



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
held on Monday 7 September 2015 at 7.00 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **The Worshipful the Mayor**

Councillor Lesley Jones MBE B.Ed MA

#### **The Deputy Mayor**

Councillor Parvez Ahmed

### **COUNCILLORS:**

Aden	Agha
Allie	Bradley
Butt	Carr
Chohan	S Choudhary
A Choudry	Colacicco
Collier	Conneely
Crane	Daly
Davidson	Denselow
Dixon	Duffy
Eniola	Ezeajughi
Farah	Filson
Harrison	Hirani
Hossain	Hylton
Kabir	Kansagra
Kelcher	Khan
Long	Marquis
Mashari	Maurice
McLeish	McLennan
Miller	Moher
J Mitchell Murray	W Mitchell Murray
Naheerathan	M Patel
RS Patel	Pavey
Perrin	Shahzad
Ms Shaw	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Southwood
Stopp	Tatler
Thomas	Van Kalwala
Warren	

#### **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from: Councillors Colwill, Hector, Hoda-Benn, Mahmood,

Nerva and Oladapo

1. **Procedural motion**

Councillor Warren moved a procedural motion seeking to amend the circulated seating plan and requested a recorded vote. The motion was put to the vote and declared LOST.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Davidson, Shaw and Warren

AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Agha, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Chohan, Choudhary, Choudry, Colacicco, Collier, Conneely, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Eniola, Ezeajughi, Farah, Filson, Harrison, Hirani, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kansagra, Kelcher, Khan, Long, Marquis, Mashari, Maurice, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Naheerathan, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler, Thomas and Van Kalwala

ABSTENSIONS: The Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Councillor Carr

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 June 2015 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Declarations of interests**

Councillor Miller declared a non pecuniary interest in item 12 – Motion submitted by Brent Conservative Group – in that he is connected with the Trade Union representing the person referred to in the motion. He stated that he would leave the meeting room during discussion of this item.

4. **Mayor's announcements (including any petitions received)**

The Mayor welcomed the new Chief Executive of Brent, Carolyn Downs, to the meeting on her first day in the role.

The Mayor offered sincere condolences on behalf of the Council to Councillor Hector on the recent death of her husband.

The Mayor congratulated Brent students who did so well in A level and GCSE examinations.

The Mayor announced that the official opening of the new Library Centre in Willesden would take place on 12 September 2015.

The Mayor announced that Brent would soon welcome the start of the Rugby World Cup and would be hosting the Rugby World Cup Trophy Tour on 12 September 2015.

The Mayor congratulated Brent duo Ashley McKenzie and Nekoda Davis who had been selected for the British Judo squad for the World Championships to be held in Kazakhstan.

The Mayor announced that a programme of events was being arranged to raise funds for her charity, Brent Young Carers. She urged Members to support the events starting with an evening at the Tricycle Theatre on 9 September 2015.

The Mayor drew attention to the list of current petitions showing progress on dealing with them circulated around the hall.

**5. Appointments to committees and outside bodies and appointment of chairs/vice chairs**

RESOLVED:

that the following appointments be made:

<b>body</b>	<b>appointment</b>
Alcohol & Entertainment Licensing Committee	Councillor Long – vice chair
	Councillor Shaw to replace Councillor Davidson
Audit Committee	Councillor Choudry – vice chair
Planning Committee	Councillor Agha – vice chair
	Councillors Colwill and Kansagra - substitutes
Health & Wellbeing Board	Dr Ethie Kong (Brent CCG) – vice chair
	Mr Ian Niven – Head of Healthwatch, Brent
General Purposes Committee	Councillors Colwill and Maurice - substitutes
Equalities Committee	Councillors Colwill and Maurice - substitutes
	Councillor Kansagra – vice chair
Scrutiny Committee	Councillors Maurice and Kansagra - substitutes
	Iram Yaqub (Oliver Goldsmith Primary School) co-opted primary school parent governor representative

**6. Report from the Leader or members of the Cabinet**

The Leader spoke about the refugee crisis and pledged that the Council would play its part in providing refuge in the same way as it had done in the past by supporting up to 50 families or more if the need and capacity existed.

The Leader welcomed the new Chief Executive to the meeting and paid tribute to the outgoing Chief Executive, Christine Gilbert.

At this point the Mayor suspended the report from the Leader to allow Councillor Kansagra to welcome the new Chief Executive to Brent and pay tribute to Christine Gilbert.

Councillor Pavey spoke against the Government's Budget statement in July and outlined the scale of local government cuts that Brent faced. He referred to the £1.3M cut from Brent's public health budget in the current year. Councillor Pavey stated that consideration was being given to developing the Council's budget for 2017/18 with creative ways being explored in order to protect frontline services.

Councillor Mashari spoke about enrolment by residents on Brent Start courses for 2015/16; in the past week 800 people had registered for courses which was part of the Council's campaign to get more residents into adult education. She referred to the recent announcement by the Skills Funding Agency that mandated ESOL courses would be cut with immediate effect. This was on top of a 24% reduction in funding for further education in the current year. Councillor Mashari reported that BrentWorks would be launched in November creating apprenticeships and job opportunities across a wide range of sectors. She stated that the Living Room project had opened on the St Raphael's estate marking the start of the working people working places pilot supporting local people with employment, health and housing involving a range of agencies. Finally, she reported on the Coming Soon club at Chesterfield House providing a range of free events over the summer for local entrepreneurs.

Councillor Moher reported on the recent exam results which showed an overall improvement and demonstrated the outstanding success of some schools and she congratulated all those involved on their achievements. Councillor Moher updated members on the situation with school places and the temporary and permanent school expansions that were taking place. She stated that 3,911 in time applications for admission to reception had all received an offer with 80% receiving their first choice, which was in line with the national average. However the DfE recommended a vacancy factor of 5% and Brent was well below this level so things would be very tight as a high number of in-year applications could be expected.

Councillor McLennan welcomed Right to Buy receipts for affordable homes expenditure and, given the acute housing shortage, the opportunity to go out to the market to develop housing provision. She reported that the Planning Committee had approved the use of John Barker Court for homeless residents offering quality accommodation. Councillor McLennan reported on a successful bid with Ealing and Hounslow to the central heating fund which would be used to improve the lives of some residents who currently did not have central heating. She referred to landlord licensing with nearly 5,500 licences issued and rogue landlords being prosecuted.

Councillor Southwood stated that the Cabinet had recently agreed a travel strategy and that a walking strategy was out for consultation. The Council was making it easier for residents to report on cases of fly tipping so that swift action could be taken. She stated that it was the time of year when the Council submitted its

strategic transport requirements and funding needs. Councillor Southwood updated members on the Brent Cross development and the welcome decision by Barnet not to remove the green space in Cricklewood and the concern that remained over the sustainable transport elements of the redevelopment.

## **7. Deputations**

Councillor Warren moved a suspension of standing orders to allow a deputation to the meeting and requested that a recorded vote be taken.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Davidson, Shaw and Warren

AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Agha, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Carr, Chohan, Choudhary, Choudry, Colacicco, Collier, Conneely, Daly, Denselow, Dixon, Eniola, Ezeajughi, Farah, Filson, Harrison, Hirani, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kansagra, Kelcher, Khan, Long, Marquis, Mashari, Maurice, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Naheerathan, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler, Thomas and Van Kalwala

ABSTENTIONS: The Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Councillors Crane and Duffy

## **8. Outstanding committee appointments**

The Leader of the Council introduced the report which sought to appoint committee seats allocated to the Brent Conservative Group. He moved the appointment of members to the seats as listed in the circulated paper.

Councillor Warren spoke against making the appointments and argued that the overall allocation of seats to the two opposition groups should be made on a fairer basis. He felt that the places offered to his group were on the less important committees and stated that he and his colleagues would not attend the meetings. Councillor Warren moved amendments to the recommendations which sought to accept his wishes and agree to allocate the places in a more equitable manner.

RESOLVED:

that the following appointments be made:

Audit Committee – Councillor Davidson

Corporate Parenting Committee – Councillor Shaw

Standards Committee – Councillor Warren

Health and Wellbeing Board – Councillor Carr

(Councillors Davidson, Shaw and Warren wished it recorded that they had voted against the above resolution).

## **9. Report from the Chair Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Filson referred to the circulated report and stated that the Scrutiny Committee had met twice since his last report. He had visited the Brent Connects

forums to explain the importance and purpose of the scrutiny process. The committee was keeping a rolling log of decisions taken. Two task groups had been created to look at CCTV and fly-tipping. A budget task group would also be established and he expected it would look at the level of reserves available to carry forward and whether departments had succeeded in meeting their budgets. Councillor Filson stated that the Scrutiny Committee had been critical of the long term transport strategy report which Cabinet had since considered and had not agreed with the views of the committee.

#### 10. **Questions from the Opposition and other Non- Executive Members**

Councillor Kelcher referred to the importance of the Harrow Road and the proposed parking and loading restrictions about which local businesses had expressed concern. He asked for a commitment to work closely with the Harrow Road Business Alliance to ensure that changes to parking and loading restrictions along the stretch of the Harrow Road passing through Kensal Green ward did not adversely impact on the local businesses in the area. Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment) replied that the part of the road being referred to was a very busy thoroughfare with pressure on parking and loading provision. She stated that she would work with the Alliance to ensure that the planned scheme did not inhibit their ability to do business.

Councillor Hossain asked that thanks be given to the neighbours, Council officers and the police who all responded swiftly to a serious problem in College Road when intruders broke into a garage and created a huge mess that needed to be cleaned up; she also thanked the Parks Service for dealing with Japanese Knotweed in Preston Park. Councillor Hossain posed the question of how long such public services would continue to exist before being put out to private companies or the voluntary sector. Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment) replied that she was delighted to be able to thank all those involved. The teams in question had experienced huge financial pressures but continued to do a good job. She stated that it showed that there were public servants working on behalf of the Council that were prepared to put in extra effort for local residents in areas that did not always gain much attention.

Councillor Chohan asked if representations would be made to Transport for London against the plan to close all London Underground ticket offices despite the Mayor of London's promise in 2008 to keep them open. He felt this would have a detrimental effect on crime prevention and accessibility for older passengers. Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment) replied that this reminded her of the broken promise by the Mayor which was extremely disappointing. She agreed that the biggest impact would be felt by people who needed a little more assistance when travelling, whether elderly or with disabilities. Councillor Southwood stated that she was not confident in the equality impact assessment that had been carried out, nor were any lessons being learnt from the ticket offices that had already been shut. She assured members that she would be working closely with Navin Shah, AM (London Assembly Member) to hold the Mayor to account on how he implements the closures and that he was taking into account all the equalities aspects that he should be.

Councillor Bradley asked about the implications of the Government's forced sale of Council homes in Brent. He asked what the effect would be of depriving the

borough of the capital receipt and rent income and on the long term housing strategy for the borough. Councillor McLennan (Lead Member for Housing) replied that the implications were very stark. She was awaiting an announcement on the proposed Housing Bill which had been long delayed. It was to be assumed that the National Housing Federation and housing associations were in discussion with the Department for Communities and Local Government trying to influence the outcome. As an example, housing association tenants would have similar rights to buy as Council tenants and the Council would have to replace high value properties. It was estimated that 15% of Londoners would be able to afford to buy and in Brent this could represent up to 2,400 sales, although this was all subject to receiving the details of the proposal. It was not known how high value property would be determined but it was currently estimated that there would be 650 such properties in Brent. It would mean a loss of rent putting pressure on the housing stock.

Councillor Choudry stated that minimum wage workers who rented would be up to £32 worse off as a result of the Chancellor's summer budget even after all the planned rises in the minimum wage. He asked, given that more than half of households in Brent rented, what the impact would be on local residents. Councillor Choudry was particularly concerned that this would mostly affect the most vulnerable groups in the borough. Councillor Mashari (Lead Member for Employment and Skills) replied that the impact would be mostly felt by the working poor. People on benefits faced increasing financial pressures over the next few years, significantly there were cuts to in work benefits as much as out of work benefits. As an example anyone receiving working tax credits with an income of more than £3,800 will be worse off and there would be a disproportionate adverse impact on ethnic minority communities. Councillor Mashari also referred to the child tax credit cap limit to two children which would again disproportionately impact on ethnic minority groups. She stated that reduced income for these families was likely to lead to missed rental payments and have an impact on the Council's collection levels.

Councillor Davidson stated that the Government's Troubled Families programme had achieved stunning results with 810 families in Brent having their lives transformed and, that Brent residents were enjoying record low levels of unemployment. He contrasted this with the Council's green bin tax which had led to record fly tipping in the borough. He asked if the Cabinet would praise the economic and social record of the Conservative Government instead of misleading local residents suggesting every perceived problem in Brent was the Government's fault. Councillor Moher stated that the Cabinet would support any initiative that helped the most disadvantaged members of society, including the Troubled Families programme which, she stated, was based on the Labour Government's family intervention programmes. Councillor Moher thanked the team running the programme for their hard work and dedication in helping so many families. However, she did not accept that the results were stunning because this would suggest a life changing situation, when in fact the use of food banks was increasing, rents soaring and people were being evicted. The jobs on offer often involved zero hours contracts and although employment was rising many people were taking on multiple jobs to make ends meet. She referred to those who would be worse off when the cuts to tax credits were introduced and the increase in the uptake in free school meals, all of which showed that people were not better off.

## 11. **Changes to the constitution**

The Leader of the Council introduced the changes being proposed to the Constitution. He added that a full review of the Constitution would be undertaken and encouraged members to take part in this rather than propose changes at meetings of Full Council.

Councillor Warren proposed changes to Standing Order 13 – Vote of No Confidence, the terms of reference for the Equalities Committee and Standing Order 32 – The Annual Meeting and requested recorded votes on his three proposals.

The voting for each of Councillor Warren's proposals was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Davidson, Shaw and Warren

AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Agha, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Carr, Chohan, Choudhary, Choudry, Colacicco, Collier, Conneely, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Eniola, Ezeajughi, Farah, Filson, Harrison, Hirani, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kansagra, Kelcher, Khan, Long, Marquis, Mashari, Maurice, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Naheerathan, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler, Thomas and Van Kalwala

ABSTENTIONS: The Mayor and Deputy Mayor

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the changes to the Constitution shown marked up in Appendix 1 to the report submitted be agreed and the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to make consequential changes;
- (ii) that the minor and other technical changes to the Constitution made by the Chief Legal Officer shown marked up in Appendix 2 to the report submitted be noted.

## 12. **Member's absence from Council meetings**

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Councillor Oladapo's absence from meetings of the Council since 27 November 2014 be approved on the basis of his ongoing ill-health and that the position be reviewed, if required, at Full Council in January 2016;
- (ii) that the Council's best wishes be extended to Councillor Oladapo for a speedy return to good health.

## 13. **Motions**

### 13.1 **Holocaust Remembrance Day**



Councillor Maurice moved the motion circulated in his and Councillors Colwill and Kansagra's names which sought to commit the Cabinet to declare the 27 January of every year as Holocaust Remembrance Day uniquely for the purpose of commemorating all those who perished at the hands of the Nazis, whether Jew or gentile. In response, it was explained by Councillor Denselow that the Council held an event each year as commended by the Holocaust Memorial Trust which supported remembering both the holocaust and subsequent genocides and so the motion as worded could not be supported.

The motion was put to the vote and declared LOST.

### 13.2 **Rosemarie Clarke case.....Truth or Cover-Up?**

Councillor Warren moved the motion circulated in his and Councillors Davidson and Shaw's names which sought to get the Council to agree to an independent inquiry into all aspects of the Rosemarie Clarke Employment Tribunal case. He asked that a recorded vote be taken on the matter. In response it was argued that due legal processes should be followed and it was inappropriate to raise the item at a meeting of the Council.

The motion was put to the vote and declared LOST.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Carr, Davidson, Shaw and Warren

AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Agha, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Chohan, Choudhary, Choudry, Colacicco, Collier, Conneely, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Eniola, Ezeajughi, Farah, Filson, Harrison, Hirani, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kelcher, Khan, Long, Marquis, Mashari, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Naheerathan, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler, Thomas and Van Kalwala

ABSTENTIONS: The Mayor and Deputy Mayor and Councillors Kansagra and Maurice

### 14. **Urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

COUNCILLOR LESLEY JONES MBE B.ED MA  
Mayor