

Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 4 October 2023

Present:

The Right Worshipful, the Lord Mayor Councillor Dar – in the Chair

Councillors:

Andrews, Abdullatif, Akbar, Azra Ali, Ahmed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Amin, Appleby, Bano, Bayunu, Bell, Brickell, Bridges, Butt, Chambers, Chohan, Collins, Connolly, Craig, Curley, Evans, Flanagan, Fletcher, Foley, Gartside, Good, Green, Grimshaw, Hacking, Hassan, Hewitson, Hilal, Hitchen, Holt, Hughes, Hussain, Igbon, Ilyas, Iqbal, Johns, Johnson, T Judge, Kamal, Karney, Kilpatrick, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, Leech, J Lovecy, Lynch, Lyons, Marsh, McCaul, McHale, Midgley, Moran, Noor, Northwood, Nunney, Ogunbambo, Rahman, Rawlins, Rawson, Razaq, Reeves, Reid, Riasat, Richards, I Robinson, T Robinson, Sadler, M Sharif Mahamed, Sheikh, Shilton Godwin, Simcock, Stogia, Taylor, Wheeler, Wiest, Whiston, White, Wills, Wilson and Wright

CC/23/65 The Lord Mayors Announcements and Urgent Business Death of Former Councillor Audrey Jones

The Lord Mayor invited all those present to stand for a minute silence in memory of former Councillor Audrey Jones. Audrey Jones had served as a Councillor for Withington Ward 1978 – 2008 and was Lord Mayor 2003-2004 and was made an Honorary Alderman in July 2008.

CC/23/66 The Lord Mayor's Announcements and Special Business - Morocco and Libya earthquakes and flooding

The Lord Mayor invited those present at the meeting to observe a minute's silence in memory of the lives lost following the recent earthquakes and flooding in Morocco and Libya.

CC/23/67 The Lord Mayor's Announcements and Special Business – Constitutional and Nomination Committee minutes

The Lord Mayor informed the Council that she had agreed to the submission of the minutes of the Constitutional and Nomination Committee held on 4 October 2023.

CC/23/68 Minutes

Decision

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Lord Mayor.

CC/23/69 Notice of Motion - Call for a General Election now

Councillor Craig submitted the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Karney: -

Since 2010, Manchester City Council has seen its budget decimated, losing the equivalent of £428 million a year. 13 years of cuts, the most intense and unfair cuts happening to local Government during the Coalition years of 2010-15 have been followed by the Tories mismanagement of the economy. Many local councils across the country are facing the prospect of going bust.

The last 13 years have seen an unprecedented decline in living standards and an increase in the number of children living in poverty. The House of Commons Library cites and increase of over 500,000 children living in poverty between 2011 and 2017/18. This has only got worse through the Cost-of-Living Crisis with the disastrous freezing of LHA and other benefits.

Public Services have been cut to the bone, and schools and hospitals are literally crumbling. The Coalition Government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, followed by the Conservative Governments short sighted vision for the education of our children, has now 13 years later, to outdated, dilapidated, crumbling and unsafe schools throughout the country. The recent RAAC scandal is one example of the short-sightedness of the Coalition Government's cancellation of the successful Building Schools for the Future, and the Prime Minister further cutting budgets to rebuild schools when he was Chancellor.

We call on every member of the council to condemn the Lib Dem/Tory coalition government for cutting the Building Schools for the Future programme back in 2010. Therefore, this Council resolves to call on the Conservative Government to end 13 years of pain and chaos by calling for a General Election Now.

The Lord Mayor informed Council that Councillor Craig had accepted the amendment submitted by Councillor Johnson and seconded by Councillor Bayunu prior to the meeting, and that it now formed part of the substantive motion.

The amended motion was put to the Council as the substantive motion and the Lord Mayor declared it was carried unanimously.

Resolution

This Council resolves to call on the Conservative Government to end 13 years of pain and chaos by calling for a General Election Now.

CC/23/70 Notice of Motion - Call on the council to become a Co-operative Council

Councillor Hughes submitted the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Reid: -

The Council notes that there are nearly 7,000 independent cooperative businesses across the UK, each owned and democratically run by their customers, employees, suppliers or members of their local community. Today, the co-operative movement is a significant part of the UK's economy, growing by 21% to £33billion, and outperforming the economy as a whole during the recent recession. The number of people who own and control the UK's cooperatives has grown by to 17.5m - nearly a quarter of the UK's population. From credit unions to community allotments – the rise in co-operative ownership is a significant development for the UK's business sector, meaning that the number of co-op members continues to outstrip the number of shareholders in the UK. This Council believes: -

- That the co-operative model provides a sustainable way of providing local government services that empower residents, service users and employees, giving them a fair share and an equal say.
- Local Councils up and down the country have already put these values into practice in a number of ways, for example developing the co-operative sector, resident and employee-owned companies and co-operative schools and colleges. Our social value and ethical procurement policies for all of our contracts has been the envy of many other local authorities and a clear co-operative policy. Not least this has been put into place in the contracts we have tendered for, not least the construction of the Coop Live where many local apprentices have been employed.
- That the Council has the opportunity to “choose cooperative” when considering the future of local services, giving residents and communities more of a say in their area.

Therefore, we call on the Council to become a Co-operative Council by: -

(1) Working to incorporate co-operative values and principles when planning services and in its engagement with local residents.

(2) Ask the Council's scrutiny function to scrutinise the Council's engagement with the co-operative and mutual sector in Manchester and in doing so look to make further recommendations for its potential growth.

(3) Requesting that Officers consider how to improve engagement with local cooperatives, for example through stakeholder events.

(4) Requesting Officers to explore the setting up of a community asset transfer fund, so that local communities can own and protect their own assets.

(5) Auditing our contractors and suppliers on how many meet the FairTax Mark standards, pay the Living Wage and continue with and expand our social value and ethical procurement policies and meet appropriate standards on apprenticeships.

(6) Protecting residents by always working hard to connect residents to jobs and opportunities, and through support on help to work schemes and on tackling poverty

and the crisis of the cost-of-living increases.

(7) Requesting that Officers explore how the Council can support the possibility of supporting a great number of local Co-operatives, social enterprises and credit unions.

(8) Supporting the announcement that across Greater Manchester £750,000 will be made available to grow the inclusive economy with more co-operatives and social enterprises.

(9) Setting up a working group with the Executive Member to look at what more we can do.

On the motion being put to the vote, the Lord Mayor declared it carried.

Resolution

This Council resolves to become a Co-operative Council by: -

1. Working to incorporate co-operative values and principles when planning services and in its engagement with local residents.
2. Ask the Council's scrutiny function to scrutinise the Council's engagement with the co-operative and mutual sector in Manchester and in doing so look to make further recommendations for its potential growth.
3. Requesting that Officers consider how to improve engagement with local cooperatives, for example through stakeholder events.
4. Requesting Officers to explore the setting up of a community asset transfer fund, so that local communities can own and protect their own assets.
5. Auditing our contractors and suppliers on how many meet the FairTax Mark standards, pay the Living Wage and continue with and expand our social value and ethical procurement policies and meet appropriate standards on apprenticeships.
6. Protecting residents by always working hard to connect residents to jobs and opportunities, and through support on help to work schemes and on tackling poverty and the crisis of the cost-of-living increases.
7. Requesting that Officers explore how the Council can support the possibility of supporting a great number of local Co-operatives, social enterprises and credit unions.
8. Supporting the announcement that across Greater Manchester £750,000 will be made available to grow the inclusive economy with more co-operatives and social enterprises.

9. Setting up a working group with the Executive Member to look at what more we can do.

CC/23/71 Notice of Motion – Significantly Expand the use of Selective Licensing

Councillor Bayunu submitted the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Wiest: -

This motion asks Manchester City Council to use the full extent of its powers to improve conditions for renters in Manchester.

In 2020, Manchester City Council launched a revised Private Rented Sector Strategy with aim to see “Manchester’s Private Rented Sector provide a high quality, low carbon, affordable and sustainable offer so that Manchester’s residents have a good choice of quality homes in clean, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods.”

We are midway through the delivery of this ambition and yet across the city in wards from north to south, east to west, we continue to see our residents live in appalling conditions. Overcrowded and in poor state of repair.

One of the actions we have taken is to introduce Selective Licencing.

‘Selective licensing’ is a licence scheme which requires all private landlords operating within a designated area to license any privately rented property within that area.

To date, we have introduced Selective Licencing in small sections of a handful of wards.

Currently only small sections of the following wards are being served:

May 2022 – April 2027

- Ben Street: Clayton and Openshaw
- Hyde Road: Gorton and Abbey Hey
- The Ladders: Gorton and Abbey Hey
- Trinity: Harpurhey

August 2023 – August 2028

- Matthews Lane, Levenshulme
- Great Western Street/Claremont Rd, Moss Side and Whalley Range
- Laidon/Dickenson Rd & Birch Lane, Rusholme
- The Royals, Longsight

Yet some of our residents living within the past schemes reported long delays in their requests for support, infrequent inspections, and landlords indifferent to the requirements the licences place upon them.

This Council notes: -

That the areas covered by Selective Licencing in the city represent a tiny proportion of the housing in Manchester that could be under the control of the city's Selective Licencing Team.

And

As ALL the revenue raised by the licences is used to monitor and administrate the scheme, this also represents a tiny proportion of the money that could be available to ensure that this Team has the proper resources to do their job.

This Council is also aware that: -

Liverpool City Council has been able to bring around 80% of its eligible housing into its Selective Licencing Scheme. The money raised means that their Selective Licencing Team is able to offer a robust and effective service to their residents.

This Council therefore resolves to extend the reach of Selective Licencing by:

- (1) Asking national government for permission to extend landlord Licencing city wide.
- (2) Asking the officers responsible for the current and past schemes to provide a report to council of its strengths and weaknesses with a summary of the threats and opportunities for expansion.
- (3) Extending the duration of current schemes and revisiting past schemes should evidence emerge that need has not been or is not being met.
- (4) Committing to reaching the target of 100% of properties eligible to have been involved in a Selective Licencing Scheme by 2030.

Councillor White moved an amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Appleby, as follows: -

This motion asks Manchester City Council to use the full extent of its powers to improve conditions for renters in Manchester.

In 2020, Manchester City Council launched a revised Private Rented Sector Strategy with aim to see:

“Manchester’s Private Rented Sector provide a high quality, low carbon, affordable and sustainable offer so that Manchester’s residents have a good choice of quality homes in clean, safe and vibrant neighbourhoods.”

This strategy has now been updated by our ambitious Housing Strategy for the City, updated, and agreed in July 2022. ~~We are midway through the delivery of this ambition and yet across.~~

In the city in wards from north to south, east to west, we continue to see our residents live in appalling conditions. Overcrowded and in poor state of repair. The need to

tackle rogue landlords is a key priority and never been more important for the approx. 90,000 households living in the private rented sector.

One of the actions we have taken is to introduce Selective Licensing.

'Selective licensing' is a licence scheme which requires all private landlords operating within a designated area to license any privately rented property within that area.

The council also has mandatory HMO licensing across the city, which means that any HMO with 5 or more bedrooms has to have a landlord license – this means an additional 2,209 houses across the city have landlord license – and gives the council additional powers to tackle rogue landlords and improve housing conditions for tenants.

~~To date, we have introduced Selective Licensing in small sections of a handful of wards.~~

In addition to the mandatory HMO licensing, since 2017, the council has introduced 13 selective licensing schemes in 11 different wards all across the city.

1,547 licenses were issued in the first four selective licensing schemes in Moston, Crumpsall, Moss Side and Old Moat.

~~Currently only small sections of the following wards are being served:~~

These schemes are now live in the following wards:

May 2022 – April 2027

- Ben Street: Clayton and Openshaw
- Hyde Road: Gorton and Abbey Hey
- The Ladders: Gorton and Abbey Hey
- Trinity: Harpurhey

1,018 licenses have been issued to date in these 4 areas

August 2023 – August 2028

- Matthews Lane, Levenshulme
- Great Western Street/Claremont Rd, Moss Side and Whalley Range
- Laindon/Dickenson Rd & Birch Lane, Rusholme
- The Royals, Longsight

Although early in the 5- year designation and licensing period, over 200 licenses have already been issued in these 5 new selective licensing areas in these 4 wards.

Therefore, across the 13 selective licensing schemes, and mandatory HMO licensing, we have issued nearly 5,000 licenses to date to help tackle rogue landlords and improve housing conditions for tenants.

~~Yet some of our residents living within the past schemes reported long delays in their requests for support, infrequent inspections, and landlords indifferent to the requirements the licences place upon them.~~

Selective licensing is one tool that the council has to tackle poor landlords and improve housing conditions. All those renting in the private rental sector can get assistance with housing issues from the council, even if their landlord doesn't have a license. Under the Housing Act 2004, the council can enforce against various housing standards in regards to damp, mould, excessive cold, gas and electrical safety and general levels of disrepair in the property. This doesn't require a license.

Selective, and HMO mandatory licensing is another very important way we can raise standards in the private rented sector, by inspecting properties, and getting landlords to comply with their license. During Covid-19, inspections had to be paused, but they are now fully back and operational and we pro-actively inspect 50% of houses with a license and inspect other licensed homes where complaints are raised by tenants.

This Council notes:-

~~That the areas covered by Selective Licensing in the city represent a tiny proportion of the housing in Manchester that could be under the control of the city's Selective Licensing Team.~~

That a motion on landlord licensing was passed by the council in February 2022, and agreed that the council would go further and faster to introduce more areas for selective licensing all over the city.

And

~~As all the revenue raised by the licences is used to monitor and administrate the scheme, this also represents a tiny proportion of the money that could be available to ensure that this Team has the proper resources to do their job.~~

This Council is also aware that: -

Other cities and areas have introduced selected licensing – however, a robust case has to be made to introduce these schemes against a strict criteria set by government. Until recently, secretary of state approval had to be obtained to go beyond licensing 20% of the private rented stock in the city. However, this approval process is now devolved to the Mayor at Greater Manchester level – and Manchester will continue to monitor how we best deliver further selective licensing across the city to ensure that we continue to tackle issues with rogue landlords and tackle issues with the poorest level and quality of private rented housing.

~~Liverpool City Council has been able to bring around 80% of its eligible housing into its Selective Licensing Scheme. The money raised means that their Selective Licensing Team is able to offer a robust and effective service to their residents.~~

Since 2017, the council has issued 1,000s of enforcement and improvement notices, inspected 1,000s of properties, and issued nearly £1 million worth of fines through

Civil Penalty Notices to all private rented sector landlords, including those in our various licensing schemes, both selective and mandatory HMO licenses. We have also pursued prosecution cases through the courts for the very worst offending landlords, and these have been highlighted in the media.

This Council therefore resolves to extend the reach of Selective Licensing by:

~~(1) Request that the Executive ask national government for permission to extend landlord Licensing city wide.~~

1) Recommending to the Executive the acceleration of the roll out of further selective licensing schemes all across the city, and liaising further with the Mayor of Greater Manchester about extending our ability to selectively license more than 20% of our private rented stock

~~(2) Request that the Executive ask for a report ask the officers responsible for the current and past schemes to provide a report to council of its strengths and weaknesses with a summary of the threats and opportunities for expansion.~~

2) Noting the regular evaluation reports provided by council officers to the Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee in recent years, and look forward to the next evaluation report that is due to be presented to the committee in December 2023. This report will also propose further and new areas for selective licensing across the city.

~~(3) Request that the Executive extend the duration of current schemes and revisiting past schemes should evidence emerge that need has not been or is not being met.~~

3) Noting that Selective Licensing Schemes cannot be extended beyond their 5-year designation. If required, a new scheme in the same area can be proposed, subject to another 10-week public consultation and the Executive will consider that in full as part of the evaluation process for all schemes, both previous and current.

~~(4) Request that the Executive commit to reaching the target of 100% of properties eligible to have been involved in a Selective Licensing Scheme by 2030.~~

4) Recommending to the Executive that they should continue to use all means possible, with selective and mandatory HMO licensing, and other means provide for in the Housing Act 2004, to tackle rogue landlords and improve housing conditions for all our tenants. All our residents deserve to live in a safe, secure, affordable and sustainable home.

The amendment was put to the Council and the Lord Mayor declared that it was carried.

The amended motion was put to the Council as the substantive motion and the Lord Mayor declared it was carried.

Resolution

This Council resolves to extend the reach of Selective Licensing by:

1. Recommending to the Executive the acceleration of the roll out of further selective licensing schemes all across the city, and liaising further with the Mayor of Greater Manchester about extending our ability to selectively license more than 20% of our private rented stock.
2. Noting the regular evaluation reports provided by council officers to the Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee in recent years and look forward to the next evaluation report that is due to be presented to the committee in December 2023. This report will also propose further and new areas for selective licensing across the city.
3. Noting that Selective Licensing Schemes cannot be extended beyond their 5-year designation. If required, a new scheme in the same area can be proposed, subject to another 10-week public consultation and the Executive will consider that in full as part of the evaluation process for all schemes, both previous and current.
4. Recommending to the Executive that they should continue to use all means possible, with selective and mandatory HMO licensing, and other means provide for in the Housing Act 2004, to tackle rogue landlords and improve housing conditions for all our tenants. All our residents deserve to live in a safe, secure, affordable and sustainable home.

CC/23/72 Notice of Motion - Against the Closure of Staffed Ticket Offices

Councillor Bayunu submitted the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Nunney: -

- This Tory Government is again taking action to worsen the lives of ordinary working people already facing a cost-of-living crisis, by denying them widespread and easy access to the purchase of rail products and best value fares through the proposed closure of ticket offices.

These proposals also place many working people at risk of redundancy and there are no safeguards in place for future job security on our rail networks.

The announcement to carry out a public consultation within such a short time frame was farcical and clearly demonstrates how little interest this government has in the opinions of the majority of people in this country.

This Council is aware that:-

There are a range of products and services available at the ticket office, which may not be available from Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs). This includes refunds, season ticket changes, ranger and rover tickets, bus connections, park and ride, group save, disabled persons discount, season tickets over one month in length, advance fares, rail card purchases, off-peak tickets before 9.30am, changes to ticket

classes, seat reservations, cycle reservations, photocards for season tickets, scholar tickets, sleeper bookings and car parking.

Using TVMs is a one-sided process, there is no interaction between customer and retailer like there is in the ticket office. In contrast, ticket office staff can ask customers questions about their journey and requirements to ensure they get the right ticket for their journey and can offer a range of routes and classes.

Many TVMs do not take cash, or permit a part cash, part card payment. Given that people on lower incomes and older and disabled people are more likely to use cash, these groups stand to be disproportionately affected by ticket office closures and may find it difficult to travel as a result.

Unlike ticket office staff, TVMs do not automatically offer passengers the cheapest ticket for their journey, or clearly explain restrictions on certain fares, such as operator-specific tickets.

Ticket Office staff also are best placed to sign post and safeguard facilities and other support for passengers with disabilities/accessibility or other equalities related needs.

Ticket office closures would cause a significant worsening of the facilities and support offered to disabled, deaf and older people. Already, disabled people face numerous barriers in accessing the rail network and are three times less likely to travel by rail than non-disabled people. Twenty-two percent of the population had a disability in 2020/2 and since 2002/3 the number of people reporting a disability has increased by 3.8million (+35%).

This Council notes: -

That there has been overwhelming opposition to ticket office closures from disabled people's organisations, including Disability Rights UK, National Federation of the Blind UK, Transport for All, RNIB, RNID, Guide Dogs, Scope, Thomas Pocklington Trust, Winvisible, Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People and the MS Society.

That disabled people are much less likely than non-disabled people to have access to the internet, and therefore online ticketing is not accessible for many.

That there is substantial demand for the ticket office. While the Government says that 'only' 12% of tickets are sold at ticket offices, in 2022/23, there were 1.5 billion passenger journeys, which equates to around 180 million journeys being facilitated by ticket offices.

The presence of staff is vital for ensuring the railway is accessible to all.

Staffed ticket offices have an important role in supporting passenger safety and security. Ticket offices provide a place of safety for both staff and passengers.

Ticket office staff are trained and experienced in dealing with difficult incidents and the presence of staff deters abusive and anti-social behaviour.

Ticket office staff provide support and assistance to passengers during times of disruption or in response to emergencies and their role often includes carrying out safety and security checks at the station throughout the day.

We further note that:

Passenger watchdogs give us a consistent theme emerging from research, which is that passengers like and value the presence of staff. Having staffed ticket offices supports passenger perceptions and feelings around safety, and closing ticket offices could lead to passengers no longer feeling safe when travelling.

At the House of Commons debate on 6 July, 2023. Our MP, Afzal Khan for Manchester, Gorton gave this plea for our residents.

"The announced closure of 45 railway ticket offices across Greater Manchester, including at Levenshulme and Gorton stations, will be to the detriment of my constituents who depend on them. Just when we should be encouraging travel by rail to reduce our carbon footprint, this measure will push people away from our great British railways. We should be trying to make train travel easier, cheaper and more accessible, so why are the Government acting against the interests of the public?"

As a Council who declared a climate emergency in 2019 and with a commitment to being Zero Carbon by 2038, this Council expresses gratitude to our local MP for standing up for local people in Parliament and for the climate.

Therefore, this Council commits to: -

- (1) Sending a message of solidarity to the RMT, TSSA, and all unions and other organisations who are coordinating action to oppose these measures.
- (2) Thanking all Manchester Councillors who took action coordinated by the unions and other organisations.
- (3) Using all resources at our disposal to raise awareness amongst our residents about how they can continue take action against these measures, including:
- (4) Sending clear messages about the impact of these measures on our city and residents through direct mail, press statements and billboards
- (5) Signposting people to any further online consultations at Libraries and other council owned facilities.
- (6) Working in partnership with all our Manchester MPs and across Greater Manchester, with the GMCA and our GM Mayor, Andy Burnham to oppose these measures.

Councillor Lyons moved an amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Hilal, as follows: -

This Tory Government is again taking action to worsen the lives of ordinary working people already facing a cost-of-living crisis, by denying them widespread and easy access to the purchase of rail products and best value fares through the proposed closure of ticket offices.

These proposals also place many working people at risk of redundancy and there are no safeguards in place for future job security on our rail networks.

The announcement to carry out a public consultation within such a short time frame was farcical and clearly demonstrates how little interest this government has in the opinions of the majority of people in this country.

This Council is aware that:-

There are a range of products and services available at the ticket office, which may not be available from Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs). This includes refunds, season ticket changes, ranger and rover tickets, bus connections, park and ride, group save, disabled persons discount, season tickets over one month in length, advance fares, rail card purchases, off-peak tickets before 9.30am, changes to ticket classes, seat reservations, cycle reservations, photocards for season tickets, scholar tickets, sleeper bookings and car parking.

Using TVMs is a one-sided process, there is no interaction between customer and retailer like there is in the ticket office. In contrast, ticket office staff can ask customers questions about their journey and requirements to ensure they get the right ticket for their journey and can offer a range of routes and classes.

Many TVMs do not take cash, or permit a part cash, part card payment. Given that people on lower incomes and older and disabled people are more likely to use cash, these groups stand to be disproportionately affected by ticket office closures and may find it difficult to travel as a result.

Unlike ticket office staff, TVMs do not automatically offer passengers the cheapest ticket for their journey, or clearly explain restrictions on certain fares, such as operator-specific tickets.

Ticket Office staff also are best placed to sign post and safeguard facilities and other support for passengers with disabilities/accessibility or other equalities related needs.

Ticket office closures would cause a significant worsening of the facilities and support offered to disabled, Deaf and older people. Already, disabled people face numerous barriers in accessing the rail network and are three times less likely to travel by rail than non-disabled people. Twenty-two percent of the population had a disability in 2020/2 and since 2002/3 the number of people reporting a disability has increased by 3.8million (+35%).

This Council notes: -

That there has been overwhelming opposition to ticket office closures from disabled people's organisations, including Disability Rights UK, National Federation of the Blind UK, Transport for All, RNIB, RNID, Guide Dogs, Scope, Thomas Pocklington Trust, Winvisible, Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People and the MS Society.

That disabled people are much less likely than non-disabled people to have access to the internet, and therefore online ticketing is not accessible for many.

That there is substantial demand for the ticket office. While the Government says that 'only' 12% of tickets are sold at ticket offices, in 2022/23, there were 1.5 billion passenger journeys, which equates to around 180 million journeys being facilitated by ticket offices.

The presence of staff is vital for ensuring the railway is accessible to all.

Staffed ticket offices have an important role in supporting passenger safety and security. Ticket offices provide a place of safety for both staff and passengers.

Ticket office staff are trained and experienced in dealing with difficult incidents and the presence of staff deters abusive and anti-social behaviour.

Ticket office staff provide support and assistance to passengers during times of disruption or in response to emergencies and their role often includes carrying out safety and security checks at the station throughout the day.

We further note that:

Passenger watchdogs give us a consistent theme emerging from research, which is that passengers like and value the presence of staff. Having staffed ticket offices supports passenger perceptions and feelings around safety, and closing ticket offices could lead to passengers no longer feeling safe when travelling.

~~At the House of Commons debate on 6 July, 2023. Our MP, Afzal Khan for Manchester, Gorton gave this plea for our residents.~~

~~"The announced closure of 45 railway ticket offices across Greater Manchester, including at Levenshulme and Gorton stations, will be to the detriment of my constituents who depend on them. Just when we should be encouraging travel by rail to reduce our carbon footprint, this measure will push people away from our great British railways. We should be trying to make train travel easier, cheaper and more accessible, so why are the Government acting against the interests of the public?"~~

Manchester is particularly badly hit, with threats to one of the busiest stations in the country with Manchester Piccadilly ticket office even forced to close. Local Labour Councillors across Gorton, Levenshulme, Withington, Burnage and East Didsbury (with support from Cllr Hilal) have been regularly lobbying to save their stations. Since the announcement of the closure of ticket offices, Manchester's Labour MPs, Greater Manchester's Labour Mayor, Manchester City Council Executive Members,

and Councillors have actively campaigned against closures from presence at local stations to encouraging responses to the consultation and working with community groups to threaten legal action.

~~As a Council who declared a climate emergency in 2019 and with a commitment to being Zero Carbon by 2038, this Council expresses gratitude to our local MP for standing up for local people in Parliament and for the climate.~~

Currently the consultation has closed and the Government must give certainty to staff, passengers and the public.

Therefore this Council commits to:-

- (1) ~~Sending~~ Continuing to send a message of solidarity to the RMT, TSSA, and all unions and other organisations who are coordinating action to oppose these measures
- (2) Thanking all Manchester Councillors who took action coordinated by Labour party, the unions and other organisations.
- (3) ~~Using all~~ Continue to resources at our disposal to raise awareness amongst our public discuss to our residents about how they can continue take action against these measures, and encourage them to continue lobbying the Government to reverse their plans including
- (4) ~~Sending clear messages about the impact of these measures on our city and residents through direct mail, press statements and billboards~~
- (5) ~~Signposting people to any further online consultations at Libraries and other council owned facilities.~~
- (6) Call on the Government to rethink their plans ~~Working~~ in partnership with all our Manchester MPs and across Greater Manchester, with the GMCA and our GM Mayor, Andy Burnham to oppose these measures.

The amendment was put to the Council and the Lord Mayor declared that it was carried.

The amended motion was put to the Council as the substantive motion and the Lord Mayor declared it was carried.

Resolution

This Council commits to: -

- (1) Continue to send a message of solidarity to the RMT, TSSA, and all unions and other organisations who are coordinating action to oppose these measures.

- (2) Thanking all Manchester Councillors who took action coordinated by Labour party, the unions and other organisations.
- (3) Continue to publicise to our residents about how they can continue take action against these measures and encourage them to continue lobbying the Government to reverse their plans
- (4) Call on the Government to rethink their plans working in partnership with all our Manchester MPs and across Greater Manchester, with the GMCA and our GM Mayor, Andy Burnham to oppose these measures.

(The Lord Mayor adjourned the meeting for ten minutes. The meeting resumed at 11.45am)

CC/23/73 Proceedings of the Executive

The proceedings of the Executive on 26 July and 13 September 2023 were submitted. The Council was asked to give particular consideration to the following recommendations:

Exe/23/70 Our Town Hall Project - Progress Update

The Executive recommend to Council approval of a capital budget increase of £29m for the project, funded by borrowing, to maintain progress with the construction works until the end of December 2023.

Exe/23/77 Capital Programme Monitoring P4 2023/24

The Executive recommends that the Council approve the following changes to the Council's capital programme: -

- Aviva Studios, Home of Factory International - a capital budget increase of £22.2m, funded by borrowing.
- Corporate Services - Our New Finance & HRODT System – a revenue budget increase of £17.4m, to be spread across 4 financial years, and funded from the Capital Fund reserve.
- Neighbourhoods – Manchester Aquatic Centre (MAC) – a capital budget increase of £0.640m, funded by borrowing.
- Growth and Development – Piccadilly Garden Design Phase – a capital budget increase of £0.782m, funded by borrowing.

Decisions

1. To receive the minutes of the Executive held on 26 July and 13 September 2023.
2. To approve a capital budget increase of £29m for the project, funded by borrowing, to maintain progress with the construction works until the end of December 2023.

3. To approve the following changes to the Council's capital programme:
- Aviva Studios, Home of Factory International - a capital budget increase of £22.2m, funded by borrowing.
 - Corporate Services - Our New Finance & HRODT System – a revenue budget increase of £17.4m, to be spread across 4 financial years, and funded from the Capital Fund reserve.
 - Neighbourhoods – Manchester Aquatic Centre (MAC) – a capital budget increase of £0.640m, funded by borrowing.
 - Growth and Development – Piccadilly Garden Design Phase – a capital budget increase of £0.782m, funded by borrowing.

CC/23/74 Questions to Executive Members and Others under Procedural Rule 23

Councillor Tom Robinson responded to a question from Councillor Green regarding the nature of the Council's work with the Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust.

Councillor Tom Robinson responded to a question from Councillor Reid regarding progress to ensure better access for our residents to gain access to NHS dentists across the city.

Councillor Igbon responded to a question from Councillor Nunney regarding plans for the number of new litter bins for the city.

Councillor Igbon responded to a question from Councillor Nunney Igbon regarding a procedure concerning the supervision of work being undertaken by Biffa in suppressing weed growth on footpaths

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Nunney regarding the Council's support to businesses to comply with new laws to ban single use plastics which came into force on 1st October 2023.

Councillor Tom Robinson responded to a question from Councillor Appleby regarding update Council on the Integrated Care Board's preparations for winter.

Councillor White responded to a question from Councillor Leech concerning viability assessments conducted Manchester on affordable homes.

Councillor Craig was not present to respond to a question from Councillor Leech regarding HS2 and responded separately after the meeting.

Councillor Akbar responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding the provision of Council Tax support.

Councillor Rahman responded to a question from Councillor Leech regarding GMP failing to provide accurate local crime stats on its website.

Councillor White responded to a question from Councillor Wheeler regarding notifying ward councillors of major planning developments in their ward.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Kilpatrick regarding gully cleaning arrangements.

Councillor Rahman responded to a question from Councillor Bayunu regarding policing arrangements for organised protests.

Councillor Rawlins responded to a question from Councillor Bayunu regarding requested consultation with residents on any proposed removal of trees.

CC/23/75 Scrutiny Committees

The minutes of the following Scrutiny Committee meetings were submitted:

- Economy and Regeneration – 18 July and 5 September 2023
- Communities and Equalities – 18 July and 5 September 2023
- Children and Young People – 19 July and 6 September 2023
- Health – 19 July and 6 September 2023
- Resources and Governance – 20 July and 24 August and 7 September 2023
- Environment, Climate Change and Neighbourhoods – 20 July and 7 September 2023

Decision

To receive those minutes submitted.

CC/23/76 Proceedings of Committees

The minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

- Audit Committee – 25 July and 19 September 2023
- Planning and Highways Committee – 27 July, 31 August and 21 September 2023
- Personnel Committee – 13 September 2023

The Council was asked to give particular consideration to the following recommendations from the minutes:

PE/23/9 Recruitment to the role of Director of Population Health and Wellbeing

The Committee request Council agree the recruitment for the role to be at its current substantive grading level of SS4 (£105,566 to £116,346), with the optional inclusion of a market rate supplement up to a fixed maximum of £5,000 to be applied at the discretion of the Director of HROD and Transformation (in discussion with the Chief Executive).

- Health and Wellbeing Board – 20 September 2023
- Constitutional and Nomination Committee – 4 October 2023

The Council was asked to give particular consideration to the following recommendations from the minutes:

CN/23/21 Appointments and Changes to Council Committee Membership

1. Recommend Council approve the amendments to committee appointments as follows:-

Committee	Member(s) to be added	Member(s) to be removed
Licensing Committee	Councillor Ludford	
Licensing and Appeals	Councillor Ludford	
Planning and Highways		Councillor Ludford
Audit		Councillor Stogia
Health		Councillor Stogia
Resources and Governance	Councillor Stogia	
Children and Young People	Councillor Marsh	

Decisions

1. To receive those minutes submitted.
2. To approve the recruitment for the role to be at its current substantive grading level of SS4 (£105,566 to £116,346), with the optional inclusion of a market rate supplement up to a fixed maximum of £5,000 to be applied at the discretion of the Director of HROD and Transformation (in discussion with the Chief Executive).
3. To approve the changes in appointments to Committees and panels of the Council, as detailed above.

CC/23/77 Review of Members Allowances - GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Consideration was given to the report of the City Solicitor that provided the Council with the report and recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in relation to the remuneration of the members of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Decisions

That Council:

1. Accept the recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel and agree payment of special responsibility allowances to the Manchester City Council Members appointed as Members, substitute Members, Chair and, where appointed, the vice-chair of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in the report, backdated to 1st April 2023.
2. Agrees to the indexation of the special responsibility allowances as recommended by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.
3. Instructs the City Solicitor to amend the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme set out in Part 7 of the Council's Constitution to give effect to the decision of Council.

CC/23/78 Appointment of an additional Independent Person for consideration of complaints against Members

Consideration was given to the report of the City Solicitor concerning the appointment of an additional Independent Person to assist the Council's Monitoring Officer in dealing with allegations that members of the Council have acted in breach of the Council's Code of Conduct

Decision

To agree to appoint William Goh as an Independent Person for period of four years starting 4 October 2023.

CC/23/79 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.

CC/23/80 Date of Council meeting March 2024

Decision

The Council agreed to change the date of the meeting of Council from 27 March 2024 to 20 March 2024.