



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

Held as an online virtual meeting on Monday 7 September 2020 at 10.00 am

PRESENT(in remote attendance): Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor McLennan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Farah, Knight, Nerva, M Patel, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Stephens and Tatler

Also present (in remote attendance): Councillor Kennelly (for agenda item 7 only).

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Butt welcomed Councillors Knight, Nerva and Stephens and to their first meeting as newly appointed Cabinet Members for Community Safety & Engagement; Public Health, Culture & Leisure and Schools, Employment & Skills.

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th August 2020 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

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

None.

5. **Petitions (if any)**

None.

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

None.

7. **Poverty Commission Final Report and Recommendations**

Councillor Butt began by advising members of a written submission received shortly in advance of the meeting from Councillor Ketan Sheth, as Chair of the Joint Community & Wellbeing and Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny briefing, held to present the Poverty Commission report to scrutiny members in advance of its

consideration by Cabinet. Scrutiny members had welcomed the Commission's report and highlighted a number of proposals, which had been detailed in Appendix 2 of the report. These included (as highlighted in Councillor Sheth's submission) proposals relating to public health, housing, financial exclusion and local welfare and the need to ensure clear metrics to monitor progress against implementation of the recommendations.

Councillor Butt then welcomed Councillor Kennelly to the meeting who had also requested to speak on the item. In welcoming the Commission's report and findings, Councillor Kennelly highlighted the need to ensure adequate challenge around inequalities in both public health and the environment, especially in relation to oral and mental health, air quality and regeneration of the boroughs high streets. Whilst recognising the work undertaken to date, he highlighted a need to ensure the report was subject to full scrutiny in order to enable all stakeholders to engage in the process with a clear set of measureable objectives and targets to be set and presented to Full Council for consideration.

Councillor Southwood thanked Councillor Kennelly for his remarks and introduced the item, which set out the final report and findings of the Poverty Commission. In responding to the comments raised Cabinet were assured that the issues raised by Councillor Kennelly along with the comments from the joint scrutiny briefing in relation to the findings would be considered in the response to the commission and as part of the development of the Action Plan, which it was confirmed would be submitted to Council for consideration, prior to Cabinet as requested.

In continuing her introduction, Cabinet were informed that an Action Plan would be developed in partnership with voluntary organisations to support the implementation of the recommendations from the Commission. The Plan would include specific performance measures to assess the impact which implementation of the Commission's recommendations were having across local communities in the borough.

Councillor Southwood requested that her thanks be recorded to Lord Best for chairing the Commission and to the community and voluntary partners who had contributed to the findings.

In expressing their support for the both the commissioning of the report and the findings produced, Cabinet highlighted the openness of the Council in inviting active scrutiny. In discussing the recommendations Members emphasised:

- The effect of the pandemic in highlighting the link between poverty and health inequalities.
- The need to address low quality housing, given the associated health and social impacts arising from residents having to live and increasing work in unsuitable conditions.
- A desire for consideration to be given to the particular effect of poverty on women. Support was shown for the provision of free sanitary products in civic facilities, with encouragement for partners to do the same.
- The need to link poverty to the climate emergency, including a recognition of the effects of poor air quality.

- The welcome focus on the need to address digital exclusion as part of the overall approach along with progress already being made and determination of the Administration to deliver despite the budgetary pressures faced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic,

In expressing his support for the report, Councillor Neil Nerva took the opportunity to record his thanks to his predecessor for their work on developing the profile of public health in the borough.

Having noted the comments received and report from the Commission, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) accept all the recommendations within the Commission's report and the steps outlined within the report for their implementation.
- (2) To agree publication of a Council response to the Commission's report and development of a delivery plan for implementation of the recommendations.

8. **Brent Black Community Action Plan – Implementation**

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Margaret McLennan introduced the report which outlined the proposed implementation strategy for the Brent Black Community Action Plan. The plan had been developed in response to global events, in recognition of the significance and pertinence of the issues to the local black community.

Cabinet were informed that the actions contained in the plan had been grouped into ten thematic work streams for implementation, resourcing and risk analysis. Cabinet noted that a Community Action Plan Coordinator had been appointed to both assist officers and Members in the delivery of the work streams, and to ensure and promote the continued engagement of the community. In summing up her introduction, Councillor McLennan thanked officers for their efforts and support in delivery of the plan and their work in developing actions that were widely supported by the community.

Whilst recognising the importance of the plan and welcoming the strategy for implementation, Cabinet were keen to ensure that the actions identified translated into positive outcomes for the community and that progress in their implementation was kept under review in order to maintain the long term commitment to action and community focus.

In showing their support for the proposals, Councillors Promise Knight and Thomas Stephens thanked their predecessors for their work on progressing the actions under their remits.

Having considered the work streams presented for consideration and prioritisation in relation to the Brent Black Community Action Plan, Cabinet **RESOLVED** having taken into account the timescales and resourcing implications identified to:

- (1) Agree that actions with a delivery date within six months were prioritised for initial action and implementation.

- (2) Agree that actions with delivery dates beyond six months be considered as part of the Council's annual budget setting process, with the Action Plan to be reviewed accordingly.

9. **Borough Plan - Review of Year One**

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Margaret McLennan introduced the report which presented the one year review of the Borough Plan 2019-2023, against the delivery plan broken down across the five main strategic themes. The overall strategy and delivery plan for the coming year had also been subject to review in order to reflect changing priorities and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The review had outlined the key achievements and progress made by the Council in delivery of the Plan over the last year with further work being undertaken to review and refresh the main strategic themes within the Borough Plan to reflect the changing priorities and to provide a greater challenge to the Council.

In expressing their support for the review, Cabinet felt it was important to highlight the achievements identified in relation to the educational attainment levels of black Afro-Caribbean boys, the strides made in regeneration, employment and skill apprenticeships, the building of new homes, the reduction in fly tipping, and the planting of trees.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the first year review document for the Council's Borough Plan 2019-2023.

10. **Treasury Management 2019/20 Outturn Report**

The Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources, Councillor Margaret McLennan, introduced the report which summarised the treasury management activity for the 2019/20 financial year, and provided confirmation that the Council was in compliance with its prudential indicators. Cabinet's attention was drawn to the following points:

- The improved net borrowing position of the Council in relation to its Capital Financing Requirement;
- The diversification of investment options with borrowing having taken place from a private placement for the first time in response to more favourable interest rates and in order to reduce the reliance on the Public Works Loan Board;
- Final payment having been received in recovery of the Council's investments following the Icelandic Bank's collapse.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note the 2019/20 Treasury Management outturn report and approve its referral to Full Council, in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code).
- (2) Note that for 2019/20 the Council had complied with its Prudential Indicators, which were approved by Full Council on 25 February 2019 as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Capital Strategy Statement.

11. **Procurement of 6 supported living services for Mental Health & Dual Diagnosis Learning Difficulties and Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD)**

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Councillor Harbi Farah, introduced the report seeking approval to tender for six supported living services for residents with learning difficulties and mental health issues. The tendering exercise formed part of the wider 'New Accommodation for Assisted Living' (NAIL) programme and would provide more specialised care services. Cabinet were informed that all services would be procured in compliance with the London Living Wage.

Cabinet expressed their support for the scheme, noting that it highlighted the priorities of the Council in supporting housing for all sectors of society.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

(1) approve inviting tenders for six Supported Living services, as detailed below, by way of open competition within the following Lot structure based on specialist needs:

- Lot 1 PMLD services John Wilson House, 167 Willesden Road and 124 Harrowdene Road
- Lot 2 Mental Health service, 12 St Gabriel's Road
- Lot 3 Dual Diagnosis service, 155 Walm Lane
- Lot 4 LD services 2-4 Cranhurst Road and 3 Salmon Street

(2) approve inviting the tenders referred to in (1) above on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report.

(3) approve officers evaluating the tenders referred to in (1) above based on the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 6.2(vi) of the report.

(4) delegate award to the Strategic Director in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.

12. **Affordable Workspace Strategy & Action Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration Property and Planning, Councillor Shama Tatler, introduced the report which sought approval for the implementation of the Affordable Workspace Strategy and Action Plan. The strategy was designed to support local start up, micro and small & medium-sized enterprise (SME) by maximising planning policy to encourage affordability, whilst supporting the regeneration of high streets and aligning with the Council's social value policy and other local and community benefits

Cabinet welcomed the incremental approach to implementation outlined in the report, and noted that the timing of the strategy was particularly relevant given the recovery process for local business and enterprise being supported following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Having thanked officers for their work in preparing the Strategy, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to

- (1) Note the Affordable Workspace Strategy & Action Plan.
- (2) Approve the Affordable Workspace Strategy and Action Plan, prior to publication on the Council's website, dissemination of the same to key partners and stakeholders, and implementation.

13. **Proposals for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance Strategy**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning, Councillor Shama Tatler, introduced the report which set out a suggested approach for the introduction of a governance strategy for the use of strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) spending. The governance strategy sought to link the growth objectives within the draft Brent Local Plan and projects identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan in support of growth and the Borough Plan priorities, whilst also having regard to existing internal processes and arrangements in order to provide a clear fair and efficient, decision making process regarding the allocation of strategic Community CIL funding. In concluding her remarks Councillor Tatler thanked the officers involved in developing the strategy.

In noting the Council's efforts to collect and utilise CIL funding in order to support local communities and infrastructure, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to agree the suggested approach and arrangements for introducing a Governance Strategy for Strategic CIL, as set out in section 3 of the report.

14. **Highways Carriageway Scheme Programme 2020-21**

The Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor Krupa Sheth, introduced the report which sought approval for the Highways Carriageway Scheme Programme 2020-21. The proposal to use the total capital budget allocation of £3.5 million exclusively for carriageways and highways was highlighted, with footways subject of their own £20 million major investment programme. Whilst noting the additional £239k received from Transport for London (TfL) to fund resurfacing work along Willesden Lane (Sidmouth Road to Coverdale Road), Cabinet expressed concern that future LIP funding was uncertain in light of the budgetary pressures on TfL created by the Covid-19 pandemic, which given the impact on the Council, would be subject to ongoing review and discussion.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed Highways Carriageway Scheme Programme 2020-21, as detailed within Appendix B of the report.

15. **Proposed New Article 4 Directions To Replace The Existing Directions For Brent's Residential Conservation Areas**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning, Councillor Shama Tatler, introduced the report seeking approval to proceed with the development of proposals for new Article 4 directions in local conservation areas. Cabinet were informed that the new directions were required to ensure planning policy reflected current guidance. It was emphasised that the directions would apply only to the façade and front garden of a building; public highways were not within the remit,

with final approval of the directions based on a consultation period and subsequent support from residents.

Whilst welcoming the report, Cabinet were keen to ensure that the final wording of the example notice, as set out in Appendix One of the report, was made as clear as possible for local residents to understand.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note the regulatory requirements for the cancellation of existing Article 4 Directions and the making of new Article 4 Directions, as prescribed by The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.
- (2) Note the making of new Article 4 Directions, as outlined within the report on a non-immediate basis to withdraw permitted development rights in the conservation areas listed within section 1.3 and as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report.
- (3) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in association with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning to carry out the necessary publicity, notification, consultation and subsequent decision on whether to cancel and confirm the new Article 4 Directions, as prescribed by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, in that respect.

16. Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

17. Any other urgent business

None.

The meeting ended at 10:52

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair