

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE
Tuesday, 15th September, 2009 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Lorber (Chair), Councillor Blackman (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Detre, Matthews, Sneddon, Van Colle and Wharton

ABSENT: Councillors Allie, Brown and Colwill

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Dunwell

1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None declared.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 August 2009 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising (if any)

None.

4. Deputations (if any)

None.

5. Addendum to the West London Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy

The report from the Director of Environment and Culture provided an addendum to the previously adopted 2006 West London Waste Authority (WLWA) Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) and sought Executive approval for the adoption of that addendum. The WLWA had already adopted the addendum subject to its co-adoption by the constituent boroughs. The report also set out other, very preliminary, proposals that were to be considered by Brent and the other constituent boroughs as part of a longer-term vision for sustainable waste management in the WLWA area.

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member, Environment, Planning and Culture) in commending the report to the Executive for approval, stated that he looked forward to the implementation of the recommendations, pointing out that the target of recycling and composting 70% of municipal waste was fundamental to the strategy. When questioned on the market place's capacity to use recycled waste, Councillor Van Colle conceded that this was a difficult issue but assured that technology to improve recycling was under active consideration. He was pleased that recycling rates in the borough continued to improve. Councillor Blackman (Lead Member, Resources) commented on a lack of clarity within the financial implications and Richard Saunders responded that approval of the strategy at this stage did not

commit to extra costs and that the aim was to encourage a reduction in residue waste as future land fill tax rises would lead to increased costs.

The Executive agreed the report.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to the adoption of the Addendum (attached as Appendix A to the report from the Director of Environment and Culture) to the existing Joint Waste Management Strategy;
- (ii) that the measures required by constituent boroughs to increase recycling be noted;
- (iii) that the WLWA proposal to review civic amenity site provision in the WLWA area be noted;
- (iv) that the proposed changes to operational governance of the WLWA and borough partnership be noted.

6. **The local impact of the recession - 6 month review**

A report had been received by the Executive on 16 March 2009 which detailed the impact the recession was having in Brent and made a number of recommendations. The report from the Director of Policy and Regeneration before members detailed Brent's position 6 months on and progress to date on recommendations made at the March meeting. Economic data indicated that the recession was having a high impact in Brent, particularly in the most deprived wards. Councillor Lorber (Leader of the Council. Lead Member, Corporate Strategy and Policy Co-ordination) in introducing the report set out key projects under the Improvement and Efficiency agenda designed to promote regeneration and maximise local income. The Council aimed to assist people to take up working opportunities to which they were entitled. Additionally, Councillor Lorber pointed out as vulnerable people were most susceptible to risk, priority would be given to supporting them through training for employment, noting the expectation that unemployment would continue to rise after the recession was over. He noted the outcomes from the Recession Conference held on 15 July 2009 and stated that all suggestions would be welcomed.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the progress made against recommendations made in the report received by Executive on the 16 March 2009 be noted; and
- (ii) that the outcomes from the recession conference provided in Attachment 2 to the report from the Director of Policy and Regeneration be agreed.

7. **Performance and Finance Review - Quarter 1, 2009/10**

The report from the Directors of Policy and Regeneration and Corporate Finance summarised Brent Council's spending, activity and performance in Quarter 1, 2009/10 and highlighted key issues and solutions to them. Members' attention was drawn to the need to identify an additional £4.5m in order to balance the 2009/10

budget and it was noted that overspending was still occurring and there were particular risk areas. The need to take action to bring the budget into balance was emphasised.

In commenting on the projected overspends, Councillor Wharton (Lead Member, Children and Families) contributed that the majority in his service area were either one-off expenditures or demand led and a number were related to child protection. As a consequence, efforts had to be made to claw back from other areas. Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member, Environment, Planning and Culture) added that in his service area the reduction in parking income was a London wide problem, as motorists appear to be more inclined to obey parking regulations in the current financial climate. In considering the service performance schedules, the Director of Policy and Regeneration expressed concern that too many indicators were in the high risk categories and it was hoped that this situation would change with Improvement and Efficiency initiatives. Councillor Blackman drew attention to the rate of permanent exclusion from schools, currently listed as high risk, considering that it would be more accurate to look at the annual figure instead of the first quarter, given the current downward trend.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the council's spending, activity and performance in the first quarter of 2009/10 be noted;
- (ii) that all directors ensure that spending is kept within budget, underperformance tackled, and that measures are taken, in consultation with relevant portfolio holders, to achieve this;
- (iii) that the virements detailed in appendix F to the report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources be approved.

8. Modernisation of the council's financial management arrangements and approval for appointment of consultants

The Director of Finance and Corporate Resources' report set out proposals for modernisation of the Council's financial management arrangements. The proposals have been developed as part of the "One Council" stream of work set out in the Council's Improvement and Efficiency Strategy, which was published in September 2008. The Council was in the process of implementing a single accounting system and this provided the opportunity to review the council's financial management arrangements originally introduced in the early 1990s to meet requirements at the time. The proposals were initially developed by a cross-council officer task group, and were subsequently validated in a detailed business case by Deloitte MCS Limited, who also set out a road map for implementing the changes. The report set out the proposals for change and an approach for implementation, including the appointment of a strategic partner to support delivery of the changes proposed.

Councillor Blackman (Deputy Leader, Lead Member for Resources) stated that the business case was strong and any efficiency savings yielded could be used elsewhere. The proposals came as a result of a lot of hard work and he commended staff for their efforts.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following category of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that agreement be given to:
 - (a) the implementation of Phase 1 of the proposals in the Business Case summarised at Appendix A of the report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources; and
 - (b) the submission of a further report on whether to proceed with the Phase 2 optimisation stage around December 2010 (as set out in para 4.2 of the Director's report);
- (ii) that Deloitte MCS Limited be appointed as a strategic partner to support implementation of Phase 1 (para 5.5) in the sum of £799k;
- (iii) that the risks of the modernisation project and measures to mitigate them as set out in para 6.1 of the Director's report be noted;
- (iv) the proposed arrangements for member oversight in paragraph 6.2 of the Director's report be approved;
- (v) that the funding arrangements set out in paragraph 7.5 of the Director's report be approved.

9. Reference of item considered by Forward Plan Select Committee (if any)

None.

10. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

P LORBER
Chair