

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE
Monday, 12th September 2005 at 6.00 pm

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

Also present were Councillors Crane, Farrell, Freeson, Harrod, Kabir, Sayers and Van Colle.

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Coughlin.

1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Lyon and Councillor Thomas declared prejudicial interests in the item relating to the Pakistani Community Centre and took no part in the discussion or debate and left the meeting for that item.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th August 2005 be approved as an accurate record.

3. Sexual Health of Young People in Brent

This report presented the recommendations of the Health Overview Panel's task group on 'Improving the Sexual Health of Young People in Brent' along with advice on the finance, legal, and diversity implications.

Councillor Kagan introduced this item and advised members that some of the recommendations had been added by the Overview Committee in considering the report relating to mapping, mainstream funding and grants. Councillor Farrell, the Chair of the task group, advised that there had been a significant increase in the rate of sexually transmitted diseases in recent years and the Local Strategic Partnership had asked the Health Overview Committee to carry out a review. Of key importance to the task group was the provision of up-to-date local data to allow review and planning for the future. This should be carried out both in Brent and in adjoining areas. A key issue for the young people was to have confidentiality assured and to have dedicated services for them at convenient times. Improvements in technology had led to the possibility of screenings at convenient and accessible locations and additional concern was to improve partnership working between the Primary Care Trust and the Council and signposting to services. Councillor Farrell also added the fact that the teenage pregnancy and sexual health strategies needed to be complementary.

Councillor John, on behalf of the Executive thanked the Chair, the task group members and officers for their work. Councillor Fox (Lead Member, Adults and Social Care) added that the work had provided useful and challenging targets. Councillor Lyon (Lead Member, Children & Families) added his thanks to the group agreeing that both the teenage pregnancy and sexual health strategies were complementary and there was a degree of overlap but also that there were significant differences in terms of needs between them.

The Executive noted a report and agreed that it be submitted to the Local Strategic Partnership/Partners for Brent.

RESOLVED:-

that the recommendations made in the review be noted, thanks given to the task group for their work, and also the service area and tPCT for implementing the recommendations.

4. **Increasing Childcare Places Overview Task Group Report**

This report presented the recommendations of the Overview Committee's task group on 'Increasing Childcare Places' along with the service department's response and advice on the finance, legal, and diversity implications.

Councillor Kagan introduced this report which had also been considered by the Overview Committee. She was pleased to note that service departments had already started work on recommendations. Councillor Kabir, Task Group Chair advised that the group was established to examine why early education places available in Brent were not all being taken up and how employers could play a role in providing facilities. The consultation on the report had been wide to include parents, child minders, day carers and staff. Parents' concerns related to the need for a flexible service in a quality location and the type of provision available, namely the quality of care. It was considered that two and half hours per day was not a viable option for working parents and also that for the 0 to 2 age group there were insufficient places or they were too expensive. A threat to the service was competition by the maintained education sector. Planning was needed for extra provision with information mapping for supply and demand. A key finding was the importance of designing and providing services around the needs of parents for service provision to be evidence based. Councillor Kabir was pleased that the response from the Children and Families service area had been positive and that action had started on many of the recommendations. It was noted that the Scrutiny Committee would be monitoring the implementation of task group recommendations.

Councillor Lyon welcomed the report which placed a spotlight on admission needs. He agreed that a single children's plan was needed in the future that would help address concerns. Councillor John thanked Councillor Kabir for chairing the task group and asked that the Executive's gratitude be passed on to members and staff concerned.

RESOLVED:-

that the recommendations made in this review be noted, thanks be given to the task group for their work, and the service area for implementing the recommendations.

5. Adult Education 3 Year Development Plan

This report summarised the 3 Year Development Plan required by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) as a basis for a three year funding agreement for the funding for Adult Education. The plan followed a national format and had to be approved by the local LSC by mid June to secure the three year funding, which included some guaranteed growth. A series of meetings had been held with London West LSC and had agreed the provisional draft.

Councillor Jones advised that current funding stood at approximately £5m which would be reviewed as part of the annual self-assessment. She pointed out that Brent performed well above target and asked that the plan be approved for submission to the Learning and Skills Council.

RESOLVED:-

that the plan as submitted to the LSC be approved.

6. Draft Air Quality Action Plan

Brent declared Air Quality Management Areas in April 2001 and was now required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan. This report summarised the action plan, which outlined the current and future measures to reduce air pollution in Brent and how the Council was working towards meeting national air quality objectives.

Councillor Jones advised that three years ago Brent declared Air Quality Management Areas, however it was now recognised that the Borough was not going to meet required standards in some areas. The Borough had limited control of traffic flow and large parts of the Borough, particularly in the south, had been designated as air quality management areas. The action plan set out the serious extent of problems making particular reference to areas such as the Neasden Goods Yard involved in industrial processing and waste management activities that have contributed to poor air quality.

RESOLVED:-

that the final Air Quality Action Plan be approved.

7. Service Plan for Food Safety and Occupational Health and Safety Enforcement 2005/6

The Food Standards Agency require that each local authority publish annually, a service delivery plan specifying the arrangements that they have put in place for the enforcement of food safety, food standards and feedingstuffs standards, for approval by members. Section 18 Guidance from the HSC on the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires each local authority to publish an annual service delivery plan for the enforcement of occupational health and safety for approval by members.

RESOLVED:-

that the Service Plan be approved as the Authority's plan for the enforcement of occupational health and safety legislation and the enforcement of food safety, food standards and feeding stuffs legislation during the period 1st April 2005 to 31st March 2006.

8. **Brent Municipal Waste Management Strategy**

This report set out the key proposals of Brent's Draft Municipal Waste Strategy and the information to be used by this authority in assessing the actions necessary to ensure that Brent was able to meet the demands of the European Union Landfill Directive using the best practicable environmental options without incurring excessive cost. The report included a technical assessment of action necessary and it was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny task groups' work on this matter had been taken into account. West London Waste was producing a separate strategy that would contain challenging targets particularly relating to recycling and landfill, with which failure to comply would lead to the imposition of fines. It was considered that up to 74% of household waste could be recycled and Councillor Jones was pleased to report that the Borough's rate of recycling had improved significantly over recent years.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Draft Municipal Waste Strategy (see Appendix A to the report) be approved as the basis of further consultation;
- (ii) that officers be instructed to report back on the results of the consultation process, and put forward a proposed final Strategy for Executive approval;
- (iii) that the content of the Baseline Assessment Report (Appendix B to the report) be noted and its availability to the consultation process be approved.

9. **Public Convenience Strategy**

This report examined current provision of public conveniences in Brent, located on the public highway, Parks Tubes and Train stations and in Council Buildings (for example One Stop Shops and Libraries). The report suggested ways to improve existing facilities and steps to be taken to formulate an overall strategy for future provision in the borough. The report also considered provision of toilets in Wembley Stadium and surrounding area.

Councillor Jones pointed out that the Council was not alone in having to close redundant toilet facilities, however alternative provision would be made in some areas and there were plans to use the old facilities for the storage of equipment. Of importance was signposting and maintenance and it was noted that consideration was being given to the provision of superloos.

Section 106 funding from the Wembley Stadium Development would contribute.

Councillor Beswick was pleased that provision was being made in the Wembley area and also in Harlesden.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following categories of exempt information as specified in the Schedule of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1985:

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person other than the authority.”

“Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.”

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the strategy framework for the provision of public conveniences in the borough as set out in paragraph 5.2 of the report be approved to go out for consultation with key stakeholders and residents;
- (ii) that officers be instructed to explore the possibility of installing a Universal Superloo (USL) in Neasden shopping centre, and to consider installing another USL in Harlesden within the Town Centre, in a continuing effort to ensure that there are adequate toilet facilities in all the town centres in the borough (as referred to in 6.2 of the report);
- (iii) that alternative use to be made of the redundant toilet buildings on the Harrow Road NW10 and Victoria Road NW6 as set out in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.2 of the report.

10. **Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy**

The regulatory services are: Building Control, Environmental Health, Health Safety & Licensing, Planning, Private Housing Services, StreetCare and Trading Standards. This overarching policy set out the common principles and standards for enforcement policies within specific services.

The Best Value Review had identified the need for a common approach in 2000. The Council had signed up to the principles of good enforcement practice enshrined in the enforcement concordat as published by the Cabinet Office which set out good practice for enforcement officers and the strategies and principles therein had informed this report. It was noted that the policy would take effect in November allowing time for review and monitoring.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the findings of the equalities impact assessment set out in Appendix 1 to the report be accepted;
- (ii) that the policy set out in Appendix 2 to the report be adopted as the enforcement policy of the Council in respect of the regulatory services and approved for use, to commence from 1st November 2005.

11. Disposal of Land at Alperton Sports Ground to GOALS Soccer Centres Plc

This report sought the Executive's approval to dispose of land within the Alperton Sports Ground public open space to Goals Soccer Centres Plc for the purpose of providing two additional 5-A-Side all weather football pitches to be incorporated in their existing 5-A-Side soccer development.

Councillor Jones outlined the terms of the current provision and advised that the terms would help meet objectives in the Borough's sports strategy. No objections to the proposed disposal had been received. The Director of Environment and Culture advised that an internal arrangement had existed for the use of changing rooms by a borough sports club and that it was intended that this would now be formalised. Councillor Beswick was pleased at the expansion of facilities which would have positive effects for users.

RESOLVED:-

That it be agreed to dispose of the land comprising about 0.15 hec/ 0.37 acres as shown on the plan attached as appendix 1 to the report, to Goals Soccer Centres Plc on the main terms set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report and on such other terms which the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources and the Head of Property and Asset Management consider to be in the best interest of the Council.

12. Kingsbury Pool – Update on Progress and Future Options

This report provided members with an update on the Council's negotiations with Next Generation Clubs Limited ("Next Generation") for the provision of a public swimming pool within a leisure and tennis development to be built on the site of the former Kingsbury lido in Roe Green Park.

Councillor Jones referred to the background to the negotiations between the Council and "Next Generation" setting out the difficulties that had arisen particularly relating to site and development plans and the absence of planning approval from the Mayor of London. She accepted that progress had been slow and that parking had been a key problem. Regrettably it was unlikely that funding would be available from the Capital Programme or from alternative sources. Councillor Jones circulated a motion in her name which was put to the meeting and agreed.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which is not for publication as it contained the following categories of exempt information as specified in the Schedule of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1985:

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person other than the authority.”

“Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.”

RESOLVED:-

- (i) The Executive notes the efforts made by the current Administration over the past eight years to secure a new swimming pool on the former Kingsbury pool site. We regret that the latest attempt was not successful.
- (ii) We are aware of local concerns about the lack of sports and other recreational facilities for young people in the area and we therefore resolve to consult as widely as possible with local people and other stakeholders about improved and new sports and recreational facilities within the park.

13. **One Stop Shop Annual Performance Report 2004/2005 - Consultation**

This report introduced the performance report, which provided members with information for the One Stop Shop service (6 customer drop in centres and a 60 seat contact centre) for the period April 2004 to March 2005.

Sandra Carson (One Stop Shop Manager) introduced the report and outlined the performance of the six one stop shops in the Borough. She emphasized that targets for the future would be to maintain standards and to work with Brent Housing Partnership. Consideration was being given to expansion of a contact centre to work with service departments and to improve services to vulnerable customers.

Councillor Thomas (Lead Member, Housing and Customer Services) praised the service in maintaining a high customer satisfaction rate even after 14 years of operation and indicated that new trends were being considered. Councillor John extended the Executive’s congratulations to staff for the exceptional service.

RESOLVED:-

that the report be noted together with the broad role that the One Stop Shop performs which includes customer care standards organisational leadership, performance, challenges and service priorities for 2005/06.

14. **Participation of Children & Young People: Statement of Commitment**

This report asked members to approve the Statement of Commitment to children and young people's participation which is to be put forward for adoption by the Brent Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board. The Statement of Commitment outlined the vision and key principles for engaging children and young people in decision making about the development of services in Brent.

RESOLVED:-

that the Statement of Commitment which will be used by the Council and its partner agencies to embed the participation and involvement of children and young people in Brent in the development and delivery of services be endorsed. Each partner organisation including the Council to adopt an Action Plan outlining key participation activities for the next 18 months.

15. **A Play Strategy for Brent**

The draft Play Strategy for Brent (Appendix A to the report) had been produced in line with the government review of children's play: 'Getting Serious About Play', DCMS 2004. The Strategy is a three year plan formulated in response to a request by The Children's Consultative Forum for Brent's Children's Play Service to take the lead in preparing and consulting on a draft strategy for Brent.

Councillor Lyon advised that the strategy had been based on a review of facilities which had found that provision was deficient in some areas and it was noted that a councillor would be designated as the Champion of Play by the Youth Matters 2 Forum.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the findings of the Play Strategy be noted;
- (ii) that the recommendations of the Play Strategy (see para 3.5 of the report) be agreed;
- (iii) that it be agreed to adopt the Play Strategy and its implementation plan.

16. **Capital Strategy and Corporate Asset Plan**

This report presented the Capital Strategy and Corporate Asset Plan as Appendices to the report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.

The strategy was an overarching document which looked at assets and compared in comparison to the 2002 strategy with a view to prioritising and maximising value for money. It was the intention to reduce maintenance backlogs and to set minimum standards.

Councillor Lyon emphasized the importance of the strategy and asset plan in transforming the Borough.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Capital Strategy in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed for submission to full Council for approval;
- (ii) that the Corporate Asset Plan in Appendix 2 to the report be approved;
- (iii) that approval in principle be given to the use of the £1m reserve and available maintenance budgets referred to in paragraph 4.4 of the report as part of the programme of planned maintenance, based on the results of the condition surveys. This is subject to a detailed programme being submitted to members for approval and funding.
- (iv) that the need for additional resources to continue to reduce the backlog in future years and the need to include this within the budget considerations for the 2006/7 financial year be noted.

17. Risk Management at Brent

This report outlined the background to public sector risk management, the current situation regarding risk management at Brent, a proposed revised risk management strategy, next steps in embedding risk management across the authority and the implications of the recommended actions.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Resources reported that progress had been made and that the action plan addressed requirements. It was noted that the report had been submitted to the Performance and Finance Committee and which had had a full discussion and agreed to receive a report on a six-monthly basis.

RESOLVED:-

that the proposed risk management strategy at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

18. The Pakistan Community Centre: Proposed Sale of Long Lease to the Pakistan Welfare Association

This report sought the approval of the Executive to the sale of a long lease on the Pakistan Community Centre (the Centre) to the Pakistan Welfare Association (PWA).

The Director of Finance and Corporate Resources outlined the terms of the lease making specific reference to the legal implications which supported the line being taken. The Borough Solicitor referred to the maximum under value possible should the Council secure vacant possession of the property which Members could consider, however added that they may also wish to take into account the work of the Pakistan Workers' Association and the community benefits it provided contributing to improved economic and

social well-being of the area. The Borough Solicitor outlined the three options available to the Committee and Councillor John reminded the Executive of the context within which the report had been prepared namely to clarify the position on property leases of youth and community centres in the Borough.

The Executive agreed the recommendations in the report.

Councillors Thomas and Lyon declared prejudicial interests in this item and took no part in discussion and left the meeting.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the sale of a long lease on the Pakistan Community Centre to the Trustees of the Pakistan Welfare Association be agreed on the terms as detailed in paragraph 3.11 of the report;
- (ii) that the Head of Property & Asset Management be instructed, in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, to agree such other terms to the lease which are deemed to be in the best interest of the Council.

19. Authority to invite tenders for Occupational Health Service Contract

This report concerned the provision of occupational health services to the Council, which are currently provided by Occupational Health Westminster under a contract which is due to expire on 31st March 2006. This report requested approval to invite tenders in respect of a contract for the provision of occupational health services to the Council for a three-year period commencing 1st April 2006 with an option to extend the contract for a further two year period, as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

Val Jones (Director of Human Resources and Diversity) advised that following a review, it had been found that there was support for an outsourced service and that sickness absence levels had decreased.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that it be noted the General Purposes Committee agreed the recommendations set out in paragraph 2.2 and 2.3 of the report.
- (ii) that approval be given to the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders as set out in paragraph 3.11 of the report;
- (iii) that approval be given to officers to invite tenders and evaluate them in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria referred to in paragraph (ii) above.

20. Vital Signs Performance Digest Quarter One – April to June 2005

This report introduced the Vital Signs for the period April to June 2005. The Vital Signs monitors the Council's performance against key indicators.

The Executive noted that the report was now presented in a revised format following a review and that the report now picks out key areas not meeting targets with increased detail and comment. The report had already been submitted to the Performance and Finance Committee who had identified two indicators for monitoring specifically school exclusions and robberies.

RESOLVED:-

that the Council's performance against key performance indicators be noted.

21. Access to Financial Services for excluded groups

This report provided officer comments and information on the legal, financial and diversity implications of the Scrutiny Task Group's report entitled Access to Financial Services.

Councillor Kagan (Lead Member, Local Democracy and Consultation) referred to the task group findings that approximately 10,000 to 15,000 people in the Borough did not hold bank accounts and that improvements needed to be made in the dissemination of information. Funding had yet to be found for a welfare adviser post and she made particular reference to the legal implications for such the Council providing such a post. However, she accepted that the Council had a role as a community leader and to promote the economic well-being of the area.

Councillor Van Colle introduced the report as task group chair. He considered that the task group had presented "soft options" relating to information provision and building up local organisations to form alternative sources of finance for excluded people. He considered that the budget provision requested was small. The Executive agreed that the report be referred to the Partners for Brent Board. Councillor John extended the Executive's gratitude to Councillor Van Colle and colleagues for their work on the task group.

RESOLVED:-

that the recommendations made in this review be noted; thanks be given to the task group for their work, and the service for taking responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the task group.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

A JOHN
Chair

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