



# LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

## MINUTES OF THE CABINET

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 14 October 2024 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillor Mili Patel (Vice-Chair in the Chair) and Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Farah, Grahl, Nerva, Rubin, Krupa Sheth and Tatler.

Also present: Councillor Molloy

### 1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Housing) with Councillor Mili Patel (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) chairing the meeting.

### 2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made during the meeting.

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

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 9 September 2024 be approved as a correct.

Kim Wright (Chief Executive) advised members that for clarity Councillor Muhammed Butt had advised of a retrospective interest to be recorded in the minutes from the 9 September 24 Cabinet meeting in relation to Minute 5: Presentation of the petition on the impact of event days hosted at Wembley Stadium. This was a personal interest as a recipient of tickets he had accepted for events at the stadium, which it was confirmed had also been declared on his register of gifts and hospitality.

### 4. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None.

### 5. **Petitions (if any)**

No petitions were submitted for consideration at the meeting.

### 6. **Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)**

There were no references from the Community & Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees submitted for consideration at the meeting.

### 7. **Quarter 2 Financial Forecast 2024/25**

Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) introduced a report which set out the financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme as at Quarter 2 2024-25.

In introducing the report, Councillor Mili Patel highlighted that despite the considerable efforts to maintain financial control, the operating environment and wider economic context faced by the Council remained volatile. Since 2010, members were reminded that the Council had lost at least £210m from its core budget with the impact having been felt by everyone who lived and worked in the borough. During the same period the number of Council employees had also reduced by at least 50%. Whilst recognising the efforts made to innovate, identify efficiencies and generate income members were advised these measures alone would no longer be sufficient over the longer term. Since the Q1 forecast had been presented to Cabinet in July 2024 the Council's financial position had worsened with the need (during 2025-26) to identify £16.5m of cuts in order for the Council to be able to continue standing still, with the challenging nature of the additional cuts identified fully acknowledged for residents, staff and members alike. Without intervention, members were advised the risk of being able to move back to financial sustainability would become more difficult with a fundamental adjustment therefore required in the functions undertaken by the Council and way services were delivered enabling a focus to remain on the most vital and key statutory functions.

In highlighting how local authorities such as Brent had become the government's emergency provider of last resort delivering more services than ever before and picking up the challenges and costs in relation to areas such as adult social care and the housing crisis, the way in which the financial burden had also been shifted on to residents was also recognised with pressures remaining particularly acute in relation to Children's and Adult social care packages, and costs associated with the provision of temporary accommodation.

Whilst the government had now changed and the outcome of the Autumn budget was awaited, the challenges and pressures facing the Council remained the same and, it was felt would require a fundamental shift in approach to address. Given the opportunity members were, however, assured that the Council stood ready to renew and rebuild public services whilst also continuing to lobby for the reforms to local government finance needed and working hard to continue protecting and safeguarding residents.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted the extent of the significant challenges identified in seeking to manage demand and address the pressures identified, with members welcoming the transparent nature of the report in seeking to ensure the public and other key stakeholders remained informed and engaged. Whilst recognising the financial position inherited by the new government, members remained mindful of the significant financial boost and change in approach that would be required within the Autumn budget in order to safeguard key frontline service with members, in the meantime, committed to continue working with their relevant Corporate Directors to ensure the monitoring and management of budgets in each service area.

As an initial package of continued support members also took the opportunity to welcome the recent announcement of the extension of funding for the Household Support Fund (HSF) for a further period of 12 months (up to 31 March 25). The initial grant allocated had been £2.8m with a second tranche of funding estimated to be approx. £2.3m all of which would continue to be used to support vulnerable residents through the cost-of-living crisis.

Having noted the update provided Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the new grant funding received in year, the overall financial position and the actions being taken to manage the issues arising as detailed within the Q2 Financial Forecast.
- (2) To note progress on the savings delivery tracker, as detailed in Appendix A of the report.
- (3) To note the prudential indicators for treasury management, as detailed in in Appendix B of the report.
- (4) To approve the virements set out in section 4.7.15 of the report.

#### 8. **Review of working age Council Tax Support Scheme for 2025/26**

Councillor Donnelly Jackson (as Cabinet Member for Resident Support & Culture) introduced a report presenting proposals for changes to the local Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme that would, subject to approval, become effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

In introducing the report, members noted (as initial context) the significant financial challenges faced by the Council and £210m cut from the budget since 2010 with (as had been identified in the previous report) the Council needing to address a budget gap that was projected to reach £30 million by 2027-28 and therefore needing to make informed and responsible decisions that sought to balance the needs of residents with the sustainability of services being provided.

As part of this approach the review of the CTS Schemes, and changes proposed as a result, had not only been designed to deliver an essential financial adjustment but were seen as a necessary evolution to ensure the Council could continue to effectively support its most vulnerable residents whilst promoting a fair contribution from all working-age households which would also have the effect of bringing the scheme closer in line with those offered by other London Boroughs. In seeking to outline the rationale behind the proposed changes members were advised that from a financial perspective the costs of providing Council Tax Support were forecast to increase from £19.9m in 2024/-5 to £21.2m in 2025-26. In order to mitigate against this increase, the proposed changes aimed to reduce the cost of the scheme by £8m, delivering savings of £5m which it was pointed out would directly contribute towards addressing the Council's identified budget gap, ensuring that resources could continue to be allocated effectively to those services relied on by residents. As a further aim, the proposals had also been also designed to simplify non-dependant charges and align the backdating rules with Universal Credit regulations in order to reduce the administrative burden on both residents and staff with the adoption of flat-rate deductions for non-dependants removing the need to verify

income for those individuals, streamlining the application process whilst also reducing administrative costs and making it easier for families to understand their entitlements and responsibilities for payments.

In presenting the proposals for consideration, Cabinet was assured of the Council's continued commitment to supporting its most vulnerable residents with members advised that the proposed changes would also include a £1.5 million hardship fund as a means of ensuring those most in need had access to targeted, transitional assistance and support. Members were also assured that, prior to implementation of any changes, the proposals would be subject to a process of meaningful consultation and engagement with residents and stakeholders in order to allow input and ensure all views were considered in seeking to work collaboratively and develop a scheme that best served local need.

In summary, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson felt that the proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme represented a strategic and necessary step forward with the options outlined in the report having been designed to not only address the Council's current financial challenges, but also to simplify the schemes administration whilst also seeking to promote fairness and ensure support continued to be provided for the most vulnerable.

In considering the report and options outlined, members recognised the challenging nature of the changes outlined but in recognising the context in which they had need to be developed welcomed the detailed and careful nature of the review undertaken into available options.

In taking the opportunity to express support for continued lobbying in seeking to introduce a fairer and more equitable way in which local authorities were funded through the Fair Funding Review Cabinet **RESOLVED** having considered the options available:

- (1) Whilst indicating their support for Option 2, to consultation with residents and key stakeholders including the Greater London Authority on the following options (as detailed in section 2 of the report) - Option 1 (do nothing) and Option 2 (based on the following package of proposals in addition to the technical administrative proposals designed to reduce the costs to the Council's working aged local Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme) and to implement the final scheme with effect from 1 April 2025:
  - (a) Introduce a standard 35% minimum payment for working age households and apply a percentage reduction to each of the income bands. This would mean all CTS claimants being expected to contribute a minimum of 35% towards their Council Tax liability. Their CTS will then be calculated based on their income and this will determine which income band they fall into. If this proposal was adopted, the cost of the scheme would reduce by £7.6m, with detailed explanations and calculations, number of residents impacted and the proposed weekly reduction in CTS shown in Appendix A of the report.
  - (b) Simplify the non-dependant charges and have just two flat rate non-dependant deductions for most households with other adults living in the property, £8 per week for non-dependants "out of work" and £20 per week for non-dependants "in work". This would remove the need to verify income for non-dependants for

CTS claims and reduce the administration burden. Adopting this proposal would reduce the cost of the scheme by £0.7m, with a detailed explanation and calculations of the proposed non-dependant deduction, number of households affected and proposed weekly reduction in CTS support shown in Appendix B of the report.

### **Proposed Changes - Technical Administrative**

- (2) To align the backdating rules for new CTS claim in line with the Housing Benefit and Universal Credit regulations i.e. for a maximum of one calendar month. The backdating request to be made at the time of submission of new claim. This proposal would reduce the overall cost of the scheme because it would not be required to automatically go back to the beginning of the financial year, as per the current scheme.
- (3) To review the section 13A policy for hardship fund for Council tax.
- (4) To enable the consideration (by Cabinet) of increasing/decreasing the income bands for customers and non-dependant charges depending on the Consumer Pricing Index (CPI) from September of the previous year and DWP uprating of welfare support received in January of the new financial year.
- (5) To amend the CTS scheme to include the Universal Credit notification received from DWP for Council tax, as start date of claim for Council tax reduction if there was entitlement to it.

## **9. Climate and Ecological Emergency Programme 2024-26**

Councillor Rubin (Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation & Climate Action) introduced a report providing a review of the Council's current 2022-24 Climate Programme and setting out an updated programme for 2024-26.

In presenting the report, Cabinet were advised that Brent's Climate and Ecological Emergency Programme represented one of the most far reaching programmes of activity across the Council with the key aim in seeking to address both the immediate and longer-term challenges in its journey towards carbon neutrality by 2030 and to make Brent one of the greenest, most diverse and climate resilient boroughs in London. In addition to the key themes within the original Climate Strategy the updated programme had also been designed to place greater emphasis, as additional overarching principles, on connecting people with nature, improving Brent's resilience to the impact of climate change as well as building community capacity for climate action. In contributing towards the Council's wider strategic priorities, the programme had also retained a focussed in promoting social justice and economic well-being with households supported in tackling the cost-of-living and local businesses in the promotion of cost effective climate friendly practices. Amongst the new initiatives identified within the programme, members attention was drawn to the Church End & Roundwood Green Corridor Scheme which had included a £3m capital allocation designed to not only enhance green spaces but also improve air quality and biodiversity and address fly tipping and other types of anti-social behaviour. Additionally, further flexibility was being sought in use of the Brent Carbon Offset Fund in order to take advantage of the opportunities to seek external grant funding to support the decarbonisation of

Council housing and the Council's corporate estate. Taken together it was felt the programme would provide a focus not only in progressing the Council's climate ambitions but also in continuing to address key issues of significance for local residents including cleaner air, greener spaces, warmer homes and healthier and more active and sustainable travel options, including expansion of the School Street programme.

In considering the report, members welcomed the ambitious nature of the initiatives included within the programme including the investment in the Church End & Roundwood Green Corridor, along with the progress made in delivery of the programme to date whilst also recognising the ongoing challenge from local activists and stakeholders to move faster in relation to delivery of the targets in relation to carbon neutrality.

Officers were thanked for their efforts in delivery of the current programme and development of the updated set of priorities and initiatives which it was recognised would require ongoing collaboration to deliver, working in partnership with key stakeholders (including local businesses and residents the Mayor for London and London Councils, the health service and Public Health) to deliver meaningful change in seeking to build a greener, cleaner, healthier, prosperous and a fairer borough for all. In concluding, members also took the opportunity to highlight their support for wider initiatives which it was felt would also assist in addressing transport and air quality issues in relation to delivery of the West London Orbital rail network and decarbonisation of the Chiltern Line.

In view of the support expressed Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the progress made with the current Climate Programme (2022-2024) as summarised in Section 5 of the report and in the Climate Data Dashboard (included as Appendix 2 of the report).
- (2) To agree the proposed overarching priorities and key deliverables to be included in the 2024-2026 Climate Programme, as set out in Section 6 of the report.
- (3) To agree the new Climate Programme 2024-2026, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (4) To approve a capital budget allocation of £3m to implement the Church End and Roundwood Green Corridors Scheme and approve £3m SCIL funding to offset these costs.
- (5) To agree to an amendment to the current Brent Carbon Offset Fund Allocation Policy to remove the current weighting/proportions (60%/30%/10%) available for council housing, Brent maintained schools and 'Other' respectively, so that the Fund can be used to maximise both the overall funding the council can attract and the outcomes that can be delivered for residents and to meet its climate commitments; and, to delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Partnerships, Housing and Resident Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action, to continue to have overall responsibility for the oversight and operationalisation of the Policy.

- (6) To note that an updated Brent Climate Adaptation & Resilience Plan, which sits under the Brent Climate Strategy, is proposed to be published later this autumn under delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action.

## 10. **Families Homelessness Service Relocation**

As a result of Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing) having submitted his apologies for absence Councillor Mili Patel (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) introduced a report detailing proposals to relocate the Families Homelessness Service from Brent Civic Centre to the New Millennium Centre and seeking approval for the authority to tender in order to carry out works in order to fit out the designated space at the new location.

In introducing the report, members were advised that the proposals had been developed within the context of the homelessness crisis and to enable the homelessness service to be hosted within the New Millennium Centre as part of a wider and more strategic and holistic community wellbeing programme of support. In recognising the homelessness crisis as the single biggest challenge currently facing the council, the proposals had been designed to reflect a re-imagining of the Council's existing assets with the refurbishment works at the New Millennium Centre providing purpose-built facilities for services and service users requiring housing support. Members noted that the proposals were also aligned with Brent's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and new Strategic Change Programme, which included enabling outcome-focused approaches that would support residents through a model of preventative and integrated Brent Council, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and partner services and respond to local need.

In terms of other advantages highlighted, members were advised the new site was located in the south of the borough, where the majority of homelessness demand was focussed, and also located within walking distance of key services such as the Single Homelessness Service, the Crisis Skylight building, and JobCentre Plus in Harlesden. Co-location with wider services, including Brent Hubs, debt and food support was also expected to provide additional support for vulnerable families whilst also providing access to other intervention and support services in relation to mental health, employment and skills that would not only support cost avoidance, but also assist in preventing future rough sleeping and future need for housing and adult social care services. The relocation process had also been designed to support expansion of the Community Wellbeing project (currently being piloted at Bridge Park Leisure Centre) with the new Community Wellbeing Service including additional health provision in the form of access to health professional such as GPs Social Prescribers, Public Health Community Support Officers, and Brent Health Matter leads able to refer residents for closer, more integrated partnership working and wraparound support.

In considering the report, members commended the approach outlined and welcomed the opportunities identified through the proposed relocation in terms of not only offering more holistic wrap around support for vulnerable adults and families and links to Brent Hubs but also in terms of the use of Council assets to

innovate and adapt in seeking to address the challenges faced, working jointly with key stakeholders and local residents.

Having also noted and welcomed the recent appointment of a provider to deliver the expanded Community Wellbeing Service at the New Millennium Centre, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve proposals for a relocation of the Families Homelessness Service from the Brent Civic Centre, Wembley to the New Millennium Centre, Roundwood.
- (2) Following (1) above, to approve the inviting of tenders to deliver the works to fit out the designated spaces at the New Millennium Centre on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.2.19 of the report.
- (3) To approve officers evaluating the tenders in (2) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.2.19 of the report.
- (4) To note that the Corporate Director, Partnerships Housing and Resident Services in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing will use powers delegated under the Constitution to award the contract for works to fit out designated spaces at the new Millennium Centre.
- (5) To approve the use of £400k of capital budget to undertake the works.

#### 11. **Corporate Performance Report - Quarter 1 2024-25**

Councillor Rubin (Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation & Climate Action) introduced a report, which provided Cabinet with an overview of corporate performance in Quarter 1 2024-25.

In presenting the report, Cabinet noted that the performance monitoring update provided a detailed assessment against the full suite of Key Performance Indicators developed to monitor delivery of the desired outcomes and corporate priorities within the new Borough Plan 2023-2027. In terms of a brief overview members attention was drawn to the 49 Borough Plan key indicators included with the performance scorecard of which 20 had been identified as green (on or above target), 4 as amber (just off target) and 12 as red (off target) with 13 included as contextual information.

In recognising the efforts being made to ensure the continued delivery of services and work being undertaken jointly by Cabinet Members with their relevant Corporate Directors, in seeking to manage and mitigate against the financial challenges and strategic risks identified as part of the overall wider approach towards supporting local residents and in support of the priorities within the Borough Plan, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note the Borough Plan 2024-25 performance reporting for Q1 as set out in section 3 and Appendix A of the report
- (2) To note the current and future strategic risks associated with the information provided and agree the remedial actions on strategic risks identified as

appropriate alongside the challenge on progress being provided with responsible officers as necessary.

## 12. **South Kilburn - Authority to Tender for a Single Delivery Partner**

Councillor Tatler (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth) introduced a report updating Cabinet on progress with the South Kilburn Regeneration programme and, having outlined the challenges and key issues faced, recommending the appointment of a Single Development Partner (SDP) to deliver the remainder of the programme.

In introducing the report, Cabinet noted the strategic importance of the South Kilburn regeneration programme not only to Brent but also the surrounding local community to whom tribute was paid for their ongoing support and engagement with the Council on delivery of the programme. Whilst the original approach had involved the programme being delivered on a phased basis in line with the Masterplan and the procurement of contractor(s) to deliver each stage of the regeneration programme on a site by site basis the Council was now at the stage in considering the most appropriate route to deliver the remainder of the programme, taking account of various factors including not only viability but also feedback from residents (supported by local ward councillors) on the quality of their experience to date in the way the programme had been delivered. In acknowledging the feedback provided in relation to estate management, communication, build quality, the provision of supporting infrastructure and public realm provision and engagement, the report outlined the process undertaken to review and adapt the approach resulting in the recommendation to move forward with a Single Development Partner rather than to continue delivery on a site-by-site basis. As a result, approval was being sought to commence the process in seeking to secure a Development Partner with who the Council could align its vision and values based on its commitment to the Landlord Promise, delivery of high-quality affordable housing, placemaking, community collaboration alongside wider employment, social and economic regeneration and enter into a longer term partnership. In thanking officers within the South Kilburn Regeneration team for their support, members were assured that the approach outlined had been designed to encourage and attract suitable partners underpinned by appropriate contractual and legal structures to ensure not only the Council's but also local community interests were protected as the process moved forward.

In considering the report, members recognised the importance of the programme as part of the Council's overall approach towards regeneration, housing, sustainability and community development along with the way in which the appointment of a Single Delivery Partner had the potential to ensure a more streamlined approach towards delivery of the Council's strategic goals including those relating to the cleaner and greener priority within the Borough Plan and delivery of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy as well as Brent's Housing Strategy.

In welcoming the focus on feedback from local residents, members were supportive of the approach outlined in terms of the way it had been designed to facilitate a more co-ordinated and holistic approach to the management and maintenance of neighbourhood and delivery of place along with a comprehensive set of social and economic benefits with it noted that this represented the start of the process and

ongoing work in partnership with the Mayor for London and other key partners on delivery of the programme.

Having considered the report Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the progress update on the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme, the community's experience of regeneration and the key priorities for the remainder of the programme to be integrated into the procurement – (not exclusive list) delivering high quality affordable housing, placemaking, community collaboration, social value.
- (2) To approve the procurement of a Single Delivery Partner for the remainder of the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme through inviting tenders.
- (3) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to approve pre-tender considerations as set out in Contract Standing Order 89 in respect of the procurement of a Single Delivery Partner, to include selection of the most appropriate procurement process to be used.
- (4) To approve officers evaluating tenders on the basis of the pre-tender considerations referred to in (3) above.
- (5) To note that consultants required for the procurement of the Single Delivery Partner, to include commercial advisers, lawyers, planning consultants and design consultants will be procured using powers delegated to officers under the Constitution.
- (6) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to negotiate all the relevant aspects of all legal and commercial agreements leading to the appointment of the preferred Single Delivery Partner.
- (7) To note officers will seek Cabinet approval to award the contract to the preferred bidder following the conclusion of the procurement exercise to appoint a Single Delivery Partner.
- (8) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to seek the approval of the Secretary of State to serve the required Initial and Final Demolition Notices on the secure tenants at the sites which are to be redeveloped.
- (9) To authorise the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to consult with secure tenants regarding the application to the Secretary of State to apply to obtain vacant possession of the properties occupied by the secure tenants at the sites to be developed pursuant to Ground 10/10A of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985.

- (10) To authorise the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for the redevelopment of the sites under Ground 10/10A of Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 and for the use of compulsory purchase powers pursuant to section 226 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 to obtain vacant possession of the Sites in order to redevelop and/or demolish them.
- (11) To authorise the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to negotiate and agree buyback terms with leaseholders affected by the regeneration scheme and where appropriate, negotiate and agree compensation with the secure tenants who are required to relocate.
- (12) To authorise the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to make an application to the Secretary of State to seek consent under section 19 of the Housing Act 1985 to appropriate any part of the sites including any part consisting of a house or part of a house so that the site is no longer held for the purposes of Part II of the Housing Act 1985.
- (13) To authorise the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to consult with those with third party rights over the sites to be redeveloped and, thereafter, after considering representations made by third parties to appropriate the sites for planning purposes.

### **13. Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3**

Councillor Tatler (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth) introduced a report seeking approval to the implementation of a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Council in order to deliver up to 42 homes for temporary accommodation and refugee resettlement and relocation schemes through Round 3 of the Local Authority Housing Fund.

In presenting the report, Cabinet recognised that whilst emergency and temporary accommodation could never be a long-term solution to tackling the homelessness crisis it remained one of the fundamental issues needing to be addressed in order to support residents in housing need move across housing types and tenures as their circumstances changed and in acting as an initial safety net. Whilst highlighting the efforts being made in Brent to reduce the number of residents being placed in Temporary Accommodation (TA), the limited supply and high cost involved in continuing to source good quality TA to address the ongoing level of demand continued to threaten the financial stability of not only Brent but local authorities across London. Although recognising the need for a longer-term solution, the Council was working hard to increase its supply of TA to enable residents to be moved out of the most expensive emergency provision in B&B and

hotels in order to reduce the financial pressures being experienced whilst also seeking to improve the quality of life for those residents in need of support.

As part of this approach and the Council's close working arrangement with the new government, the report presented an opportunity available to utilise external grant funding of £10.5m being made available through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) to move at pace in seeking to tackle the crisis in supply of affordable housing. In noting this would also require a capital match funding contribution to be provided by the Council, it was felt this demonstrated what could be achieved by the Council in seeking to address the housing crisis, when empowered with the necessary resources given the funding provided would be used to purchase 42 street level properties for Temporary Accommodation and resettlement purposes.

Whilst noting this would represent a small start in relation to addressing the overall numbers of households currently placed in TA and on the housing needs waiting list members were keen to welcome the opportunity provided to support the Council in seeking to increase the supply of affordable housing as a means of tackling homelessness, alleviating costs associated with the use of Temporary Accommodation (TA) and supporting the refuges and resettlement programme. Members were also keen to recognise the impact on those residents in housing need who it would be possible to support as a result, with 22 of the properties to be sourced being above 3-bed in size, recognising the acute demand for larger family sized accommodation.

On this basis and in support of the approach outlined within the report Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the proposed acquisition of up to 42 properties using the allocated Local Authority Housing Fund.
- (2) To approve the capital budget of £25,803,000 as set out in section 6.1 of the report to supplement the grant and cover the acquisition programme.
- (3) To delegate to the Director of Property and Assets the authority to agree the terms of any legal documents and enter into contracts to acquire an interest in the properties so as to give effect to this decision.

#### 14. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

#### 15. **Any other urgent business**

There were no items of urgent business.

Prior to ending the meeting, Councillor Mili Patel (as Deputy Leader) took the opportunity to advise members this would be Councillor Tatler's final Cabinet meeting following her decision to step down as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth with effect from the start of November to take up a new role with the Local Government Association. Cabinet, in congratulating Councillor Tatler on her new appointment, also thanked her for the programme of regeneration delivered during her time serving Brent as a Cabinet Member. In thanking

members she had served with during her time on the Cabinet, with particular reference to the professional and personal support provided by Councillor Muhammed Butt as Leader of the Council, Councillor Tatler was also keen to recognise the support received from officers (particularly acknowledging Alice Lester) for their role in assisting to transform the delivery of regeneration and planning activity across Brent and associated impact in relation to the continued provision of social and affordable housing and wider community benefit through NCIL. Councillor Tatler ended by once again thanking all members for their support and advising that she looked forward to continuing to support the work being undertaken by the Council in her new role as well as local residents in her ongoing representational role as local ward councillor for Kingsbury

The meeting ended at 10.45 am

COUNCILLOR MILI PATEL  
Vice Chair in the Chair