

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING
Monday, 26th April 2004 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor John (Chair), Councillor Coughlin (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Beswick, Fox, Jones, Kagan, D Long, Lyon, R S Patel and Thomas.

Councillors Wharton also attended the meeting.

1. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None declared.

2. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th March 2004 be approved as an accurate record.

3. **The Children Bill (2004)**

This joint report from the Directors of Education, Arts and Libraries and Social Services informed members of the publication of the Children Bill (2004) and asked for the agreement of the Executive to the action proposed within Brent to plan for the implementation of the new legislation.

Councillor Lyon (Lead Member, Education, Arts and Libraries) outlined the provisions of the Bill referring to the briefing paper from The Education Network and Brent's response to the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters'. He stated that the aim would be for maximum integration with minimum organisational disruption. Councillor Fox (Lead Member, Social Services) endorsed Councillor Lyon's sentiments and emphasised the importance of ensuring that measures to protect children's safety were as robust as possible. He referred to the Supporting Corporate Parenting Group chaired by the Chief Executive and noted that under the Bill, there was a requirement for the needs of Looked After Children to be specifically promoted. Councillor Fox felt that the aims of the Bill, to provide integrated services, would complement current practices.

The Executive agreed the recommendations in the report.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the main proposals of the bill be endorsed, namely:
- The five outcomes for children and young people
 - The duty of all partners to cooperate and make partnership arrangements
 - The vesting of the responsibility for the oversight and coordination of Children's Services in Brent with the Council as Local Authority
 - The creation of a shared information system

- The integration of services for children across education, social care and health including joint-commissioning, pooled budgets, multi-agency training and multi-agency teams with designated key workers
 - The designation of a Lead Member for Children's Services
 - The designation of a Director for Children's Services.
- (ii) that the principle of maximum operational integration and minimum organisational disruption in approaching the implementation of the Bill's proposals be approved;
- (iii) that the establishment of a Member / Officer Steering Group, led by the Leader and Chief Executive, to oversee the implementation of the proposals and to ensure that all service areas of the Council are fully involved in the implementation / development of the proposals be endorsed;
- (iv) that approval be given to the establishment of a Children's Services Partnership Board to be responsible for the integration of Children's Services to be co-chaired by the Director of EAL and Director of Social Services. The Board will invite formal representation at a senior level from the PCT, the two NHS Trusts and the Voluntary Sector. The Board will commission work for sub-groups such as the Children and Young People's Priority Action Group. It will liaise with the Local Strategic Partnerships;
- (v) that responsibility for the development of Children's Services be vested with the Directors of EAL and Social Services as the core members of the Partnership Board with identified areas of responsibility under joint-working arrangements;
- (vi) that the appointment of a Children's Service Project Manager to be responsible to the Board for the implementation of the Children's Bill proposals be approved;
- (vii) that it be planned to appoint a Director of Children's Services in the financial year 2006/7 subject to the enactment of related proposals in the Bill;
- (viii) that it be noted that a formal Brent Partnership Framework will be prepared for the main agencies responsible for Children's Services; it is proposed that this be established in the financial year 2006/7, drawing on experience of the Partnership Board, pilot Children's Trusts and integration models in other Local Authorities;
- (ix) that consideration be given to appointing a Lead Member for Children's Services in the municipal year 2005/6;

- (x) that a costed project plan for the implementation of the Children's Bill proposals in the financial years 2004/5 and 2005/6 be submitted to the June Executive meeting;
- (xi) that approval be given to the development of the Area Child Protection Committee into a Local Safeguarding Board by April 2005 or earlier if possible; a further report to be submitted on this proposal be approved.

4. Authority To Invite Tenders for the New-Build Sport and Performance Arts Hall at Chalkhill Primary School

This report requested approval to invite tenders in respect of the above named works contract as required by Council Contract Standing Orders 89 and 90 and to evaluate tenders. Councillor Lyon pointed out that this was one of a number of projects funded under the New Opportunities Fund and that as the estimate costs had risen slightly to those in the original application this may impact on the list of priorities. Shortfall in funding this scheme would be met from forecast under-spend on other NOF schemes. Members questioned progress on the proposal for there to be community use of the sports hall and the Director agreed to do further analysis and report back.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained information as specified in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:

"The amount of any expenditure proposed to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the acquisition of property of the supply of goods or services."

RESOLVED:

that, subject to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) granting project scheme approval:

- (i) the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders as set out in paragraph 6.9 of the report be approved;
- (ii) officers invite tenders and evaluate them in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria, as referred to in paragraph 6.9 of the report.

5. Determination of Community School Admission Arrangements – September 2005

This report set out the proposed admissions arrangements for community schools for 2005/2006.

RESOLVED:

that the proposed admissions criteria for Community schools as detailed in Appendix A for Primary and Nursery Schools and Appendix B to be report for Secondary schools be agreed.

6. Gavin House, Neasden Lane Planning Brief

This report sought approval for a Planning Brief which had been prepared by the Planning Service in conjunction with local residents, community groups and members of the local Area Consultative Forum following a period of consultation from 1st March 2004 to 26th March 2004. The Brief was based on the policies in the adopted Unitary Development Plan 2004. It provided a comprehensive approach to the re-development of the site and guidance to the developers on the form of the development that the Council considers acceptable. The Brief also set out the planning justification for a Section 106 Agreement associated with any future planning application for the site. It was proposed that the Brief be adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the revised Brief incorporating revisions following consultation (as set out in Appendix 3 to be report) be agreed;
- (ii) that the revised Planning Brief be adopted as supplementary planning guidance for developers and as a material consideration for assessing any planning application for the site.

6. Environment Fees & Charges

This report proposed changes to a wide range of fees and charges levied by various service units in Environmental Services and Councillor Jones (Lead Member) outlined the reasons for the fees and the proposed changes. Agreement was sought to the levels of fees and charges proposed in relation to specific services provided by Building Control, Land Charges, Trading Standards, Health, Safety & Licensing and Environmental Health.

RESOLVED:

that the levels of fees and charges proposed in paragraphs 8.1-8.5 and Appendices 1-4 to the report be agreed.

7. Supply & Demand and Temporary Accommodation

This report sought Members' approval of the lettings targets for 2004/05 and provided Members with an updated supply and demand analysis for housing, including lettings performance in 2003/04. Councillor Thomas (Lead Member) made reference to the supply demand projection which was not positive due to the housing supply in the borough. On overcrowding the

borough had the fourth highest rate in London while expenditure on Temporary Accommodation budgets within the General Fund for the financial year 2003/04 had broke even. He highlighted risk factors in particular challenges arising from Bed and Breakfast legislation and a recent judgement on unaccompanied minors. The report from the Director of Housing also set out an update on progress against the Council's Bed and Breakfast Action Plan in 2003/04, and details of plans to maintain the reduction in households in hotel accommodation in 2004/05.

Councillor Thomas suggested that the report be sent to all councillors for information and the Executive agreed the recommendations.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the lettings targets for 2004/05, as detailed in paragraph 7.3 and Appendix E to the report, be noted;
- (ii) that the following be noted:-
 - (a) the updated supply and demand analysis for housing, including lettings performance in 2003/04
 - (b) the update regarding expenditure on Temporary Accommodation within the General Fund for the financial year 2003/04, and analysis of the key factors which will have an impact on expenditure and numbers in temporary accommodation in 2004/05. These factors include the statutory instrument making it unlawful for a local authority to place a homeless family with children in a hotel for more than six weeks; proposed changes to the HB subsidy rules for temporary accommodation, and the asylum seekers' amnesty;
 - (c) the progress against the Council's Bed and Breakfast Action Plan in 2003/04;
 - (d) that the existing allocations policy is under review and that the outcome of this review will be reported to members later in the year.
- (iii) that a copy of this report be sent to all members of the Council for information.

8. **Housing Capital Programme 2004-05 and 2005-06 - Scheme Approval**

This report sought approval for Schemes to be funded from the 2004-05 and 2005-06 Housing Investment Plan Budget.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the 2004-05 and 2005-06 investment Plan budget, which is included in the Housing Capital Programme, be allocated as follows:-

| Scheme | 2004-05 £000 | 2005-06 £000 |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Disabled Facilities Grants | 570 | 500 |
| New Units | 980 | 0 |
| Supporting People | 300 | 0 |
| Total | 1,850 | 500 |

- (ii) that it be agreed to allocate the forecast £350k increase in the Disabled Facilities Grant Specified Capital Grant in 2005-06 to the Housing Private Sector Housing Capital Programme;
- (iii) that it be noted that the Supporting People capital scheme will be met from the Housing Investment Plan, subject to agreement of 2.1 above. Therefore the total Housing Capital Programme 2004-05 will reduce by £300k to £39,154k. This sum will be provisionally carried forward to 2005-06 to provide for the forecast increase in the Disabled Facilities Specified Capital Grant.

9 E-Government Programme 2004/5

Councillor Coughlin introduced this report and set out progress towards the 2005 e-Government targets and proposing the allocation of funding to high priority projects across the authority in 2004/5 totalling £1,339,068. A further sum of capital expenditure had been allocated for specific e-government and IT projects. The highlights of the programme were in line with the cross-cutting themes contained in the Corporate Strategy and included a pupil database to track educational achievement, an online MORI survey for 2004 and a document management system. Councillor Coughlin also outlined progress made by service areas in 2003/2004 and the benefits achieved.

Bernard Diamant (Director of Corporate Services) acknowledged the contribution of partner agencies who had played a leading role in particular in housing and the NHS. Councillor Fox welcomed the implementation of 'Framework I' as a major event for social services helping to improve the safety of vulnerable people through better information flows. Members also congratulated officers for work on the Council's website, including BRAIN, which had been recognised for its accessibility. It was asked that their appreciation of the high quality work which had given the Council a reputation for being at the forefront of IT development be conveyed to staff concerned.

The recommendations in the report were agreed.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the proposed funding arrangements for 2004/5 be agreed;

- (ii) that the proposed project and information management arrangements be agreed;
- (iii) that the Director of Corporate Services be authorised to agree any necessary variations to this schedule to ensure best use of the available funding.

10. Disability Discrimination Act – Fourth Progress Report

This fourth progress report summarised the steps being taken by the Council to improve access to services for people with disabilities as required by Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This report particularly focused on the progress for making council buildings some of which, Councillor Coughlin pointed out, would not be compliant in the foreseeable future as they were due for demolition or refurbishment. Discussions were taking place over a further eleven buildings where the compliance position was being clarified.

Bernard Diamant made reference to the advances made across the Council with the I&DeA/Grass Roots disability awareness scheme and the role of the Welfare to Work Joint Investment Plan Co-ordinator in promoting independent living and social inclusion for people with disabilities.

The Executive agreed the recommendations in the report and welcomed the forecast compliance in advance of the deadline.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the progress outlined in the fourth progress report be noted;
- (ii) that developments and initiatives, in line with the Disability Discrimination Act, to improve service delivery for people with disabilities in the areas indicated in this report be brought forward in future progress reports.

11. Quality of Life for Older People Overview Task Group

This report introduced the final recommendations of the Overview task group set up to consider the 'Quality of life for older people'. The report from the task group was presented to the Overview Committee on 17th February 2004 where the recommendations of the task group were endorsed and it was requested that the report be presented to the Executive for consideration.

Councillor Wharton (Task Group Chair) stated that the group had consulted widely and found that it was felt that there was a lack of information on what was available for older people. Other local authorities address this with a sign post booklet giving telephone numbers and brief descriptions of services available. A reading group to review Brent publications would also be valuable. A third recommendation was to improve the internal

information chain via those council staff with whom older people have regular contact.

The Executive thanked Councillor Wharton and the task group for a valuable piece of work and agreed that consideration should be given to the budgetary implications for service areas. It was agreed that the Lead Members and the Task Group Chair would meet with officers of the Policy and Regeneration Unit to consider in detail the financial implications and report back.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the findings and recommendations of the Overview task group on 'quality of life for older people be welcomed and noted;
- (iii) that the proposals in the report, in particular the publication of a 'signpost booklet' for older people; the establishment of a reading group to review Brent's publications and; improving the information chain via Brent Employees a be broadly supported;
- (iii) that Lead Members for Social Services and Democratic Services and Councillor Wharton meet with the Director of Policy and Regeneration to explore the detailed financial implications of the proposals and report back to the Overview Committee and the Executive.

12. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED:-

that the press and public be now excluded from the meeting as the following item contains exempt information as specified in Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, namely:-

"Any terms proposed, or to be proposed, by or to the Authority in the course of negotiations for a contract or for the acquisition or disposal or property or the supply of goods or services."

13. **Elizabeth House 341-347 High Road Wembley - Lease Renewal**

This report sought Members' consent to the renewal of the Council's lease of the above property on the terms detailed in this report.

RESOLVED:

that the renewal of the Council's lease of Elizabeth House be agreed for a term of 5 years from expiry of the lease on the main terms set out in the Detail of the report and such other terms which the Manager of Corporate Property Services considers to be in the best interest of the Council

14. **Award of Contracts for the Supply of Caribbean, Asian Halal and Asian Vegetarian Frozen Meals for Meals Services**

This report requested authority to award contracts as required by Contract Standing Order No 89. This report summarised the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contract should be awarded.

The Director of Social Services outlined the current position on the tendering process for the supply of Asian Vegetarian Meals presenting a number of options. The Executive agreed to Option 1 in the report and that there be review and report back on the weighting and criteria. The Borough Solicitor set out the legal position on the options for consideration.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the contract for the supply of frozen Caribbean Meals be awarded to Blue Mountain Foods Ltd as set out in paragraph 7.7.1 of the report;
- (ii) that the contract for the supply of frozen Asian Halal Meals be awarded to Mrs Gills Kitchen as set out in paragraph 7.8.1 of the report
- (iii) that option 1 in the report be approved namely not to award the contract for supply of Asian Vegetarian Meals at this stage, that a new procurement process be commenced for the contract as set out in paragraph 7.9.7 and that officers review and report back to the Executive for approval of evaluation criteria and weightings and award of the contract.

15. **Procurement of New Homes in South Kilburn**

This report from the Director of Housing sought Executive approval for a variation to the Masterplan contract. The report outlined activities to be undertaken to procure construction contractors to start the building of the proposed 20 Demonstration Homes targeted for completion by April 2005. This report also sought authority from the Executive to proceed with the procurement of contractors for the building of the 20 proposed Demonstration Homes which will be funded through the South Kilburn New Deal for Communities (SKNDC) programme.

The Director of Housing outlined the background to the recommendations and the restrictions in terms of timescales. He also outlined the associated risks and this was endorsed by the Borough Solicitor who advised against any further variations to the contract.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that a variation and extension to the Masterplan contract with MACE to specifically provide the services of Employer's Agent, Quantity Surveyor, Clerk of Works and Planning Supervisor in relation to the Demonstration Homes including managing the procurement of contractors to undertake the building of the Demonstration Homes be approved;
- (ii) that approval be given to the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders for the construction of the twenty demonstration homes (as set out in paragraph 7.16 of the report) and officers be authorized to invite tenders for the building of the 20 proposed Demonstration Homes and then evaluate them in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria.

The meeting ended at 8.05 pm.

A JOHN
Chair

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