

Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 30 March 2022

Present:

The Right Worshipful, the Lord Mayor Councillor T Judge – in the Chair

Councillors:

Akbar, Ahmed Ali, Sameem Ali, Shaukat Ali, Andrews, Appleby, Bano, Benham, Bridges, Butt, Chambers, Chohan, Clay, Collins, Connolly, Craig, Curley, M Dar, Y Dar, Doswell, Evans, Farrell, Flanagan, Foley, Good, Green, Grimshaw, Hacking, Hassan, Hewitson, Hilal, Hitchen, Hughes, Hussain, Igbon, Ilyas, Johns, S Judge, Kamal, Karney, Lanchbury, Leech, J Lovecy, Ludford, Lyons, McHale, Midgley, Monaghan, Moore, Newman, Noor, Nunney, B Priest, H Priest, Rahman, Raikes, Rawlins, Rawson, Razaq, Reid, Riasat, Richards, Robinson, Russell, Sadler, M Sharif Mahamed, Sheikh, Simcock, Stanton, Stogia, Wheeler, White, Wills, Wilson and Wright

CC/20/22. The Lord Mayor's Special Business - Statement on the Ukraine Conflict

The Lord Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to address the Council to provide an update on Manchester's response to the war in Ukraine.

The Leader of the Council announced that Manchester stands in unity and solidarity with the people of Ukraine and will continue to do everything possible to support the humanitarian effort to help those affected by the Russian invasion.

Manchester continues to be ready to play its part, together with towns and cities across Europe, in welcoming evacuees escaping the conflict and the humanitarian disaster it is creating.

The Leader of the Council outlined Manchester's response to the conflict:

- A Council Task and Finish Group has been established to co-ordinate the local response to administer, and support arrivals from Ukraine, under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and enhanced Visa scheme.
- The group is chaired by the Strategic Director of Neighbourhood and attended by senior officers from across the council and key workstreams have been developed to organise the response.
- Strategic Directors have been asked to prioritise this work across their services and a number of senior officers are regularly meeting with government officials to scope the requirements.
- The regional response is being considered and coordinated via GMCA and the NW Regional Strategic Migration Partnership.

Home Office Visas

- The government has made provision for an increased volume of visas for Ukrainians with ties to the U.K.
- Around 3,000 people have been issued one by the middle of March.

Homes for Ukraine

- The Homes for Ukraine scheme allows British citizens and businesses to sponsor a named Ukrainian or family to stay in their accommodation in return for a £350 support payment per residential address.
- Over 150,000 applications have been made under this scheme to date (29 March).
- However, a relatively small number of Ukrainians have arrived on this scheme to date – 1,000 as of 29 March.
- Manchester has received (as at 29 March) notification of a growing number of sponsors in the city.
- These are spread across the city, with a mixture across owner occupied, private rented and social housing accommodation.
- The Council is unaware of the complete guidance around some of the processes involved, but Council Officers are working collaboratively with regional and national partners to ensure that these are well-rounded and appropriate.
- Given that confirmed sponsors are beginning to cascade to the Council, verification as well as accommodation and safeguarding checks are due to begin imminently over the next few days.

Arrivals

- To date, the numbers of Ukrainians coming to the UK from Ukraine have been limited and not on the scale seen from Afghanistan or previous crises, in terms of large numbers of refugees arriving.
- The limited number that arriving have largely been individuals linked with the Friends and Family Visa Scheme, who have established links to the U.K. and require relatively little support. Many have been using Manchester Airport as a transit hub before travelling on to other locations in the North.
- As the Homes for Ukraine scheme progresses, the numbers of arrivals into Manchester are expected to increase rapidly.
- The levels of support required are likely to vary and will be determined by personal experiences ahead of and on leaving Ukraine, with the expectation that traumatic experiences will require trauma informed services where required.
- It is expected that arrivals will be predominantly women and children due the mandate on males to stay in Ukraine.
- A response team for meet and greet have been mobilised for the last ten or so days at Manchester Airport. A request for volunteers has been shared throughout the entire City Council workforce and over 100 employees have decided to help.
- Consideration is also being given to the need to provide support at Manchester Piccadilly train station and Chorlton Street bus station given their status as key transport hubs – it is understood that some Ukrainians have been arriving into the UK via ferry from Ireland into Holyhead and would likely arrive at Piccadilly.

We Love Mcr Umbrella Fund

- On 24 March 2022, the We Love Mcr charity launched the Manchester Ukraine Welcome Fund.
- The fund serves as a central fundraising page for Manchester that is officially supported by the Council with funds distributed to various community groups and charities across the city who are best placed to support Ukrainians.
- Several communications have been published on various council-platforms such as Facebook, whilst the story has also been picked up by the Manchester Evening News amongst others.
- The amount raised by the fund currently stands at £54,194, which includes a £50,000 initial donation by the Council.
- An employee at the Council has agreed to walk from the Town Hall Extension to Buckingham Palace in support of the fund.
- We are now working to identify appropriate partners to share the funding with and to put in place appropriate governance structures, whilst remaining as agile to the changing circumstances as possible.

A member raised the point that the time taken to deal with applications to allow access to the UK is taking too long and the government should do more to speed up the process. The families looking to travel to the UK were struggling financially in view of not being able to work and the high cost of temporary accommodation.

CC/20/23. The Lord Mayor's Special Business - White Ribbon Accreditation

The Lord Mayor invited Anthea Sully, the Chief executive of White Ribbon UK to address the Council following the Council's successful White Ribbon accreditation. The White Ribbon Charity is leading the work that is ending men's violence against women by engaging with men and boys to make a stand against violence, changing cultures and raising awareness.

The Deputy Leader (Councillor Rahman) addressed the Council on the value the accreditation provided and the work to be done to deliver the Council's 3 year Action Plan. Work has started on the delivery which includes the establishment of a steering group, the appointment of ambassadors from each directorate and the introduction of a programme of work directed at the city's night-time economy. Next steps will involve updating the Council's work based domestic and sexual abuse related policies and training. In addition, work will take place to improve the Safe Accommodation Pathway for housing and support for woman and children fleeing violence and abuse.

The Chief Executive of White Ribbon UK addressed the council to outline the work and purpose of the White Ribbon campaign and the importance of the Council's role in promoting the White Ribbon Promise.

The Lord Mayor accepted and White Ribbon Plaque and certificate on behalf of the Council.

CC/20/24. The Lord Mayor's Special Business - Cost of Living Increase

The Lord Mayor invited Angela Harrington (Director of Inclusive Economy), Tom Wilkinson (Deputy City Treasurer) and Matthew Hassell (Revenues and Benefits service) to address and Council and give a presentation regarding Family Poverty and the impact of continued increases in the cost of living and the help and support the Council is providing to Manchester residents at such a difficult time.

The Deputy Leader (Councillor Midgely) addressed the Council thanked officers for the continued work to produce strategies to help and support Manchester residents who are in need. In recognising the increases in the cost of living that have been the highest for more than thirty years with an increase in the number of families living in poverty and after seeing the value of their benefits further reduced, the Council will continue to stand up for Manchester residents. Reference was also made to the physical and mental health impacts on those affected by increased costs and the difficult decisions to be made regarding the provision of food, heating and other essential purchases that can lead to money worries and debt. The Government was asked to act to help and support those in need.

Other members addressed the Council on the impact and consequences to Manchester resident's lives resulting from the cost of living increase, increases in inflation and overall reductions in living standards. To ensure the experiences of those affected is not lost, a Manchester Cost of Living Crisis report will be produced and delivered to No10 and No11 Downing Street for the Prime Minister and the Chancellor to read to help them both to understand the negative consequences of reducing the finances to those in need and the importance of taking action to address this as soon as possible.

The Leader of the Council responded to a question regarding the use of pre-payment meters and the suggestion that energy companies be requested to freeze outstanding debts until energy prices had significantly reduced. The Leader stated that the 'UK Won't Pay' national campaign would be joined to support the proposals to introduce a freeze on the energy price cap, investigate solutions to the energy crisis, scrap the increase in national insurance, introduce the reregulation of energy pricing and investigate energy companies on price hikes in energy prices. All members of the council were invited to show their support.

CC/20/25. Lord Mayor's Special Business - Retiring Members

The Lord Mayor informed the Council that six Councillors would not be seeking re-election in May 2022 and thanked them for their contribution to the Council and the residents they represent. The Councillors not seeking re-election were:

Sameem Ali
Rosa Battle
Ben Clay
John Farrell
Mary Monaghan; and
Rebecca Moore.

CC/20/26. Minutes

Decision

The Minutes of the Council (budget) meeting and two extraordinary meetings held on 4 March 2022 were approved as correct records and signed by the Lord Mayor.

CC/20/27. Notice of Motion - Serving the Public

Last month this Council agreed the budget for the coming budget year. The budget was based on providing services to our residents and ensuring our residents who are most in need receive the support and best services we can provide for them.

Setting the budget is only the start of the process and we rely on our employees for the actual delivery.

Our Council working together with our Trade Union partners have supported our workforce in the face of an exceedingly difficult two years of the pandemic. Council employees have worked throughout the pandemic, whether office workers continuing to deliver from home or the huge numbers of frontline workers who continued to deliver vital services face to face in our resident's homes, on our streets and across all of our city.

Our workforce has not had it easy over the past 12 years, suffering from vicious funding cuts by the Tories, enabled at first by their compliant LibDem coalition partners, leaving Manchester City Council no option but to make cuts to services and reducing our workforce.

Council employees faced the brunt of these cuts and service reductions alongside continued year on year pay settlements that amounted to a pay freeze at best. Manchester City Council says a heartfelt thank you to all its employees for their contribution in supporting the City during the pandemic.

Elsewhere, front line workers of all kinds have also contributed massively during the pandemic, including public transport drivers, food deliveries, shop workers and many more all here in Manchester delivering for our residents.

Manchester City Council says a big thank you to all employees working for the public for their contribution in supporting the City during the pandemic. Aiding all this work has been everyone involved with the Voluntary Sector who have been outstanding during the pandemic in providing food, support, and company to our residents.

While we regret the government policies that make them necessary, our city's Food Banks have worked tremendously hard to support those hardest hit by the economic failures of the Conservative Government. Manchester City Council says a big thank you to all in the Voluntary Sector for their contribution in supporting the City during the pandemic.

Council employees keeping our city going and supporting our communities. Public Sector employees delivering for our residents. All this followed by the pandemic and the failed austerity agenda of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats and still our

staff continue to deliver at the highest standards and go and above and beyond to support the community that they work and live in.

This Council moves a vote of thanks in recognition of all their hard work and dedication through these most trying of times.

Motion proposed and seconded:

Resolution

The motion was put to Council and voted on and the Lord Mayor declared that it was carried unanimously.

Decision

This Council moves a vote of thanks to council employees and the voluntary sector, in recognition of all their hard work and dedication through these most trying of times.

(A personal interest was declared by Councillors: Appleby, Connolly, Hassan, Nunney and Andrews for the reason that each is a member of a trade union.

CC/20/28. Notice of Motion - Road Safety and Children

Manchester City Council has declared 2022 the Year of the Child and is committed to doing all we can to enable children to have a safe and active childhoods in our City.

This Council notes our commitment to enabling children and their families to walk and cycle to school and parks, and across the City, and the significant funds already committed to this.

Further, we will:

1. Develop a programme of auditing school and park entrance points, to be completed within the next eighteen months, to ensure our records for these are up to date with a mechanism for regularly updating this.
2. Formulate a strategy to create safe crossing points for each of the school and park entrances over a precise timescale to be agreed with the Executive Member for the Environment, but with a view to the work being completed within the next 8 years;
3. Ensure that safe crossing points are an integral part of the Council's Active Travel Strategy which is currently being developed.
4. Lobby central government for funding to enable this plan to be achieved as quickly as possible.
5. Lobby Highways England to prioritise schemes and spending that improve pedestrian and cycle safety in the major road network.

Motion proposed and seconded:

Resolution

The motion was put to Council and voted on and the Lord Mayor declared that it was carried unanimously.

Decision

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3. Ensure that safe crossing points are an integral part of the Council's Active Travel Strategy which is currently being developed.
4. Lobby central government for funding to enable this plan to be achieved as quickly as possible.
5. Lobby Highways England to prioritise schemes and spending that improve pedestrian and cycle safety in the major road network.

CC/20/29. Proceedings of the Executive

The proceedings of the Executive on 16 February and 16 March 2022 were submitted.

Decision

To receive the minutes of the Executive held on 16 February and 16 March 2022.

CC/20/30. Questions to Executive Members and Others under Procedural Rule 23

Councillor White responded to a question from Councillor Wheeler regarding housing within Piccadilly Ward.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Wills regarding progress on the Parsonage Road safer streets project.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Wills regarding arrangements for the repair of pavements.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Nunney regarding the placement of new litter bins in the city.

Councillor White responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding impact of the publishing of financial viability statements on the number of affordable homes delivered through planning applications.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding flood mitigation measures.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding local councillor representation on planning applications.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding off road parking spaces to flats in new developments.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding complaints received regarding micro asphalt resurfacing.

Councillor White responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding affordable housing within residential developments.

Councillor Akbar responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding maintenance charges on the New Islington estate.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding free waste collections to prevent fly tipping.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding expectations from a car parking scheme in Ancoats.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding the parking permit arrangements for Eastlands Residents.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding street lighting.

Councillor Akbar responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding parcel theft.

Councillor Akbar responded to a question from Councillor Good regarding parks within Beswick.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Hilal regarding signage, enforcement and traffic phasing to and from Princess Parkway.

Councillor Akbar responded to a question from Councillor Stanton regarding on funding arrangements for the Didsbury Library and war memorial grounds

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Chambers regarding street cleaning arrangements in Withington.

CC/20/31. Scrutiny Committees

The minutes of the following Scrutiny Committee meetings were submitted:

Communities and Equalities 8 February and 8 March 2022
Resources & Governance 8 February and 8 March 2022
Health 9 February and 9 March 2022
Children and Young People 9 February and 9 March 2022
Environment and Climate Change 10 February and 10 March 2022
Economy 10 February and 10 March 2022

Decision

To receive those minutes.

CC/20/32. Proceedings of Committees

The minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

- Audit Committee – 15 February 2022
- Licensing Committee – 7 March 2022
- Planning and Highways Committee – 17 February 2022 and 17 March 2022
- Standards Committee – 17 March 2022
- Personnel Committee – 16 February 2022 and 16 March 2022, and in particular, to consider:

PE/22/02 Creation of a new post - Director of Neighbourhood Delivery and the redesignation of the existing post of Director of Policy, Performance and Reform to Assistant Chief Executive

The Committee:-

- Recommends to Council the creation of new post, Director of Neighbourhood Delivery at senior salary grade SS4 Grade (£98,592 to £108,853).

and;

PE/22/06 Pay Policy Statement 2022/23

- Note the content of the draft Pay Policy Statement and commend it for approval by the Council at its meeting on 30 March 2022.
- Note the organisation's Pay and Grading Structure for the financial year 2022/23 appended to the Pay Policy Statement and commend it for approval by the Council at its meeting on 30 March 2022.
(See minute number CC/22/33 below.)

Decision

1. To receive those minutes submitted.

2. To approve the creation of new post, Director of Neighbourhood Delivery at senior salary grade SS4 Grade (£98,592 to £108,853).

CC/20/33. Draft Pay Policy Statement

Consideration was given the report of the Director Human Resources and Organisational Development that presented the draft Manchester City Council Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23. The statement is cognisant of the organisational context and the impact of the 2022/23 budget. It sets out the direction of travel in relation to pay for Manchester's officers for the year ahead in line with the organisational priorities. The statement has been developed to comply with the legal requirement set out under section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 and takes account of other relevant legislative requirements. The Statement also includes information on the Council's 'Gender Pay Gap' and work to proactively promote workforce equality, in accordance with the requirement to carry out Gender Pay Reporting set out within The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Decision

To approve the draft Pay Policy and note the organisation's Pay and Grading Structure for the financial year 2022/23, as appended to the Pay Policy Statement in the report submitted.

CC/20/34. Key Decisions Report

The Council considered the report of the City Solicitor on key decisions that have been taken in accordance with the urgency provisions in the Council's Constitution.

Decision

To note the report.