



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on Monday 22 February 2016 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
Chan	Chohan
S Choudhary	Colacicco
Colwill	Crane
Daly	Davidson
Denselow	Dixon
Duffy	Eniola
Ezeajughi	Farah
Harrison	Hector
Hirani	Hoda-Benn
Hossain	Hylton
Kabir	Kansagra
Kelcher	Long
Mahmood	Marquis
Mashari	Maurice
McLeish	McLennan
Miller	Moher
J Mitchell Murray	W Mitchell Murray
Nerva	M Patel
RS Patel	Pavey
Perrin	Shahzad
Ms Shaw	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Southwood
Stopp	Tatler
Van Kalwala	Warren

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Councillors A Choudry, Collier, Conneely, Khan, Naheerathan, Oladapo and Thomas

1. **Mayor's introduction**

The Mayor referred to conduct at the previous meeting of Council and reminded all Members to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct when addressing each other. She reported that Councillor Davidson had submitted a letter of apology to herself and the Leader of the Council for any offence caused by what he had said at the meeting. This had been accepted. However, other Members' behaviour had fallen short of the expected standard and she asked that this improve.

2. **Procedural motion**

Councillor Warren moved a procedural motion to amend the seating plan and requested a recorded vote. 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, Chan, Chohan, Choudhary, Colacicco, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Eniola, Ezeajughi, Farah, Harrison, Hector, Hirani, Hoda Benn, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kelcher, Long, Mahmood, Marquis, Mashari, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Nerva, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler and Van Kalwala

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

3. **Procedural motion**

The Chief Whip, Councillor Kabir, moved a procedural motion relating to the debate on item 5.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Leader of the Council be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes in presenting the report on the 2016/17 budget and Council Tax to the meeting, setting out the Cabinet's proposals for the budget, after which the following arrangements be agreed for the purpose of debating and voting upon the 2016/17 Budget and Council Tax:
 - (a) the Leader of the Conservative Group be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes,
 - (b) the Leader of the Brent Conservatives be permitted to speak for up to 15 minutes,
 - (c) the Deputy Leader of the Council be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes,
 - (d) the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes,

- (e) a general debate to follow during which the usual rules for debate will apply as set out in Standing Orders 46 and 47 save as set out in this procedural motion,
- (f) the Leader of the Council be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes to submit his closing remarks;

(ii) that voting on each Group's budget proposals shall be taken en bloc.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 January 2016 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting subject to minute 1 showing a recorded vote (amendment incorporated).

5. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None declared.

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

The Mayor was delighted to report that she had received her MBE on 4 February at Buckingham Palace from Prince Charles.

The Mayor reminded Members that the Council was celebrating Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month with an event open to employees, elected members and residents on 23 February, in the Civic Centre from 12noon to 2pm. The Mayor added that LGBT History Month had been celebrated since 2005 and the theme of the event this year was 'Embracing LGBT Lives in Brent'.

The Mayor announced that the Council was celebrating International Women's Day on 8 March from 10am - 2pm in the Civic Centre. She stated that International Women's Day was a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marked a call to action for accelerating gender parity.

The Mayor announced that Mr Colin Hegarty, a maths teacher at Preston Manor School in Wembley, had been included in the top ten shortlist for the Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize 2016. Colin had created his own online videos to teach his pupils and on behalf of the Council she wished him well.

The Mayor reminded Members that Her Majesty the Queen would celebrate her 90th birthday on 21 April. She paid tribute to her significant service to the country. Events across the country – including in Brent – were planned, and she encouraged everyone to get involved to mark this historic milestone.

The Mayor announced that she had recently welcomed students from the Lycée International de Londres who were doing a project on Brent and its services and from the School Council of the Avigdor Hiirsch Torah Temimah Primary School. She reported that both groups had very much enjoyed learning about democracy and the work of the Council.

The Mayor reported that the previous week Mayors from across London and councillors had visited the Swaminarayan Mandir which she had hosted in aid of her charity appeal

The Mayor announced two dates for Members to note. On 5 April she was hosting a Theatre Evening at the Tricycle Theatre and on 13 May was her End of Year Celebration at the Civic Centre. Full details would follow.

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank everyone who had supported her Mayoral year so far, including those who were taking part in a quiz night the next day. The Mayor was pleased to report that to date she had raised over £6,000 for the Brent Young Carers.

The Mayor reported on Maisie Summerton who had recently celebrated her 100th birthday in Carrick House Nursing Home.

In accordance with Standing Orders a list of current petitions showing progress on dealing with them had been circulated around the chamber.

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

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments be made:

Corporate Parenting Committee	Councillor Warren to replace Shaw
Corporate Parenting Committee	Councillors Davidson and Shaw substitutes
Audit Committee	Councillors Shaw and Warren substitutes
Standards Committee	Councillors Davidson and Shaw substitutes

8. Budget 2016-17 and Council Tax

The Council had before it a report on the 2016/17 revenue and capital budgets and proposing an increase in the Council Tax to be levied.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Butt, addressed the meeting in support of the proposed budget. He referred to the cuts imposed by Government on local government, stating that the effect of this would be to reduce the Council's budget by half during the period 2010-2018. He stated however that action was being taken to protect the services that local residents cared about. Nevertheless there was a need for honesty in recognizing the scale of cuts faced by the Council and that current levels of services could not be maintained and Council Tax levels not increased. He presented an optimistic view of the future based on everyone in the borough working together to make Brent a better place. Councillor Butt referred to Brent as a growing borough which in turn put pressure on local services, particularly from increasing numbers of young people and elderly people. He outlined how the Council had responded to the Government cuts by adopting values that ensured value for money, protecting vulnerable people and providing for the young. So far it

had been possible to hold down Council Tax levels but he explained this was no longer possible if the priorities of residents were to be protected. Councillor Butt outlined the proposals contained in the budget for growth and development. He encouraged everyone to download the Cleaner Brent App to help the Council keep the streets free from rubbish. He expressed confidence that the people of Brent would help the Council get through this difficult time and commended the budget proposals to the meeting.

Councillor Kansagra responded by saying that at every budget meeting the blame was laid on the Government but it was forgotten that the past Labour government had left the economy in a very weak position. He outlined what he regarded as improvements since achieved by the present government such as increased employment levels, cuts in taxes and increases in the state pension. He agreed with the proposal to increase the Council Tax by 2% to help fund Adult Social Care but did not agree with the proposal to further increase the Council Tax by 1.99%. He submitted amendments to the budget designed to delete the proposal for the green bin collection charge and introduce free parking for half hour where appropriate in Brent's secondary shopping parades.

Councillor Warren presented his alternative budget headlined by a 2.5% cut in the level of Council Tax. He criticized what he regarded as the high level of reserves held by the Council and indicated areas where the Council had not spent the money it had available to it which he felt was unacceptable. He stated that residents did not need to be consulted on improving services and that the money spent on this would be better spent on dealing with potholes in the borough. Councillor Warren's proposals sought to make savings on some central items and increase funding for Adult Social Care, fly tipping enforcement, CCTV and removing the green bin charge. He commended his alternative budget to the meeting.

Councillor Pavey, Lead Member for Resources and Deputy Leader, thanked those local people that had taken part in the consultation on the budget. He thanked Scrutiny members for their work on considering the budget proposals and the contributions made by individual councillors. Councillor Pavey addressed the proposals submitted by Councillor Kansagra and asked how they would be paid for. Commenting on the proposals put forward by Councillor Warren he stated that these lacked proper scrutiny. He stated that the level of reserves held by the Council had been carefully examined. Consultation with residents had shown support for a Council Tax increase. The proposed budget preserved services for children and older people and helped people get into work.

Councillor Kelcher, Chair of Scrutiny Committee, referred to the work of scrutiny members on CCTV, tackling illegal dumping and the budget. He stated that a lesson learnt was that scrutiny of the budget needed to start earlier in the year. A view of scrutiny members was that in future years a clearer vision was needed to support the budget discussions. He referred to areas of the budget which had been influenced by the work of scrutiny.

A general debate followed with councillors commenting on the proposed budget and the amendments put forward. Reference was made to the impact the banking scandals had had on the economy. It was submitted that the budget proposals contained in the report sought to protect the most vulnerable. It was felt that the money generated by a 2% rise in Council Tax was not sufficient to meet the

increasing need for Adult Social Care. A point was made that government cuts should be recognised for what they were. Criticism was made of the government's Universal Credit system. A point was made that the budget sought to achieve equality and fairness. Members supported the allocation of additional resources to various areas that supported the needs of local residents. The view was expressed that it was the responsibility of the Council to present a balanced budget and this had been done under difficult circumstances. People who lived and worked in the borough were asked to make best use of the dwindling resources available.

A view was submitted that the alternative budget proposals put forward by Councillor Warren were to be applauded. Reference was made to the additional money allocated to local councils by the government for repairs to potholes and that well run efficient councils would be able to make good use of this. A view was submitted that the government was addressing the level of debt just as householders were encouraged to do.

The Leader thanked everyone for their contribution and suggested that the opposition parties did not understand the impact the cuts in government grant were having.

The amendment moved by Councillor Kansagra was put to the vote and declared LOST.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Colwill, Kansagra and Maurice

AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Agha, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Chan, Chohan, Choudhary, Colacicco, Crane, Daly, Davidson, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Eniola, Ezeajughi, Farah, Harrison, Hector, Hirani, Hoda Benn, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kelcher, Long, Mahmood, Marquis, Mashari, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Nerva, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Shaw, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler, Van Kalwala and Warren

ABSTENTIONS: The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor Carr

The amendment moved by Councillor Warren was put to the vote and declared LOST.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Carr, Davidson, Maurice Shaw and Warren

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

ABSTENTIONS: The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors Colwill and Kansagra

RESOLVED:

- (i) that an overall 3.99% increase in the Council's element of council tax for 2016/17 with 2% as a precept for Adult Social Care and a 1.99% general increase be agreed;
- (ii) that the General Fund revenue budget for 2016/17, as summarised in Appendix B to the report submitted be agreed;
- (iii) that the cost pressures and savings detailed in Appendix D to the report submitted and dedicated schools' grant as set out in section 6 of the report be agreed;
- (iv) that the revisions to the savings originally proposed in the budget set in the 2015/16 budget set out in paragraphs 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 of the report submitted be agreed;
- (v) that the revision to remove saving MGF02 from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 budget proposals set out in paragraph 6.6 of the report submitted be agreed;
- (vi) that the Chief Finance Officer's assessment of risks as set out in Appendix E to the report submitted be noted;
- (vii) that the report from the Budget Scrutiny Panel included as Appendix F to the report submitted be noted;
- (viii) that the results of consultation as set out in section 9 of the report submitted be noted;
- (ix) that the budgets for central items as detailed in Appendix G to the report submitted be agreed;
- (x) that the capital programme as set out in Appendix J to the report submitted be agreed;
- (xi) that the Treasury Management Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2016/17 set out in Appendix K to the report submitted be agreed;
- (xii) that the Prudential Indicators measuring affordability, capital spending, external debt and treasury management set out in Appendix L to the report submitted be agreed;
- (xiii) that the advice of the Chief Legal Officer as set out in Appendix M of the report submitted be noted;
- (xiv) that the categorisation of Earmarked Reserves and Provisions set out in Appendix N of the report submitted be agreed;
- (xv) that the schedules of fees and charges set out at Appendix Q of the report submitted be agreed;

- (xvi) that the funding update provided in Appendix R to the report submitted be noted;

[These decisions only include a provisional Council Tax level for the GLA as its final budget was not agreed when this report was dispatched. This means that the statutory calculation of the total amount of Council Tax under Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 may be amended by the final Greater London Authority precept].

- (xvii) that, in relation to the council tax for 2016/17:

the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2016/17 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:

- (a) £1,025,870,075 being the aggregate of the amount that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act.
- (b) £927,580,000 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £98,290,075 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- (d) £1,101.24 being the amount at (c) above, divided by the amount for the taxbase of 89,254, agreed by the General Purposes Committee on the 25th Jan 2016, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

- (e) Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
734.16	856.52	978.88	1,101.24	1,345.96	1,590.68	1,835.40	2,202.48

being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (xviii) that it be noted that for the year 2016/17 the proposed Greater London Authority precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, in respect of the Greater London Authority, for each of the categories of dwellings are as shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
184.00	214.67	245.33	276.00	337.33	398.67	460.00	552.00

- (xix) that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at paragraph 2.15(e) and 2.16, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2016/17 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
918.16	1,071.19	1,224.21	1,377.24	1,683.29	1,989.35	2,295.40	2,754.48

- (xx) that it be noted that the Chief Finance Officer has determined that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2016/17 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Act 1992.
- (a) that the Chief Finance Officer be and is hereby authorised to give due notice of the said council tax in the manner provided by Section 38(2) of the 1992 Act,
 - (b) that the Chief Finance Officer be and is hereby authorised when necessary to apply for a summons against any council tax payer or non-domestic ratepayer on whom an account for the said tax or rate and any arrears has been duly served and who has failed to pay the amounts due to take all subsequent necessary action to recover them promptly,
 - (c) that the Chief Finance Officer be and is hereby authorised to collect revenues and distribute monies from the Collection Fund and is authorised to borrow or to lend money in accordance with the regulations to the maximum benefit of each fund.
- (xxi) that in the event that the GLA sets a different council tax precept to that set out in this report (which was the published provisional amount at the date of despatch) that authority be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer to vary the amounts at (xix) above, but only insofar as to reflect the GLA decision, and to make consequential, but no other, amendments to the amounts at (xx) above.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Aden, Agha, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Chan, Chohan, Choudhary, Colacicco, Conneely, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Eniola, Ezeajughi,

Farah, Harrison, Hector, Hirani, Hoda Benn, Hossain, Hylton, Kabir, Kelcher, Khan, Long, Mahmood, Marquis, Mashari, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Nerva, M Patel, R Patel, Pavey, Perrin, Shahzad, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stopp, Tatler and Van Kalwala

AGAINST: Councillors Carr, Colwill, Davidson, Kansagra, Maurice, Shaw and Warren

ABSTENTIONS: The Mayor and Deputy Mayor

9. **Localism Act 2011- Pay Policy Statements**

Members considered the report detailing the arrangements that had been put in place in Brent Council to meet the requirements of Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 Act to produce a pay policy statement on an annual basis.

RESOLVED:

that the draft Pay Policy Statement attached to the report submitted be approved as an accurate and factual representation of the council's pay arrangements for 2015/16.

10. **Future scrutiny structure**

Member considered the report proposing a new structure for the operation of the Scrutiny function in Brent.

The proposals were broadly welcomed in recognition of the workload which needed more specialism and to be undertaken by a larger number of councillors. A point was made regarding the allocation of the position of vice chair on each committee.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the new scrutiny structure set out in the report submitted be approved for implementation in May 2016;
- (ii) that a review of scrutiny arrangements concerning strategic matters such as budget setting and policy formation be the subject of a follow up report later in 2016;
- (iii) that the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to amend the Constitution to record the new scrutiny structure.

11. **Members Allowance Scheme**

Members considered the report proposing changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme which sets out the allowances Members are entitled to receive for carrying out their responsibilities.

A view was submitted that at a time when the Council was having to make such severe cuts and increasing the level of Council Tax it was not appropriate to increase the level of members' allowances.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Members' Allowance Scheme attached as Appendix 2 to the report submitted be approved for the financial year 2016/17;
- (ii) that the Chief Legal Officer be requested to comply with the statutory requirements to publicise the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme.

12. Changes to the operation of Full Council meetings

Members considered the report which outlined a number of proposals to change the Council's Constitution to improve the opportunities for non-Cabinet members and members of the public to participate in full Council meetings.

RESOLVED:

that the changes to the Constitution proposed in the report submitted and, if applicable, marked up in Appendix 1 to the report be approved and the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to make consequential changes throughout the Constitution.

13. Changes to the constitution

Members considered the report which outlined a number of proposals to change the Council's Constitution including clarifying and amending the requirements of the Council's Forward Plan procedures; extending the right of call-in beyond key decisions; increasing contract values and the delegated powers of officers and renaming the Brent Connects Kilburn and Kensal area consultative forum.

RESOLVED:

that the changes to the Constitution proposed in the report submitted be approved and the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly.

14. Members' absence from meetings

RESOLVED:

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 the Annual meeting of Full Council in May 2016;

15. Urgent business

None.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

COUNCILLOR LESLEY JONES MBE B.ED MA
Mayor