



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
held on Monday 23 January 2017 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	Davidson
Denselow	Dixon
Duffy	Eniola
Ezeajughi	Farah
Harrison	Hirani
Hossain	Kabir
Kansagra	Kelcher
Long	Mahmood
Marquis	Mashari
Maurice	McLeish
McLennan	Miller
J Mitchell Murray	Moher
Naheerathan	Nerva
M Patel	R S Patel
Pavey	Perrin
Pitruzzella	Shahzad
Ms Shaw	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Southwood
Stopp	Tatler
Thomas	Van Kalwala

## **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from: Councillors Hector, Hylton, Khan, Jones and W Mitchell Murray.

### **1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED**, that the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 November 2016, be approved as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to the following amendments:

#### **(i) Urgent Item: Review of Political Groups on Committees**

(a) That the following words at bullet point 8 be deleted:

- Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee (Councillor Colwill);

(b) That appointments to Committees by the Brent Conservative Group be listed as an addendum to these minutes;

#### **(ii) Matters Arising**

That mention be made of the following response given by Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for the Environment) at the last meeting of the Council to the request by Councillor Nerva for an update on the motion put at that meeting with regard to Air Quality in Brent.

*At the meeting of Council, held on 21 November 2016, Councillor Southwood had said that the Council was to launch an anti-idling campaign within the next couple of months and that, at the moment, Brent's schools were being invited to design a cleaner air logo, which would be used for all of the Borough's air quality work moving forward, designed by the Borough's children on the basis that it was for the benefit of them that the Council improved the quality of the Borough's air for future generations. She added that an air equality action plan would also go out for public consultation, subject to Cabinet approval in December 2016, so Councillor Nerva could be assured that the practical steps the Council was able to take as a Borough would be fully consulted on with the residents so that the Council could begin to make a real difference here.*

### **2. Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

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

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- (i) The Mayor wished everyone a Happy New Year and good health for 2017.
- (ii) The Mayor announced that he had just returned from an extremely enjoyable, busy and informative private visit to Bangladesh. He said he had been

honoured to be able to meet the President and Prime Minister and had been humbled by the reception he received. The Mayor said that he had met with the speaker of the House of Parliament, the Foreign, Law and Information Ministers and the Dhaka and Sylhet City Corporation Mayors, the British High Commissioner in Bangladesh, the Federation of Chamber of Commerce, the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce, the Sylhet Chamber of Commerce, Mowlobi bazar Chamber of commerce and he also attended an international Rotary and Lions association reception. He went on to say that he had also met with the Inspector General of Police for Bangladesh given the importance of security and improving safety and that he had spoken at a seminar organised by the Centre for Non-Resident Bangladeshis on how Britain and Bangladesh could work together post Brexit. The Mayor said that they had discussed the issue of nationality for Bangladeshis living abroad and that he had extended an invitation to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to visit Brent. In conclusion, the Mayor said that Tulip Siddiq had been present for his meeting with the Prime Minister and that he had taken the opportunity to visit his primary school and to see family there.

- (iii) The Mayor expressed his sincere thanks to his Deputy Mayor, Councillor Chohan, who had covered his engagements whilst he had been away.
- (iv) The Mayor extended his thanks to all those Members and Officers who had attended his Christmas fundraising event on 15 December. He said that it had been an extremely enjoyable evening and a substantial amount of money had been raised for his chosen charities. The Mayor said he was very grateful for the continued support he received.
- (v) The Mayor reminded Council of the Brent Holocaust and Genocide Memorial that was to be held in the Civic Centre on Thursday 26 January 2017 at 6.45pm. This, he said, would be an opportunity to remember those who had lost their lives during the Holocaust and those who had been affected by genocide all over the world. The event, he said, was to be a non-faith event which would be open to all to attend.
- (vi) The Mayor announced that the Council would be celebrating the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) History Month on 28 February 2017. He said that the "Pride NOT Prejudice" event would focus on LGBT history, the celebration and recognition of LGBT people and culture past and present. He encouraged Members to attend the event at the Civic Centre from 6pm to 8pm for an opportunity to engage with colleagues, residents and partners and said that further details about the event, together with full registration details, would be included within the Members' Bulletin.
- (vii) It was with sadness that the Mayor announced the passing of Kathy Bardoo, a former Mayor's PA and who would have been known to many of those present at the meeting. He said that her funeral had taken place last week and the Council offered its condolences to her husband Lawrence, daughter Juliette and the Bardoo family. The Mayor was delighted that so many former Mayors, Councillors and staff had been able to attend the ceremony.

- (viii) The Mayor announced that he had attended the London New Year's Day Parade and had been very proud of St Michael's Steel Band who had taken part on behalf of the Mayor's Office. He said that it had been a wonderful day, despite the weather, and it had been great to see so many visitors to London enjoy the day.
- (ix) The Mayor announced that, since the last meeting of Council, the Country had sadly lost one of its finest singers and songwriters, George Michael, who had sadly passed away on Christmas Day. The Mayor said that George had attended Kingsbury High School, in Brent, until his early teens and that his death had been a huge shock and represented a huge loss to the music and entertainment industry.

The Mayor went on to say that George had continued his association with Brent and had a long association with Wembley, playing Live Aid in 1985, Wham's farewell concert in 1986, the Nelson Mandela concert in 1988, the Freddie Mercury tribute concert in 1992 and the NetAid anti-poverty concert in 1999.

George, he said, had also been the first artist to perform at the new Wembley stadium as part his European tour in 2007 and would be sadly missed by many.

- (x) The Mayor announced that, in accordance with Standing Orders, a list of current petitions showing progress on dealing with them had been circulated around the Chamber.

#### 4. **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) Resignation of Councillor Shama Tatler, as full Member, from the Council's Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee – Councillor John Duffy to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (ii) Resignation of Councillor Shama Tatler, as substitute Member, from the Council's Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee – Councillor John Duffy to fill the vacancy, as substitute Member.
- (iii) Resignation of Councillor Roxanne Mashari, as full Member, from the Council's General Purposes Committee – Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (iv) Resignation of Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, as full Member from the Council's Equalities Committee – Councillor Roxanne Mashari to fill the vacancy, as full Member.

- (v) Resignation of Councillor Roxanne Mashari, as substitute Member, from the Council's Health and Wellbeing Board – Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, to fill the vacancy, as substitute Member.
- (vi) Resignation of Councillor Roxanne Mashari, as substitute Member, from the West London Economic Prosperity Board – Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (vii) Resignation of Councillor Roxanne Mashari, as substitute Member, from the Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as substitute Member.
- (viii) Resignation of Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray, as full Member, from the Corporate Parenting Committee – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as Chair and full Member.
- (ix) Resignation of Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray, as full Member, from the General Purposes Committee – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (x) Resignation of Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray, as full Member, from the Health and Wellbeing Board – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (xi) Resignation of Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray, as full Member, from the Highways Committee – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (xii) Resignation of Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray, as full Member, from the Schools' Disciplinary Sub-Committee – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (xiii) Resignation of Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray, as full Member, from the Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee – Councillor Mili Patel, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (xiv) Resignation of Councillor John Duffy, as full Member, from the Council's South Kilburn Trust – Councillor Rita Conneely to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (xv) Resignation of Councillor Michael Pavey, as full Member, from the Tricycle Theatre Board – Councillor Tom Miller, Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.
- (xvi) Resignation of Councillor Roxanne Mashari, as deputy for Councillor Margaret McLennan, on the London Councils Greater London Employment

Forum – Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, to fill the vacancy, as full Member.

- (xvii) Resignation of Councillor Roxanne Mashari, as deputy for Councillor McLennan on the London Councils Greater London Employment Forum – Councillor Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills, to fill the vacancy.

## 5. 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)

Councillor Butt said that the New Year brought many challenges for the Council, particularly around schools, the National Health Service and looking after elderly residents. He said that the Council needed to be focussing on these issues and needed to make sure that every child did have the best start in life. He added that the Council would be making sure that it stood up and protected the National Health Service from the Government and that the Council needed to make sure that its residents, especially the older generation, lived dignified lives in the future.

Councillor Butt welcomed Councillors Shama Tatler and Mili Patel to the Cabinet. In conclusion, Councillor Butt said that, as the Council moved forward, it still had to deal with the challenges of what might happen with regards to Brexit.

### (ii) Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Councillor McLennan said that January and February would focus largely around the Council's Budget and that she, the Leader and senior officers had been attending all meetings of the Brent Connect Forums and had undertaken a "supermarket sweep" where Councillors and senior officers had been talking to residents in supermarkets to gauge their views on the proposals for budget cuts that were required to be made, which in essence, had been positive and there had been an understanding of the reasons behind why the Council had to make cuts. She said there had been support of the fact that Brent's Council Tax had to rise and the proposed increase for social care precept was something that the Council would need to do because the public agreed that looking after the most vulnerable was one of the key things that the local authority should be taking forward. Despite the challenges, Councillor McLennan said that, as an authority, the Council was still delivering services in different ways in order to release savings. Part of this strategy, she said, was looking at shared services. Councillor McLennan said that Brent's IT Services was leading the way by managing IT provision at two very large London boroughs and was looking to expand this service other boroughs also. In conclusion, Councillor McLennan said that her vision was for Brent to become a digital hub, something digital and something for the future but, for now, the priority was the Budget.

(iii) Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for the Environment)

Councillor Southwood said that everyone would be aware that Transport For London (TFL) was renewing its business plan, which had been published towards the end of last year. She said that this included how TFL was to allocate the LIP for this year, which was the Council's main source of funding for doing all the things its residents wanted, and needed the Council to do in terms of traffic management in the Borough. Councillor Southwood went on to say that whilst it was not all good news for the Council, one very exciting piece of news was that TFL had identified 12 clean bus corridors and that Edgware Road, the whole length along the A5, was to be one of those corridors, which meant that every bus would be of Euro 6 standard. She said that other roads were benefitting too and referred to Chamberlain Road in her own ward, which now benefitted from buses going along it which were other clean air bus corridors. Councillor Southwood thanked all residents and Brent Councillors who had been very supportive so far and she hoped that this would be the beginning of lots of other very concrete measures from TFL that would benefit Brent and its residents.

Councillor Southwood also updated Members on the current position with regard to the Council's zero tolerance approach to illegal dumping within the Borough. She said that the first six months of the pilot with Kingdom Securities had now passed and the data had been collected. She said that over 3,200 Fixed Penalty Notices had been issued and the Council had sent out the first 50 court summons for ones that were, so far, unpaid. Councillor Southwood went on to say that the Council was reducing the proportion, which were allocated for cigarette butts, to move towards occasions such as bird feeding, which was a big issue for the Council's residents. In conclusion, Councillor Southwood said that the data told a really encouraging story so far in that the fines were working and the Council hoped to be able to take that forward in a way that it would be able to respond even better to what residents wanted.

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

Councillor Tatler began by paying tribute to her predecessor, Councillor Mashari for her work in the Cabinet over the last few years. Councillor Tatler said that she was looking forward to the challenge of working in the Cabinet for Brent residents in an exciting portfolio. She also thanked the senior officers within the Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills brief for bringing her up-to-speed with developments in those areas.

Councillor Tatler congratulated Richard Barrett, the Council's Head of Estates Regeneration, who had won the Alan Cherry Award for Place-Making. She said that the award had been established to give recognition to the significant contributions that leading figures in the public sector made to the quality of place-making within their communities.

Councillor Tatler said that Wood House Urban Park, which was part of the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme, had one both the regional and

national landscape awards in the category “Principal Award for Regeneration” and invited Members to visit the park as it was a brilliant example of how officers and the Council had worked with the community to build a park that was actually wanted by everyone living around the estates there.

Councillor Tatler announced that the Council had allocated another £100,000 to secure additional outcomes to St Raphael’s and that she was working with CRISIS in Harlesden to support residents into work over the coming year.

In conclusion, Councillor Tatler said that she was looking forward to meeting with key stakeholders in all of the Council’s developments and projects and ensuring that the community was central to the vision the Council had of creating a Brent that was sustainable, vibrant, prosperous and one that could meet the challenges of the 21st Century but, above all else, be inclusive of all.

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

Councillor Hirani began by thanking everyone who worked in the health and social care sector today in what was a very challenging time and said that the Council was truly grateful for the work that they did.

Councillor Hirani said that the Council had, this winter, developed its integrated “rehab and reablement” service where the Council had step down beds based at the Willesden Centre for helping with the discharge process. He said that the Council was also working with Northwick Park, along with other Councils across West London where the hospitals had experienced difficulties discharging patients over the last few years because they were discharging patients to Ealing to Harrow and to Brent so between the partner local authorities it was decided that Brent Council be the designated link to Northwick Park Hospital dealing with discharges from that hospital.

Councillor Hirani was proud to announce that, in February, following a successful pilot in Barnet, the “Trailblazer Programme”, where the Council had been working with the West London Alliance, would start in Brent and that this was a specific programme to support people experiencing mental ill-health to get into work.

In conclusion, Councillor Hirani said that, sadly, within the announcements to local government from Central Government, it was apparent that a further £0.5m cut had been made to the Council’s public health grant, which was on top of the £2m which had already been announced. Councillor Hirani said that this was just a clear shambles of how a government could not actually connect prevention and public health to the crisis that had been happening in the NHS. He said that the public health grant that the Council used could be supported to help people stop people drinking alcohol excessively or to help them stop smoking and instead the Government wanted to plough money into the higher-end problems so that hospitals were dealing with alcohol-related admissions at hospital and cancer treatment as well.

(vi) Councillor Miller (Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities)



Councillor Miller began by thanking those Members who had attended the Council's "Time to Talk" event on gangs, which he had chaired last week. He said that, at the last meeting of the Full Council, he had made it clear that tackling gang violence, drug dealing and exploitation would be some of his key priorities within his portfolio. Councillor Miller was very pleased to say that this was being followed-up and that this made dialogue and partnerships with the communities effected absolutely essential. Councillor Miller said that the event had been attended by just short of 200 people and a range of perspectives and organisations were represented to discuss what could be an enormously complex and sometimes emotionally challenging topic. He said that this would not be a listening event which led to nowhere and that the valuable input the Council had gained from the Panel and from those who had attended would form part of the Council's new Stronger Communities Strategy, which would be presented later in the year. Councillor Miller went on to say that organising work was still ongoing around this and that he would be working very closely with staff to make sure that intervening on gangs was key to what went into this strategy.

Councillor Miller announced that it had been a good time for Brent's Libraries and he congratulated Wembley Library staff on its performance against national statistics and benchmarking methods. He said that Wembley Library was now the third most visited library nationally after the Central Libraries in Birmingham and Manchester and that the task now would be to drill down into data, which could inform the Council about people's levels of engagement with libraries

Councillor Miller also thanked staff at Willesden Green for what had been an excellent event, in partnership with the Romanian and Cultural Institute and the National Library for Romania, who would be donating some curated materials to the Library in Brent. He said that Brent had a very large Romanian population in Brent – one of the largest in the country - and that this would be very important at a difficult time for these communities post Brexit. Councillor Miller said that work like this, on behalf of the Council, sent a very clear message and that Brent's message was that if someone was an EU worker in this country, then Brent was right behind them and would make sure that they were a full part of Brent's community.

In conclusion, Councillor Miller advised Members that the Council was currently working closely with community libraries to draft a memorandum of understanding, although the title of this might change, about how the Council could best support their activities and work in partnership with them. He said that the Council had, at times, had a difficult relationship with community libraries in the past and one of the things that he wanted to make sure the Council got out of this was a good relationship of trust and support between community libraries and the Council. Councillor Miller said he would be returning with more information about how this policy was developing in the coming months because the Council was currently taking feedback from the community libraries.

(vii) Councillor Patel (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

Councillor Patel said that she was very pleased to have been appointed as Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and that it was a personal appointment since she had attended school in Brent. She said that she was really looking forward to meeting the team and officers and continuing the work of her predecessor, Councillor W Mitchell Murray.

(viii) Councillor Farah (Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform)

Councillor Farah advised Members that there would be approximately £2m identified to tackle single homelessness in Brent. He said that the current housing and planning appeal would mean local authorities would have to provide advice and guidance to single homelessness when it became law. Councillor Farah said that, following the Council's successful application for just under £1m from the Government, the Cabinet had approved to match-fund that amongst local voluntary sector organisations to deliver homelessness prevention and relieve outcomes for hundreds of homelessness single people who currently had not had the help that they needed. He said that this new programme would make Brent one of the leading Councils in the country in dealing with this issue and it would test an approach where the voluntary sector partners were paid according to how successful they had been in both tackling homelessness and helping people sustain their accommodation afterwards.

Councillor Farah also updated Members on the Brent Housing Partnership consultation which was now underway. He said that the 12 weeks of consultation with tenants and leaseholders to inform the Council's final decision on future housing management, was running until 17 March 2017 and he asked that Members engage with their residents, leaseholders and other interested parties to encourage them to take part in this important consultation. Councillor Farah said that the Council was seeking views on the preferred option to bring the service back in house. He said that the consultation set out how the Council planned to tie in housing with other Council services such as antisocial behaviour and streets and estate management to address residents' key concerns and aspirations that they had raised before. Councillor Farah confirmed that the Council would consult in parallel with Council Staff, Brent Housing Partnership and colleagues too.

**6. Deputations (if any)**

The Mayor informed Members that he had received the following request for a deputation.

Removing Speed Bumps and Replacing with Alternative Traffic Calming Methods

Councillor Davidson introduced Mr Matthew Godley to Members.

Mr Godley, a resident of Brent, introduced the deputation on the subject of the case for removing speed bumps and replacing these with alternative traffic calming methods.

In response, Councillor Southwood, Cabinet Member for the Environment, thanked Mr Godley for his deputation and said that the Council's responsibility as a traffic

authority was to keep traffic moving safely but also to mitigate other impacts such as pollution and she hoped that she had reassured Mr Godley that this was absolutely paramount for the Council. She said that around 200 deaths in the Borough were contributed to by poor quality air per year. She added that in many parts of the Borough, there were limited speeds, often to 20mph, and these were accompanied by signage and traffic calming, which often meant speed bumps. Councillor Southwood said that these had been chosen on the basis that the evidence suggested that they did have a really strong impact on reducing speeds, reducing amounts of traffic and that they were a cost-effective way for the Council to do that. She said that, in the current financial climate, the ability to alter what the Council spent, both its capital and revenue budgets, on this was significantly limited but that did not mean she was going to stand up and thank you for coming and say the Council would just carry on doing what it had always done. Councillor Southwood said that, with the caveat that the Council was in a very limited financial position, she would welcome a further discussion and meeting with Mr Godley to talk about the alternatives that he had suggested. She imagined that different parts of the Borough would be suited to different forms of traffic-calming and that this depended on the width of roads and pavements and also, of course, proper consultation with local residents. Councillor Southwood said that the Council also used chicanes and road-narrowing measures in different parts of the Borough. She acknowledged that many residents needed to drive but that the most effective way of reducing air quality and reducing traffic accidents was to reduce the number of cars on the Borough's roads. Councillor Southwood said that the Council was very committed to making the Borough safer to walk in and safer to cycle in and making its public transport infrastructure something which residents felt able to choose without compromising on their actual ability to get where they needed to get to. In conclusion, Councillor Southwood thanked Mr Godley for addressing Council and stated that if he would like a meeting to discuss the matter further, then to get in touch.

#### **7. Questions from Members of the Public**

In accordance with Standing Order 39A, there were no questions received from Members of the Public.

#### **8. Petitions**

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

#### **9. Urgent Items Taken Under Standing Order 16**

Councillor Warren moved a point of order to seek clarification that the Council had fully complied with Standing Order 16.

The Council's Chief Legal Officer confirmed that the Standing Order had been fully complied with. She confirmed that one notice had not previously been published but that this had now been done in relation to Item (c).

In accordance with Standing Order 16, Councillor Butt informed the Council of the decisions that had been taken.

Councillor Warren asked whether the decisions taken could be the subject of further debate. The Mayor confirmed that the Leader had only to inform Members of the decisions that had been taken.

Councillor Warren moved that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the Council to have a more detailed explanation of the items contained within the agenda.

Prior to Councillor Warren's motion being put to the vote, the Chief Executive reaffirmed that the decisions had been made, that they had all been sent to the relevant Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees in advance, that there had been no call-in of any of the decisions taken and that the provisions of the Council's Standing Orders had been met.

On a vote being taken by a show of hands, Councillor Warren's motion was declared **LOST**.

The Chief Executive invited any Member who had any concern about any of the decisions in relation to this matter that they relay those concerns to her, in writing, to respond to.

**RESOLVED** that the urgent key decisions taken by the Leader and the Chief Executive, as detailed in Page 23 to the agenda, be noted.

10. **Invitation to become an Opted-In Authority: The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 (the Regulations)**

Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader), introduced the report by the Council's Chief Finance Officer and commended to the Council that with the abolition of the Audit Commission, Council now had the power to appoint its own external auditors. She said that the general consensus was that the Council should appoint external auditors so that they could have a consensus of independence and ensure strict governance.

Councillor McLennan said that the LGA had produced a model which the Council, and other local authorities, would wish to buy into which had the advantage of bulk purchasing and savings to the Council.

**RESOLVED** that the Public Sector Audit Appointments' (PSAA) invitation to 'opt in' to the sector led option for the appointment of external auditors for five financial years commencing 1 April 2018, be accepted.

11. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

In accordance with Standing Order 39(b) the subject chosen for debate by non-Cabinet Members was "Crisis in the NHS".

During the debate, Members expressed concerns that the Government had made things difficult for the third sector in recent years as it had become almost impossible for organisations dependent upon the combination of government funding and charitable donations to speak their minds, which made the recent Red Cross denouncement of the humanitarian crisis in the NHS more pertinent.

It was said that people were seeing an essential public service being robbed of every resource by the Government and that the Government had cut and cut and had been allowed to do so. It was suggested that unless people came together in opposition, the good work of past Labour Governments could be undone.

Members agreed that the NHS was something everyone relied upon and were very proud of. It was noted that Labour, Conservative and Liberals had always supported the NHS. It was recognised that there was a crisis in social care and knew that the NHS could not work properly if there was no funding and interaction with social care. Brent needed an all-party approach to funding and transformation of the NHS and social care funding.

## 12. **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 if she agreed that at the cost of the taxpayer to do a consultation and ignore the results is a costly waste of time and a pretence to be concerned with the majority of residents in Brent and that this sets a dangerous precedent for future consultations which the residents will not trust or participate in in, in the future? Does the Lead Member have concerns that this will come back to haunt this administration in May 2018 regarding this terrible hike?

In response, Councillor Southwood said “no” in short, to both of the questions put. She thought that Councillor Shaw may have been referring to the statutory consultations for amending the traffic orders in order to implement the policy. She said that prior to that, an extensive public consultation unlike any undertaken before had been undertaken on parking, which looked in a more holistic way about what people cared about. Councillor Southwood said that what residents cared about was finding somewhere to park when they needed to; making journeys that were essential easier; easier for their visitors to park; easier for elderly people to have people come to visit and easier for the Council to tackle air quality by making sure that its traffic moved more sensibly around the Borough. She said that the pricing of parking was an absolutely appropriate response to managing demand and managing the very small number of spaces (35,000) the Borough had to serve its 56,000 households.

- (ii) Councillor Crane asked the Cabinet Member if she would investigate what powers are available to the Council and how the Council use these powers to adopt the alleyway and report urgently to the Cabinet?

In response, Councillor Southwood said that it was a blight for residents to live with, disgusting and an extra sensory experience the likes of which one would not wish to experience. She said that the key here was finding a solution that resolved the issue in the long-term and which was proportionate and in the public interest. She said that she was very willing to look at different models for funding and resourcing the kind of sustained approach to these alleyways that would actually make it sustainably clean and pleasant to live around. Councillor Southwood said that Officers were already looking into this matter and that she was very happy to commit to bringing back ideas in ways that were in the public interest and which would support a sustainable resolution of this.

- (iii) Councillor Colwill asked the Cabinet Member would he join him (Councillor Colwill) and the Mayor of London in objecting to the strike brought on Christmas when people were visiting relatives, as this was not an honourable thing to do?

In response, Councillor Butt said that there was a democratic right for people to strike and it was down to both parties to sit round the table to negotiate and to come up with a solution. He said it had been regrettable that people had been inconvenienced but reiterated that it was for the parties to get together. He said that the Government was actually trying to make things a lot harder for workers in restricting the rights of union members and he thought it was not right what the Government was trying to do in restricting the labour of union members as and when required and when negotiations broke down.

- (iv) Councillor Long asked the Cabinet Member whether the Council would be doing anything to tackle funeral poverty?

In response, Councillor Butt said that when a young person died, the resultant costs on an individual were significant and that the Council had mechanisms in place. He said that the local welfare system was one and emergency loans could be provided by the Council to individuals but the Council would work with its community and voluntary sectors to look at further opportunities and ways to support people in these tragic circumstances and to support those individuals in their time of need.

- (v) Councillor Nerva asked the Cabinet Member in view of the very detailed answer given, whether the Cabinet and Councillor Hirani in particular, as Lead Member, would approach all parties in Brent to send a serious letter to the Secretary of State urging a proper arrangement for social care funding?

In response, Councillor Hirani said that he could not speak for all parties as only one had responded but he would in any case reach out to all parties.

- (vi) Councillor J Mitchell-Murray asked the Cabinet Member how can we make gang members or gang leaders inclusive within our community?

In response, Councillor Miller said that at the Time to Talk event held last week, one thing that came up again and again was the influence that peoples groups of friends had on them and the way that people thought about senior gang members in a cultural sense. He said that these were people that were present in people's communities who they saw a lot and grew to respect them as part of their friendship groups. He added that taking these people out of that was absolutely key. Councillor Miller said that, as part of the answer he had given you, he had spoken a little bit about mentoring and gang exit strategies to get people away from them but that was very much on the official service delivery side of things of what the Council was doing and would only ever make small differences and small improvements year-on-year and the Council was honest about that and that is what the Council was trying to achieve. He said that one thing he did want to add in terms of what he had already said was that at the event, it became very, very clear indeed that there were a lot of third sector organisations there. He said that young people were organising themselves to provide alternative role models to people in the community and there was a really good project there called "Manhood" which was about masculinity. He said that people were out there doing things about this already, and without funding and that the big question was how could the Council involve them in its work, how could the Council be partners to them and how could the Council support them and to that effect he was going to be inviting some of those third sector groups back into have a further discussion with him on how to tackle that role model issue.

### 13. **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 Council's Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, said that the main business of the Committee of late had been consideration of the Budget report, which had been debated both by the Cabinet and his committee and was now available for public inspection. He said that an underlying theme throughout the report, which was something the Council would need to take very seriously in the future, was the idea of the Council becoming more self-sufficient when business rates were devolved and looking at ways in which the Council could grow its own local businesses and be enterprising in the way that it helped them to develop and therefore claim the tax in return.

Councillor Kelcher said that the Budget consideration was the second of three task groups which were to be held during the current municipal year and he hoped that the three task group reports, when taken together at the end, would highlight the strategic direction of the Committee. He added that the Committee had started off by looking at the national issue of the devolution of business rates and how this would affect Brent. The Budget, he said, went into more detail on specific financing and areas around that and the third task group, which Councillor Stock would chair, would look at some particular, specific ideas about how the Council could grow local businesses in Brent and

discuss the best ideas that could be taken forward from other communities. Councillor Kelcher said that, since the last meeting of Full Council, the Committee had considered one call-in, which had looked at some actions around the development in South Kilburn. He said that he had visited the site in question and a record number of people had come along to the Committee to make depositions and speak. In the end, he said, the Committee decided not to refer the decision back to Cabinet but did make a series of recommendations about how the Committee thought decisions of this kind could be improved in future.

Councillor Kelcher said that, at the last meeting of the Committee, Members looked at the Council's Investment Strategy and asked questions about the wholly-owned company, which the Council had set up. He said that the Committee had also looked at how to improve High Streets, which also included a site visit there as part of this work.

Councillor Kelcher was pleased that one of the ideas that came out of these discussions was around setting up a Bond when there were some building developments within an area and that where those building developments damaged kerbside or the pavement, the Council could pay for the repair but not lose the money. He said that this matter had been agreed by the Cabinet and he felt that the entire process about how recommendations were presented to Cabinet had very much improved and was pleased that the work of the Committee was making a difference.

Councillor Kelcher announced that there were only two meetings of his Committee remaining in this municipal year. He said that, at the next meeting, the Committee would be looking specifically at whether Brent was a green Council and what it could do to take its environmental issues more seriously. The final meeting of the current Municipal Year, he said, would centre around crime and antisocial behaviour and the Committee looked forward to welcoming the Borough Commander to answer questions on those themes. Councillor Kelcher said that, since his appointment as Chair in May, it had seen three Members of the Committee graduate to the Cabinet with the latest being Councillor Tatler and Councillor Patel. He said that the vacancy that had arisen on the Committee due to Councillor Tatler's appointment to the Cabinet, would likely be filled by Councillor Duffy and the Council would need to have another by-election to replace Councillor Patel. In conclusion, Councillor Kelcher said that he would be very happy if anyone wanted to discuss any of these issues further.

(ii) Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Sheth, Chair to the Council's Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, said that people were frequently challenged about the importance of being offered choice but one choice that Brent's residents did not have was the air which they breathed. At the moment, he said, air quality in Brent, and in many parts of London, was not good enough. He added that the consequences of being exposed to poor air quality for Brent's residents could pose a significant risk to their health and even trigger health problems for some. Councillor Sheth said that monitoring in parts of the Borough had



recorded levels of pollution which, at times, had been unacceptable and the situation needed to change.

Councillor Sheth was pleased the Cabinet was consulting on the Air Quality Action Plan 2017 – 2022, which set out a number of steps the Borough could take to improve air quality. Earlier today, he said, his Committee had met with officers and Cabinet Members for Community Wellbeing and for Environment to discuss the Plan and to give the Committee's feedback about the proposals to help tackle poor air quality and improve public health.

Councillor Sheth said that he had begun by saying Brent residents did not have a choice about the air they breathed, however the Borough's residents could play a crucial role in improving air quality in the Borough by supporting the Cabinet's initiatives to reduce car and vehicle emissions and that, if everyone worked together, they could start to reach the goals that were set out in the new Air Quality Action Plan.

Councillor Sheth said that, in his last report to Full Council, he said his Committee would be receiving the annual report of the Brent Local Safeguarding Children's Board. He said that his Committee had been impressed by the work that the Board and the Independent Chair was doing in helping to ensure effective safeguarding of the Borough's children who may have been at risk of harm. However, he said, the Committee had learned that, in August 2016, the London CRC, which worked alongside the Probation Service, had said they would no longer attend meetings due to staff reduction, which he felt was unacceptable. Councillor Sheth said that the Board had no power to compel stakeholders who did not want to engage however, he would write to London CRC to express the Committee's concerns about its stance and urge it to review its decision as he expected London CRC to play its part in helping to safeguard Brent's children.

Councillor Sheth said that, next week, his Committee would be receiving the annual report of the Brent Safeguarding Adults' Board, which would be presented by the Board's independent Chair. The Board, he said, was also a multi-agency body, which had a strategic role in Brent bringing together the Council, NHS, the Police and others to help to ensure this effective protection of adults who may have been at risk of harm.

In conclusion, Councillor Sheth said that he had been invited to the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) to speak at its Annual Conference in central London. This, he said, had been a hugely proud moment for him personally and it gave considerable recognition to the good work of his and Councillor Kelcher's committees in developing scrutiny in Brent.

#### **14. Report from Vice-Chair of Audit Committee**

Councillor A Choudry, Vice-Chair to the Council's Audit Committee, thanked the Council for agreeing to change the Constitution to enable the voice of the Audit Committee to be heard at Council meetings.

He said that the work of the Audit Committee was often perceived as very technical and unglamorous with a bunch of bean counters going on to the Audit Committee

and just looking at numbers. He said that this was not so and that whilst not all Members of the Committee were accountants, there were a number of people who were crucial and who played a big role in grilling some of the people, including KPMG, Price Water House and some of the Officers, which he felt was an important role of the Committee and that it was important that some of the issues the Committee discussed there got reported to Council. In addition to this, he said, some of the crucial decisions taken by the Audit Committee in terms of finance e.g. the treasury element of this, was a highly complicated matter that he thought the Committee needed to discuss. He said that the Committee did spend an enormous amount of time doing some of those things and seeing how this money was invested and to get a better return for it. Councillor Choudry said that the Committee also looked at things such as the arrangement for the external audit work and what work the Committee needed to do, why, when and how the Committee reported it and received feedback. Over the period of the last year or so, Councillor Choudry said that the Committee had considered the shared costs side of things that the Council was perhaps were branching out to other boroughs and making sure that it was getting synergy benefit from other authorities. He said that the Committee was of the opinion that it was not happening for Brent so it took a decisive decision to take that back in-house and he was very proud and very pleased that people from all parties came to help the Committee and to make that decision. We don't play politics in the Audit Committee – we play a serious role in making sure what is best for Brent actually is delivered and it happens all the time. Councillor Choudry said that the Committee had also looked at the statutory accounts, which was a very important part of the Committee's work. Brent was, he said, generally transparent and he believed it did an enormous amount of work here in Brent and he thought it was good that the Council did and that it continue to do that. Councillor Choudry said that the cooperation it had amongst colleagues was good but there was concern where the Council had to appoint an individual onto the Audit Committee, these individuals were appointed for one year and maybe, he said, there was the need to reappraise the Council's approach going forward and maybe there was a need to have it for a longer period to allow for consistency and to provide a better, balanced approach to the work of the Committee. Councillor Choudry said he was personally reassured, as normally the Chair would present these reports but because the Committee had an independent chair, he had been tasked to say things here and he was very proud and pleased that the Audit Committee had been given this opportunity.

## 15. **Motions**

### (i) Protect Brent's Schools from Government Cuts

Councillor Patricia Harrison moved the motion circulated in her name by urging the Council to condemn the Government's proposals for a National Schools' Funding Formula and reject any effort to pay for the failure of an ideologically imposed programme of austerity by choking off essential and already insufficient funding for the education of children and young people in Brent.

The motion was put to the vote and was declared **CARRIED**.

(ii) Health and Social Care Budget

Councillor Colwill moved the motion circulated in his name in that the Conservative Group calls on the Leader of the Council to ensure that enough money was placed in the health and social care budget locally to ensure that the services could adequately cope with residents who would have need to access the health services in the coming winter.

Councillor Warren moved as an amendment that this Council notes that Councillor Colwill's group does have a "canny knack" of choosing subjects for motions that are popular with the Labour Group. The Council also notes that, like the Labour Group, Councillor Colwill's Group did not support the additional £2.25m for social care included in the Brent Conservative Group budget for 2016/17.

Councillor Warren's amendment was put to the vote and was declared **LOST**.

Councillor Hirani moved as an amendment that this Council unanimously ~~The Conservative Group~~ calls on the ~~Government Leader of the Council~~ to ensure that enough money is placed in the health and social care budget locally to ensure that the services can adequately cope with residents who will have need to access the health services for this winter and beyond.

Councillor Hirani's amendment was put to the vote and was declared **CARRIED**.

Councillor Colwill's original motion, as amended, became the substantive motion, which was put to the vote and was declared **CARRIED**.

(iii) Planning Shambles

Councillor Warren moved the motion circulated in his name that this Council notes the damning report by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) into the workings of the Brent planning department.....the report highlighted:

1. "Significant weaknesses in the planning application review and assessment process."
2. "The Council may not be able to demonstrate that it has taken steps to prevent bribery resulting in non- compliance with the Bribery Act 2010."
3. "Anti - bribery awareness training has not been provided to planning staff."
4. "Audit trail is susceptible to manipulation .This could result in planning applications being approved inappropriately due to fraud or error."
5. "No code of conduct for officers. No requirement for officers to make formal declaration of interest."

PWC concluded that it could only give the Brent planning service "limited assurance."

This Council believes that only "limited assurance" is simply unacceptable, and believes that it is essential that all our residents have confidence in the integrity of the planning process.

In the light of the PWC report, this Council instructs the Chief Executive to initiate an independent review into planning applications submitted in the report period - 01/01/16 to 31/07/16 - and to report back to Full Council with the results of her findings."

In accordance with Standing Order 47(d) the motion was put to a recorded vote and a list of the votes cast produced as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Carr	Aden	Collier
Shaw	Agha	Thomas
Warren	Allie	
	Bradley	
	Butt	
	Chan	
	S Choudhary	
	A Choudry	
	Colacicco	
	Colwill	
	Conneely	
	Crane	
	Daly	
	Davidson	
	Denselow	
	Dixon	
	Duffy	
	Eniola	
	Ezeajughi	
	Farah	
	Harrison	
	Hirani	
	Hoda-Benn	
	Hussain	
	Kabir	
	Kansagra	
	Kelcher	
	Long	
	Mahmood	
	Marquis	
	Mashari	
	Maurice	
	McLeish	
	McLennan	
	Miller	
	J Mitchell Murray	
	Moher	
	Naheerathan	

Nerva  
M Patel  
R S Patel  
Pavey  
Perrin  
Pitruzzella  
Shahzad  
Ketan Sheth  
Krupa Sheth  
Southwood  
Tatler  
Van Kalwala

Accordingly, Councillor Warren's Motion was declared **LOST**.

16. **Urgent Business**

The meeting was declared closed at 8.45 pm

COUNCILLOR PARVEZ AHMED  
Mayor