



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on Monday 19 September 2016 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Parvez Ahmed

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Bhagwanji Chohan

COUNCILLORS:

Aden	Agha
Allie	Bradley
Butt	Carr
Chan	S Choudhary
A Choudry	Colacicco
Collier	Colwill
Conneely	Crane
Daly	Denselow
Eniola	Ezeajughi
Farah	Harrison
Hector	Hirani
Hossain	Jones
Kabir	Kansagra
Kelcher	Khan
Long	Mahmood
Marquis	Mashari
McLeish	McLennan
Miller	Moher
W Mitchell Murray	Naheerathan
Nerva	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 Davidson, Hylton and Maurice and from Councillor Stopp for lateness.

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday 11 July 2016, be approved as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to the following amendments:

- (i) Minute No.4 (Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and Appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs).

That, at Line 1 to Resolution (i) therein, the word "Person" be deleted and replaced with "Member" to reflect the appointment of Dr Robert Cawley as Independent Member to the Council's Standards Committee; and

- (ii) That Councillor Allie be recorded as having left the meeting of 11 July 2016, early.

2. Suspension of Standing Orders

In accordance with Standing Order 2 (Suspension of Standing Orders), Councillor Warren moved that Council suspend Standing Orders to consider a matter of urgent business Councillor Warren had asked be considered at this meeting.

For clarity, the Chief Executive asked that all Members be made aware as to what the matter in question was before Council could determine whether or not to suspend Standing Orders.

In response, Councillor Warren stated that Cabinet had decided to delegate to Councillor Butt and the Chief Executive, the decision to agree that the Revenue Support Grant be fixed for the next four years and that in addition to that, an efficiency plan be agreed.

Councillor Warren stated that he accepted that the decision had been made by Cabinet and that decision was final but felt that Members should be aware of the significance of that decision, which was binding upon the next Administration, and also felt that Members would want to see what was included in any efficiency plan.

Councillor Warren said that 14 October 2016 was the date by which a decision had to be arrived at and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to be notified of that decision. He added that the urgent item he had asked to be considered was for an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to be convened on 13 October 2016 to discuss the content or whatever decision the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive had made. In conclusion, Councillor Warren said that this was a significant interest from the Council's point of view and since it was part of the Budget process, should be discussed.

In response, Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader, stated that the decision to offer the fixed, four-year rate had been agreed last year by DCLG and that the Council had agreed that it would wait until after the referendum as there was an area of uncertainty as to what the impact would be. Councillor McLennan went on to say that now the Referendum had been held most, if not all London Councils, had

agreed to the four-year rate since it was the only matter at the present time where the Council could say with any certainty that there was guaranteed income coming in.

Councillor McLennan said that Officers had been informed that out of all the London Councils, none had rejected it and, in terms of how it had been agreed, most Councils Cabinets had taken the decision. She said that one or two London Councils had taken the matter to Full Council and that little or no discussion had taken place. She added that Cabinet taking the decision was the right action to take. Councillor McLennan said that the Cabinet decision on the offer made had been taken last year.

In conclusion, in respect of any efficiency plan, Councillor McLennan stated that, in line with transparency, she was happy for Members to see budget proposals prior to consultation.

On a vote being taken by a show of hands, three Members voted for the motion and no Members abstained from the vote. The Mayor confirmed that all other Members present voted against the motion which, accordingly, was declared **LOST**.

3. **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

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

The Mayor made the following announcements:

(i) The Mayors' Charities

The Mayor said that Members would have been aware that he had had a busy summer working to raise money for his three charities. The Mayor thanked Members for their support.

Since the last meeting of Full Council, the Mayor had held the first of his fundraising events. He said it was a magnificent event with over 400 guests in attendance and he thanked all the Members of his Charity Committee who had made the event such a success.

The Mayor advised Council that his next two fundraising events were planned for 15 December 2016 and 16 March 2017 and he encouraged all Members to support both events in any way they could.

(ii) Civic Reception

The Mayor was delighted to announce that, on 29 September 2016, he would be holding his Civic Reception at Crest Academy in his Ward and that all Members were warmly invited to attend.

(iii) Nice, France

The Mayor said that recent events in New York reminded us how fragile the society we lived in was. He said that whilst Members were raising money in Brent on 14 July 2016, the tragic events in Nice had unfolded. The Mayor said that the Council's thoughts and prayers were with the victims of these barbaric acts.

(iv) Zee London Mela

The Mayor was delighted, along with the Leader of the Council, to have welcomed the Zee London Mela in Wembley last month. Despite the weather, he said that Wembley had come alive with a mixture of cultures, food and music and he expressed the Council's thanks to The Mayor of London who graced the event with his presence.

The Mayor said that, hopefully, the Council would see the Mela return to Brent next year.

(v) Kingsbury Synagogue 80th Anniversary Event

The Mayor said he had been honoured to attend the Kingsbury Synagogue 80th Anniversary Event recently.

(vi) Pakistani Independence Day

The Mayor thanked the Councillors who had organised the successful Pakistani Independence Day Celebration held recently at the Civic Centre.

(vii) Community Festivals

The Mayor announced that a number of fantastic community festivals had taken place since the Council last met:

- The Harlesden Community Festival;
- The Willesden Temple 41st Anniversary Celebrations;
- The Cricklewood Festival;
- The outreach event for Romanian communities delivered by the East European Resource Centre.

(viii) A-Level and GCSE Attainment

The Mayor was delighted to announce that Brent's A-Level and GCSE attainment had improved again this year. He said that the young people were a credit to the Borough and he congratulated them on the hard work they had put in over the past year.

The Mayor also extended his thanks to Brent's many dedicated teachers, staff and governors who had worked tirelessly to help the Borough's young people reach their full potential.

(ix) Coffee Morning for MacMillan Cancer Support

The Mayor encouraged all Members to come to the Civic Centre from 9.30am to 12.30pm on Friday 30 September 2016 to join the Coffee Morning to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support.

He said that, as well as the traditional bake sale, this year would also feature an international stall selling different treats from around the world.

(x) Councillor Denselow

The Mayor offered his congratulations to Councillor Denselow who had recently completed yet another marathon, in just three hours and 45 minutes, in support of the Mayhew Animal Home.

(xi) Rosh Hashanah, Eid and Diwali

The Mayor passed on his best wishes to colleagues, staff and residents who were celebrating Rosh Hashanah and also to those that had celebrated Eid recently.

The Mayor extended a Happy Diwali to everyone who would be celebrating Diwali soon.

(xii) Fiona Alderman, Chief Legal Officer

The Mayor invited Members to join him in saying farewell to the Council's departing Chief Legal Officer, Fiona Alderman. He said that Fiona had joined Brent 12 years ago from Redbridge as Principal Lawyer and was soon to leave Brent and return to Redbridge as Head of Legal and Constitutional Services. On behalf of Members past and present, the Mayor thanked Fiona for her professionalism and good humour and wished her well in Redbridge.

In conclusion, the Mayor stated that, in accordance with Standing Order 68(f), a list of current petitions showing progress to date, had been circulated to all Members.

5. **Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs (if any)**

RESOLVED, that the following appointments to committees be ratified by the Council:

(i) Wellbeing and Scrutiny Committee

The resignation by Payam Tamiz (Al-Khoei Foundation) as co-opted Member of the Council's Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the appointment by the Foundation of Siddika Gulamhusein as replacement Member on the Committee, be noted; and

(ii) Standards Committee

Dr Robert Cawley be appointed as Independent Member to the Council's Standards Committee (Minute No.1 (i) above refers).

6. Reports from the Leader and Cabinet

In accordance with Standing Order 38, the Council received reports from the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members, as follows:

(i) Councillor Butt (Leader of the Council)

(a) Syrian Refugees

Councillor Butt spoke on the recent plight of Syrian refugees and how Brent was working with partners to ensure their safe transition to Brent. He added that other London Councils and the LGA had visited Calais to see at first hand, the extent of the situation and that they had returned with renewed vigour to help individuals affected. He went on to say that, in Brent, the Council had been working with UK London Citizens, the Inter Faiths' Centre and Crest Academy in an attempt to set up a network of support to any Syrian refugees moving to Brent.

(b) Streets and Heritage

Councillor Butt said that the Council had recently been contacted by the National Lottery Heritage Fund asking how it could work with the Council in providing allocated funding to improve streets and areas of heritage within the Borough.

(c) Bobby Thomas

Councillor Butt extended his thanks to Bobby Thomas who had organised the recent Harlesden Festival, which made sure that the Council had resilient communities that it was supporting and working with.

(ii) Councillor Pavey (Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities)

"Time to Talk" Event

Councillor Pavey took the opportunity to invite all Members and residents to attend the latest of the Council's "Time to Talk" events, which was scheduled to be held on the evening of 3 October 2016. Councillor Pavey said that Time to Talk was all about engaging with the community to try and find grass root solutions to the really difficult problems faced and that, following the success of the Council's most recent event on hate crime, the next event would focus on extremism.

Councillor Pavey went on to say that this was an important issue and one the Council wanted to address openly, sensibly and constructively. In conclusion, Councillor Pavey encouraged everyone with an interest in this area to come along and get involved.

(iii) Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Environment)

(a) Illegal Dumping and Antisocial Behaviour

Councillor Southwood said that Members and residents shared her frustration at the number of hotspots the Council had across the Borough where not only was illegal dumping very common but where there was a link to antisocial behaviour.

Councillor Southwood sought to advise Members that the Council was taking a much more joined-up approach to some of these areas and that this was beginning to yield results. She added that, more importantly, the Council had to work more closely with the community and similar with the model pioneered by the Keep Wembley Tidy Group and she thanked the Group for helping the Council to get better at working in partnership.

(b) Brent Transport Service

Councillor Southwood said that many Members and residents may not have been familiar with the Brent Transport Service, which transported the Borough's young people who attended special schools across Brent, as well as some of the Borough's adults who required its support to attend services they used.

Councillor Southwood went on to say that the Council's fleet was old and that the service was becoming unsustainable. She added that the Council was now working in partnership with Harrow and had launched a transport help which she felt was really exciting and had many opportunities for the future. In conclusion, Councillor Southwood said that this could not only sustain the service but improve it.

(iv) Councillor Mashari (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills

(a) Head of Planning, Transport and Licensing

Councillor Mashari informed Members of the appointment of Alice Lester, the Council's new Head of Planning, Transport and Licensing, with effect from 17 October 2016. She said that Ms Lester, a resident of Brent, brought with her, experience of working with three London Boroughs and the Planning Advisory Service, which was a national organisation that provided help with a range of experience and skills needed for this very important position.

(b) West London Economic Prosperity Board

Councillor Mashari advised Council that the Board was scheduled to meet on Wednesday 21 September 2016 and that she would be working with her counterparts across West London to help provide support and confidence to businesses that faced the uncertainty that had been created by Brexit and also to the large number of European Union citizens who were valued employees and residents across Brent and other West London Boroughs.

(c) Ashford Place

Councillor Mashari extended her congratulations to Ashford Place, which had become the Council's latest living wage accredited employer in Brent and which took the total number of accredited employers to over 30 within the Borough.

(v) Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader of the Council)

(a) Draft Budget

Councillor McLennan advised Council that the Administration was due to publish its draft Budget and that it would be seeking authority from Cabinet on 24 October 2016, to undertake consultation on it. She said that once Cabinet's authority to consult had been approved, all Members would have an opportunity to review the proposals and to allow the Opposition to formulate an alternative budget should it wish to do so.

(b) Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

Councillor McLennan said that she wanted the Council to fix the RSG for four years as it gave a level of certainty and clarity that was required.

(vi) Councillor W Mitchell Murray (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

Councillor Mitchell Murray echoed the Mayor's congratulations to all of Brent's students, for doing as well as they had, and to the teaching and support staff and parents who had helped their children achieve the grades that they had.

Councillor Mitchell Murray was pleased to advise Council that this year's results for Brent's children had showed that the Borough was delivering higher than the national average results for Brent's pupils across all key stages. Additionally, Councillor Mitchell Murray highlighted the following points:

- (i) Brent had achieved a significant closing of the gap in the Early Years Foundations Stage and that, for the first time here in Brent, the Borough had no primary schools below the Government's targets;
- (ii) In contrast with other areas in the Country who had seen a decline in their GCSE results, Brent's continued to improve with the proportion of the Borough's students achieving five GCSEs Grades A to C (including English and Maths) this year, had increased by three percentage points to 63%.
- (iii) The Council had already learnt from its schools' feedback this summer that more of the Borough's A-level students had been successful in gaining entry into the Russell Brookes Society. The Council had seen an increase too in the numbers of A-level examinations in Brent, with an increased pass rate of 99% as

opposed to 97% last year. Councillor Murray said she would not be satisfied until the Council got nearer to a 100% pass rate.

(iv) Congratulations also to all of the Borough's Looked after Children, who also attended their exams.

(vii) Councillor Hirani (Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing)

(a) Health Visiting a School Nursing Service

Councillor Hirani said that work was underway to develop the "Health Visiting a School Nursing Service" in order that the Council had a 0-19 offer. Councillor Hirani said that this was a new way of looking to deliver services so that more parents could access that support as new families and also that the Council had a service, which stretched onto other areas, and that people who did have a visit from a NHS professional took that opportunity to look at other issues such as housing so that such an opportunity was not missed.

(b) My Heart Beats with Brent

Councillor Hirani was delighted to announce the launch of "My Heart Beats with Brent", in conjunction with Tottenham Hotspur FC, which encouraged Brent residents to take part in 30 minutes of physical activity or exercise every day, and he encouraged Members to take part in the scheme.

(c) Sustainable Transformation Plans (STP)

Councillor Hirani said that NHS England had developed national footprints across the Country where they were expecting local areas to deliver plans and services to their local population. In Brent, he said he wanted to turn this process around in order that the Council looked at what the needs of the Borough were and that these were presented to the STP to reflect the ways in which residents would like to see the Council's services run. Councillor Hirani added that, in order to do this, a public event was being hosted by Brent at 6.30pm on Monday 26 September 2016, to which he encouraged Members, and their residents to come along to, to ensure a representative view from residents across the Borough. He added that he was working with the Council's Communications Team to take STP out onto the streets of Brent speaking to people and the residents of Brent, on the STP.

(viii) Councillor Farah (Cabinet Member for Housing)

Councillor Farah gave a quick update on Brent's Benefit Cuts Toolkit, which was being launched shortly. He said that, following the lowering of benefits cuts scheduled for this year, which would affect approximately 1,800 Brent residents who were in receipt of welfare benefit, 200 of these would experience a reduction in their housing benefits for the first time, with 600 experiencing a rise in their current housing benefits.

Councillor Aslam Choudry left the meeting at 7.25pm.

7. Deputations (if any)

In accordance with Standing Order 39, there were no deputations received from members of the public.

8. Questions from Members of the Public

The Mayor advised Council that six questions had been received by those residents listed below and that, in each case, a written response had been circulated and details of these had been placed before Members.

Council noted that those persons who had submitted Questions 4 and 5 were present at the meeting.

Question 1 from Fahmida Shakhar Khan to Councillor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Environment.

Question 2 from Ramesh Gami to Councillor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Environment.

Question 3 from Chris Dunham to Councillor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Environment.

Question 4 from Elham Farsi to Councillor Farah, Cabinet Member for Housing.

The Mayor welcomed Ms Farsi to the meeting and invited her to put a supplementary question to Councillor Farah.

Ms Farsi stated that she had not been happy with the answer given to her original question and asked for it to be readdressed. In response, Councillor Farah proposed that he meet with Ms Farsi outside of the Council Meeting to take the matter forward.

Question 5 from Ms Jennifer Dowell to Councillor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Environment.

The Mayor welcomed Ms Dowell to the meeting and invited her to put a supplementary question to Councillor Southwood.

Ms Dowell stated that she did not have a supplementary question but that she felt she was being punished for doing a good job within her neighbourhood. In response, Councillor Southwood proposed that she meet with Ms Dowell outside of the Council Meeting to look at ways in which the Council could do more to assist her.

Question 6 from Malik Nasir Khan to Councillor Farah, Cabinet Member for Housing.

9. Petitions

In accordance with Standing Order 68, there were no petitions received.

10. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

Non-Cabinet Members discussed the issue of grammar schools.

During the debate, Members expressed concern over the lack of any real evidence to even continue to provide grammar schools and that the introduction of further such schools was a disastrous policy and would not help the brightest children.

Members acknowledged that all children should be given an equal chance particularly as far as education provision was concerned and that the Council and other local authorities which shared the same concerns, should apply pressure to the Government accordingly.

Members were concerned that the Government, in proposing the introduction of further grammar schools, had failed to address current important issues concerning education provision across the Country, including head teacher and teacher retention levels, class size issues, valuing teachers and supporting head teachers in their challenging roles.

During debate, a number of points were raised by Members, including:

- Local authorities should continue to make comprehensive schools better.
- In areas where there were grammar schools, only 20-30% achieved five A to C grades, as opposed to areas without grammar schools.
- Grammar schools provided no social value and actually made nearby schools worse by syphoning out local resources.
- Grammar schools were for children who had been selected at just 11 years, which was too young.
- Education was a birth right and not a privilege

Councillor Sabina Khan left the meeting at 7.54pm.

11. **Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members**

The Mayor advised Members that this item gave them the opportunity to ask questions of Members of the Cabinet on any matter, which was the responsibility of Cabinet. He confirmed that Members had received written tabled responses to these questions.

The Mayor stated that non-Cabinet Members each had one minute to ask a supplementary question if they so wished.

- (i) Councillor Shaw asked the Cabinet Member to inform residents as to who was responsible for sorting out the damage from floods, which had affected residents living in Chamberlain Road and All Souls Avenue NW10?

In response, the Chief Executive advised Council that this question had already been answered in the written tabled responses, which had been circulated previously.

- (ii) Councillor Choudhary asked the Cabinet Member that, since reports in circulation suggested that unemployment would rise next year as a result of Brexit, what action was likely to be taken to challenge those problems.

In response, Councillor Mashari (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills) reiterated that there were signs of recruitment contracting significantly since Brexit in the short-term at least. She said that in a snap-poll following Brexit, conducted by the Institute of Directors, figures had suggested that a quarter of firms were temporarily freezing recruitment. Councillor Mashari went on to say that other surveys conducted suggested that six out of nine sectors surveyed were less optimistic about adding jobs in the wake of Brexit.

Councillor Mashari agreed with Councillor Choudhary that there was a great deal of uncertainty and a great lack of confidence at the present time. Councillor Mashari reassured Members that the Council was doing all that it could to reassure businesses, not just in Brent but across West London and in some of the sectors where large numbers of Brent's residents were employed. She said that the West London Economic Prosperity Board was a key driver in this and that she would be working closely with the Chief Executive of West London Business, Angie Dakers, to bring forward proposals across West London to create a hub for businesses to get the information and the confidence they needed and, crucially, would work with the Borough's Eastern European and wider European workforce, which Brent's economy, locally, depended upon. In conclusion, Councillor Mashari reiterated that it was an uncertain time and that there was evidence already that recruitment was contracting in the short-term but that the Council would be working with its partners across West London to instil as much confidence in businesses and employers as it could.

- (iii) Councillor Daly asked the Cabinet Member if Members could be advised of the timetable for the roll-out of additional Police Officers in the remaining wards within the Borough.

In response, Councillor Pavey (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities) advised Members that all wards in Brent would have two dedicated ward officers, by the end of 2017. He said that around half of the Borough's Wards would have these dedicated officers in place by the end of 2016 (Phase 1) with the remainder being in place by the end of 2017 (Phase 2). He went on to say that the rationale behind deciding which wards would receive the support of the dedicated officers first was based upon the issues of deprivation and geographical balance. In conclusion, Councillor Pavey said that Sudbury (for which, Councillor Daly was a Ward Member) would receive the support via Phase 2 with Barnhill and Queensbury Wards being accommodated during Phase 1.

- (iv) Councillor Long asked the Cabinet Member what the Council could do to help the homeless and prevent homelessness given the illogical and daft policies of this government.

In response, Councillor Farah (Cabinet Member for Housing) said that the proposed Homelessness Protection Bill did not address the issue of housing supply. He said that the Council was doing a lot to help by utilising its Find Your Home strategy in Brent and was very successful. He said that the proposals created more work and brought about more homelessness with no additional resources and therefore Brent would continue to address its own homelessness issues with its own resources.

(v) Councillor Kelcher asked the Cabinet Member when his residents in Rowanwood could expect to receive the CCTV and litter bin provision agreed as part of the planning permission to create a new skate park there.

In response, Councillor Pavey (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities) congratulated Councillor Kelcher on the work done by his scrutiny committee on CCTV Policy and also his hard work in this particular case. Councillor Pavey said that CCTV was covered by surprisingly strict rules considering it was something most members of the community would welcome on their street corner but in the case mentioned by Councillor Kelcher, he was hopeful that a solution had been found that would enable a camera to be installed in that trouble spot in the not too distant future. He said that this solution would be a credit to his hard work.

Councillor Pavey then took the opportunity to restate the commitment he had given to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. There had, he said, been much discussion about the future of CCTV provision and that Councillor Kelcher had politely, not mentioned the Council in question, which he felt was short-sighted and dangerous. Councillor Pavey was happy to announce that the local authority in question was Westminster Council, which had taken the decision to switch off all of its CCTV and reassured Members that Brent would not be doing this but would hope to make significant investment in improving the Borough's infrastructure in the very near future.

12. **Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees**

Council received the following reports from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees, as detailed in the Supplementary Agenda to this meeting:

(i) Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Kelcher, Chair to the Committee, referred to his report which, in accordance with Standing Order 14, provided a summary of the activities that had been carried out by the Council's Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. The report covered the period from 18 May 2016 to the present day and gave details of the Committee's planned training, programme of work and items discussed during the committee meetings.

Councillor Kelcher stated that, at the last meeting, he had set out that the main reforms the Committee would focus on since he became Chair of the Committee and that these had been set out in detail in its Annual Report.

Councillor Kelcher said that the Committee was improving the way it requested reports in order that Members, and officers, were clear on what the Committee was receiving and then setting the agenda with the involvement of the whole Committee. He said that, since then, he believed that the Committee had taken these reforms further by conducting some reality checking visits, for example, the Committee had visited the CCTV Control Room before meeting to discuss the issue. He added that the Committee was working on a system whereby verbal recommendations were followed-up on as much as written recommendations and he had started to meet with Heads of Departments to make sure the Committee was aware of ongoing developments.

Councillor Kelcher said that, with regard to task groups that had been set up, the Committee had received a report from Councillor Farah (Cabinet Member for Housing) on S106 matters and that the Committee, in endorsing all other recommendations in the report had amended two and rejected one of the recommendations in the report, which was now the matter for consideration by the Cabinet.

Councillor Kelcher went on to say that the Committee had received further updates from two task groups, which had been set up previously. These, he said, referred to CCTV and illegal dumping of rubbish and, in both cases, the Committee had made further recommendations, which it believed built on the spirit of those reports and hoped would help to expand them.

Councillor Kelcher said that the Committee had also set up further task groups. The first of these, he said, was to look at business rates and that this task group would be chaired by Councillor Davidson. He said that the task group would look at the system of devolving business rates for local authorities, which was happening in this Parliament, how these would affect Brent, how Brent could take advantage of it and how exactly it would work and what the rules would be.

Councillor Kelcher said that the second task group to be established, after Christmas, was one which would consider child sexual exploitation and would be chaired by Councillor Tatler. In between these, he said, there would be a Budget task group set up, which would comprise six Members (three from each of the Council's two scrutiny committees), would be chaired by himself and would get underway in October.

In addition to task groups, Councillor Kelcher said that the Committee had considered a number of reports since the last meeting of the Council. The first of these, he said, had been to receive an overview of the Council's financial position because, as a committee, it needed to bear this in mind when considering its business. He went on to say that the Committee had also focussed on planning matters and, in particular, had considered the Council's development management policies and its overall planning strategy.

Councillor Kelcher also said that the Committee had also held a very interesting discussion in relation to the Council's resurfacing policy and that it had made recommendations on improving the public's understanding of the issue.

Councillor Kelcher said that the Committee had many more issues to consider but those which he was particularly looking forward to at the next meeting were income generation and how the Council could better use its assets and how the Council managed Brent's high streets. In conclusion, he said that the Committee had a very busy agenda ahead but that there was still provision to consider any topical or important items which came up.

(ii) Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Sheth, Chair to the Committee, referred to his report which, in accordance with Standing Order 14, provided a summary of the activities that had been carried out by the Council's Community and Well-being Scrutiny Committee. The report covered the period from 18 May 2016 to the present day and gave details of the Committee's Work Programme, visits, training and engagements undertaken and matters discussed.

Councillor Sheth stated that the care of older people was one of the greatest challenges the Council faced. He said that Brent's residents were living longer but the Council's resources to support them were diminishing year by year. Councillor Sheth went on to say that this administration had responded to the challenge by starting a new accommodation for independent living project, led by Adult Social Care. He added that residential care was very expensive and if the project succeeded, it would provide a significant budget saving, whilst improving the quality of care for some of the Borough's most vulnerable residents. Councillor Sheth said he strongly believed that it was important that in order to form a view about a service, the Council needed to find out about it at first hand. He said that, last week, he and Councillor Hector had visited extra care accommodation in Wembley, which was provided as part of the project. He went on to say that he had spent an afternoon visiting Willow House and talking to residents and key staff there. He said that what he had seen was high quality housing for older people, many of whom had mental health needs. He said that, at Willow House, the residents lived independently as far as they could, which was an excellent start, but recognised that the project had lots of challenges. Councillor Sheth acknowledged that people who lived in extra care and supported living would be exempt from a cap on local housing allowance for at least a year. He said that his Committee would meet the following evening to explore this and other questions.

Councillor Sheth said that he had also visited parts of the Borough and had seen far less happy sites. In August, he visited and joined officers from private housing services, who were carrying out checks on properties in Kingsbury, which were suspected of not complying with the Council's Landlord Licensing Scheme. Councillor Sheth said that he had been shocked by what he had seen in terms of overcrowding, people living in a garage and 12 people living in a three-bedroom house. He said that he had gone on that visit because, in July, his Committee had reviewed the Scheme and had heard that in Harlesden, Wembley Central and Willesden Green, selective licensing had been successful.

Councillor Sheth said that his Committee had made a number of

recommendations to the Cabinet but the most important one was that the Committee believed that the time had come to extend selective licensing to other parts of Brent.

Councillor Sheth then spoke on the safeguarding of the Borough's children and that promoting their welfare was another key priority for the Administration. He was pleased to announce the establishment of a "Signs of Safety" task group, to be chaired by Councillor Hoda-Benn, which had been set up to look into the introduction of a new model in children's services. He said that Signs of Safety was about improving the safety of children by working with families to build on their strengths and that this was being used by local authorities in North America, Australia and quite a number within the United Kingdom. He went on to say that part of the work of the Task Group would be to talk to frontline social workers to get their views and experiences and to make sure that the voice of children was also heard.

Councillor Sheth said that the Health Service was going through huge changes at present and that tomorrow evening, his Committee would be reviewing communication of the STP, which Councillor Hirani had spoken about earlier. He said that many Members were concerned about the future of Brent's Advisory Support Service and wanted to ensure that health services in Brent were sufficiently supporting this group of people and those people who had long-term health needs. He said that, earlier in the month, he had written to Brent Care Commissioning Group who had confirmed that they had decided to keep the pilot running but made it clear that if the pilot was not commissioned in the future then there would be a three-months' notice period in order that alternative arrangements could be put in place.

In conclusion, Councillor Sheth said that he had started by saying that the Council was having to provide more with fewer resources and that this was also true of the health service. He said that his Committee would ensure that as all public services in Brent addressed this challenge, the Borough's residents' views would be heard.

13. **Treasury Outturn**

Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report by the Council's Chief Finance Officer, which asked Council to note the 2015/16 Treasury Management outturn report, which was substantively the same as that reviewed at Cabinet on 15 August and Audit Committee on 30th June, in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code).

RESOLVED, that the 2015/16 Treasury Management Outturn Report, prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code), be noted.

14. **Motions**

(i) Air Quality in Brent

Councillor Nerva moved the motion circulated in his name by stating that air quality in London was getting worse and asked what the Council could do about it.

The motion was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED, that:

1. The concerns expressed by residents throughout Brent about air quality in our Borough, be recognised;
2. The Council urges Transport for London to make “clean bus corridors” in Chamberlayne Road and Wembley High Road a priority; and
3. Officers be asked to report, by the end of 2016, on quick win measures and a long-term strategy for Brent Council to improve air quality in Brent.

(ii) Regal Way

Councillor Colwill moved the motion circulated in his name requesting that the Council finishes the road upgrade at Regal Way with the same materials used on the other side of the road.

The motion was put to the vote and declared LOST.

(iii) Libraries

Councillor Warren moved the motion circulated in his name requesting that the Council confirms its previous promises and pledges of support for the continued existence of the four voluntary-run Brent Libraries (Preston Community, Barham Park, Kensal Rise and Cricklewood)

By way of an amendment, the Labour Group moved that the following paragraphs be added to the above motion:

- (b) This Council also notes the excellent work already undertaken to make these community libraries valued partners of the Brent Library Service by providing services over and beyond the Council’s statutory offer; and
- (c) This Council supports the Cabinet’s decision to develop a new Community Libraries Strategy involving the four community library groups.

The motion, as amended became the substantive motion, which was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

15. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business transacted.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

COUNCILLOR PARVEZ AHMED
Mayor