



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

### **MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Monday 20 January 2020 at 5.30 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor McLennan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Agha, Farah, Colwill, Hirani, Tatler and Miller

Also present: Councillor Shafique Choudhary

1. **Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Krupa Sheth with Councillor Tom Miller attending as a substitute member.

2. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interests made by Members.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

There were no deputations received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on, Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019 be approved as an accurate record.

5. **Matters arising (if any)**

Minute No. 6 – Calculation of Council Tax Base 2020/21

Councillor Hirani sought an update on progress with the paper outlining the overall approach towards the management and collection of Council Tax debt and impact of the Council Tax Protocol. The Chief Executive informed members that the report was being progressed and that in the meantime, the approach towards debt collection involving more vulnerable residents, remained subject to detailed review.

6. **Domestic Abuse Policy**

Martin Williams (Head of Human Resources) introduced the report from the Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations seeking approval to introduction of a Domestic Abuse Policy (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) for staff. The aim of the policy was to set out the support available to employees and provide advice and guidance to managers on the impact of Domestic Abuse in the workplace.

Members noted that the policy was one of a number of standards required to achieve accreditation to the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) which sought to recognise good practice and commitment in responding to Domestic Abuse. Implementation would also enable the Council to sign up to the GMB Unions "Work to Stop Domestic Abuse" Charter, with Martin Williams also highlighting the level of consultation that had taken place thorough the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Officer Steering Group in developing the policy.

Members welcomed the report and thanked officers for their work in developing the policy. In terms of issues raised the Committee were advised that subject to approval of the policy, work would commence on the recruitment and training of Domestic Abuse Champions with the launch of a webpage. Martin Williams also confirmed that requests for leave from domestic abuse victims in order to attend counselling, medical, legal or other related appointments would be dealt with under the Special Leave category, rather than, taken from general annual leave entitlement.

As no further issues were raised, it was **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the Domestic Abuse Policy, as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report
- (2) To note the following specific policy provisions:
  - (a) Review of Welfare Loans to include:
    - i) Same day emergency loans for Domestic Abuse victims;
    - ii) The maximum loan for all purposes to be increased from £1000 £5000. The amount loaned would not exceed the applicant's monthly net pay; and
    - iii) All welfare loans to be interest free (interest is currently a fixed rate of 1% per annum above the current base rate of the Council's bankers);
  - (b) Special Leave – requests for leave from Domestic Abuse victims to attend counselling, medical appointments or legal proceedings, moving house or re-organising childcare would be considered in line with other requests under the Special leave category.
  - (c) Domestic Abuse Champion volunteers - Recruitment would be undertaken of Domestic Abuse Champions volunteers, as a confidential first point of contact for those experiencing Domestic Abuse.

## **7. Stopping Up Order - Land North Chippenham Gardens**

Nicolaas Potgieter (Highways & Infrastructure), introduced the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment seeking approval for authorisation to make a Stopping Up Order for an area of public highway consisting of footway and road located north of Chippenham Gardens under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990). Members noted that the Order was required to enable completion of the development situated at the land north of Chippenham Gardens, as detailed within section 1.2 of the report.

In terms of comments raised, members were advised that officers were satisfied with the accuracy of the land registry data available in relation to the site, which had also been subject to legal verification. In terms of costs relating to the Stopping Up Order, confirmation was provided that these would be recharged to the budget for the overall South Kilburn Programme.

As no further issues were raised, it was **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note that the draft Stopping Up Order had been advertised as required by Section 247 TCPA 1990 and the consultees had informed the Council that they had either no objections or no record of apparatus in the immediate vicinity of our enquiry.
- (2) To approve the making of the Stopping Up Order and that a notice of making be advertised

**8. Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies**

None

**9. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

**10. Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at: 17:41

Councillor Muhammed Butt  
Chair