



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held as an online meeting on Friday 16 October 2020 at 3.30 pm

PRESENT (in remote attendance):

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Lia Colacicco

COUNCILLORS:

Abdi	Aden
Afzal	Agha
Ahmed	Akram
M Butt	S Butt
Chan	Chappell
Chohan	S Choudhary
A Choudry	Colwill
Crane	Daly
Dar	Denselow
Dixon	Donnelly-Jackson
Ethapemi	Farah
Gbajumo	Georgiou
Gill	Hassan
Hirani	Hylton
Johnson	Kabir
Kansagra	Kelcher
Kennelly	Knight
Lloyd	Lo
Long	Mahmood
Mashari	Maurice
McLeish	McLennan
Miller	Murray
Naheerathan	Nerva
M Patel	Perrin
Sangani	Shah
Shahzad	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Southwood
Stephens	Tatler
Thakkar	

1. **Welcoming Statement**

Prior to its formal opening, the Mayor welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting and invited the Chief Executive to outline the guidance relating to conduct of the meeting.

The Mayor also advised he was delighted to announce that Councillor Liz Dixon had been awarded an MBE in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. The award was in recognition of her outstanding work in restorative justice and her efforts in rehabilitating offenders over the last three decades. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor congratulated Councillor Dixon on her award.

The Mayor then moved on to the formal agenda for the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor advised that direct apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Conneely. Apologies for lateness were also received from Councillors Ethapemi and Hirani.

It was also noted that Councillor Mitchell-Murray and Ramesh Patel were unable to attend due to technical issues in being able join the meeting remotely.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

None received.

4. **Deputations**

The Mayor advised that he had accepted requests for three deputations to be presented at the meeting on the subject of Healthy Neighbourhoods.

The first of these had been from Joel Davidson on behalf of the Brondesbury Park Residents Association. The second from Mark Falcon, speaking on behalf of Brent Clean Air Campaign and the third from Charlie Fernandes, speaking on behalf of the Brent Cycling Campaign.

The Mayor advised that unless otherwise indicated by Members, he intended to allow each of the nominated speakers up to five minutes to present their deputations. He would then allow Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning up to five minutes to respond on the deputations received.

As no issues were raised on the approach outlined, the Mayor moved on to welcome Joel Davidson to the meeting and invited him to present the first deputation on behalf of the Brondesbury Park Residents Association. The following issues were highlighted as part of the deputation:

- The Brondesbury Park Residents Association felt that the low traffic neighbourhood schemes were being pushed through undemocratically by the Council, with local people not having been consulted or engaged before

- implementation. The approach towards the concept of “retrospective consultation” was deemed unacceptable and unsatisfactory by local residents in the area;
- Concerns were also highlighted in relation to the design of the schemes based on what was felt to be “anecdotal data”, with schemes elsewhere across London also causing similar concern, for example in Ealing, Hackney and Islington. In Wandsworth and Redbridge, this had led to local authorities reversing decisions to implement the schemes;
 - It was also felt the schemes would make traffic, and therefore air pollution, along main roads in the Brondesbury Park area, such as Kilburn High Road, Salisbury Road and Chamberlain Road worse, with a number of local schools also likely to be adversely affected by the increase in traffic;
 - Highlighting that Brent had one of the largest percentage of daily trips by public transport and one of the lowest percentage of daily trips for motor vehicles in London, the Resident Association felt this weakened the case for introduction of low traffic neighbourhoods. Moreover, it was also felt there was a need to recognise that air pollution levels had reduced as a result of the pandemic. As such, the need for such measures was deemed questionable, especially as it was felt the use of road closures and barriers in local areas would not prompt residents to move to alternative modes of travel;
 - Low traffic neighbourhoods were also felt to discriminate against those with mobility issues, the elderly and tradespeople, all of whom struggled to travel without the use of motor vehicles;
 - Whilst highlighting that Resident Association remained keen to improve their local environment and were supportive of the efforts being made to encourage more active modes of transport such as walking and cycling, it was felt this could be achieved and coexist alongside motor vehicle use. The approach would, however, require a joined up approach and dialogue with local residents rather than schemes being pushed through without the necessary level of engagement. In concluding, the Council was asked to consider withdrawing the current proposals in order to properly engage with residents on how best to improve their local environment.

The Mayor thanked Joel Davidson for his deputation and then welcomed Mark Falcon, to the meeting who was invited to present the second deputation on behalf of the Brent Clean Air Campaign. The following issues were highlighted as part of the deputation:

- Outlining the role of Clean Air for Brent in campaigning to improve air quality and their work in supporting the Council’s Air Quality Scrutiny Inquiry, members’ attention was drawn to the impact which air pollution was having across the UK. Not only was it a major cause of deaths, estimated at over 40,000 per year, but it had also been estimated to cost the NHS 20% of its annual budget with its impact on health having a disproportionately worse impact on the vulnerable as well as being recognised as a “national health emergency”;
- In London, the biggest cause of air pollution had been traffic, with motorists themselves being amongst the worst affected by air pollution;
- In terms of healthy neighbourhoods, he felt it important to highlight that it was national government policy to promote active travel, which had in part been in response to the pandemic with local authorities expected, as a condition of the

funding attached, to implement the necessary changes quickly and efficiently. This included the reallocation of road space to support walking and cycling, use of filters to restrict motor vehicle access, encouraging walking and cycling to school and reducing speed limits;

- There was strong evidence that the promotion of active travel could change travel habits with it estimated that 60% of all journeys could be undertaken via alternative means, with a focus on the school run a priority;
- The wider public health benefits of healthy neighbourhoods were also highlighted, alongside the aim to tackle air pollution, respond to the pandemic and the climate emergency;
- In summing up, members were advised that whilst wanting to avoid increasing traffic on main roads or making it more difficult for those vulnerable members of society who depended on their cars, the Brent Clean Air Campaign were supportive of the principles and objectives behind Brent's Active Travel Programme. Evidence from existing low traffic neighbourhood schemes had shown they were effective in changing behaviours but this would require effective local engagement, supported by the necessary evidence and ongoing monitoring and evaluation throughout the consultation trial period.

The Mayor thanked Mark Falcon for his deputation and then welcomed Charlie Fernandes, who was invited to present the third and final deputation on behalf of the Brent Cycling Campaign. The following issues were highlighted as part of the deputation:

- Outlining the role of Brent Cycling Campaign in support of the active travel programme, members were advised that the campaign group had been approached by many local residents who were in support of healthy Low Traffic Neighbourhoods having witnessed the benefits of less cars being on the road during the lockdown phase of the pandemic. The view expressed was that residents were keen to see these schemes becoming fully operational, with the Council thanked for their efforts in introducing them during such challenging times;
- Whilst recognising and supporting concerns about the lack of prior public consultation, it was felt that consultations generally had low engagement with only those against tending to make themselves heard. Trialling schemes was a more natural way to experiment, providing residents with the opportunity to experience the benefits or to suggest adjustments as the trials progressed;
- It was also pointed out that a majority of Brent residents were highly dependent on public transport, prior to the national lockdown. With the current advice being to avoid public transport, where possible, it was felt the scheme had a real opportunity to promote and encourage alternative travel options for those with and without access to cars;
- Recognising the comments made during the previous deputation, members were once again reminded that Brent suffered from one of the worst levels of air pollution in London, and had some of the highest levels of health inequality. It was felt healthy neighbourhoods would go some way to alleviating these concerns. In restricting rat running, the schemes could also result in quieter, safer and more inclusive neighbourhoods as community spaces for all;
- Whilst supporting the need for progressive and urgent action, the campaign were also keen to ensure the use of low traffic neighbourhoods were only seen as part of an overall solution. In their view, the provision of protected

cycle paths also remained a key priority on main roads in order to provide the necessary connections between low traffic neighbourhoods and low traffic town centres and other destinations and in enabling active travel and enhancing the quality of life for local residents.

The Mayor thanked Charlie Fernades for concluding the deputations and then moved on to invite Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration Property and Planning to respond to the comments raised.

Councillor Tatler thanked all three of the deputations and advised the Mayor that rather than address the issues raised at this stage she intended to provide a more comprehensive response once the petitions due to be presented under the next item had also been considered. Before moving on, however, she also took the opportunity to thank all officers involved for their efforts in arranging the Extraordinary Council meeting at short notice and in the midst of an ongoing public health crisis.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Tatler for her initial response and advised that as there were no further speakers he would move on to the next item.

5. **Petitions**

In addition to the deputations received, the Mayor advised that he had also agreed to accept three petitions at the meeting again relating to Healthy Neighbourhood proposals.

The first of these related to the Active Travel Programme within Preston ward with Yogi Patel as lead petitioner. The second related to proposed road closures in the Kensal, Brondesbury & Queens Park area, with Alexandra Kelly as lead petitioner. The third and final petition was from the Kilburn Village Residents Associated and related to proposed road closures in their area with Christopher Mahon as lead petitioner.

The Mayor advised that unless otherwise indicated by Members, he intended to allow each of the nominated speakers up to five minutes to address the meeting in order to present their petitions. As with the previous item, he would then provide Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning with an opportunity to respond to the issues raised, for which she would also be allowed up to five minutes.

As no issues were raised in terms of the approach outlined, the Mayor welcomed Yogi Patel to the meeting and invited him to present the first petition, with the following issues highlighted:

- Speaking on behalf of local residents from Thirlmere Gardens and other local roads in the area, Yogi Patel advised that whilst those who had signed the petition were supportive of the healthy neighbourhood concept and promotion of active travel in the area they were opposed to the blocking of roads, which were felt to create unnecessary boundaries between neighbourhoods;
- Concerns were also highlighted in relation to the evidence around air quality, congestion and road safety used as the basis for designing the scheme

- implemented in their area and at the lack of prior consultation or engagement with local residents;
- The practical difficulties created for local residents following implementation of the scheme were also highlighted, which included lack of what was felt to be adequate or accurate signage, limited turning space for vehicles, additional congestion, inconsiderate driving and vehicles not able to use the blocked roads having to make longer journeys, which in turn led to higher emissions. This was seen as dangerous for local residents and properties;
 - Concerns were also raised in relation to the timing and execution of the works, taking account of other building and utilities works in the area which had led to some temporary barriers being moved to provide access;
 - As an alternative to the measures introduced, local residents had advised they would be supportive of one-way systems and increased signage to support the existing 20mph zone and to encourage traffic to use alternative routes without the need for planters or barriers. In summing up, members were asked to recognise the impact in terms of congestion and parking which further development would have in an already densely populated area and the concerns raised in relation to consultation and the evidence provided to support the design of the scheme. Those who had signed the petition were instead keen to focus on other types of environmental improvement, which it was felt would achieve a better impact locally.

The Mayor thanked Yogi Patel for presenting the petition and then welcomed Alexandra Kelly to present the second petition, on which the following issues were highlighted:

- Members were advised that the petition being presented was seeking to oppose the proposals in relation to Low Traffic Neighbourhood Scheme covering the Kensal, Brondesbury & Queens Park area (LTN 19). With over 2,300 signatures, those who had signed the petition were objecting to the proposed scheme being implemented without prior public consultation and the provision of supporting baseline data. Concerns were also raised in relation to what appeared to be the prioritisation of a neighbourhood with access to significant green space and limited congestion at the expense of other parts of the borough. It was felt the introduction of any scheme that would have a material impact on residents, should involve prior engagement with those affected residents;
- The petitioners were also keen to highlight the impact that would be created by the displacement of traffic from low traffic neighbourhood areas on to surrounding main routes. This would not only increase congestion, emissions and pollution but it was felt would also disadvantage those relying on the main routes for their business or as a means of travelling to and from work or school, thus discriminating against those residents with no alternative means of travel;
- Concerns were also expressed in relation to the lack of planning or engagement and the impact that the proposals would have on local residents wellbeing, with what appeared to be no measurable criteria against which to assess each scheme. The petition also recognised the level of opposition to low traffic neighbourhoods across London, which had been subject to widespread protests and campaigns for their withdrawal;

- With residents currently being encouraged to avoid public transport where possible, it was increasingly difficult for those with mobility issues, the elderly and tradespeople to travel and it was felt low traffic neighbourhoods would escalate these difficulties;
- In summary, the petitioners were requesting that the Council reconsider their plans and meaningfully engage with local residents before any schemes were implemented. This would enable account to be taken of local expertise and knowledge in the design of any measures that would assist in reducing pollution and improving the area for the benefit of all residents.

The Mayor thanked Alexandra Kelly for presenting her petition. He then welcomed Christopher Mahon, to the meeting and invited him to present the third and final petition, on which the following issues were highlighted:

- Speaking on behalf of the Kilburn Village Residents Association, members were advised that the petition being presented contained 363 signatures requesting the Low Traffic Neighbourhood Scheme in the Kilburn area (LTN 20) be suspended to enable detailed consultation and engagement with the local community. The lack of prior public consultation had caused concern in the Kilburn area with residents also having raised fears around the safety of active travel schemes for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians resulting from the measures that had already been introduced;
- The petitioners had also queried the rationale and evidence to support the introduction and design of the proposals in their area given the limited congestion and traffic issues currently being experienced. Key concerns included the potential displacement of traffic to other routes with high volumes of traffic; the impact any diversion of traffic to more congested routes would have in increasing journey times leading to higher emissions and more pollution; the overall impact on the local area and in terms of road safety;
- It was also pointed out that residents were concerned about how the Council planned to assess and measure the outcome of each scheme with the need for a robust methodology and comprehensive data gathering identified as essential in advance of any scheme being implemented;
- Whilst recognising the nature of the climate emergency, the petitioners were keen to avoid schemes being introduced that would make the challenges to be addressed any worse and as such were seeking further clarity on the rationale for the proposals. The need was also identified to ensure that knowledge and expertise available locally was utilised to assist in providing feedback on the design of any measures in an open and transparent way.

The Mayor thanked Christopher Mahon for presenting his petition and then moved on to invite Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration Property and Planning to respond to the comments raised under both this item and the deputations.

Having thanked the petitioners for their contributions, Councillor Tatler began her response by pointing out that there would never be a perfect solution to the climate emergency. The need to tackle the damage already done would not be convenient, quick, or pain-free given the changes that would be required to everyone's way of life in order to enable sustainable change.

Focussing on the implementation of active travel schemes, these were felt to represent one of the first opportunities locally to make a tangible difference in reducing the impact on the natural environment, providing a chance to think about changing the way things were done out of habit rather than necessity. The way the schemes were being designed would also, she pointed out, provide the chance to test a range of measures to encourage people out of their cars and onto more locally suitable modes of travel as well as providing an opportunity for residents to experiment with the types of interventions needed to tackle pollution, improve air quality and reduce the harm done to the environment.

In terms of the concerns raised, Councillor Tatler also felt it important to recognise that the schemes being implemented would not necessarily be permanent solutions. They were being implemented on an experimental and trial basis. If they succeeded, then further consideration would need to be given as to how best they could be incorporated into future public realm improvements. If they did not work, the Council would look at alternative measures in order to mitigate any negative impacts or unintended consequences with the only immovable part of the programme being the Council's pressing and real commitment to deliver on its climate emergency obligations.

The concerns raised in terms of engagement and consultation had been understood by the Council but, at the same time, Councillor Tatler felt there was also a need to understand that in order to tackle climate change everyone would have to make and accept substantial changes to their way of lives. Whilst aware of the feeling and fear that these changes were being imposed rather than undertaken in consultation, it was also recognised that the Council needed to get better in ensuring that what it said and intended cut through to the people most affected and were not picked up through other sources.

Commending officers for their support and efforts to date, Councillor Tatler felt that the Council had looked to address the concerns raised in relation to engagement and consultation with over 30 public meetings now undertaken and more being scheduled moving forward.

An assurance was provided that the Council would therefore, be looking to take the issues and concerns raised on board, with Councillor Tatler again thanking the deputations and petitioners for taking the time to participate in the meeting in order to share their different perspectives. The Council, she pointed out, would only be able to succeed in the face of the climate emergency if they were willing to try initiatives such as healthy neighbourhoods, but recognised these would need to be implemented and assessed as cooperative and collaborative ventures, which had also been a condition of the fast-tracked government funding. She also felt it was important to note that it had been the government, as part of their funding requirements, who had stipulated the unorthodox process of consultation and engagement being part of the active trials rather than as a precursor to them.

In summing up, Councillor Tatler was keen to once again highlight the need for everyone to be actively involved in addressing the challenges faced and hoped that it would now be possible for everyone to focus their energies on moving forward together and in forging new and lasting partnerships that would ensure it was possible to leave future generations with the proud legacy of a better Brent.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Tatler for her response and advised that as this concluded the item he would move on to deal with the motion submitted as the basis for the Extraordinary Council meeting.

6. Motions - Healthy Neighbourhoods Schemes

Before moving on to consider the motion listed on the summons, the Mayor reminded members that, in accordance with Standing Orders, a total of 30 minutes had been set aside for consideration of the motion submitted for debate.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Gill to move the motion submitted by the members who had requisitioned the Extraordinary Council meeting.

In moving the motion Councillor Gill outlined why the members who had requisitioned the meeting had felt it necessary to do so, highlighting the strong and extensive level of representations received from members of the public and important issues being raised as a result. Many of the concerns raised had been in relation to the lack of prior public consultation, although it was recognised that the process of engagement and consultation had been a result of the way in which central government had sought to introduce active trials. Whilst those members who had submitted the motion retained faith in officers and the Lead Member in being able to justify the schemes, the need had been identified to ensure the background to their introduction was clearly explained and was seen more clearly in the context of the global climate emergency and concerns regarding air quality and pollution within Brent. The difficulty in making meaningful changes to the environment in order to address the climate emergency and air pollution had been recognised, along with residents' desire to see change which, in summing up, he felt highlighted the need to ensure the background, aims and flexibility behind the plans were fully explained along with the relevant outcomes and review process. This had been what the motion sought to achieve.

Following the original motion being moved, the Mayor advised Members of an amendment submitted by Councillor Donnelly-Jackson, the details of which had been included with the supplementary agenda published in advance of the meeting and were set out below. Councillor Donnelly-Jackson formally moved the amendment, highlighting what she felt was the need for the Council to continue taking a proactive and courageous approach in the face of the climate emergency. Highlighting the Council's commitment to being carbon-neutral by 2030, she felt it important to recognise the impact of pollution and poor air quality as a well-known cause of health issues, particularly within Brent.

Focussing on the pandemic, she felt this provided a unique opportunity to reimagine and adapt the borough's streets, taking account of the financial support being provided by central government, which would provide more space for both pedestrians and cyclists. Recognising that the Low Traffic & Healthy Neighbourhood proposals were experimental, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson pointed out there was much evidence at home and abroad that these schemes could have the desired effect with the amendment to the motion also accepting the importance and welcoming active scrutiny of the proposals as they continued to be developed.

The amendment moved was as follows:

“Title: Healthy Neighbourhoods Scheme (add) and their part in addressing air quality and climate change

TO ADD AT THE START:

That this Council:

- embraces its obligations to ensure that every possible intervention against climate change is considered and explored;
- recognises that air quality in this borough falls well below the standards that should be expected, not least in relation its impact on the physical health and wellbeing of its residents;
- endorses the intention underpinning Brent’s experimental ‘Healthy Neighbourhoods’;
- acknowledges the unorthodox conditions attached to conditional government funding necessitating public consultation and engagement within the six-month period of these low traffic trials and not prior to them as might more commonly be expected;
- welcomes the many lessons that have been, are being, and will continue to be learned throughout this programme with regards to the initiative itself and the manner in which the organisation interacts with the communities it serves;
- highlights the progress already made through planned and promoted public meetings, thanks each and every participant for their invaluable contributions thus far;
- thanks those responsible within the organisation for their efforts to date, and commits itself – in light of the importance of these measures as a first tangible foray against climate change set in the context of the new behaviours and habits that they are designed to encourage – to continue providing comprehensive updates to the appropriate forums and committees, this one included, at the earliest opportunity, covering, but not limited to, the following:

TO THEN AMEND THE WORDING OF THE ORIGINAL MOTION AS FOLLOWS:

Replace:

~~To instruct the Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning to provide a comprehensive rationale for the introduction of the temporary Healthy Neighbourhoods in the various areas.~~

With:

- Clarity of the rationale for the introduction of these temporary measures in the various areas;

Breakdown and replace the remaining list as follows:

~~This to provide details about how these areas have been chosen;~~

- Details about how these areas are chosen;

~~how it impact targets; mitigations, if any; viability of the monitoring of the scheme;~~

- How we anticipate that they will impact on the council's active travel, clean air, and climate change targets;

~~what prior public and stakeholder engagement has taken place;~~

- What stakeholder engagement is involved;

~~the equity of the trade-off between loser residential streets and gainers;~~

- Comment on how the relative real or perceived pros and cons of these schemes will be weighted and proposed mitigations for addressing concerns of those residents that might feel that others' 'gains' are their 'losses';

~~the risk of increased congestion on certain residential roads and implications on emissions;~~

- Consideration of the risk that some measures may increase congestion elsewhere and the implications that may have on emissions;

~~the methodology to be used to evaluate the outcome, notably the goal of lower overall traffic volumes; and the measurements in place to secure adequate baseline data for ALL streets affected (including the connector roads).~~

- An explanation of overall methodology —including ensuring an adequate baseline for evaluating outcomes, including the goal of lower overall traffic how these schemes will be monitored, and how their viability will be assessed”

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on both the original motion and amendment, which had been moved, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Dar opened the debate by praising the intentions of those in support of healthy low traffic neighbourhoods, and those members and officers involved in their implementation. The schemes were, however, deemed unsuitable for Cricklewood given its location within the borough and important access links to important routes in surrounding areas.

Councillor Shahzad sympathised with cyclists and pedestrians and the impact that motor vehicle use had on air pollution levels, yet was not convinced that low traffic neighbourhoods were on their own the best way to reduce air pollution in the borough. It was suggested that the schemes would displace and encourage more traffic on main routes and therefore increase air pollution levels around them, with the need for more emphasis on encouraging the use of e-cars and prior consultation with affected stakeholders.

Councillor Kennelly, whilst recognising and supporting the public health benefits of the healthy neighbourhood proposals felt it was also important to focus on the concerns raised in relation to the level of public engagement and consultation prior to their implementation, as the cornerstone of local democracy. The limited engagement of local residents to date had created concern given the material impact of the measures locally. Speaking in support of the petition presented by Yogi Patel earlier in the meeting, he also questioned the suitability of the measures in Preston ward, which according to the Council's own standards had lower levels of emissions and congestion, narrower roads and more green space than many other areas within the borough. Concerns had also been raised about the design of the scheme, specifically given its impact on accessibility for more vulnerable local residents with the Lead Member urged to think again in terms of implementation to ensure a more targeted approach and to achieve the benefits being sought across the borough as a whole.

Councillor Kansagra began by thanking all local residents and stakeholders who had spoken earlier during the meeting for their contributions and supported the concerns raised about the low traffic neighbourhoods proposals appearing to have had been rushed through by the Council with little regard for the interests of local residents. Whilst supportive of the need to tackle climate and air quality concerns he felt, if properly consulted, local residents would have been able to suggest alternative proposals more suited to their local areas. The Council was therefore encouraged to avoid rushing implementation and instead to work with local residents in implementing the schemes moving forward in order to avoid further local opposition and ensure the necessary level of engagement and consultation.

Councillor Nerva emphasised the need to encourage less traffic on the borough's roads, pointing to the increase in traffic on residential roads in the past decade and the high proportion of journeys being undertaken that were under 2km or between 2km-5km and impact on air quality. He felt this supported the need to encourage more active modes of travel, with specific examples provided within Queens Park ward. Whilst the concern over the limited amount of prior public consultation was understood, he felt there was also a need to recognise that the requirement to implement low traffic neighbourhoods before public consultation had resulted from the way funding had been allocated for the schemes by central government. In terms of further assurance, he also highlighted the need to recognise the experimental nature of the measures being introduced which would be subject to further consultation moving forward as the measures were developed.

Councillor Kelcher, taking the opportunity to address residents direct, also highlighted the air quality crisis faced within the borough, with Brent being one of the worst affected of all London boroughs in terms of air pollution. Speaking in support of the amended motion, he felt the impact this created in terms of public health and in addressing the climate emergency needed to be fully recognised. In this respect, low traffic neighbourhoods were seen as a proportional measure in an attempt to reduce pollution levels and improve air quality and would assist in creating a culture in which active travel was seen as the norm rather than car use for many short distance journeys. In terms of the comments highlighted, whilst recognising the issues raised he felt that a majority of local residents understood the issues faced and would be supportive of the approach and measures being taken by the Council to tackle the climate emergency and encourage walking,

cycling and the use of public transport as alternative modes of travel across borough.

Councillor Hassan encouraged the Council to ensure that there was appropriate consultation going forward to ensure that the measures remained in the public interest. Highlighting her support for the proposed amendment and work of the Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning in response to the concerns raised, she felt it was also important to recognise the outcome of the research undertaken in relation to the implementation of low traffic neighbourhoods, and the positive impact these schemes had achieved elsewhere. Councillor Hasan was therefore keen to support the Council in taking any steps it could to change behaviour and reduce car usage in order to ensure the climate emergency was addressed.

Councillor Georgiou advised that he was also supportive of the need to address the climate emergency, including action to encourage residents to change their travel habits, the promotion of active travel as well as the provision of more affordable access to public transport. He did feel, however, that the issues raised in relation to public consultation and engagement to date were of concern alongside the overall level of communication with local ward councillors as key stakeholders. Given these concerns, Councillor Georgiou took the opportunity to propose that the Council set up a cross-party task group to further scrutinise the schemes and ensure the necessary outreach with local stakeholders.

Councillor Maurice then spoke to highlight what he felt was the anti-motorist nature of low traffic neighbourhoods, which he believed had been imposed on residents without the necessary public consultation. Whilst supporting the need to tackle concerns relating to air quality he suggested that there were more significant causes of air pollution than neighbourhood traffic, such as overpopulation and the increase in delivered goods. As a result, he felt the measures were likely to have the opposite effect to those intended by increasing air pollution on main roads creating additional congestion and the associated danger for pedestrians and cyclists. Pointing out that similar concerns had also been raised in other parts of London leading in some case to schemes being removed, he encouraged the Council to consider taking the same action and postponing the implementation of any further schemes until they had been subject to due consideration and the necessary level of consultation and engagement with key stakeholders.

Councillor Long highlighted the benefits of low traffic neighbourhoods and the issue of tackling rat running in the borough, given the costs of installing the necessary traffic calming measures. She therefore felt there was a need for the Council to continue being brave in tackling climate issues and in demonstrating the benefits of the experimental measures as a means of focussing public consultation.

Councillor Dixon, also speaking in support of the proposed amendment expressed her pride in the Council's response and approach towards tackling the climate emergency, which she felt also honoured the wishes of younger generations across the borough. With regard to public engagement, it was felt that retrospective consultation could be effective with the experimental nature of the trials identified as a means of the Council seeking to identify what would or would not work for residents in each area. She also praised the work of the Lead Member for

Regeneration, Property & Planning in terms of the efforts being made to engage with local residents and other key stakeholders in taking the proposals forward.

As the final speaker in the debate, Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, felt it was important for members to recognise the financial constraints and pressures under which the Council was continuing to operate following a decade of austerity and underfunding by central Government. Thanking those members of the public and other stakeholders for their contributions at the meeting and recognising the efforts of the Lead Member in response to the issues identified, he pointed out that the introduction low traffic neighbourhoods had been designed to reflect Central Government requirements in terms of the process for their implementation and funding being allocated. Despite the pressures and challenges identified, he took the opportunity to highlight how the Council was continuing to deliver to meet the needs and improve the quality of life for local residents of which healthy neighbourhoods were seen as one such example. This was alongside other achievements such as being nominated as Council of the Year and delivering the Borough of Culture. He therefore ended by urging all members to support the proposed amendment to the motion.

As the time available for the debate on the motion had expired, the Mayor thanked all members for their contributions and then moved on to invite Councillors Gill (as mover of the original motion) and Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (as mover of the amendment) to exercise their rights of reply.

As Councillor Gill had no additional comments to make, the Mayor moved straight on to Councillor Donnelly-Jackson who in summing up highlighted what she felt to be the Council's duty to improve the quality of the lives for the residents it served. Commenting on how proud she was of the Council's approach in reacting to the climate emergency, she urged members to support the measures being trialled through healthy neighbourhoods as part of a smart approach to cut air pollution levels in the borough. In recognising the importance of public engagement in this process, she ended by welcoming the ongoing efforts being made by the Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning in this respect and reiterated the need for the measures to be seen as part of an overall approach towards improving the environment for all residents across the borough.

Having thanked Councillor Donnelly-Jackson for her closing remarks, the Mayor advised that he intended to move straight to the vote on the motion starting with the amendment, which had been moved. The amendment, as set out above, was then put to the vote and this was declared **CARRIED**.

Councillors Kansagra, Colwill and Maurice abstained from the above decision advising they were in favour of the original motion.

Following its amendment, the Mayor then moved on to put the substantive motion to the vote and this was declared **CARRIED** as follows.

"That this Council:

- embraces its obligations to ensure that every possible intervention against climate change is considered and explored;

- recognises that air quality in this borough falls well below the standards that should be expected, not least in relation its impact on the physical health and wellbeing of its residents;
- endorses the intention underpinning Brent’s experimental ‘Healthy Neighbourhoods’;
- acknowledges the unorthodox conditions attached to conditional government funding necessitating public consultation and engagement within the six-month period of these low traffic trials and not prior to them as might more commonly be expected;
- welcomes the many lessons that have been, are being, and will continue to be learned throughout this programme with regards to the initiative itself and the manner in which the organisation interacts with the communities it serves;
- highlights the progress already made through planned and promoted public meetings, thanks each and every participant for their invaluable contributions thus far;
- thanks those responsible within the organisation for their efforts to date, and commits itself – in light of the importance of these measures as a first tangible foray against climate change set in the context of the new behaviours and habits that they are designed to encourage – to continue providing comprehensive updates to the appropriate forums and committees, this one included, at the earliest opportunity, covering, but not limited to, the following:
 - Clarity of the rationale for the introduction of these temporary measures in the various areas;
 - Details about how these areas are chosen;
 - How we anticipate that they will impact on the council’s active travel, clean air, and climate change targets;
 - What stakeholder engagement is involved;
 - Comment on how the relative real or perceived pros and cons of these schemes will be weighted and proposed mitigations for addressing concerns of those residents that might feel that others’ ‘gains’ are their ‘losses’;
 - Consideration of the risk that some measures may increase congestion elsewhere and the implications that may have on emissions;
 - An explanation of overall methodology—including ensuring an adequate baseline for evaluating outcomes, including the goal of lower overall traffic how these schemes will be monitored, and how their viability will be assessed”

Once again, Councillors Kansagra, Colwill and Maurice again abstained from the above decision advising they were in support of the original motion.

The meeting closed at 5.00 pm

COUNCILLOR ERNEST EZEAJUGHI
Mayor