



# **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

## **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE Monday 20 August 2012 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Butt (Chair), Councillor R Moher (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Arnold, Crane, Hirani, Jones, Long, J Moher and Powney

Also present: Councillors S Choudhary, Hashmi and Harrison

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Beswick

### **1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

Councillor Crane declared a personal interest in the report relating to the food growing and allotments strategy as an allotment holder.

### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 July 2012 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### **3. Matters arising**

None.

### **4. Deputations**

None.

### **5. Food Growing and Allotments Strategy**

Councillor Powney (Lead Member, Environment and Neighbourhoods) introduced the report from the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services which proposed a unified approach to the development of food growing provision in the borough. Councillor Powney emphasised the value of people growing their own food and drew members' attention to the strategy document and also the action plan circulated as appendices to the report.

Councillor Lorber (Leader of the Opposition) sought clarification of the allotments sites affected by the strategy and also the future of Elms Gardens Allotments. The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services advised that one of the disused allotment sites referred to in the report was near the Vale Farm Sports Centre and Councillor Lorber was advised that discussions with residents on the

future of Elms Gardens allotments were being led by the Regeneration and Major Projects department and would be announced once finalised.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the findings of the strategy be noted and agreement given to its vision to “provide a range of food growing opportunities accessible to all parts of the community and to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle within a greener borough”;
- (ii) that agreement be given to the three inter linked objectives which have been formed to deliver the vision of the strategy, as set out in paragraphs 3.15 to 3.17 of the report from the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services;
- (iii) that approval be given to the action plan to deliver the strategy attached as Appendix 4 to the Director’s report.

*Councillor Crane declared a personal interest in the report as an allotment holder.*

## 6. **Outcome of the Strategic Review of the Brent Schools Portfolio**

The report before members provided an update on the capital available for school expansion and the timeline requiring additional funds for meeting the need for school places in Brent. Councillor Crane (Lead Member, Regeneration and Major Projects) referred to the unprecedented demand for school places London wide. It was proposed to create 19.5FE (form of entry) primary places by 2015 through existing school expansions in addition to temporary places. Councillor Crane drew attention to plans for the use of the former Preston Library and Stonebridge Adult Day Care Centre as bulge classes. There remained a funding shortfall of approximately £82M and the council would need to lobby for additional resources. Councillor Crane stated that the council had little option but to implement these plans given the large number of children currently without school places with more expected in the future. The council was committed to high quality buildings and consultation would be taking place with school governing bodies.

Councillor Arnold (Lead Member, Children and Families) contributed that the projections for pupil numbers were robust and that the 2011 National Census had revealed the borough’s population to have been under counted. Free Schools and Academies were currently the only options for new schools and the council would select partners that would fit the needs of the Brent community. A list of draft criteria for identifying preferred partners was attached to the report. Councillor Arnold confirmed that all on time applicants for school places for the 2012-13 academic year had been offered a place however 413 late applications had been received. 400 additional temporary places would be created for September 2012 and the number of SEN places would be expanded. The In Year Fair Access Protocol had been revised and schools and the trade unions would be consulted in September 2012. The Director of Children and Families confirmed that places would continue to be offered throughout the Autumn term.

Councillor Hirani (Lead Member, Adults and Health) asked for an update on the position regarding secondary schools. The Director of Regeneration and Major

Projects advised that correspondence had been received from central government indicating that discussions would start in 2014 for the provision of promised school buildings in 2016. Members would receive bi-monthly updates on the progress of schemes. The Executive heard that the Department for Communities and Local Government were aware of the underestimate in the borough's population as borne out by the Census figures and that the figures would be revisited.

Councillor Lorber raised the absence of reference to Hopscotch Nursery, currently based in Winkworth Hall, Chevening Road, NW6 who were lobbying for permanent premises to be identified, Winkworth Hall having been declared surplus to requirements. He suggested that the Executive should consider whether the Hall could be used as a temporary school. Councillor Crane responded that the report before members concerned premises not currently in use and the allocation of the capital programme. Leasing arrangements were in place for the nursery until 2013 and discussions were taking place on the longer term.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the current and future allocation of capital set out in Section 4.0 of the report from the Directors of Children and Families and Regeneration and Major Projects;
- (ii) that the current and future demand for primary school places as set out in Section 5.0 of the Directors' report be noted;
- (iii) that the strategy for the delivery of primary school places as set out in Section 5.0 of the report be approved;
- (iv) that it be noted that an additional report will be submitted to the Executive on the strategy to deliver secondary school places by December 2012;
- (v) that it be noted that the demand for new school places cannot be met only through expansion of existing schools due to the limited availability of funding; the Council is required to promote additional ways of creating school places by pursuing the current government agenda on free schools and academies;
- (vi) that agreement be given to the criteria set out in Appendix 3 of the Directors' report, specifically in relation to the provision of new Free Schools and Academies;
- (vii) that agreement be given to the proposal to acquire Fulton Road (Quintain) and Oriental City properties for the purpose of developing new schools as part of the S106 developer's agreement. Terms to be advised to the Executive for approval;
- (viii) that approval be given to the principle of creating a new school expansion team as set out in Section 9.0 of the report, which would be subject to a further approval of a business case;
- (ix) that the provision of new temporary 'bulge' classes for the academic year 2012-13, as per Appendix 2 of this report, which includes removal of

Stonebridge Day Care Centre and Preston Library from the current Council disposal programme for duration of 3-years and 7-years, respectively be noted.

## **7. Expansion of St Robert Southwell School**

Councillor Arnold (Lead Member, Children and Families) reminded the Executive that the Governing Body of St Robert Southwell RC Primary School was proposing to alter the school by adding half of one form of entry (0.5FE) to increase the school by 105 places across Reception to Year 6 from September 2013 and that agreement in principle had been given in April 2012 subject to the completion of due diligence by the council. Discussions had taken place with the school and the Westminster Diocese, a statutory consultation process taken place and a funding agreement drafted. The estimated cost of the project was £1.41m of which the cost to the Council would be a maximum of £1.31m to be funded from the Main Capital programme, providing high quality accommodation. Councillor Arnold added that the shortfall in Catholic school places would be addressed. She drew members' attention to the outcome of the consultation and the Equalities Impact Assessment which was appended to the report.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that it be confirmed that the main reason for approving the alteration of St Robert Southwell RC primary schools was to provide permanent primary places in an area of the borough which has a severe shortage of Reception to Year 6 Catholic places, as agreed at the Executive meeting on 23 April 2012;
- (ii) that approval be given to the permanent expansion of St Robert Southwell RC Primary School by 0.5FE;
- (iii) that it be noted that upon implementation of the proposal, St Robert Southwell RC Primary School would provide 15 new permanent places in each year group from 5 September 2013;
- (iv) that approval be given to the council entering into a funding agreement with the Roman Catholic Westminster Diocese for the Council to fund the building works to a maximum of £1.31m.

## **8. Stonebridge Adventure Playground Grant 2012-2014**

The report from the Director of Children and Families sought agreement to grant fund a voluntary/community organisation, for one year and seven months, subject to performance, to enable the continued running of Stonebridge Adventure Playground, and delivery of holiday activities during summer, Christmas, Easter, and the half-term breaks. The Lead Member for Children and Families, Councillor Arnold advised that grant funding was now considered to be the preferred option.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Grant Criteria and Standard Conditions of Grant Aid set out in Appendix 1 of the report from the Director of Children and Families be noted;

- (ii) that agreement be given to the voluntary sector organisation as Brent Play Association, to continue running Stonebridge Adventure Playground, and delivery of holiday activities during summer, Christmas, Easter, and the half-term breaks;
- (iii) that it be noted that in the case of the grant funding being withdrawn for performance reasons, the decision to reallocate the fund was delegated to the Director of Children and Families.

## 9. Brent Housing Partnership

The report from the Director of Regeneration and Major Projects advised that on 16 July 2012 the Executive agreed to enter into a new long term management agreement with Brent Housing Partnership for the purposes of managing the council's remaining housing stock. The Executive also agreed to the full implementation of recent reviews of efficiency and governance arrangements within Brent Housing Partnership (BHP). The existing management agreement between the Council and BHP was due to expire on 30 September 2012. The report proposed to extend the existing management agreement until 31 March 2013, so as to provide sufficient time for the preparation of the new management agreement, and to ensure that future management agreement reviews were fully aligned with the council's budget process and municipal year. Further, the report sought additional changes to BHP's Articles of Association to extend the tenure of existing tenant and independent Board Members whose terms were scheduled to end in the intervening period until 31 March 2013.

Councillor Lorber (Leader of the Opposition) questioned the reason for the delay in the introduction of the new arrangements and felt that all political groups on the council should be represented on the Board. Councillor Long acknowledged that the delay was unfortunate and the Executive noted that there would be only three council nominees on the Board.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that agreement be given to extend the existing Management Agreement between the Council and BHP until 31st March 2013, at which time it will be replaced with a new long term Management Agreement in line with the decision of the Executive of 16 July 2012;
- (ii) that agreement be given to amend where necessary BHP's Articles of Association, in particular paragraph 15 thereof, to allow for the existing resident Board members of BHP to remain in situ until 31 March 2013;
- (iii) that authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Major Projects, in consultation with the Director of Legal and Procurement to negotiate and finalise the long term Management Agreement with BHP pursuant to the decision of the Executive dated 16 July 2012;
- (iv) that authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and Major Projects, in consultation with the Director of Legal and Procurement, to approve subsequent amendments to the Articles of Association and

Memorandum of Association of BHP between now and the end of March 2013 which may be necessary to enable the new Management Agreement to be in place by 1 April 2013 and to implement the recommendations set out in the report of Navigant Consulting regarding the Governance Review of BHP.

**10. Brent Meanwhile Partnership and Meanwhile and Urban Regeneration Foundation**

The report from the Director of Regeneration and Major Projects advised that council was taking forward temporary use and meanwhile projects across the borough to assist with delivering regenerative outcomes. To ensure the appropriate governance of existing and future projects, it was proposed that a governance vehicle be established to ensure their success in the short, medium and long terms. It was proposed that the governance vehicle be known as the "Brent Meanwhile Partnership" and would consist of a relationship between the council and a newly formed national charity known as the "Meanwhile Foundation". Councillor Crane (Lead Member, Regeneration and Major Projects) advised that the need for formal arrangements had increased in recent years and the initiative would help reduce the number of derelict premises and vandalism. It would be funded through the New Initiatives budget and Councillor Crane referred members to the legal implications and the framework agreement appended to the report.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Director for Regeneration and Major Projects be authorised to formally establish the Meanwhile Foundation, a new national charitable organisation in partnership with Locality and other founding partners;
- (ii) that the Director of Regeneration and Major Projects be authorised to enter into a Framework agreement on behalf of the Council with the Meanwhile Foundation.

**11. Contract for Facilities Management Services to council portfolio**

Councillor Crane (Lead Member, Regeneration and Major Projects) introduced the report on the provision of Facilities Management Services to cover the council's entire property portfolio including the Civic Centre, the retained portfolio and the interim portfolio (those properties held for the period prior to the date of occupation to the Civic Centre). The report set out the outcome of the exercise to procure a total facilities management ("TFM") solution. It was recommended to award the contract to Europa Facilities Services Ltd to commence on 1 November 2012 for a six year period following which there would be a review. Discussions have taken place with Trade Unions over the future of existing council staff.

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 a contract for Facilities Management Services be awarded to Europa Facilities Services Ltd to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 and to expire on 30 June 2018 with provision for the council to extend the contract for two further one year periods;
- (ii) that approval be given to the approach outlined within the report from the Director of Regeneration and Major Projects for the treatment of existing council employees delivering FM services affected by this Contract;
- (iii) that officers' intention to establish an FM Client side team to provide effective contract management be noted.

**12. Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

**13. Reference of item considered by Call in Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

None.

The meeting ended at 7.35 pm

M BUTT  
Chair