

Meeting of the Executive
Monday 6th August 2007 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Blackman (Vice Chair, in the Chair) and Councillors Allie, D Brown, Clues¹, Colwill, Matthews, O'Sullivan, Van Colle and Wharton.

Councillor Sneddon also attended the meeting.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Lorber.

1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

Councillor Wharton declared a personal interest in the item relating to multicultural day care service for older people, as a supporter of the Sudbury Neighbourhood Centre, and would withdraw from the meeting taking no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16th July 2007 be approved as an accurate record.

3. Councillor Dorman Long

As this was the first meeting of the Executive since the death of Councillor Dorman Long on 20th July 2007, members observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

4. Brent Biodiversity Action Plan and the Biodiversity Duty

The Brent Biodiversity Action Plan was adopted by the Council in 2001 as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan covering the geographic area of the London Borough of Brent. Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member, Environment, Culture and Planning) presented a review which was designed to take the revised Plan forward. The report from the Director of Environment and Culture also recommended that the Brent Biodiversity Action Plan should be adopted as the Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan of Brent Council.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Brent Biodiversity Action Plan be endorsed as the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for the London Borough of Brent;
- (ii) that the Brent Biodiversity Action Plan be adopted the as the Corporate Biodiversity Action Plan for Brent Council;
- (iii) that responsibility to make minor changes to the Plan prior to publication and in operation be delegated to the Director of Environment and Culture;

¹ as amended at 11 Sept meeting

- (iv) that the need to implement the Biodiversity Duty into the functions of the local authority and the proposed actions set out in section 4.0, 'Implementing the Biodiversity Duty', of the Biodiversity Action Plan be noted.

5. **ALMO Settled Homes Initiative**

The Council and Brent Housing Partnership Limited (BHP) have been awarded capital funding of £5m to deliver a temporary to permanent housing scheme. The report from the Director of Housing and Community Care set out how this would be achieved, it being anticipated that BHP would set up a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to carry out the procurement and development programme. It was understood that, subject to BHP becoming successfully registered as part of the National Affordable Housing Programme, the Housing Corporation's preference was for grant to be paid direct to BHP. Members were asked to note the proposed scheme and to indicate its support for the general principles whilst requiring a further detailed report for formal approval for the scheme.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the proposed scheme be noted and agreement given to BHP further developing the proposals prior to the submission of an additional further report from officers for formal approval of the scheme;
- (ii) that agreement in principle be given, subject to the submission of further details, to BHP owning, managing and granting tenancies of properties in connection with the Settled Homes Initiative;
- (iii) that agreement in principle be given, subject to further details being submitted, to the transfer to BHP or an SPV established by BHP for that purpose, of up to 500 one bed properties over a five year period in exchange for an equal number of two bed properties in the same period in order to increase the Council's stock of two bedroom properties;
- (iv) that officers offer assistance to BHP in developing a viable scheme which has an acceptable level of risk to both BHP and the Council.

6. **Authority for the ALMO to deliver affordable homes under the 2008-11 National Affordable Housing Programme**

This report provided details on the opportunity for the Council's ALMO Brent Housing Partnership Limited (BHP) to develop new affordable homes under the Housing Corporation's 2008/2011 National Affordable Housing Programme (subject to successful accreditation). The report requested agreement, in principle, for BHP to be permitted to own, manage and grant tenancies of properties to newly developed properties that have been developed under the scheme and to agree, in principle, to provide a

Performance Guarantee Bond in respect of any funding allocation received by BHP under this programme.

Councillor Allie (Lead Member, Housing and Customer Services) congratulated BHP on their successful negotiations.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that agreement be given for the ALMO to develop bids for the provision of new affordable homes under the Housing Corporation's 2008/2011 Affordable Housing Programme, subject to successfully being selected and accredited as a Preferred Partner at the pre-qualification stage and subject to obtaining specific executive approval on each development scheme that is proposed to be delivered using social housing grant;
- (ii) that agreement in principle be given, to the provision of a Performance Guarantee Bond to the Housing Corporation in respect of BHP in order for the ALMO to qualify to receive Social Housing Grant under the Housing Corporation's 2008/2011 National Affordable Housing Programme, subject to conditions set out in paragraph 3.4, noting that a further report will be brought before members setting out the detail of the proposed bond and the risks associated with it;
- (iii) that agreement in principle, be given to permit BHP to own, manage and grant tenancies to newly developed properties which have been funded by the Housing Corporation using social housing grant allocated from the National Affordable Housing Programme (see paragraph 3.3 of the report from the Director of Housing and Community Care, but subject to approval being given by this Executive to each scheme which BHP intends to submit to the Housing Corporation pursuant to this initiative

7. Pilot Cash Incentive Shared Equity Scheme

This report provided details of a pilot shared equity scheme with the aid of £0.65M of GLA grant to enable 20 council tenants to purchase a property in the private market. The Lead Member, Councillor Allie, welcomed the initiative which would allow tenants to buy a stake in their homes and was good news for the borough. He sought assurances on how the tenants would be selected and the Director responded that the grant had to be spent within the financial year and that the method of selection would be based on ability to complete within the timeframes. Information on the scheme would be circulated widely. Councillor Allie congratulated BHP on their achievement.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to the introduction of a pilot shared equity scheme facilitating up to 20 Council tenants to purchase a home in the private market under a shared equity arrangement funded and

administered by BHP and, if agreed, permit BHP to acquire assets for the purposes of this scheme;

- (ii) that agreement be given to a loan to BHP for the purpose of providing finance to enable BHP to purchase its share in the properties to be acquired under the scheme for a sum not exceeding £2M and that the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources be authorised to negotiate such terms and conditions of the loan as are sufficient to ensure there is no detrimental impact on the Council's finances;
- (iii) that the timescales for delivering this pilot be noted and authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources and Director of Housing and Community Care to conclude negotiations with BHP on establishing and commencing this pilot scheme, and in particular determining the nature of the loan structure and loan agreement to be offered to BHP under this scheme and the form of documentation to be used within the scheme by BHP, in consultation with the Borough Solicitor. Officers will also consult with the Lead Member of Housing and Customer Services on the delivery of this pilot.

8. Multicultural Day Care Service for Older People – options following tendering

On 15th January 2007 agreement was given to invite expressions of interest for a contract for multicultural day care services as part of a market testing exercise. Tenders were subsequently invited in accordance with the process approved by the Executive on 16 April 2007. Only one tender, from the current provider, was received which was heavily qualified and the cost was in excess of the budget available. This report set out the options now available and the Executive was requested to approve the new process to be followed. The Director advised that it was the intention to report on the outcome to the October meeting.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following category of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that agreement be given to an exemption from the tendering requirements in Standing Order 84 for the further procurement of the multicultural day care service due to the failure of the recent tender process;
- (ii) that approval be given to officers negotiating with Sudbury Neighbourhood Centre to provide a multicultural day care service as set out in paragraph 3.8.2 of the report, within the parameters set out

in paragraph 3.10, and to delegate to the Director of Housing and Community Care the decision to award a contract on satisfactory conclusion of these negotiations;

- (iii) that in the event of the negotiations described in paragraph (ii) above, proving unsuccessful, a further report will be brought to this Executive.

(Councillor Wharton declared a personal interest in the above item, took no part in the voting or discussion thereon and left the room for the duration).

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.

R BLACKMAN
Vice Chair, in the Chair