

MINUTES

Meeting: Economy Committee
Date: Wednesday 20 January 2021
Time: 10.00 am
Place: Virtual Meeting

Copies of the minutes may be found at:

www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/economy

Present:

Léonie Cooper AM (Chair)
Shaun Bailey AM (Deputy Chairman)
Susan Hall AM
Dr Alison Moore AM
Murad Qureshi AM
Caroline Russell AM

Observers

Siân Berry AM
Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM

1 Apologies for Absence and Chair's Announcements (Item 1)

- 1.1 The Chair explained that, in accordance with Standing Order 8.2, Siân Berry AM and Caroline Pigeon MBE AM had been invited to attend the meeting as observers and participate in the discussion with invited guests at Item 6.
- 1.2 In accordance with Government regulations, the meeting was being held on a virtual basis, with Assembly Members and guests participating remotely.
- 1.3 The Clerk read a roll-call of Assembly Members who were participating. Apologies for absence were received from Unmesh Desai AM, for whom Dr Alison Moore AM attended as a substitute.

2 Declarations of Interests (Item 2)

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

2.2 **Resolved:**

- (a) 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.**
- (b) That it be noted that the following Members declared non-pecuniary interests, for reasons of transparency, in relation to Agenda Item 8, Models for Economic Recovery: Co-operatives and Universal Basic Income (UBI):**
 - (i) Murad Qureshi AM and Caroline Russell AM had signed a Cross Party Parliamentary and Local Government letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in support of UBI trials;**
 - (ii) Léonie Cooper AM, Murad Qureshi AM and Dr Alison Moore AM were members of the Co-operative party and sat as Labour and Co-operative Assembly Members; and**
 - (iii) Dr Alison Moore was a member of the North London Credit Union.**

3 Minutes (Item 3)

3.1 **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 be signed by the Chair 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 completed and outstanding actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee be noted.

5 Action Taken Under Delegated Authority (Item 5)

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

5.2 **Resolved:**

That the recent action taken by the Chair of the Economy Committee under delegated authority, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, namely to agree the Committee's report, *Has the Golden Goose become a Turkey? London's Christmas Economy and COVID-19*, be noted.

6 Models for Economic Recovery: Cooperatives and Universal Basic Income (Item 6)

6.1 The Committee received the report of the Executive Director of Secretariat as background to putting questions to invited guests on the role of co-operatives and Universal Basic Income (UBI) in London's economic recovery from COVID-19.

6.2 The Chair explained that, in accordance with Standing Order 2.2D, the agenda items would be taken in a different order to assist with the conduct of business. At the conclusion of the first discussion on co-operatives, the Committee would begin Item 7: Referred Motion, before returning to Item 6 to hold a discussion with the second panel of guests on UBI.

6.3 The Chair welcomed the first panel of guests to the meeting:

- Jessica Jacobs, representative from Co-ops for London; and
- Seema Malhotra, Labour and Co-operative Party Member of Parliament for Feltham and Heston.

6.4 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 1**.

6.5 At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked the guests for their answers.

7 Referred Motion (Item 7)

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

7.2 The Chair explained that at the London Assembly (Plenary) meeting on 5 November 2020, the Assembly agreed to refer the following motion to the Economy Committee for consideration under Standing Order 3.13:

“This Assembly notes that:

- **Financial security is critical to a stable and thriving society.**
- **According to Trust for London close to a third of Londoners live in poverty, even before the coronavirus crisis our city had the highest poverty rates in the UK.**
- **A Universal Basic Income (UBI) could help alleviate poverty, opening the door to opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach, and liberate people from the anxiety of job insecurity through a monthly income regardless of employment status, wealth, or marital status.**
- **The existence of a UBI must be in addition to targeted welfare payments to those who have additional needs - such as for housing, for single parents, or for expenses incurred due to disabilities.**
- **A network of UBI Labs have been set up and works with local authorities across the UK developing UBI proposals to address problems such as poverty, inequality, discrimination and environmental damage, long-term and immediately, in relation to coronavirus.**
- **There are many potential benefits to a UBI including:**
 - **More flexible workforce and greater freedom to change jobs;**
 - **Supporting a caring economy to value unpaid work;**
 - **Removing the negative impacts of benefit sanctions and conditionality; and**
 - **Enabling greater opportunities for people to work in community and cultural activities or to train or reskill in areas that will be needed to transition to a lower-carbon economy**
- **The current crisis has increased the risk of poverty for many Londoners. This is the right time to trial Universal Basic Income.**
- **520 elected representatives from every part of the UK have recently written to the Chancellor asking him to support pilots of Universal Basic Income in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.**

This Assembly calls on the Mayor to:

- **Write to the government calling for a fully evaluated basic income pilot in the city; and**
- **Work with local authorities to help test UBI in London.”**

7.3 In accordance with Standing Order 3.14, the mover of the referred motion, Siân Berry AM, was invited to explain the motion.

7.4 The Chair then invited the seconder of the referred motion, Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, to speak.

8 Models for Economic Recovery: Cooperatives and Universal Basic Income (Item 6 continued)

8.1 The Chair welcomed the second panel of guests to the meeting:

- Daniel Mermelstein, representative from UBI Lab London; and
- Ellen Clifford, representative from Disabled People Against Cuts.

8.2 A transcript of the discussion is attached at **Appendix 2**.

8.3 At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked the guests for their contribution to the meeting.

8.4 **Resolved:**

- (a) That the report and discussion be noted; and**
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the discussion.**

9 Referred Motion (Item 7 continued)

9.1 Following the discussion with invited guests, Members debated the referred motion.

9.2 At the conclusion of the debate, a vote was taken on a proposal from the Chair to:

- Defer the consideration of the referred motion to a future meeting of the Economy Committee, where additional scrutiny on UBI would take place; and
- Write to the Government and London Councils seeking additional information to contribute to the Committee’s investigation.

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9.3 With three votes being cast in favour, and three votes being cast against, the Chair used their second casting vote under Standing Order 2.6B and the proposal was agreed.

9.4 **Resolved:**

(a) That consideration of the referred motion be deferred to a future meeting of the Economy Committee; and

(b) That authority be delegated to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree letters to the Government and London Councils seeking additional information to contribute to the Committee's investigation on UBI.

10 Economy Committee Work Programme (Item 8)

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

10.2 **Resolved:**

That the work programme for the remainder of the 2020/21 Assembly year be noted.

11 Date of Next Meeting (Item 9)

11.1 The date of the next meeting of the Committee was confirmed as Tuesday, 2 March 2020 at 10.00am.

12 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent (Item 10)

12.1 There were no items of business that the Chair considered to be urgent.

13 Close of Meeting

13.1 The meeting ended at 1.00pm.

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Chair

Date

Contact Officer: Lauren Harvey, Senior Committee Officer; Telephone: 020 7983 4383;
Email: lauren.harvey@london.gov.uk