

# MINUTES

**Meeting: London Assembly  
(Mayor's Question Time)**  
**Date: Monday 23 February 2015**  
**Time: 10.00 am**  
**Place: Chamber, 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/whole-assembly>

**Present:**

Roger Evans AM (Chairman)	Jenny Jones AM
Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair)	Stephen Knight AM
Tony Arbour AM	Kit Malthouse AM
Gareth Bacon AM	Joanne McCartney AM
John Biggs AM	Steve O'Connell AM
Andrew Boff AM	Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Victoria Borwick AM	Murad Qureshi AM
James Cleverly AM	Dr Onkar Sahota AM
Tom Copley AM	Navin Shah AM
Andrew Dismore AM	Valerie Shawcross CBE AM
Len Duvall AM	Richard Tracey AM
Nicky Gavron AM	Fiona Twycross AM
Darren Johnson AM	

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

- 1.1 There were no apologies for absence.
- 1.2 During the course of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed to the public gallery journalism students from City University London, politics students from AHA International and pupils from St Christopher's School, Camden.

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

- 2.1 The Assembly received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat.

### **2.2 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 London Assembly meetings held on 21 January 2015 (Mayor's Question Time) and 28 January 2015 (Plenary) be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as correct records.**

## **4 Final Draft Consolidated Budget 2015/16 (Item 4)**

### **Report of the Mayor (Item 4a)**

- 4.1 The Assembly received the Mayor's Final Draft Consolidated Budget 2015/16 for the GLA Group and an oral statement from the Mayor on the Budget. A transcript of the Mayor's oral statement is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2 Sir Edward Lister, Chief of Staff and Deputy Mayor for Policy and Planning, and Martin Clarke, Executive Director of Resources, were also in attendance for the statement and for the duration of the question and answer session.
- 4.3 At 10.04am, in accordance with Standing Order 2.12, the Chairman adjourned the meeting following a disturbance in the public gallery. The meeting resumed at 10.08am.

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**Questions to the Mayor (Item 4b)**

- 4.4 Assembly Members put questions to the Mayor on his Final Draft Consolidated Budget. The transcript of the questions put by Members and the Mayor's answers is attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 4.5 At 11.03am, in accordance with Standing Order 2.12, the Chairman adjourned the meeting following a disturbance in the public gallery. The meeting resumed at 11.04am.

**Consideration by the Assembly of the Mayor of London's Final Draft Consolidated Budget Proposals 2015/16 (Item 4c)**

- 4.6 Following the Mayor's departure, the Assembly debated the Mayor's Final Draft Consolidated Budget 2015/16.
- 4.7 The substantive motion before the Assembly was: "To approve the Final Draft Consolidated Budget for 2015/16 with or without amendment."
- 4.8 During the course of the debate John Biggs AM referred to a letter from the Mayor to him as Chairman of the Assembly's Budget and Performance Committee. That letter was circulated to Assembly Members for information and is attached as **Appendix 3**.
- 4.9 A Formal Budget Amendment, presented on behalf of the London Assembly's Labour, Green Party and Liberal Democrat Groups, was moved by John Biggs AM and seconded by Darren Johnson AM and Stephen Knight AM (and is attached as **Appendix 4**).
- 4.10 Following debate and in accordance with Standing Order 6.6E(1), a named vote was taken on the Budget Amendment in the name of John Biggs AM.
- 4.11 The votes were cast as follows:

For the Amendment: John Biggs AM, Tom Copley AM, Andrew Dismore AM, Len Duvall AM, Nicky Gavron AM, Darren Johnson AM, Jenny Jones AM, Stephen Knight AM, Joanne McCartney AM, Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, Murad Qureshi AM, Dr Onkar Sahota AM, Navin Shah AM, Valerie Shawcross CBE AM, Fiona Twycross AM and Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair).

Against the Amendment: Tony Arbour AM, Gareth Bacon AM, Andrew Boff AM, Victoria Borwick AM, James Cleverly AM, Kit Malthouse AM, Steve O'Connell AM, Richard Tracey AM and Roger Evans AM (Chairman).

- 4.12 With 16 votes being cast in favour and 9 votes being cast against, the Budget Amendment did not receive the requisite two-thirds majority to amend the Mayor's budget proposals.

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4.13 A Formal Budget Amendment, presented on behalf of the London Assembly's Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green Party Groups, was moved by Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM and seconded by Valerie Shawcross CBE AM and Darren Johnson AM (and is attached as **Appendix 5**).

4.14 Following debate and in accordance with Standing Order 6.6E(1), a named vote was taken on the Budget Amendment in the name of Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM.

4.15 The votes were cast as follows:

For the Amendment: John Biggs AM, Tom Copley AM, Andrew Dismore AM, Len Duvall AM, Nicky Gavron AM, Darren Johnson AM, Jenny Jones AM, Stephen Knight AM, Joanne McCartney AM, Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, Murad Qureshi AM, Dr Onkar Sahota AM, Navin Shah AM, Valerie Shawcross CBE AM, Fiona Twycross AM and Jennette Arnold OBE AM (Deputy Chair).

Against the Amendment: Tony Arbour AM, Gareth Bacon AM, Andrew Boff AM, Victoria Borwick AM, James Cleverly AM, Kit Malthouse AM, Steve O'Connell AM, Richard Tracey AM and Roger Evans AM (Chairman).

4.16 Jenny Jones AM moved and Gareth Bacon AM seconded the following Budget Related Motion:

"This Assembly congratulates the winner of the Friends of the Earth 'Run on Sun' competition, Stoneydown Park primary school in Walthamstow, and the runner up, Dulwich Wood Primary school in Southwark. But we regret that more schools aren't benefitting from solar PV, and note that of the 200 London schools that have been retrofitted through the Mayor's RE:FIT programme or that are in the pipeline for works, not a single school has or is planning to fit solar PV.

We note that the government estimate that a typical school could accommodate a 25 kWp system generating an income of around £3,435 per year, with a payback period of 10-12 years and a further 8-10 years of revenue.

This Assembly notes that the Mayor's Final Draft Consolidated Budget for 2015-16 lacks any specific work streams to help schools in London install solar PV and asks that the Mayor of London investigates further funding streams that may be used to accelerate delivery.

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to strongly consider using some money in the 2015-16 budget to support schools installing solar PV panels."

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- 4.17 Following debate and upon being put to the vote, the Budget Related Motion in the name of Jenny Jones AM, namely:

**“This Assembly congratulates the winner of the Friends of the Earth ‘Run on Sun’ competition, Stoneydown Park primary school in Walthamstow, and the runner up, Dulwich Wood Primary school in Southwark. But we regret that more schools aren’t benefitting from solar PV, and note that of the 200 London schools that have been retrofitted through the Mayor’s RE:FIT programme or that are in the pipeline for works, not a single school has or is planning to fit solar PV.**

**We note that the government estimate that a typical school could accommodate a 25 kWp system generating an income of around £3,435 per year, with a payback period of 10-12 years and a further 8-10 years of revenue.**

**This Assembly notes that the Mayor’s Final Draft Consolidated Budget for 2015-16 lacks any specific work streams to help schools in London install solar PV and asks that the Mayor of London investigates further funding streams that may be used to accelerate delivery.**

**This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to strongly consider using some money in the 2015-16 budget to support schools installing solar PV panels.”**

was agreed unanimously.

- 4.18 Stephen Knight AM moved and John Biggs AM seconded the following Budget Related Motion:

“This Assembly notes the recent shift in the main source of Greater London Authority (GLA) funding from government grants to retained business rates.

This Assembly recognises that despite the benefits of recent reforms to the business rates system – which provide a greater financial incentive for the Mayor to promote economic growth in London – there remains great volatility and uncertainty in this key income source from year to year.

Within this context this Assembly is concerned by the Mayor’s stated intention to cut the GLA’s share of council tax by a further £19 (or six per cent) in 2016-17, of which £12 would arise from a planned reduction in the GLA’s contribution towards the cost of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This Assembly believes that the Mayor’s current plans will place unnecessary financial constraints on the next Mayoralty as well as dramatically restricting the future activity of the GLA, since a cut in the precept next year would recur every year thereafter and the scope to reverse this change is now limited to no more than 2 per cent of the GLA’s share of council

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tax, beyond which a costly local referendum would be triggered. This is a strategic decision for London and is best taken by a Mayor with a future in the civic leadership of our City rather than to be taken as a gesture by an outgoing Mayor with one foot out of the door.

This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to commit to freeze the GLA's share of council tax in 2016/17 in order to give the next Mayor the ability to use the additional income arising from the partial withdrawal of the Olympic precept to finance the future infrastructure needs of London, in particular the delivery of new affordable homes."

- 4.19 Following debate and upon being put to the vote, the Budget Related Motion in the name of Stephen Knight AM, namely:

**"This Assembly notes the recent shift in the main source of Greater London Authority (GLA) funding from government grants to retained business rates.**

**This Assembly recognises that despite the benefits of recent reforms to the business rates system – which provide a greater financial incentive for the Mayor to promote economic growth in London – there remains great volatility and uncertainty in this key income source from year to year.**

**Within this context this Assembly is concerned by the Mayor's stated intention to cut the GLA's share of council tax by a further £19 (or six per cent) in 2016-17, of which £12 would arise from a planned reduction in the GLA's contribution towards the cost of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.**

**This Assembly believes that the Mayor's current plans will place unnecessary financial constraints on the next Mayoralty as well as dramatically restricting the future activity of the GLA, since a cut in the precept next year would recur every year thereafter and the scope to reverse this change is now limited to no more than 2 per cent of the GLA's share of council tax, beyond which a costly local referendum would be triggered. This is a strategic decision for London and is best taken by a Mayor with a future in the civic leadership of our City rather than to be taken as a gesture by an outgoing Mayor with one foot out of the door.**

**This Assembly therefore calls on the Mayor to commit to freeze the GLA's share of council tax in 2016/17 in order to give the next Mayor the ability to use the additional income arising from the partial withdrawal of the Olympic precept to finance the future infrastructure needs of London, in particular the delivery of new affordable homes."**

was agreed (16 votes cast in favour, 9 votes cast against).

- 4.20 The Chairman then formally put the substantive motion, namely,

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“To approve the Final Draft Consolidated Budget 2015/16 without amendment”

- 4.21 Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was not agreed (9 votes cast in favour, 16 votes cast against).
- 4.22 The Chairman explained that, although the substantive motion had not been agreed, as no amendments to the Budget had been agreed by the requisite majority, and in accordance with Paragraph 8(5) of Schedule 6 to the GLA Act 1999 (as amended), the Assembly was deemed to have approved, without amendment, the Final Draft Consolidated Budget for 2015/16.
- 4.23 The Chairman confirmed that concluded the Assembly's consideration of the Final Draft Consolidated Budget for 2015/16 was concluded.

## **5 Mayor's Report (Item 5)**

### **5.1 Resolved:**

**That the Mayor's Report covering the period from 8 January to 9 February 2015 be noted.**

## **6 Questions to the Mayor (Item 6)**

### **6.1 Resolved:**

**That it be noted that written answers to all questions submitted to the meeting under the Mayor's Question Time procedure would be provided on 26 February 2015, as agreed by the Assembly at its meeting on 21 January 2015.**

## **7 Date of Next Meeting (Item 7)**

- 7.1 The Assembly noted that its next scheduled meeting would be the Plenary meeting which would take place at 10.00am on Wednesday 11 March 2015 in the Chamber, City Hall.

## **8 Any Other Business the Chairman Considers Urgent (Item 8)**

- 8.1 There was no urgent business requiring consideration.
- 8.2 The Chairman placed on record his thanks to the GLA's security staff and to the police for their assistance in dealing with the demonstrations outside City Hall and disturbances in the Chamber during the meeting.

## 9 Close of Meeting

9.1 The meeting closed at 12.14pm.

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Chairman

Date

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