



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on Monday 3 March 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Bobby Thomas

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Kana Naheerathan

COUNCILLORS:

Aden	Adeyeye
Al-Ebadi	Allie
Arnold	Mrs Bacchus
Baker	Beck
Brown	Butt
Chohan	S Choudhary
A Choudry	Colwill
Crane	Daly
Denselow	Gladbaum
Harrison	Hashmi
Hector	Hirani
Hopkins	Hossain
Jones	Kabir
Kansagra	Kataria
Long	Lorber
Mashari	Matthews
McLennan	Mitchell Murray
J Moher	R Moher
Ogunro	Oladapo
BM Patel	CJ Patel
HB Patel	HM Patel
RS Patel	Pavey
Powney	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Singh
Van Kalwala	

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Councillors Beswick, Cheese, Cummins, Green, Hunter, Moloney and Ms Shaw

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Councillor J Moher felt that minute number 9.3 on Council Tax benefit did not accurately reflect the debate and he put before the Mayor an amended version to the latter part of the printed minute that he had prepared and he read this to the meeting. Councillor Kansagra argued that the minute was a brief account of the debate and that if Councillor Moher's amendment was to be accepted he would want the list of questions Councillor Colwill put forward in debate also listed. He also referred to the other debates recorded in the minutes and asked why this particular one should be changed in this way. The Mayor explained that the debate on a motion allowed the opportunity for members to express a view either for or against the motion and to move amendments before voting on the motion. It was not customary to record in detail exactly what was said by each councillor and the minute reflected the opposing views on the motion. The Mayor acknowledged the views expressed by Councillor Moher.

RESOLVED:

that subject to noting the views expressed by Councillor J Moher on minute number 9.3 - Council Tax benefit – the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 January 2014 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

The following LEA school governor and children centre positions were noted and treated as declared as a non prejudicial interest by those members indicated:

Councillor:	School Governing Body
Arnold	Kilburn Park School Foundation
Bacchus MBE JP	Chalkhill Primary School
Colwill	Brent Education Tutorial Service (BETS)
Chohan	Federation of Lyon Park Infant and Junior Schools
Choudry	Islamia Primary School
Colwill	St Gregory's Catholic Science College
Gladbaum	The Willow Children's Centre
Gladbaum	Curzon and Fawood Children's Centre Partnership
Gladbaum	Harlesden Primary School
Harrison	Preston Park
Hossain	Uxendon Manor
John OBE	Brentfield Primary School
John OBE	Stonebridge Primary School
Jones	St Andrew & St Francis C of E Primary S
Kabir	The Village School
Long	Newfield Primary School
Lorber	Barham Primary School
Mashari	Wykeham Primary
McLennan	Anson Primary School
Mitchell-Murray	Phoenix Arch School
R Moher	Fryent Primary School

R Moher	Wembley High Technology College (Academy)
J Moher	Wembley High Technology College (Academy)
Moloney	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Willesden
Naheerathan	Roe Green Junior School
BM Patel	Federation of Lyon Park Primary Schools
R Patel	Roe Green Infant School
BM Patel	Federation of Lyon Park Junior and Infants' Schools
HM Patel	Byron Court Primary School
HM Patel	Federation of Lyon Park Junior and Infants' Schools
HB Patel	Preston Park Primary School
Pavey	Wembley Primary School
Ketan Sheth	Federation of St Joseph's Catholic Junior and Infants' School
Ketan Sheth	Woodfield School (Secondary Special)
Ketan Sheth	College Green Nursery School
Krupa Sheth	Braintcroft Primary
Singh	Woodfield School (Secondary Special)
Thomas	Harmony Children's Centre & St Raphael's
Van Kalwala	Mitchell Brook Primary School

The following membership of the Board of Brent Housing Partnership were noted and treated as having declared a non prejudicial interest:

Councillor Colwill	Councillor Jones
Councillor Ogunro	Councillor Long

The following declarations made at the meeting were recorded:

Councillor	Declaration
Chohan	Brent Indian Association
Kabir	Trustee to CVS Brent
Lorber	Director and trustee of Friends of Barham Library
BM Patel	Trustee of the Patidar Centre
HB Patel	Brent Indian Association Shree Sattavis Gam Patidar Samaj (Europe)
HM Patel	Trustee of the Patidar Centre

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

On behalf of the Council the Mayor thanked the following councillors, who were not standing in the forthcoming elections, for all their hard work serving the Council over the years:

Councillors
Emad Al-Ebadi
Mary Arnold
Javaid Ashraf

Joyce Bacchus
Eddie Baker
Jack Beck
Lincoln Beswick
Helga Gladbaum
Simon Green
Sami Hashmi
Ann Hunter
Ann John
Chris Leaman
Hayley Mathews
Jim Moher
Colum Moloney*
Benjamin Ogunro
Chandubhai Patel
James Powney
Harbhajan Singh
Gavin Sneddon

He made a special mention of Councillors Bacchus, Beswick, Gladbaum, John and Moloney* who had all served for 20 years or more on the Council.
[*Councillor Moloney subsequently stood in the 2014 elections)

The Mayor announced that at a recent award ceremony held by Asian Voice the Leader of the Council had picked up an award as councillor of the year and congratulated him on this.

The Mayor wished Councillor Cheese a speedy recovery from his recent operation and hoped to see him back very soon. He also wished former councillor, Irwin Van Colle, a speedy recovery from major heart surgery and wished him well.

The Mayor announced that the previous week celebrated the 10th anniversary of Citizenship Ceremonies in the borough with a special ceremony in the Grand Hall.

The Mayor reminded members that he was taking part in the London Marathon on 13 April. He had a money giving page set up and stated that he would appreciate everybody's support to raise as much money as possible for his charity.

The Mayor announced other upcoming events for his charity:

- end of year party on 9 May
- Thanksgiving Service on 1 June at St Catherine's Church
- various events in the process of being organised

The Mayor pointed out that in accordance with Standing Orders a list of current petitions showing progress on dealing with them had been circulated around the chamber.

4. **Procedural motion**

The Chief Whip moved a procedural motion in relation to debating the item on the 2014/15 Budget and Council Tax.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that paragraph (d) of Standing Order 46 be suspended;
- (ii) that the Leader of the Council be permitted to speak for up to 30 minutes in presenting the report on the 2014/15 budget and Council Tax to the meeting, setting out the Executive's proposals for the budget, after which the following arrangements be agreed for the purpose of debating and voting upon the 2014/15 Budget and Council Tax:

the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group be permitted to speak for up to 30 minutes;

the Leader of the Conservative Group be permitted to speak for up to 30 minutes

the Chair of Budget and Finance Overview and Scrutiny Committee be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes;

the Deputy Leader of the Council be permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes;

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;

the Leader of the Council be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes to submit his closing remarks

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

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

None.

6. **The 2014/15 Budget and Council Tax**

The Council had before it a report seeking approval of the 2014/15 revenue and capital budgets and to the Council Tax to be levied. It set out the process for developing the budget, a breakdown of service area budgets and the overall budget requirement in 2014/15.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Butt, addressed the meeting in support of the proposed budget. He drew attention to the need for the Council to make £18 million savings next year and £53 million savings in the two years following meaning that by 2017 the Council would have £133 million less to spend on vital services relied on by local people. He stated that the picture beyond these figures was of families struggling to get by as wages were frozen, benefits cut and rising household bills. He submitted that the unprecedented cuts imposed on the Council were a matter of political choice by the coalition Government. However he felt that local councils could still make things better for their residents by protecting the poorest and by working together the aim was to build a fairer and more prosperous borough.

Although the cuts being made were not out of choice, Councillor Butt stated that the Council would not defer from making the difficult decisions it was forced to make whilst also trying to protect frontline services. He outlined initiatives within the budget including a freeze on Council Tax for the fifth year running, supporting the Big London Energy Switch, paying the London Living Wage to all staff and restricting the ability of payday lending firms to advertise in the borough. He added reference to the support provided for keeping open every Sure Start centre in the borough despite a 50% fall in government funding, the achievements of young people in gaining qualifications and seeking further education or employment. The volume of the borough's waste recycled had increased from 21% to 43% and new facilities provided in parks and sports centres helped reduce health inequalities. One priority was to help local businesses grow to create more jobs for local residents, as seen in the Wembley regeneration area and another being to provide new homes such as in Kilburn. Councillor Butt saw an opportunity for the Council to renew the borough's sense of community make it a fairer place with jobs for local people. He commended the budget to the Council.

Councillor Lorber responded by criticising Councillor Butt for blaming somebody else when the past Labour government was responsible for the war in Iraq, bailing out the banks and reducing the number of Police Community Support Officers. Locally the Labour council had stopped parking scratch cards, overseen a reduction in the condition of the local environment and lost the trust of local communities by closing half the borough's libraries. He referred to his tabled amendments to the budget which proposed additional expenditure on libraries, highways, parking, street cleaning and waste management, festivals and events, school crossing patrols and the introduction of a Council Tax discount for special constables resident in Brent. He proposed this would be met by savings from setting a vacancy factor, reducing the number of interim staff and deleting some senior posts, streamlining the Mayor's office and reducing the costs of supporting ward working. There would also be reductions in the transformation reserve and remuneration reserve to fund one-off spending. He so moved his amendments to the budget.

Councillor Kansagra responded by saying he felt he had heard all the Leader of the Council had said before. He agreed with the sentiments expressed about the need to protect the citizens of Brent and with the proposal to freeze the Council Tax. He added that the first freeze came under the Liberal Democrat/Conservative council in 2009/10 and had since been supported by Government policy and funding when in the past under Labour it had increased. He referred to the Leader of the Council regularly referring to the need to save over £100 million but not explaining that the cuts were spread over five years. Councillor Kansagra pointed out that the Government had removed the ring fencing of grant meaning that the Council was free to spend resources on the projects and services it wanted to provide. He referred to the debate at the last Council meeting on Councillor Colwill's motion which had sought to reduce the burden on those on benefit having to pay at least 20% of the Council Tax. Because any change to the Council Tax Support Scheme required further public consultation he would not be proposing a change at present but declared his intention to review the scheme in the future if the opportunity presented itself. Councillor Kansagra continued by referring to additional funding the Council benefited from and moved amendments to the budget which sought to assist the development of voluntary sector libraries, deleting the ward working programme; promoting and furthering the borough's cultural life by restoring support

to community organisations to celebrate cultural and religious events within the borough, introducing one hour free parking on the borough's high streets where conditions permitted in order to support local businesses and to reduce the level of reserves to £6 million. He criticised the lack of information provide on the sale of old Council offices which meant he could not be certain about the level of money available to the Council.

Councillor Hopkins, Chair of Budget and Finance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, thanked members of the committee and supporting officers for their work over the past year. She reminded members of the role of overview and scrutiny and the importance of its work in protecting the interests of the borough's residents. She pointed out a key recommendation from the committee that the Council should not assume restoration of any funding from a successive government. Councillor Hopkins highlighted other recommendations from the committee, including the importance of the One Council programme and what it saw as high risk areas such as the public realm contract and the parking contract. She reported that the committee had expressed concern over the top slicing the New Homes Bonus and felt the Community Infrastructure Levy had to be optimised with provision of transparent information to Members. The committee had also felt that the civic centre was not generating the income that had been part of its cost justification and that innovative thinking was needed to improve this. She expressed the committee's concern over the Council's use of interim and consultant staff and the procurement process behind this which often did not represent best practice. The committee had recommended more transparent processes for this. Finally, she felt the Council needed to engage more closely with residents and hear their views.

Councillor R Moher, Lead Member for Resources, stated that every effort had been made to identify efficiency savings and develop new and better ways of working. She outlined the level of efficiencies made as well as the savings achieved through the One Council programme. This included adopting new procurement techniques, agreeing a new public realm contract and the savings created by moving to the Civic Centre. Councillor Moher referred to the impact of the welfare reforms and the efforts made by the Council to mitigate these by for instance moving to a position of exempting residents on higher and lower incapacity benefit from paying Council Tax. She referred to the work of the 'Navigators' who had helped people some of the most socially excluded get back into work. She criticised opposition members for not being concerned about the plight of individuals and instead being more concerned about inconveniences such as parking and potholes. She commended the budget as one that sought to protect the most vulnerable and help everyone get on in tough times.

A general debate followed with members commenting on the proposed budget and the amendments put forward. It was submitted that some members seemed to think that the Council was only responsible for parking and libraries, ignoring the long list of support services the Council provided for families and young people. The view was put that tough decisions had been taken on the budget in order to protect valuable services. Some members referred to the need for the Council to find £53M savings in the next two years and yet proposals had been put forward requiring additional funding. A view was expressed that the libraries issue was being used as a political weapon because discussions were taking place with community groups on the issue but this was being ignored. The public realm

contract was referred to as an example of the excellent work being done by the Council and how this had been recognised by it being shortlisted for the Excellence in Public Procurement awards. The Council was taking aggressive action against fly tippers in the borough and improving sports facilities. However, it was also submitted that Government support had enable the Council to freeze the level of Council Tax. A view was expressed that the Government was successfully reducing the public deficit and that this work needed to continue. In referring to the discussion on parking it was confirmed that parking scratch cards would be withdrawn later in the year because the existing system was not working effectively and the new electronic system delivered an improved service. In addition visitor household parking permits, a trusted visitor pass and health emergency badge for medical professionals making home visits were all being introduced. Some of the key aspects of the budget were referred to such as providing homes, creating school places, regenerating the borough, increasing the pupil premium and protecting the elderly. It was submitted that the past actions of the Labour administration had reduced funding for local health services. It was suggested that removing people from the housing list denied them the chance of being housed. A view was expressed that the future of Bridge Park needed to be resolved and it was felt that a school should be built there to provide much needed places in that area of the borough. Further contributions referred to the wide provision of adult care services and health services provided by the Council and the lack of any contributions from opposing members that addressed the funding and need for these services. Reference was made to the provision of housing and the introduction of a licensing scheme for the private rented sector to improve conditions.

The Leader thanked everyone for their contributions and Councillor Hopkins for her committee's report. He referred to some of the contributions made by members which he felt failed to address the financial situation facing the Council.

The amendments proposed by Councillor Lorber were put to the vote en bloc and declared LOST. In accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting was recorded as follows:

FOR: Councillors Beck, Brown, Hashmi, Hopkins, Kataria, Lorber, Matthews and CJ Patel (8)

AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Adeyeye, Al-Ebadi, Allie, Arnold, Bacchus, Butt, Chohan, S Choudhary, A Choudry, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Gladbaum, Harrison, Hector, Hirani, Hossain, Jones, Kabir, Long, Mashari, McLennan, Mitchell Murray, J Moher, R Moher, Naheerathan, Ogunro, Oladapo RS Patel, Pavey, Powney, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Singh, Thomas and Van Kalwala (37)

ABSTAINED: Councillors Baker, Colwill, Kansagra, BM Patel, HB Patel and HM Patel (6)

The amendments proposed by Councillor Kansagra were put to the vote en bloc and declared LOST. In accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting was recorded as follows:

- FOR Councillors Baker, Colwill, Kansagra, BM Patel, HB Patel and HM Patel (6)
- AGAINST: Councillors Aden, Adeyeye, Al-Ebadi, Allie, Arnold, Bacchus, Butt, Chohan, S Choudhary, A Choudry, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Gladbaum, Harrison, Hector, Hirani, Hossain, Jones, Kabir, Long, Mashari, McLennan, Mitchell Murray, J Moher, R Moher, Naheerathan, Ogunro, Oladapo RS Patel, Pavey, Powney, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Singh, Thomas and Van Kalwala (37)
- ABSTAINED: Councillors Beck, Brown, Hashmi, Hopkins, Kataria, Lorber, Matthews and CJ Patel (8)

The recommendations in the report submitted were put to the vote en bloc and declared CARRIED. In accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting was recorded as follows:

- FOR: Councillors Aden, Adeyeye, Al-Ebadi, Allie, Arnold, Bacchus, Butt, Chohan, S Choudhary, A Choudry, Crane, Daly, Denselow, Gladbaum, Harrison, Hector, Hirani, Hossain, Jones, Kabir, Long, Mashari, McLennan, Mitchell Murray, J Moher, R Moher, Naheerathan, Ogunro, Oladapo RS Patel, Pavey, Powney, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Singh, Thomas and Van Kalwala (38)
- AGAINST: Councillors Baker, Beck, Brown, Colwill, Hopkins, Kataria, Lorber, Kansagra, Matthews and BM Patel, CJ Patel and HM Patel (12)
- ABSTAINED: Councillors Hashmi and HB Patel (2)

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the General Fund revenue budget for 2014/15, as summarised in Appendix A of the report, be agreed;
- (ii) that the Service Area budgets including the cost pressures and savings detailed in Appendices B and C of the report be agreed;
- (iii) that the report of the Budget and Finance Overview and Scrutiny Committee attached as Appendix D to the report be noted;
- (iv) that Appendix E of the report be noted and the budgets for central items and other budgets be agreed;
- (v) that the report from the Chief Finance Officer in Appendix C(iii) of the report in respect of his statutory duty under Section 25 of 2003 Local Government Act be received;
- (vi) that there be no increase in the Council's element of Council Tax for 2014/15;

- (vii) that the advice of the Director of Legal and Procurement as set out in Appendix M of the report be noted;
- (viii) that the instalment dates for Council Tax and NNDR for 2014/15, and the recovery policy for Council Tax as set out in Appendix F(ii) of the report be agreed;
- (ix) that decisions on individual applications for reducing Council Tax payable in accordance with section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer;
- (x) that the Medium Term Financial Outlook in Section 5 of the report be noted;
- (xi) that the School's Budget set out in Appendix H of the report be agreed;
- (xii) that the Housing Revenue Account budget set out in Appendix I(ii) of the report be agreed;
- (xiii) that the 2014/15 to 2016/17 capital programme as set out in Appendix J of the report be agreed;
- (xiv) that the levels of unsupported borrowing forecast for 2014/15, based on the borrowing levels agreed by the Council on 28 February 2013 be noted;
- (xv) that the Treasury Management Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/15 set out in Appendix K be agreed;
- (xvi) that the Prudential Indicators set out in section 7 of the report and Appendix L of the report for affordability, capital spending, external debt and treasury management be agreed;
- (xvii) that in relation to the Council Tax for 2014/15:-

the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:

- (a) £1,059,811,000 being the aggregate of the amount that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act,
- (b) £975,937,657 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act,
- (c) £83,873,343 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) £1,058.94 being the amount at (c) above, divided by the amount for the taxbase specified above calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, and
- (e) Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
705.96	823.62	941.28	1,058.94	1,294.26	1,529.58	1,764.90	2,117.88

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 2014/15 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 shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
199.33	232.56	265.78	299.00	365.44	431.89	498.33	598.00

- (xix) that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (e) above and the precepting authority referred to in xviii above, 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 2014/15 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
905.29	1,056.18	1,207.06	1,357.94	1,656.70	1,961.47	2,263.23	2,715.88

- (xx) that it be noted that the Chief Finance Officer has determined that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2014/15 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Act 1992;

- (xxi) that the Chief Finance Officer be and is hereby authorised:-

- (a) to give due notice of the said Council Tax in the manner provided by Section 38(2) of the Local Government Act 1992,
- (b) 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, and
- (c) 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.

7. **Potential impact of HS2 on regeneration proposals in Brent**

Councillor Crane introduced the report before Members on taking action if considered expedient to oppose the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill and if deemed expedient to deposit a petition against the Bill in either or both Houses of Parliament. He stressed that the Council was not being asked to accept or reject the HS2 project but to take action to protect the Council's interests. He proposed a further resolution committing the Council to engage and consult with local residents in respect of emerging proposals for HS2.

Members commented that the proposed new interchange at Old Oak Common presented the potential for the biggest change to take place in the borough for many years. The proposed vent shaft on the Queens Park car park site was opposed by local residents who had not been consulted and there did not appear to be any clear explanation for why this land needed to be acquired. The Council was urged to keep residents informed of developments. Reference was made to the expense of petitioning a Bill and the benefit of supporting Transport for London to share the costs. Councillor Kansagra felt that in due course a further report should be submitted to General Purposes Committee in order to keep members informed.

RESOLVED:

that in considering the potential impacts of the current proposals for HS2 in Brent:

- (i) in pursuance of section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972, it is expedient for the Council to oppose the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill introduced into the House of Commons on 25 November 2013;
- (ii) that the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth, in consultation with the Lead Member for Regeneration and Major Projects, be authorised to take all such steps as may be necessary or expedient to action the above, including taking all steps required for the Council to deposit a petition against the Bill and thereafter to maintain and, if considered appropriate, withdraw its opposition to the Bill;
- (iii) that the Common Seal of the Council may be affixed to any documents required to be sealed in connection with the submission of any such petition and the subsequent opposition to the Bill and that the Council's Parliamentary Agents be authorised to sign and deposit the petition on behalf of the Council;
- (iv) that the Council continues to engage and consult with local people in the area in respect of emerging proposals for HS2.

8. **Localism Act 2011 - Pay Policy Statement**

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 2014/15.

9. Joining a collective investment vehicle for London pension funds and commitments for capital

Members considered the report before them on the Council becoming a shareholder in a private company to be the Authorised Contractual Scheme Operator of a Collective Investment Vehicle and to agree to join the London boroughs' Pensions CIV Joint Committee.

Councillor Brown expressed concern that it was proposed to delegate to the Chair of the Pension Fund Sub-Committee authority to act for the Council and sought to amend the recommendation to delegate this role to the Chief Finance Officer. Officers explained that the proposal for an elected member to be authorised to act on behalf of the Council followed normal arrangements whereby they would be acting on the advice of officers. It was stressed that decisions on whether to invest in the ACS would remain with the Council.

RESOLVED:

(i) that the Council:

become a shareholder in a private company limited by shares which will be incorporated to be the Authorised Contractual Scheme Operator (the ACS Operator") of the Collective Investment Vehicle;

contribute £1 to the ACS Operator as initial capital;

(ii) that the Chair of the Pension Fund Sub-Committee be delegated authority to act for the Council in exercising its rights as a shareholder of the ACS Operator, and to authorise the Vice Chair of the Pension Fund Sub-Committee to act in their absence;

(iii) that the Council joins the London boroughs "Pensions CIV Joint Committee", to be formed under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and to delegate to the Joint Committee those functions necessary for the proper functioning of the ACS Operator, including the effective oversight of the ACS Operator and the appointment of Directors.

10. West London Waste Plan

Members had before them a report presenting a revised draft of the proposed submission version of the Joint West London Waste Plan which had been agreed by the Executive in January 2014 for statutory public consultation across west London in March/April.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Proposed Submission Draft Joint West London Waste Plan, be submitted for Examination, subject to representations made;
- (ii) that the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth be delegated authority to make minor editing and textual changes to the Proposed Submission Draft of the West London Waste Plan after consultation with the other 5 London Boroughs involved.

11. **Motions**

Councillor S Choudhary moved a suspension of standing orders to allow the late submission of a motion.

Councillor Lorber spoke against suspending standing orders and stated that if this was done he would no longer take part in any cross party co-operation on reviewing the constitution.

Councillor Kansagra stated that by passing the suspension of standing orders it showed a lack of respect for the constitution. He stated that the motion had been submitted late and should therefore not be taken.

RESOLVED:

that standing orders 34(e) relating to motions being taken at the Council Tax setting meeting and 45(c) relating to the prior circulation of motions to be debated be suspended to allow the following item to be debated.

11.1 **Youth unemployment**

Councillor Arnold moved the motion circulated in her name which read:

“With a million young people unemployed throughout the UK – 50,000 more than at the 2010 elections – and numbers rising, Brent Council recognises the scale of the challenge faced by young people in our borough. In the wake of the Coalition Government’s failed economic policies and gross mismanagement of the Work Programme and £1 billion Youth Contract, it is all the more important that councils do everything in their power to promote youth employment.

Following David Cameron’s disastrous decisions – nodded through by the Liberal Democrats – to cancel the Education Maintenance Allowance, double university tuition fees and terminate the Future Jobs Fund, it is hardly surprising that young people feel that this Government is letting them down. Labour local authorities across the country including Brent are delivering innovative solutions to support young people to find work.

Brent Council is proud that:

Brent schools students’ educational achievement is above national average and our young people have attained one of the highest rates of university entry of any UK local authority area. 15% of Brent pupils gain admission to Russell Group universities compared to 9% nationally.

The Brent 14–19 Partnership and Connexions outreach work has achieved the second lowest NEETS rate for 16- 18s in the country.

The Brent Youth Parliament provides a strong voice for our borough's young people, particularly through their campaign for better careers guidance and a skills-for-life curriculum to improve preparation for work.

The Council has committed to recruit 100 new apprentices over three years.

The Council Employment and Enterprise Team is recruiting young people into work through employer partnership schemes such as Wembley Works; and is providing digital tools and training for young entrepreneurs through the Brent Business Hub.

This Council is committed to promote new programmes to tackle youth unemployment. By strengthening strategic employer partnerships, we will deliver the radical action necessary to get young people into work. This agenda builds on the Council's good work in directly recruiting young people into job opportunities at the new London Designer Outlet as well as local construction companies in South Kilburn and Wembley; developing the new Roundwood Centre skills and enterprise training hub; and increasing the supply of quality apprenticeships within the borough through including local labour clauses within council contracts.

We cannot afford to wait to reverse the rise in youth unemployment for 18-25s and we must prevent further damage to communities and families in Brent in keeping with the Council's commitment to early intervention and prevention".

RESOLVED:

that the motion submitted be adopted.

12. **Absence from meetings**

Members considered a late report concerning attendance at meetings by Councillor Beswick. The law expressly provided that where a council member fails throughout a period of 6 consecutive months from the date of their last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority then, subject to certain exceptions, they cease to be a member of the authority unless failure was due to some reason approved before the expiry of that period.

Councillor Beswick had last attended a Council meeting on 18 November 2013 and would cease to be a councillor on 19 May 2014 if he was unable to attend a meeting before then.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Councillor Beswick's absence from meetings of the Council since 18 November 2013 be approved on the basis of his ill-health and should this prevent him from attending any future meetings up to the date of his natural retirement as a councillor such absence be authorised by the Council;
- (iii) that the Council's wishes for a speedy return to good health be passed on to Councillor Beswick.

13. **Urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm

COUNCILLOR BOBBY THOMAS
Mayor