



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET Monday 13 November 2017 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Butt (Chair), Councillor McLennan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Farah, Hirani, Miller, M Patel, Southwood and Tatler

Also present: Councillors Long and Perrin

1. **Apologies for Absence**

None.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 October 2017 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None.

5. **Petitions (if any)**

None.

6. **Bid to become London Borough of Culture 2020**

Councillor Tom Miller, Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, introduced the report stating that the Greater London Authority (GLA) has launched a new competition to award two boroughs the title of London Borough of Culture for 2019 and 2020.

Councillor Miller stated that this award brings with it a £1.1 million revenue grant for each winning borough. A further six boroughs may receive grants of between £50k and £200k for exemplar projects. Cabinet noted that the application period closes on 1 December 2017 with winning boroughs announced in February 2018.

Councillor Miller stated that Brent Council is preparing a bid for 2020. Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, welcomed this initiative and thanked all the staff members involved for preparing such a positive bid.

RESOLVED:

- 6.1 The Council's commitment to submitting a bid to the Mayor for Brent to become the London Borough of Culture 2020 be confirmed; and
- 6.2 If the bid was successful, the Council would make available the required match funding.

7. Fire Safety in the Council's Housing Stock

Councillor Butt, Leader of the Council, welcomed Cllr Janice Long, Chair of Housing Scrutiny Committee, to the meeting. Cllr Long expressed concern that the report had not been available for discussion at a meeting of the Council's Scrutiny Committee, but welcomed the report recommendations.

Councillor Farah, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform, introduced the report which follows on from a decision taken at full Council on 24 July 2017 to develop a costed programme of fire safety improvement work to form part of the Council's response to enhancing fire safety measures in the Council's housing stock.

Councillor Farah stated that the report provides an update on the work undertaken since July both in terms of engaging with residents on fire prevention and their concerns, and the work done to cost and plan fire safety improvement works for high rise blocks to ensure that residents are provided with reassurance and the safety of the council's high rise buildings is enhanced.

Members of the Cabinet welcomed the report and criticised central government's approach to improving fire safety since the Grenfell Tragedy.

Councillor Butt, Leader of the Council, reminded members of the cabinet about his correspondence with the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

RESOLVED:

- 7.1 Cabinet approved a programme of Type 4 Fire Risk Assessments to be undertaken in every low, medium and high-rise block to ensure all fire risks (including any breaches in compartmentation) are fully understood and inform further works. This programme will start with high rise blocks over 12 storeys in January 2018;
- 7.2 Cabinet approved that the fire safety improvement programme be integrated within the HRA capital investment programme with immediate effect and that 3 blocks per year are to be completed. This means all blocks over 12 storeys will be complete within 5 years; and

7.3 Cabinet approved the rationale for prioritising the order in which blocks receive fire safety improvements set out in paragraph 4.16 of this report.

8. Improving the Housing Offer for Tenants and Leaseholders

With the permission of the Chair, Cllr Janice Long, Chair of Housing Scrutiny Committee addressed the Cabinet.

Councillor Farah, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform, introduced the report which sets out the proposed policy in meeting the needs of residents required to move as a result of estate regeneration programmes and, more widely, how the recommended approach could contribute to addressing Brent's supply shortage by increasing mobility within the housing stock and tackling under-occupation.

Councillor Farah stated that the policy will cover resident and non-resident leaseholders, tenants, including those renting privately in properties sold through the Right to Buy (RTB), and the more limited number of affected freeholders. All references to leaseholders in this report apply equally to freeholders.

Councillor Farah stated that, following consideration at Cabinet, the policy will be published for consultation and made available to all tenants and residents. It is proposed that once the consultation responses have been considered, the policy will be finalised and approved by the Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform.

RESOLVED:

8.1 The policy approach set out in sections 5 and 6 in the Cabinet report be approved to be pursued and the specific recommendations set out in resolutions 8.3 to 8.11 be approved, subject to consideration of responses arising from the consultation by the Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing;

8.2 Authority be given to the Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing to consult on the policy for improving the housing offer for displaced tenants and leaseholders, and to finalise and adopt the policy in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing after consideration of the responses received in the consultation process. If the finalised policy following consultation is significantly different from the approach set out in sections 5 and 6 below, the policy be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration of the consultation responses and to approve the final version of the policy;

8.3 The basic options currently available to tenants and leaseholders to remain part of the menu of options as follows:

- Market purchase in the regeneration area
- Market purchase elsewhere
- Shared ownership on the basis of a minimum purchase of 25% of the equity, funded through the buyback receipt and a contribution from Home Loss payments and, where appropriate, any other capital or savings, with rent payable on the share retained by the Council;

- 8.4 A shared equity option, with no rent payable on the equity retained by the council, be available subject to a minimum purchase of 50% of the equity. This only applies to resident leaseholders;
- 8.5 A leasehold swap option be offered, through which a leaseholder can transfer the equity in their current home into a void council property within (provided the property is not scheduled for demolition) or outside the regeneration area;
- 8.6 Where it would be to the Council's advantage or will assist in meeting needs that could otherwise delay a regeneration programme, advance purchase of properties scheduled for demolition be considered;
- 8.7 On a similar basis to that proposed in resolution 8.5, advance payment of Homes Loss and Disturbance compensation be available to leaseholders and tenants;
- 8.8 In limited cases, subject to detailed review, reversion to tenancy in acquired private sector property be offered to leaseholders unable to pursue any other option, with buyback prices based on full market value. This would also be available to other leaseholders or tenants who wish to pursue this option;
- 8.9 Support and advice be available to vulnerable households to secure supported housing where required, including the option of reversion to tenancy in Extra Care or similar provision where necessary;
- 8.10 The Council purchases properties tailored to the needs of under-occupiers to release larger homes for renting within existing acquisition programmes. This could include purchase in the private sector or buy-back from leaseholders of smaller properties seeking to sell;
- 8.11 That the Council develops a programme to buy back properties from leaseholders who need to move on grounds of ill-health, disability or vulnerability, offering the full range of options available to displaced leaseholders in regeneration schemes;
- 8.12 The council investigates how a similar approach to that set out in resolution 8.10 above might be taken to assist home owners in the private sector; and
- 8.13 The Council, where appropriate, offers temporary rehousing for vulnerable leaseholders affected by major works programmes, with a requirement for leaseholders to meet associated charges for such properties.

9. Compulsory Purchase of a Residential Property in the Kenton Area

With the permission of the Chair, Cllr Janice Long, Chair of Housing Scrutiny Committee addressed the Cabinet.

Councillor Farah, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform, introduced the report stating that it seeks Members' approval to make a Compulsory Purchase Order of a residential property in the Kenton area of the borough of Brent.

Cllr Farah stated that despite much communication and advice the owner that has been provided in respect of this long term empty property, the owner is making no determined or on-going effort to bring the property back into use.

Cllr Farah stated that a report to the Executive Committee recommending compulsory purchase of this property by the Council was made a number of years ago.

RESOLVED:

- 9.1 Cabinet agreed to use its compulsory purchase powers to acquire the property in the Kenton area of the borough of Brent, the full address of which is set out in Appendix 1 to this report, under section 17 of the Housing Act 1985;
- 9.2 The Chief Legal Officer be authorised to make and seal the Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of the property for submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for consideration and approval. Further, the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to confirm the said Compulsory Purchase Order in the event of the Secretary of State approving the Order;
- 9.3 To proceed with the acquisition, upon confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order; and
- 9.4 Subject to confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Cabinet approved the disposal of the property through the Council's I4B project in the first instance if it was an affordable option for their scheme, to a Registered Social Landlord, or to a Private Developer (in which case the sale would be by way of auction) with covenants applied to bring the property back into use as soon as possible.

10. Air Quality Action Plan (2017 - 2022)

Councillor Ellie Southwood, Cabinet Member for Environment, introduced the report and The Brent Air Quality Action Plan (2017 – 2022) which, she stated, outlines twenty broad measures the council will undertake to reduce levels of two key air pollutants, nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, known to be harmful to health.

Councillor Southwood stated that consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan (2017 – 2022) was agreed by Cabinet on 16 December 2016. Since then the action plan has been subject to extensive public consultation and 478 members of our community responded. Feedback from the consultation was used to adjust the plan where appropriate.

The target date for publication of the plan is 30th November 2017. The new plan will supersede the previous Air Quality Action Plan. Work is currently being undertaken to provide detailed implementation plans outlining how each measure will be delivered.

Councillor Southwood stated that the purpose of this report is to seek approval of the action plan measures. Councillors Hirani, Miller, Tatler and McLennan welcomed the report and action plan.

RESOLVED:

10.1 The Air Quality Action Plan (2017 – 2022) measures be noted; and

10.2 The measures be published as final.

11. Authority to Award the Design Team for South Kilburn Regeneration Programme - Carlton & Granville Centres Site - Development Options

Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, introduced the report providing an update to the 15 November 2016 Cabinet report – South Kilburn Regeneration Programme – Carlton & Granville Centres Site – Development Options.

Councillor Tatler stated that the report seeks approval to progress with appointment of a Design Team for Phase 2 of Carlton and Granville Centres Development as required by Contract Standing Order 88.

RESOLVED:

11.1 The redevelopment of Carlton and Granville Centres site as Phase 2 of the works be awarded to an architecturally led multidisciplinary design team;

11.2 Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Regeneration & Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Employment to oversee design development through further viability testing, local consultation and ultimately agree the scheme that is submitted for planning approval; and

11.3 Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Regeneration & Environment to proceed with RIBA Stage 4 and surveys and assessments as outlined in Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report.

12. Authority to Award Works Contract for South Kilburn Enterprise and Community Hub (Phase 1b)

Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, introduced this report provides an update to the 13 March 2017 Cabinet report – Phase 1 Building Project at The Granville Centre – Approval to Tender Works Contract

This report seeks authority to award a works contract to progress Phase 1 of Carlton and Granville Centres Development as required by Contract Standing Order 88.

Councillor Tatler stated that the report asks Members to note a revision in weightings and adjustment in criteria used to evaluate tenders compared to those set out in the March 2017 Cabinet report for the reasons detailed in section 3

RESOLVED:

- 12.1 The revised weightings and criteria used to procure and evaluate tenders as detailed in paragraph 3.3 of the Cabinet report be noted; and
- 12.2 The award of a works contract for South Kilburn Enterprise and Community Hub (Phase 1b) to Surecast Limited be approved.

13. Financial Forecasts 2017/2018 - Quarter 2

Councillor Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report setting out the forecasts as at 30 September of income and expenditure against the revenue budget for 2017/18, and other key financial data.

Councillor McLennan informed Members of the Cabinet that the actual spend information in the report is to 31 August 2017, and the forecasts were prepared and finalised as at 30 September.

Members of the Cabinet noted that the outlook for local government as a whole remains challenging, and the extent of the challenge remains uncertain given the developing national policies on matters such as exiting the EU, health and social care, and the new policy announcements made through the conference season.

Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, stated that this outturn forecast means the Council cannot be complacent. He said that there are still notable risks, which are outlined in the report, and there is extensive work necessary to deliver the savings on procurement and income generation through the civic enterprise strategy.

RESOLVED:

- 13.1 The overall financial position and the actions being taken to manage the issues arising be noted;
- 13.2. The fact that the overspend of £0.8m across nursing and homecare will be offset through short term one-off improved Better Care Fund resources, which are currently available until 2019/20 only, be noted. The government has committed to finding a longer term solution for the funding of adult social care; and
- 13.3. The Chief Finance Officer be delegated the authority to increase existing Capital Programme budget lines to reflect additional spending funded by ring-fenced grants or contributions, in line with agreed policy objectives.

14. Community Asset Transfer of the Former Butlers Green Public Convenience, Harrow Road, Sudbury HA0 2SL. The outcome of marketing and recommendation to proceed with a preferred applicant

Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, reminded Cabinet members that, on 24 April 2017, Brent's Cabinet approved the marketing of the Former Butlers Green Public Convenience (FBGPC), Harrow Road, Sudbury HA0 2SL as a Community Asset Transfer opportunity.

Councillor Tatler stated that the report details the outcome of marketing making a recommendation to grant a lease of the FBGPC to a preferred applicant.

RESOLVED:

14.1 Cabinet approved the proposal for a Community Asset Transfer of the Former Butlers Green Public Convenience (FBGPC) entering into a lease for 7 years with Sudbury Town Residents Association (STRA) subject to a satisfactory response to equalities monitoring and assessment of the social value test; and

14.2 Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Resources to finalise and agree the terms of the leasehold disposal.

15. Disposal of Vacant Residential Properties

Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, informed members of Cabinet that the purpose of the report is to seek the authority of Cabinet to dispose of surplus vacant residential properties, being;

- 8 Coniston Gardens, London NW9 OBD;
- 67 Woodheyes Road, London NW10 9DE;
- 20 Claremont Road, London W9 3DZ;
- Property X (address shown in appendix 1 to safeguard personal data of the owner);
- 3 Kent Road, Milton Keynes MK14 6BA;
- 18 Alliance Close, London HA0 2NG.

Councillor Butt stated that the properties are presently non-operational and non-income producing. The properties are incurring hold costs and are likely to deteriorate physically and in capital value over time. The properties are considered surplus to requirement following a thorough review of the available options by officers.

RESOLVED:

15.1 The disposal of surplus properties at 8 Coniston Gardens and 67 Woodheyes Road to I4B Holdings Limited (I4B) – the Council's wholly owned company, at market value (which has been determined by an independent Chartered Surveyor) plus the Council's costs, for use under the Private Rented Sector programme (PRS), be approved;

15.2 The disposal of Property X, which is owned by an Adult Social Care user, in the open market for a capital receipt in order that the Council may exercise its duty under the Care Act and deputyship order granted by the Court of Protection, be approved. The property will be sold at an arms-length

transaction on the open market to ensure that no conflict of interest arises and that best consideration is obtained for the service user. Approval was granted for all subsequent disposals under the Care Act, which is a statutory function, to be carried out under the delegated authority of the Strategic Director of Resources;

- 15.3 The disposal of surplus property at 20 Claremont Road at market value for a capital receipt, following a thorough review of options by officers to bring the property back into use, be approved. The property will be offered to I4B at market value, which has been determined by an independent Chartered Surveyor, for use within I4B's programmes, or will be sold on the open market;
- 15.4 Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Resources to approve, in consultation with the relevant Lead Member, the method of disposal and agree the final terms for properties within this report, including for 3 Kent Road and 18 Alliance Close;
- 15.5 An application to the Secretary of State for the disposal of 3 Kent Road and 67 Woodheyas Road be approved; and
- 15.6 An application to the Secretary of State for Education for the disposal of 8 Coniston Gardens be approved.

16. **Revenues and IT Support Service – Future Service Delivery Options**

Councillor Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report asking Cabinet to consider and evaluate options for delivery of the Revenues and IT Support Service when the existing contractual arrangements with Capita Business Services Ltd ("Capita") end on 30 April 2019.

Councillor McLennan stated that the options appraisal has shown a strong case for the retender of Business Rates as this offers the best prospects for strong performance with more robust resilience and less risk. She stated that the options appraisal has also indicated that the overall prospects for Council Tax collection performance improvement are stronger if the service returns to in house provision as this option offers the opportunity to directly control and develop the service in accordance with Brent's wider strategic objectives, in particular a more corporate approach to debt recovery and implementation of the Digital Strategy. Cabinet noted that the options appraisal has also indicated that a retender of the service may not achieve improved collection performance without increased investment through a higher contract price.

Cabinet noted that an in house Council Tax service would offer greater flexibility in terms of integrating Revenue collection with Benefits operations particularly as the working age Housing Benefit caseload starts to migrate to Universal credit from 2019. It would also allow greater flexibility in implementing a more corporate approach to debt recovery and implementation of the Digital Strategy.

RESOLVED:

- 16.1 The invitation of tenders for the provision of the Business Rates Service (“NNDR”) including associated customer service, IT Support for the Academy IT System and printing for the NNDR service on the basis of the pre-tender considerations referred to in paragraph 5.2.2 and further defined within Appendix F of the Cabinet report, be approved;
- 16.2 Officers evaluating tenders referred to in resolution 16.1 above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in Appendix F of the report, be approved;
- 16.3 The return of Council Tax Service and associated IT Support (including support for the Northgate IT System, Debtsys for Housing Benefit Overpayments and View 360 electronic document management system) to in-house provision at the expiry of the existing Revenues and IT Support Services contract, be approved, based upon the options appraisal set out within this report;
- 16.4 Cabinet noted that subject to resolution 16.3 above, printing services for the Council Tax and Benefits Services be procured by the Council (the timing of such procurement to form part of detailed transition plans in order to minimise risk of service disruption at contract expiry);
- 16.5 Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director Resources in consultation with the Deputy Leader to agree variations to the existing Revenues and IT Support Services contract to permit discrete areas of the existing contract package to be returned to in house provision before the contract expiry date, if appropriate; and
- 16.6 Growth of £0.2m arising from resolution 16.3 above be approved as set out within paragraph 3.8 and Section 6 (Financial Implications) of the Cabinet report.

17. Future Provision of the Pension Administration Service

Councillor Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report seeking approval from Cabinet to enter into a shared service arrangement with a partner through the delegation of functions pursuant to The Local Government Acts 1972, and 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012 for the provision of the future pensions administration service.

RESOLVED:

- 17.1 The selection of the Local Pensions Partnership (LPP) as a shared service partner for the Brent Council pension administration service, using the delegation of functions of the Local Government Acts stated in paragraph 1.1 of the Cabinet report, be approved.

18. Authority to Award a Contract for the Managed Services for Contingent Labour

Councillor Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report stating that, in accordance with Contract Standing Order 88, this report seeks

Cabinet authority to award a contract for the Managed Services for Contingent Labour.

She stated that the service will provide temporary staff, to fill vacant posts in the short term and on an interim basis, to manage fluctuations in workload and to obtain specialist skills quickly when the need arises. The contract for the existing service for the management of temporary staff is due to expire on 4 February 2018 and a replacement service must be in place by then to ensure no disruption to users. Councillor McLennan stated that the report summarises the process undertaken in tendering the contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contract should be awarded.

RESOLVED:

18.1 The contract for the managed services for contingent labour be awarded to Comensura Limited for the period three years plus one year extension.

19. Proposed Remodelling of Brent Customer Services

Councillor Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council, introduced the report setting out details of proposals to remodel access arrangements for services provided by Brent Customer Services, following a pilot of revised arrangements which commenced in June 2017.

Councillor McLennan stated that changes directly support achievement of the new Digital Strategy launched in July 2017 and build on work that has taken place over the last two years to make it easier for residents to access services and information through digital channels. The Digital strategy forms part of Brent's 2020 programme which aims to fundamentally reshape the nature of the Council's role and relationship with service users, whilst better managing future demand and supporting individuals to become more resilient.

RESOLVED:

19.1 The proposed remodelling of services provided by Brent Customer Services as piloted from June 2017 and detailed in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.6 of the Cabinet report, be approved. The revised service model included:

- A move to an appointments only service for residents visiting the Customer Services Centre (CSC), with appointments only available for enquiries that cannot be resolved on line, except where the customer is identified as vulnerable and unable to use on-line facilities with assistance.
- A move to digital assistance for residents phoning Brent Customer Services except where the customer is identified as vulnerable and unable to use on-line facilities with assistance.
- Active promotion of digital channels with increased support available to customers who need assistance in using these, including assistance via webchat and floor walkers in the Customer Services Centre; and

19.2 Subject to resolution 19.1 above, the fact that the permanent shift to digital-based service delivery would become effective from December 2017 and the

associated staffing and other arrangements would be managed between mid-November 2017 and April 2018, be noted.

20. **Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)**

None.

21. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

None.

22. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting was declared closed at 6.46 pm

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair