ventures. His borough planned to invest £165m in a housing company to build 700 new homes and although the Housing Minister had already been pressed on the issue pressure needed to be kept up.

Cllr John pointed out that he chaired a Construction Skills Sub-Group of the LEAP - that included off-site construction skills as part of its brief - which he hoped would be a quick and beneficial piece of work.

Cllr Sachin Shah (Labour, Harrow) cited the case of the MoD objecting to tall buildings on a site in his borough because of their proximity to a military airfield.

The Chair reported on a helpful breakfast discussion with Mr Gavin Barwell M,P the Housing Minister recently. Mayor Bullock concluded by saying that it was important that ministers understood the vital contribution of both the GLA and boroughs to this agenda. It was noted that the Minister would be addressing a London Councils event on the Housing White Paper on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the updates on:

- Initial activity in responding to the government's White Paper and new policy direction
- The work to explore a collaborative housing delivery vehicle among boroughs, which would return to Leaders' Committee

## **7. London Councils Challenge – Utilising the broader contribution of London Local Government**

The Chief Executive introduced the item saying:

The London Councils Challenge report had been clear about the potential contribution to be made by officers across London. This paper set out a basis for strengthening the way in which the collective political leadership of London local government, via London Councils, could be best supported by contributions from the sector in London, in particular by borough chief executives. The Executive had indicated its desire for a clear and transparent process for the commissioning and accountability of chief executives.

Leaders' Committee agreed :

- to endorse the proposed process for strengthening the means by which the contribution of London local government more broadly to its collective political leadership via London Councils could best be harnessed
- that a detailed Memorandum of Understanding be developed to support this approach and establish the principles which should underpin the operation of commissioned support to London Councils by chief executives and other senior staff.

## **8. Minutes and summaries**

Leaders' Committee agreed to note the minutes and summaries of:

- Pensions – 8 February 2017
- TEC Executive – 9 February 2017
- GLEF – 9 February 2017
- Executive – 28 February 2017

Before closing the meeting the Chair pointed out that it would be the last meeting of Leaders' Committee attended by Mr Mark Boleat as the chair of the City's Policy and Resources

Committee. She thanked him for his contribution over the past five years and in particular his ability to advocate on behalf of London as a whole, not just the City. Leaders' Committee endorsed her sentiments.

Leaders' Committee agreed to remove the press and public since the items on the Exempt agenda are exempt from the Access to Information Regulations. Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12(a) (as amended) Section 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting ended at 12:15.