

# MINUTES

**Meeting: GLA Oversight Committee**  
**Date: Wednesday 20 July 2016**  
**Time: 2.30 pm**  
**Place: Committee Room 5, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London, SE1 2AA**

Copies of the minutes may be found at <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/oversight>

**Present:**

Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman)  
Shaun Bailey AM  
Sian Berry AM  
Tom Copley AM  
Joanne McCartney AM  
Steve O'Connell AM  
Dr Onkar Sahota AM  
Navin Shah AM  
Peter Whittle AM

**In attendance:**

Leonie Cooper AM (for Agenda Item 12)

## **1 Apologies for Absence and Chairman's Announcements (Item 1)**

1.1 An apology for absence was received from Len Duvall AM, for whom Joanne McCartney AM attended as a substitute Member.

## **2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)**

2.1 **Resolved:**

**That the list of offices held by Assembly Members, as set out in the table at Agenda Item 2, be noted as disclosable pecuniary interests.**

### **3 Minutes (Item 3)**

#### **3.1 Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting of the GLA Oversight Committee held on 30 June 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record**

### **4 Summary List of Actions (Item 4)**

4.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

#### **4.2 Resolved:**

**That the outstanding actions arising from previous meetings of the GLA Oversight Committee be noted.**

### **5 Head of Paid Service Oral Update (Item 5)**

5.1 The Head of Paid Service reported that there were no items of additional business that required an oral update.

5.2 Navin Shah AM expressed concern about the recent failure of microphones in Committee Room 5 shortly before a meeting of the Regeneration Committee, reportedly as a result of flooding. The Committee heard that the result was Members and guests at the meeting having to share three roving microphones.

5.3 The Executive Director of Secretariat agreed to look into the cause and report back to the Committee.

### **6 Proposed Changes to the GLA Establishment - Mayor's Office (Item 6)**

6.1 The Committee received the report of the Head of Paid Service.

6.2 The Chairman highlighted the result of the proposed changes in the Mayor's Office as a net reduction of five posts and a saving of £119,000.

6.3 In response to questions from Members, the Chief of Staff confirmed that job descriptions for the Head of Advance and Senior Aide to the Mayor posts would be shared with the Committee; that recruitment would be in line with GLA recruitment policies, either internally first or externally, depending on the result of the formal consultation; that all the postholders would be entitled to a GLA pension.

6.4 The Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR & OD) confirmed that the previous structure included two similar positions to the Head of Advance

and Senior Aide to the Mayor posts, at a similar grade.

6.5 **Resolved:**

**That, subject to the comments made at the meeting and recorded above, the proposed changes to the establishment in the GLA (Mayor's Office) be noted.**

## **7 Proposed Changes to the GLA Establishment (Item 7)**

7.1 The Committee received the report of the Head of Paid Service.

7.2 **Resolved:**

**That the proposed changes to the establishment in the GLA be noted.**

## **8 Annual Governance Statement 2015-16 (Item 8)**

8.1 The Committee received the report of the Head of Paid Service and Executive Director of Resources.

8.2 **Resolved:**

**That the draft GLA Annual Governance Statement for 2015-16 be noted.**

## **9 Workforce Report (Item 9)**

9.1 The Committee received the report of the Head of Paid Service.

9.2 Navin Shah AM expressed disappointment at the low percentage of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff in the organisation and especially at management level, pointing out that 25% BAME staff in 2016 was lower than the 27% eight years earlier. Navin Shah AM requested that a practical and implementable action plan be prepared with clear targets.

9.3 The Assistant Director HR & OD acknowledged the need to increase BAME representation at all levels and agreed to provide the Committee with an action plan on BAME staff at its next meeting. The Committee noted that, to tackle issues such as a drop-off in the percentage of BAME candidates at shortlisting stage, recruiting managers were receiving training about unconscious bias and every team in the GLA was benefiting from Inclusive Leadership training, based on a PwC initiative. It was also noted that name-blind recruitment and gender-neutral applications forms were being introduced into the recruitment process by the autumn. The Assistant Director HR & OD confirmed that the statistics in the Workforce

Report related to employees, not interns or agency staff.

- 9.4 Sian Berry AM referred to the much higher turnover rates compared to the London Borough of Camden, where she was a serving councillor, and requested a wider range of benchmarking data on BAME and women employees. The Assistant Director HR & OD reported that turnover was always higher in the year of GLA elections, and that the GLA differed significantly from London boroughs in terms of its structure and reasons for turnover. The Assistant Director HR & OD agreed to provide additional benchmarking data on BAME and women employees in the next Workforce Report.
- 9.5 In response from a request from Peter Whittle AM, that use of the term BAME be reviewed to avoid categorising a diverse range of ethnicities as a single group, the Assistant Director HR & OD agreed to look at the issue.

9.6 **Resolved:**

**That, subject to the comments made at the meeting and recorded above, the Workforce Report be noted.**

## 10 People's Question Time (Item 10)

- 10.1 The Committee received the report of the Assistant Director of External Relations.
- 10.2 The Mayoral Director, External and International Affairs introduced the report, explaining that the next People's Question Time (PQT) event was proposed to take place at Brent Civic Centre on Thursday 3 November 2016, with Navin Shah AM chairing the meeting.
- 10.3 In discussion, the use of 'air quality' in the proposed agenda item of 'Air Quality and Environment' was questioned, with 'air pollution' suggested as an alternative.
- 10.4 The Committee noted the proposal for a different stage design from previous PQT events, with a more informal layout to make the event more engaging, and not including long rows of seats behind tables. The Committee asked the Mayoral Director, External and International Affairs to provide a note to the Committee when the proposed design had been prepared.
- 10.5 **Resolved:**
- (a) **That, subject to the comments made at the meeting and recorded above, the proposals for People's Question Time on Thursday 3 November 2016 at Brent Civic Centre, to be chaired by Navin Shah AM, be noted; and**
- (b) **That the future plans for People's Question Time locations and Chairs,**

**subject to further research into venues and formal consultation with the Assembly, be noted.**

## **11 Proposed Establishment of EU Exit Working Group (Item 11)**

11.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

11.2 The Chairman proposed that the EU Working Group be constituted with five Members – one Labour Group Member, one GLA Conservatives Group Member, one Green Party Group Member, one UKIP Group Member and the one ungrouped Member; that the following be appointed as Members: Len Duvall AM, Gareth Bacon AM, Caroline Russell AM, Peter Whittle AM and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM; that Len Duvall AM be appointed as Chair for the remainder of the 2016/17 year; that Gareth Bacon AM be appointed as Deputy Chairman for the remainder of the 2016/17 year; and that all other Members of party Groups be appointed as substitute Members for their relevant Group.

11.3 **Resolved:**

**(a) That an EU Exit Working Group be established, with the following terms of reference:**

- **To co-ordinate the work of the London Assembly's committees in relation to the United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union;**
- **To lead for the London Assembly in the Government's negotiations with the European Union to help to ensure that London's voice is heard;**
- **To consider the activities and approaches of other devolved administrations and relevant bodies across the United Kingdom in relation to the UK's vote to leave the EU, with a view to ensuring any consequential implications arising for London are taken into account; and**
- **To make recommendations to the Mayor, Government and any other relevant parties in relation to the UK's vote to leave the EU; and**

**(b) That the EU Exit Working Group be constituted with five Members, consisting of one Labour Group Member, one GLA Conservatives Group Member, one Green Party Group Member, one UKIP Group Member and the one ungrouped Member;**

**(c) That Len Duvall AM, Gareth Bacon AM, Caroline Russell AM, Peter Whittle AM and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM be appointed to the Working Group;**

- (d) **That Len Duvall AM be appointed as Chair and that Gareth Bacon AM be appointed as Deputy Chairman for the remainder of the 2016/17 year; and**
- (e) **That all other Members of party Groups be appointed as substitute Members for their relevant Group.**

## **12 Rapporteurship on Promoting Biodiversity in New Housing Developments (Item 12)**

- 12.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.
- 12.2 The Head of Scrutiny and Investigations explained the purpose of rapporteurships, as a means of enabling an individual Member to pursue an investigation on behalf of a committee. The Committee noted that the Housing Committee had considered the proposal and given cross-party support for the proposed rapporteurship; and that the Scrutiny Team had sufficient resources to support the work of the proposed rapporteur.
- 12.3 Leonie Cooper AM reported that she welcomed the support she had received from Andrew Boff AM, Chair of the Housing Committee and described how the building programme associated with the Mayor's housing ambitions would require attractive environments for residents as well as flora and fauna, which the rapporteurship could seek to influence.
- 12.4 The Committee noted in discussion that the potential for incorporating hedgehog runs, as well as habitats for other species in the design of developments, could be included in the review.
- 12.5 In response to a question from Shaun Bailey AM about the cost of promoting biodiversity in new housing developments, particularly with a target of 50% affordable homes, Leonie Cooper AM explained that incorporating environmentally-friendly design into developments was much cheaper than retrofitting, and that healthy environments would contribute to lower healthcare costs.
- 12.6 **Resolved:**  
  
**That Leonie Cooper AM be appointed as a rapporteur for the Housing Committee, to conduct an investigation into potential ways to improve biodiversity protection in new housing developments.**

## **13 Work Programme for the GLA Oversight Committee (Item 13)**

- 13.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

13.2 **Resolved:**

**That the work programme for the remainder of 2016-17 be noted.**

**14 Date of Next Meeting (Item 14)**

14.1 The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Thursday 22 September 2016 at 2.00pm in Committee Room 5.

**15 Any Other Business the Chairman Considers Urgent (Item 15)**

15.1 There were no items of urgent business.

**16 Close of Meeting**

16.1 The meeting ended at 3.01pm.

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Chairman

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Date

**Contact Officer:** Dale Langford, Principal Committee Manager; Telephone: 020 7983 4415;  
Email: dale.langford@london.gov.uk; Minicom: 020 7983 4458