

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE**  
**Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Lorber (Chair), Councillor Blackman (Vice Chair) and Councillors Allie, Colwill, Detre, Matthews, Sneddon, Van Colle and Wharton.

Councillors Dunwell, Jones and Mistry also attended the meeting.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor D Brown.

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

Councillor Sneddon declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in the item relating to new applications for main programme grant 2008/09 as a volunteer counsellor with Brent Bereavement Services.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2008 be approved at an accurate record.

**3. Domestic vehicle footway crossover policy and reference from Forward Plan Select Committee**

The Executive had before them a revised report from the Director of Environment and Culture circulated in advance of the meeting, which requested consideration of a new Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Policy. The Executive also noted that the policy had been previously considered by the Forward Plan Select Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> August which had made a recommendation that careful consideration be given to how it would be enforced, given available resources.

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member, Planning Environment and Culture) stated that the intention was to maximise available parking, but not to the detriment of on-street parking. The Director recognised that the problems of sustainability and enforcing compliance had yet to be resolved however it was felt worthwhile to proceed at this stage with arrangements for smaller cars. He also advised that residents could seek advice on the driveway material and design that would encourage drainage and prevent rainwater from running into to the highway.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the recommendations of the Forward Plan Select Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> August be noted;
- (ii) that the report from the Director of Environment and Culture be noted, including the responses from consultation and the introduction of sustainability considerations;

- (ii) that approval be given to the new Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Policy and officers be instructed to implement it from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008.

**4. Authority to invite tenders for the provision of education, employment, training and careers Connexions services in Brent**

The report from the Director of Children and Families requested approval to invite and evaluate tenders in respect of the contract for education, employment, training and careers Connexions services in Brent as required by Council Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89. The Lead Member, Councillor Wharton, commended the work carried out by the service, noting that the borough had a relatively low level of young people that were neither in education, employment nor training.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) that approval be given to the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders for the contract for education, employment, training and careers Connexions services in Brent (the "Contract") as set out in paragraph 3.20 of the report from the Director of Children and Families;
- (ii) that officers be authorised to invite tenders for the Contract and evaluate them in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria referred to in paragraph (i) above;
- (iii) that the Director of Children and Families be authorised to decide which parts (if any) of the service specified in the Council's current contract with Prospects Services Limited ("Prospects") are to be brought in-house rather than included in the new Contract to be tendered. This authorisation was subject to the Director of Children and Families bringing a further report to the Executive as required by the Constitution should the bringing of these services in-house be likely to result in more than 20 Prospects' employees TUPE transferring to the Council.

**5. Authority to tender for housing support services for people with mental health and other needs and other supporting people contract issues**

Councillor Allie (Lead Member, Housing and Customer Services) reminded the Executive that having previously approved the strategy, authority was now being sought to invite suitable providers to tender for five framework agreements for the provision of housing support services for (a) people with a mental health difficulty who additionally may have other needs; (b) offenders and people with a support need as a result of drug and alcohol use as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders for five framework agreements for housing support services (some incorporating care services) as set out in section 6.13 of the report from the Director of Housing and Community Care;
- (ii) that approval be given to officers to invite tenders for five framework agreements for housing support services (some incorporating care services) and evaluate them in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria referred to in (i) above;
- (iii) that approval be given to the extension of Supporting People contracts as specified in section 5.2 and 6.10 of the Director's report until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

**6. Main Programme Grant 2008/09 – new applications**

Maggie Rafalowicz (Assistant Director, Strategy and Regeneration) in introducing this report, referred to the decision taken on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008 on voluntary sector funding where it was agreed to release resources from the Main Programme Grant (MPG) to fund new initiatives and new organisations in 2008/09. An assessment had been carried out and based on the theme of children and young people as outlined in the Council's Corporate Strategy. A number of new organisations, not previously in receipt of main programme grant, had been selected for funding from October for a six month period.

Councillor Lorber (Lead Member, Corporate Strategy and Policy Co-ordination) reminded the Executive that the new arrangements were in line with the recommendations of the scrutiny task group to free up grant funding. He congratulated the organisations that had been successful and commiserated with those that had not been awarded funding on this occasion, suggesting that they approach Brent's volunteer service (BrAVA) for advice on alternative sources. Members agreed that officers should give write to organisations not successful in this funding round and give feedback on their applications. The Executive regretted that funding was not available to give grants to all worthwhile organisations however, the effectiveness of those to be in receipt of funding this time around would be monitored and there was the opportunity for new applications to be made in 2009.

The Executive approved the recommendations in the Director's report.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to the schemes and funding allocations recommended in the report from the Director of Housing and Community Care (paragraph 3.11) that would commence from 1<sup>st</sup>

October 2008 for a period of six months. Organisations approved for funding would have the opportunity to apply for the proposed new main programme grant three year funding programme that would be introduced in April 2009. Consideration of these applications would be subject to their performance during this fund and future funding was not guaranteed;

- (ii) that officers' individual assessment report of all organisations that have applied for funding in Appendix C be noted, a summary of all the applications received was also attached as Appendix A to the Director's report;
- (iii) that it be noted that one organisation (Church End and Roundwood Youth and Community Association) was approved for funding from the annual MPG for the 2008/09 but has not claimed their grant and therefore the amount available for allocation has increased to £135,859.

**7. Authority to award contract for insurance for Public Liability and Property Insurance**

The report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources requested authority to award a contract for the provision of insurance for Public Liability and Property Insurance from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89. The report summarised the process undertaken in tendering the contract and, following the evaluation of the tenders, recommended to whom the contract should be awarded. Councillor Blackman (Lead Member, Resources) commended officers for their efforts in completing this work within short timescales.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained information relating to the following category of exempt information:

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

**RESOLVED:-**

that approval be given to the award of a one year contract, with options to extend up to a further 2 years on an annual basis to Zurich Insurance Company (trading as Zurich Municipal Insurance) for the provision of liability insurance and property insurance at a total cost of £305,874 to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008.

**8. National Non-Domestic Rate Relief and Hardship Relief**

The Council had the discretion to award rate relief to charities or non-profit making bodies. It also had the discretion to remit an individual National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) liability in whole or in part on the grounds of hardship. The report from the Director of Finance and Corporate

Resources included applications received from January 2008. Councillor Blackman (Lead Member, Resources) outlined the terms of the new criteria for awarding discretionary rate relief, approved in February 2008 which focussed on ensuring that arrangements were consistent with corporate policies and relief directed to those organisations seen as benefitting residents and who did not have access to other substantial assets or rental income.

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 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).”

A motion in the name of Councillor Blackman was circulated at the meeting which was voted on and agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that approval be given to applications for discretionary relief to organisations and schools listed in the following appendices:

Appendix 2 - 100% discretionary relief to be awarded to local charities

Appendix 3 - 25% discretionary relief to be awarded to non-profit making organisations

Appendix 4 - 25% discretionary relief to be awarded to non-local charities

Appendix 5 - 100% discretionary relief to be awarded to voluntary aided schools funded from the Dedicated Schools Budget

Appendix 6 - 100% discretionary relief to be awarded to foundation schools funded from the Dedicated Schools Budget

Appendix 7 - 100% discretionary relief to be awarded to community amateur sports clubs;

- (ii) that the five applications for hardship rate relief listed in Appendix 8 of the report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources be not be approved.

## **9. Performance and Finance Review - Quarter 1 2008/2009**

This report summarised Brent Council's spending, activity and performance in the first quarter of the 2008/09 financial year and highlighted key issues and solutions. It took a corporate overview of financial and service performance. It was set out in terms of the main budgets and provided a general overview and analysis of high risk areas. The report was accompanied by appendices providing budget, activity and performance data for each service area, the Local Area Agreement, ring fenced budgets

and the capital programme. Vital signs trend data and graphs were also provided along with the Council's overall budget summary.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Council's spending, activity and performance in quarter one be noted;
- (ii) that all directors ensure that spending is kept within budget, underperformance tackled and that measures are taken, in consultation with relevant portfolio holders, to achieve this;
- (iii) that approval be given to the additional £2.134m on schools capital projects in paragraph 5.11 and agree that both this expenditure and the further £1.079m from 2007/08 identified in paragraph 5.12 of the report from the Director of Policy and Regeneration be funded by reducing provision in future years' programmes for primary school hut replacements.

#### 10. **The Single Equality Scheme 2008- 2011**

Councillor Sneddon (Lead Member, Human Resources and Diversity, Local Democracy and Consultation) introduced the Council's second Single Equality Scheme which built on the progress of earlier equality schemes and was a development of the current scheme for 2007-2010. He referred to the general equality framework, six equality strands and the action plan which set out how the authority would meet service delivery and employment obligations to residents and staff. Councillor Sneddon added that the scheme would also ensure that procurement policies were satisfied. Consultation on the scheme had been carried out and would continue.

RESOLVED:-

that the report be accepted and the scheme's publication endorsed.

#### 11. **Town Centre Regeneration in Brent**

This report set out the findings of the Town Centre Regeneration task group set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2007 to review the Council's approach to town centre regeneration in Brent. Councillor Jones (Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee) introduced the task group's report which she hoped would be seen as a valuable contribution to the regeneration strategy accepting that there was a limit to what the Council could do to halt the decline of town centres. She referred to the task group's recommendations and pointed out that there was a key role for the planning department, a need to reduce crime, dumping and also to strike a balance between parking facilities and traffic volume which adversely affected local residents. Councillor Jones commended the work of the town centre managers which it was felt could be extended to work with local projects on environmental issues. Other

recommendations included the role of neighbourhood working officers, the flexible use of property on the periphery of high streets, imposing fines for littering and dealing with trade waste.

The Lead Member (Regeneration and Economic Development) endorsed the need to protect smaller shopping centres and put the view that those that had parking facilities were among the most successful. Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member, Planning, Environment and Culture) agreed on the need for town centres to flourish and supported the task group's recommendations.

The Executive thanked the task group for their work, agreeing that the recommendations be taken into account in future work.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the recommendations set out in the Town Centre Regeneration task group report be noted;
- (ii) that members of the task group be thanked for their work.

12. **Best Value Performance Plan 2008/2009**

The Executive received the annual report which set out the Council's performance against the national set of Best Value performance indicators. It was noted that the data within the plan was subject to an annual independent verification process by the Audit Commission. The Chair, Councillor Lorber (Lead Member, Corporate Strategy and Policy Co-ordination) noted the overall improvement acknowledging however that challenges remained and that in depth discussion on improvement was taking place within service areas.

RESOLVED:-

that the Best Value Performance Plan be noted.

13. **Reference from Forward Plan Select Committee - Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Policy**

This matter was considered earlier in the meeting.

14. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED:

that the press and public be now excluded from the meeting as the following items contain the following category of exempt information 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).” (Clause 15)

“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 of property or supply of goods or services.” (Clause 16).

15. **Brent House Annexe, 356/368 High Road, Wembley**

The report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources sought approval to the renewal of the lease at Brent House Annexe, 356/368 High Road, Wembley.

RESOLVED:-

that approval be given to the renewal of the lease on the main terms outlined below and authorise the Head of Property and Asset Management in conjunction with the Borough Solicitor to enter into a lease on such other terms considered to be in the best interests of the Council.

16. **Brent Transport Services, East Lane Business Park, Wembley lease renewals of 1) offices and workshop and 2) parking compound**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Resources’ report sought the Executive’s consent to the renewal of the Council’s two leases of the above property on the terms detailed in the report.

RESOLVED:-

that approval be given to renew the Council’s leases of firstly the offices and workshop and secondly the parking compound each for a term of 5 years from expiry of the current lease at 28 September 2008, on the terms set out in paragraph 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 of the report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources and such other terms as the Head of Property and Asset Management considers to be in the best interest of the Council.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.

P LORBER  
Chair