



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
held on Monday 16 September 2019 at 6.00 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

**The Worshipful the Mayor**  
Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi

**The Deputy Mayor**  
Councillor Lia Colacicco

### **COUNCILLORS:**

Abdi	Aden
Afzal	Agha
Ahmed	Allie
M Butt	S Butt
Chan	Chappell
Chohan	S Choudhary
A Choudry	Colwill
Conneely	Daly
Dar	Denselow
Dixon	Donnelly-Jackson
Ethapemi	Farah
Gbajumo	Hassan
Hector	Hirani
Hylton	Johnson
Kabir	Kansagra
Kelcher	Kennelly
Knight	Lo
Long	Maurice
McLeish	McLennan
Miller	J Mitchell Murray
W Mitchell Murray	Naheerathan
Nerva	M Patel
RS Patel	Patterson
Sangani	Shahzad
Ketan Sheth	Krupa Sheth
Southwood	Stephens
Tatler	Thakkar

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

The Mayor advised that direct apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Crane, Gill, Mahmood, Marquis, Mashari, Pavey and Perrin.

**2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on Monday 8 July 2019 be approved as a correct record.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared by Members at the meeting.

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

The Mayor made the following announcements:

(i) Pride of Brent Youth awards

The Mayor opened his announcements by expressing his delight in having attended the Pride of Brent Youth Awards in late July. He highlighted the importance of honouring young people across Brent who were making a difference in their communities, often putting others before themselves.

(ii) Harlesden Festival

The Mayor reported that he had attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Harlesden Festival with Councillors Muhammed Butt and McLeish and was happy to see so many residents there. He congratulated those who had organised the day.

(iii) Civic Ceremony

The Mayor gave his thanks to those who had attended the service in July to mark and celebrate his Civic Year. He took the opportunity to remind Members of his Mayoral charities; the Jason Roberts Foundation and the Sickle Cell Society.

(iv) 125th Anniversary of Willesden Library

The Mayor advised that he had enjoyed attending the celebration for the 125th anniversary of the library at Willesden Green. He commemorated the fact that in 1894 the local community had voted to pay more tax in order to fund the building of a library for local people.

On the subject of Willesden, the Mayor advised that Willesden Green had recently received a visit from the judges of the Great British High Street Awards, a competition celebrating high streets across the UK. He added that Willesden Green was competing with 27 other UK high streets in the 'Rising Star' category for 2019 and urged Members to take part in the vote.

(v) Brent Hub Kilburn Opening

The Mayor said he was very proud to officiate at the opening of the Brent Hub, Kilburn, which followed on the heels of the successful Harlesden Hub. He advised that the centre was a facility for local residents to contact Brent Council and local community organisations.

(vi) Flag Raisings

The Mayor thanked everyone who had attended the flag raising events held during the summer to celebrate Jamaican Independence Day, Independence Day of Pakistan, Indian Independence Day and, most recently, Emergency Services Day.

(vii) Visits from Students from Abroad

The Mayor reported that during the summer, along with the Council Leader and Chief Executive, he had played host to groups of students visiting from the School for Ethics and Global Leadership in the USA and from E-associates Educational Consulting in Nigeria. He added that both visits were well received and gave the opportunity to showcase Brent's achievements in many areas.

(viii) Brent Summer Reading Challenge

The Mayor advised he was delighted to see children taking part in the Brent Libraries Summer Reading Challenge and congratulated those achieving gold medal success, along with everyone who participated in the challenge.

(ix) Student Success

The Mayor asked Council to join him in congratulating students across Brent on a brilliant set of GCSE, A Level and vocational results, which he said had bucked the national trend. He advised that Brent's overall A Level pass rate (grades A\*- E) rose to 97.9%. This had been above the national average, which he felt should be a source of pride to all of Brent's students, parents and carers and teachers.

(x) Charity events

The Mayor took the opportunity to announce two forthcoming events in the mayoral calendar:

- The Mayoral charity football competition on 15 October in Stonebridge Ward, with Jason Roberts due to be in attendance to raise money for the Mayor's charities; and
- The traditional Christmas Gala at the Civic Centre on 6 December 2019.

(xi) Support for work on Biodiversity

The Mayor reported that he had enjoyed attending many community events over the summer months, including fetes, sports days and street parties. He advised he was particularly delighted to visit one of Brent's renowned 'bee corridors' and an urban meadow to witness at first hand the Council's work in the field of biodiversity.

(xii) Friendliest Borough

The Mayor was happy to note that that Brent had been named in an estate agent survey as the joint-friendliest borough in London, with more than seven out of ten of those surveyed in Brent describing their neighbourhood as friendly. This was the highest in London alongside Richmond upon Thames.

(xiii) Black History Month

The Mayor concluded his announcements by reminding members of Black History Month in October and drew their attention to the flyer detailing related events in Brent.

(xiv) Deaths of former Councillors Pat Harrison and John Detre

The opportunity was also taken by Members at the end of the Mayors Announcements, to pay tribute to former Councillors Pat Harrison and John Detre following their recent deaths.

As a mark of respect, the Mayor invited all present to stand in order to observe a minutes silence.

*A minutes silence was observed.*

(xv) Petitions

Finally, the Mayor drew members' attention to the list of current petitions, along with the action being taken to deal with them, which had been tabled at the meeting, in accordance with Standing Orders.

**5. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs (if any)**

The Mayor referred Members to the supplementary agenda circulated in advance of the meeting, which contained details of the changes to appointments on Council Committees, Sub Committees and other bodies.

It was **RESOLVED** to note that under the new London North West Regional Adoption arrangements the requirement for Brent to operate its own Adoption & Permanency Panel would cease after 30 September 2019, as the Council would join new regional arrangements.

**6. Deputations (if any)**

The Mayor advised that, in accordance with Standing Order 32, he had received requests for two deputations. The first had been received from Dawn Butler, MP for Brent Central, and related to the motion submitted for consideration later during the meeting on health services in Brent and the proposals to reduce the opening hours at the Urgent Care Centre, Central Middlesex Hospital. The second deputation had been received from Ms Fiona Mulaisho who had requested to speak about public health concerns regarding pollution.

The Mayor welcomed Dawn Butler MP to the meeting and invited her to introduce the deputation. Ms Butler began by paying her own tribute to the two Councillors who had been commemorated earlier in the meeting and particularly remembered Pat Harrison as a formidable campaigner. She introduced her deputation on the future of healthcare services in Brent, noting that it was the first time a sitting MP had addressed Full Council.

Ms Butler spoke about the strains on local healthcare services as a result of sustained cuts since 2010, including the closure of the A&E facility at the Central Middlesex hospital in 2014. She noted that the loss of the Sickle Cell Unit from Central Middlesex to Northwick Park Hospital had also affected many people in the Borough suffering from the disease, given the increased distance they needed to travel for treatment. Ms Butler continued that the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was now proposing to reduce the opening hours of the Urgent Care Centre located at Central Middlesex Hospital between the hours of midnight and 8am, with the nearest alternative overnight facility being over an hour away. Highlighting strong concerns about the proposal, she felt there was a need for a full public consultation and for the CCG to be held to account in relation to the long-term strategy behind the reduction in resources.

The Mayor thanked Ms Butler for her comments and then invited Councillor Farah, as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care to respond to the deputation.

Councillor Farah, took the opportunity to thank Ms Butler for her deputation highlighting his shared concerns about the continued reduction in local health services and important need to protect the NHS as one of the nations and Labours proudest achievements. In concluding, Councillor Farah pledged the ongoing support of the Council's Cabinet in campaigning to protect local health services for all residents.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Farah for his response and then moved on to invite Fiona Mulaisho to present the second deputation.

Ms Mulaisho introduced herself as a Kensal Rise resident and former Chair of Clean Air for Brent and went on to highlight a number of concerns regarding air pollution, particularly in Kensal Rise, where she felt traffic volumes were exacerbating the problem. Ms Mulaisho advised that Chamberlayne Road was one of the worst polluted streets in London and Ark Franklin Primary Academy, a school on Chamberlayne Road, was named as one of the 50 worst polluted schools in London, according to the Mayor of London's Air Quality Audit. Concerns were also raised regarding the significant number of deaths in London every year related to air pollution and poor air quality. Ms Mulaisho went on to inform Members that in Kensal Rise, nitrogen dioxide was found to critically exceed safe EU limits, particularly in Station Terrace, used exclusively for buses, where it was three times the legal limit and therefore exposing residents and passengers to dangerous levels of pollution. She felt that the main cause of the problem were the large number of diesel fuelled buses travelling through Kensal Rise, with more proposed as part of the Kensal Corridor Improvement Scheme. Ms Mulaisho noted that residents were very concerned and urged Members to take into consideration the health and wellbeing of residents, particularly children.

The Mayor thanked Ms Mulaisho for her comments and then invited Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, to respond.

Councillor Krupa Sheth began by highlighting that air quality was a priority for the Council. Being aware of the issues in Kensal Rise and Queens Park, she advised that the Council was consulting on a scheme to reduce bus movement and congestion by promoting sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling and making public transport more accessible as well as including significant green areas to absorb pollutants. Councillor Krupa Sheth confirmed that local residents and businesses were working together with the Council to move the scheme forward and she emphasised the Council's commitment to improving air quality for children and young people. She outlined the monitoring that was in place at Ark Franklin school and other measures implemented to reduce pollution in the Borough such as the introduction of diesel surcharges, increased electric vehicle charging points and collaboration with schools to promote sustainable travel. In terms of other initiatives and with specific reference to bus vehicle pollution, Councillor Krupa Sheth concluded by advising that the Council was continuing to lobby TfL for the introduction of additional electric buses locally and in the meantime continued to issue fixed penalty fines, as part of an anti-idling policy, where buses were left idling at bus stands.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth for her response and advised that this now concluded the item. Before moving on, he took the opportunity to thank Ms Butler and Ms Mulaisho for attending the meeting in order to present their deputations.

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

The Mayor confirmed that no questions had been received from members of the public.

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

The Mayor confirmed that no requests for debates on any petitions under the Council's petition rules and Standing Order 66 had been received.

#### **9. Annual Report from the Leader**

The Mayor invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, to present (in accordance with Standing Order 38) his Annual Report on the work of the Council and State of the Borough.

Councillor Muhammed Butt began by reflecting on last year's report in terms of the challenges and also untapped opportunities therein. He lamented that the challenges remained and focussed on the financial hardship that the Council continued to face, highlighting the current crises in Adult Social Care, Housing and the NHS brought about by a decade of central government cuts to public services.

The Leader expressed his views on the forthcoming Government Budget and stressed how he felt local authorities continued to be bypassed, while the current Government continued to waste money, particularly on Brexit. The Leader was happy to confirm that Brent had the highest number of European residents in

London and the largest number to gain pre-settled status in England and, as the local population continued to grow, he expressed his pride in so many people wanting to make Brent their home.

The Leader highlighted the many accolades the Borough had received throughout the year, including Friendliest Borough in London, the nomination for the Best High Street in England and the many celebrations of its culture.

In summing up, the Leader felt that the Council was taking radical steps towards delivering on its ambitious manifesto, with empathy, a shared vision of prosperity and with culture at its heart. He reaffirmed the declaration of a Climate Emergency, agreed at the last Full Council meeting, along with the pledge not to penalise tenants in debt as a result of delays in Universal Credit payments; to fight NHS cuts; to bring more Council services in-house; to build more affordable housing; invest in the boroughs highways and support the ongoing development of the transport infrastructure; create more Community Hubs and to foster community wealth building in Brent.

Concluding his annual report and commenting on the state of the borough, Councillor Muhammed Butt felt it was possible to highlight a huge amount as being achieved but also much more to do based on an ambitious, but at the same time pragmatic set of priorities and commitments with an enormous financial challenge to continue to manage and overcome.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt for his annual report and then advised that he would open up the debate for contributions from other members, starting with a response from the Conservative Group. Councillor Colwill (as Leader of the Conservative Group) advised that he did not intend to respond, so the Mayor moved on to invite contributions from other members, with the following comments raised:

- Councillor Ethapemi sought clarification as to whether the additional spending review announced by the Government was based on national reserves or whether the Council was expected to make contingency plans.
- Councillor Kelcher commented that this was the second year that the Leader of the Opposition had not responded to the Leader's Annual Report and suggested there should be an obligation on him to do so.
- Councillor Shahzad congratulated the Leader on his speech and thanked Dawn Butler MP for lending her support to the campaign to oppose NHS cuts. He went on to highlight the concerns of residents in respect of the closure of the Cricklewood Walk-in Centre and urged the Leader and Cabinet to continue providing support on this matter.
- Councillor Naheerathan asked about the reduced access for local residents to local bank branches and whether the Council had any strategy in respect of helping to maintain a banking presence on the high street.
- Councillor Aslam Choudry congratulated the Leader on his report and also expressed surprise that the Opposition had not acknowledged the good work of the Council or offered any effective alternative outlook.

- Councillor Nerva acknowledged the reassurance that had been given to the Borough's 67,000 EU nationals but queried the impact planning for a "No Deal" Brexit had placed on the Council's resources. He was also keen to explore what more could be done to reaffirm the previously agreed policy to support a People's Vote to include an option to remain in the EU.

With no further issues raised, the Mayor invited Councillor Muhammed Butt to respond to the comments made on the Annual Report.

Councillor Muhammed Butt thanked Members for their contributions and began his response by highlighting the prudent approach taken by the Council in managing its finances over the last ten years, which had left it in a good position to help those in need, highlighting the example of the Council Tax Support Scheme. The Leader agreed that there was an opportunity to work with banks to ensure they could meet their social duties and, in respect of Brexit, he reiterated the pledge of support toward the EU nationals forming part of the Brent community and said the Council would continue to strive for a "right to remain" option.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt for his response and advised that this concluded the debate. The Council **RESOLVED** to note the Annual Report.

#### 10. **Reports from the Leader and Cabinet**

The Mayor referred Members to the written report which had been circulated with the agenda providing updates from the Leader and Cabinet Members related to their portfolios. He then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, to present the update report reminding Members that once completed he would move straight on to deal with questions from opposition and other non-cabinet members, which would include the opportunity to ask questions of relevant Cabinet Members.

Councillor Muhammed Butt thanked the Mayor for his introduction and advised that he would be asking Councillor Southwood, as Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, to lead on the update with a focus on housing related issues.

Councillor Southwood began her update by advising that she was delighted to be able to report that the Council had now completed the process of bringing the estate caretaking service back in-house, enabling better conditions for staff and better services for tenants. She then moved on to highlight the progress being made with regard to consultation on the Council Tax Support Scheme with the Council committed to maintaining the current level of investment in recognition of the important assistance being provided through the scheme for many residents. Members were also advised of the celebrations being planned to mark the 100-year anniversary of the Addison Act before finally being informed about the delivery of new council homes in Queens Park as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to the provision of additional council and affordable social housing across the borough.

Having completed her update, the Mayor advised that the time available for this item had expired and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to formally note the updates



provided by the Leader and Cabinet prior to moving on to the councillor question session.

## 11. Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members

Before moving on to consider the questions submitted by non-Cabinet members, the Mayor reminded Members that a total of 30 minutes had been set aside to deal with this item, which would begin with consideration of the written questions submitted in advance of the meeting along with any supplementary question. Once these had been dealt with, the remaining time would then be available for any other non-Cabinet members to question Cabinet Members on matters relating to their portfolio.

The Mayor advised that three written questions had been submitted in advance for response by the relevant Cabinet Member. The written responses supplied had been circulated with the Council agenda. The Mayor invited supplementary questions from the Members who had submitted the written questions.

- 11.1 Councillor Thakkar thanked Councillor Southwood, as Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, for reaffirming the Council's intention not to evict tenants falling into rent arrears due to delays in the payment of Universal Credit. As a supplementary question, she asked whether the Council, in the context of early intervention, would also be working with private and social housing providers in order to encourage them to adopt a similar arrangement and ensure monitoring of arrears and evictions.

Councillor Southwood responded by confirming that the Council met regularly with all social housing providers in the Borough and a major topic of discussion was around the difficulties encountered by those tenants in receipt of Universal Credit. Whilst the Council could not impose its own policies on other providers, Councillor Southwood advised that she would continue to work with them and to highlight emerging issues with the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) in order mitigate the risks to those falling into arrears.

- 11.2 Councillor Ahmed thanked Councillor Tatler, as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning, for her written response in relation to the allocation of funding under the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) scheme for community infrastructure projects and confirmed that he did not have a supplementary question.

- 11.3 Councillor Chappell thanked Councillor McLennan, as Deputy Leader, for her written response on the impact and financial value of the policy adopted by the Council in relation to the application of its business rate relief scheme and confirmed that he also did not have any supplementary question.

The Mayor thanked Members for their written questions and Cabinet Members for the response provide to any supplementary questions. He then advised that the remainder of the time available would be used for an open question time session to the Leader and Cabinet. The following questions were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Councillor Kelcher raised a query regarding the Sunday Car Boot Sale at Newman Catholic College in Kensal Green and whether the current issues with related paperwork could be expedited to allow sales to resume and also whether action could be taken against the illegal street traders operating in the area at the same time.

In response, Councillor Miller, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Engagement, confirmed that if the issue highlighted was related to a business licence he would ensure it received urgent attention.

- (ii) With reference to a review of the Council's Housing Allocation Policy, Councillor S Choudhary sought an update on whether the Council, in view of the additional housing now being delivered, would consider extending the offer of bidding rights to those households which had been categorised as Band B in relation to housing need back in 2014.

In response, Councillor Southwood, as Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, clarified that Councillor Choudhary was referring to approx 19,000 households who had been moved into category B of housing need in 2014. Although these household had been recognised as being in housing need, they did not currently have bidding rights under the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. Whilst hoping that it would be possible to assist these households in the future, she pointed out that the position was made more difficult and would take time to address given the need to alleviate the chronic shortage of social housing, which the Council was seeking to tackle.

- (iii) Referring to Housing Key Performance Indicators, Councillor Long sought further details and assurance about the action being taken to secure a sustained turnaround in performance, with a particular focus around customer service.

Whilst acknowledging the current improvements in performance being sought, Councillor Southwood, as Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, highlighted the recent housing transformation activity and investment being undertaken which she felt would assist in delivering improved systems and levels of performance particularly in relation to customer experience.

- (iv) Councillor S Choudhary raised a further question regarding the policy on use of materials for footway repairs and replacement in the Barnhill Conservation Area, which he felt was not in keeping with other areas.

Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, responded by advising that the Barnhill Conservation Area was not being treated any differently to other areas, with asphalt being used for footway repairs and replacement due to economic and sustainability reasons.

- (v) Councillor Long, also raised a further question, seeking details on the action being taken through the West London Economic Prosperity Board to support and encourage the creation of Green Jobs in Brent.

In response, Councillor Tatler, as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning, advised that as a member of the West London Economic Prosperity Board the Council was continuing to work with other partners, Town Centre Managers and across its Regeneration function to encourage the creation of greener businesses and jobs.

- (vi) Councillor Chan in highlighting the ongoing lobbying of TfL regarding the upgrade of the Bakerloo line sought further details on the action being taken by the Council to support this process with a specific focus on the accessibility of station facilities within the borough and on the provision of step free access at Kensal Green.

Councillor Tatler, as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning, responded by confirming that the Council was lobbying TfL to improve accessibility at Bakerloo Lane stations within Brent and had also backed a campaign being led by Lewisham and Southwark Councils aimed at securing an upgrade of the entire line.

At this stage in proceedings, the Mayor advised that the time available for the open question session had now ended and thanked all Members for their contributions.

## 12. **Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees**

Before inviting the Chairs of each Scrutiny Committee to present their reports, the Mayor reminded Members that as part of the changes to the Constitution agreed in February 2019, a total of 12 minutes had been set aside for this item. He explained that the Chair of each Scrutiny Committee would have up to three minutes to present their report, highlighting any issues felt to be of significance to the Council. Once the updates had been provided, the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet Members to question the Scrutiny Chairs on matters relating to the work of their Committees.

The following updates were provided by each of the Scrutiny Chairs:

### **Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Kelcher introduced the update report from his Committee, highlighting the following issues, with the Mayor advising that he had also agreed for the update to include (within the time available) a report from Councillor Kabir on progress of the Knife Crime Scrutiny Task Group.

- Councillor Kelcher began his update by highlighting two pre-scrutiny exercises the Committee had recently undertaken, one of which involved consideration of the Draft Statement of Licensing Principles. Issues identified had included the potential use of unit pricing in driving good behaviour in off licences, and the Purple Flag scheme promoting the night-time economy in local high streets. The other pre-scrutiny opportunity had involved a review of proposals relating to the Council Tax Support Scheme, which the Committee had supported overall. He concluded by reporting on the progress update received in relation to the Carlton and Granville Centre, following on from a previous call-in, with a particular focus on the housing element and design of the scheme.

- Councillor Kabir was then invited to provide an update on progress of the Scrutiny Task Group she was chairing on Knife Crime. Referring to the final report of the Task Group, which she urged Members to read, Councillor Kabir advised that the recommendation was to take the Public Health approach which involved investigation of the causes of knife-crime and developing actions to prevent its increase through collaboration between relevant departments of the Council as well as with the external partners – schools, police, NHS, CCG, faith groups, the justice system, probationary services and the wider community. In conclusion, Councillor Kabir felt that too many lives had been lost or blighted by knife crime and, noting the increasingly young ages of both victims and perpetrators and the effect on families and communities, she asked members for their support in taking urgent action.

The Mayor thanked Councillors Kelcher and Kabir for their updates

### **Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Ketan Sheth was then invited to introduce the update from his Committee:

- Councillor Ketan Sheth began his report by referring to the proposed closure of the Cricklewood Walk-in Centre brought to Scrutiny's attention by Councillor Dar, which had been discussed at the last Committee meeting. He thanked Councillor Colacicco for speaking at the meeting on behalf of her ward residents and reported that while the Brent and Barnet CCGs had made the case for closure, the evidence was that significant numbers of patients were using the Walk-in Centre every year and further investigation was needed regarding the proposal.
- The Committee had also considered the future recommissioning arrangements for homecare services with Councillor Ketan Sheth grateful to Councillor Farah, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, for answering the questions of the Scrutiny Committee and confirming that the proposed new homecare model would encompass the London Living Wage and the Unison Ethical Care Charter. The Committee had been keen to ensure that the recommissioning arrangements were focussed on meeting the needs of the Borough's most vulnerable residents.

The Mayor thanked each of the Scrutiny Chairs for their updates and it was **RESOLVED** that the content of each of their reports be noted.

Following the updates provided, the Mayor advised that the remainder of the allocated time would be available for questions from non-Cabinet members to the Scrutiny Chairs. In opening the item, the Mayor reminded Members of the need to ensure that questions were focussed on the work of each Scrutiny Committee. The following questions were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Councillor Nerva highlighted concerns about the approach towards scrutiny of the police and Safer Neighbourhood arrangements following introduction of the tri borough command structure and asked whether it would be

possible to examine the potential for introducing some form of joint scrutiny arrangements.

He followed this up by highlighting concerns regarding the funding position of North West London CCG and impact on patient care and waiting times, which he felt was an issue that required further scrutiny.

- (ii) Referring to forthcoming scrutiny reviews on tourism and parks on the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny work programme, Councillor Long asked if these could also include consideration on the provision of public toilet facilities.

She followed this up by also highlighting her support for the need identified to undertake further scrutiny in relation to the financial position of the North West London CCG given the increase in demand for services and impact this was likely to have on residents within the borough.

- (iii) Following on from the comments raised, Councillor Dar took the opportunity to highlight the ongoing campaign to oppose the closure of the Cricklewood GP Walk-In Centre.

In response to the issues raised relating to the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Work Programme, Councillor Kelcher advised that he was in the process of setting up a meeting in late Autumn to review the Tri-Borough Police Borough Command arrangements and that Councillor Nerva would be welcome to attend. Regarding Councillor Long's question on public toilet provision, Councillor Kelcher confirmed that he would ensure this issue was included in the relevant scrutiny reviews.

Councillor Ketan Sheth, responding to the issues raised in relation to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny work programme felt it was important to recognise that a robust scrutiny process had already been undertaken in relation to the proposed closure of the Cricklewood Walk-in Centre. In terms of the concerns raised regarding the impact of the financial position and recovery plan for the North West London Collaboration of CCGs, Members were advised that this was due to be reviewed at the next meeting of the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Sheth advised he would be attending this meeting as Brent's representative but invited any other Members with an interest to also attend as this would provide an opportunity to question and hold the North West London CCG to account.

At this stage in proceedings, the Mayor advised that the time available for questions had now expired and he would therefore be moving on to the next item with all members thanked for their contributions.

### **13. Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee**

The Mayor invited Councillor Aslam Choudry, as the Vice Chair of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee, to introduce his report updating Members on the work of the Committee.

Councillor Choudry reported that there had been one Committee meeting since his last update at which the Council's Statutory Accounts had been approved with

some minor amendments. He advised that a further update on the excellent investigation work being carried out by the internal audit team, would be provided for the next meeting. The Committee had also reviewed the Council's Treasury Management activity and noted the good management of the treasury and cash function. Councillor Choudry ended his update highlighting the work being undertaken by the Committee in relation to the valuation of the Council's Pension Fund and Investment Scheme, which he advised the Committee would keep under review.

The mayor thanked Councillor Aslam Choudry for his update and it was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

#### 14. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

The Mayor advised that no subject had been identified for debate and therefore moved to the next item on the agenda.

#### 15. **2018/19 Treasury Management Outturn Report**

Councillor McLennan introduced the report from the Director of Finance, which provided an update on Treasury Management activity and confirmed that the Council had complied with its Prudential Indicators for 2018/19. Members noted that the report had been approved and referred on to Council for consideration by Cabinet on 9 September 2019 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

The Mayor then opened the debate inviting other Members to speak on the report.

Councillor S Choudary welcomed what he felt was a good report. In spite of ongoing economic difficulties and the effects of Brexit he noted all the positive aspects highlighted in relation to the management of the Council's reserves and investment policy but felt there remained scope to consider the level of cash balances being held and how these was managed.

As no further issues were raised Councillor McLennan, in exercising her right of reply, felt it important to clarify that the majority of reserves held were capital rather than revenue in nature. Whilst recognising that the Council was in a relatively healthy financial position she pointed out this had only been achieved because of the prudent financial management approach adopted by the Administration.

The Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote by a show of hands and they were unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that Council note the 2018/19 Treasury Management Outturn Report in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

#### 16. **Motions**

Before moving on to consider the motions listed on the summons, the Mayor reminded members of the changes agreed last year to the way in which the debate

on motions would be undertaken. He advised that a total of 30 minutes would be set aside for the consideration of all three motions submitted for debate, based on an initial allocation of 10 minutes per motion. Should the time taken to consider the first motion be less than 10 minutes the remaining time available would be split between the other motions on a rolling basis.

### **16.1 Motion from the Conservative Group – Protecting and Raising the Quality of Adult Social Care in Brent**

The Mayor invited Councillor Colwill, Leader of the Conservative Group, to move the Motion on behalf of the Conservative Group.

Councillor Colwill stated that the Conservative group recognised that there were unprecedented circumstances related to adult social care with over 2,470 Brent residents diagnosed with Dementia and Learning Difficulties. He welcomed and felt it important to recognise the additional Government funding that had been allocated to local authorities in respect of adult social care, which he would be seeking to ensure was ring-fenced in order to protect those most vulnerable and support carers. Councillor Colwill concluded that there were a great many people suffering from Dementia and resources should be encouraged toward early diagnosis.

Councillor Muhammed Butt advised he would be formally seconding the Motion.

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Farah, responding on behalf of the Labour Group as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, advised that he welcomed the motion, which he felt represented a rejection of austerity and highlighted the issue of the national lack of funding for social care. He thanked Councillor Colwill for submitting the Motion and confirmed he would be willing to write to the Minister outlining the concerns raised and explore how best to take forward the other recommendations.

As no further Members had indicated they wished to speak, the Mayor invited Councillor Colwill to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Colwill thanked Councillor Farah for his support and reiterated the seriousness of the issue.

The Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

“This Council notes:

- The unprecedented times that the country is facing and the role local government has in providing local stability and leadership in these tumultuous times.
- The irreplaceable role that local council plays at the heart of communities, providing key public services that protect the most defenceless in society – children at risk, disabled adults and vulnerable older people and the services we all rely on, like clean streets, libraries and children’s centres.

- That councils up and down the UK are at breaking point, with disproportionate reductions in local council funding and comparison to the rest of the public sector.
- That councils had to spend an extra £800m in the last financial year to meet the demand on vital services to protect children and that, with an ageing population and growing demand, adult social care faces a gap of over £2bn in the next financial year.
- In Brent, as with all other council departments, adult social care has had to make significant budget savings in the past, and continues to need to make savings in the future, with a target of reducing the overall spend by £4.1m on adult social care by 2021. This is in the context of an aging population and increasing demand for services.
- Brent has an estimated prevalence of 2,470 patients living with dementia, of whom only 1,834 (74.2%) are diagnosed. This leaves an estimated 1034 undiagnosed patients living with dementia who could benefit from early diagnosis and follow up and support in the community. Brent seeks to address this gap in service with a view to providing early interventions to support people with dementia and their carers to live longer in their own homes.
- The extra £1.5bn for social care in the Government's recent spending round - £1 billion through a new grant and £500 million through the adult social care precept.
- To implement reform – which will involve difficult choices about how to raise money to pay for services – the Government must set up an independent, cross-party inquiry on social care funding, as the Institute for Government recommended last year. This would be the best mechanism to build the public and parliamentary support needed to deliver change, with the last major attempt to reform social care funding. Then, once political support is secured, legislation will have to be passed.
- This council also notes and commends the work done with partners progressing Brent as a Dementia Friendly Borough which has been recognised nationally. This will include GP practices, leisure services, libraries, the Alzheimer's Society, supermarkets such as Tesco, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, London Ambulance Service, Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, local cinemas and art venues.

The Council therefore resolves:

To write to the Health Secretary Matt Hancock MP and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sajid Javid MP.

The Council requests that the Leader of the Council:



- (1) Asks the Health Secretary for the Social Care Green Paper which includes a range of options for securing a sustainable funding solution for adult social care, financial protection and support for informal carers.
- (2) Asks the Health Secretary for increased accountability and regulatory powers for the Care Quality Commission.
- (3) Ensures the Council sign up to the Ethical Care Charter which establishes a minimum baseline for the safety, quality and dignity of care by ensuring employment conditions support a more stable workforce.
- (4) Improve access to care support through the Brent Dementia Steering Group in order to ensure that health professionals inform patients of the support available to them at the point of diagnosis.
- (5) Continue to work with our strategic and community partners to progress actions which provides leadership on being a Dementia Friendly Borough.”

## **16.2 Motion by the Labour Group – Small Changes, Big Impacts – Community Wealth-Building in Brent**

The Mayor invited Councillor Johnson to move the first motion submitted by the Labour Group.

Councillor Johnson opened by stating that Labour’s values and principles were built on a borough of culture, empathy and shared prosperity and that Brent had been an accredited Living Wage employer since 2013, and had been the first to give a business rate discount to employers in the Borough who paid their staff the living wage. With austerity continuing, Councillor Johnson felt that local business needed to be supported. As a result, the motion was calling on the Council to adopt a community wealth builder approach to support revival of the local economy having already joined the Co-Operative Councils’ Innovation Network (a collaboration of 25 authorities, collectively holding budgets of £8.75 billion) with a view to finding better ways of working with people to the benefit of their communities.

Councillor Johnson continued that the aim was to provide local businesses with training on the Council’s procurement processes and to make in-house and Brent-based services the preferred option. As part of this approach, the motion was also calling on the Council to develop a social value and ethical procurement policy and to continue to make provision for in-house services.

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Ethapemi, in seconding the motion, felt the approach outlined would improve employment in Brent and provide mutually beneficial opportunities with local businesses.

Councillor Miller also welcomed the motion and acknowledged Councillor Johnson’s long-standing work with diverse organisations towards the aim of improving wealth in the Borough. He was also keen to ensure that Brent become a trailblazer in transforming the local economy and, while highlighting the many related initiatives

that were already in place, recognised the need for a single policy that brought all the current and future ventures together.

As no further Members had indicated they wished to speak the Mayor invited Councillor Johnson to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Johnson thanked those Members who had contributed to the debate and outlined the mutual opportunities that could be gained by getting more Brent residents into work. On this basis, he urged all Members to support the motion.

The Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was declared **CARRIED**.

“This Council notes:

- The Public Services (Social Value) Act was introduced in 2012. It provides a legal basis for public authorities to look for wider social, economic and environmental benefits when undertaking procurement exercises.
- Last year, councils across London spent hundreds of millions of pounds buying in essential goods, services and expertise from the private and third sectors.
- Insourcing, can, involve lower costs, a public sector ethos, economies of scale and an enhanced level of democratic accountability to local residents.
- After years of strife, Preston Council took a different approach to how they operate, and this is now starting to bear fruit. Similarly, we want to see as much of Brent’s money invested, in every sense of the word, in this borough.
- This authority has joined the Co-Operative Councils’ Innovation Network, a collaboration of 25 like-minded authorities, collectively holding budgets of £8.75 billion – with a view to finding better ways of working for, and with, people to the benefit of their communities.
- Community wealth-building aims to revive local economies, renew trust in local services and deliver a renaissance of local government; by giving local businesses and local communities a bigger stake in the local economy.
- The Labour Party has published a report entitled “Democratising Local Public Services: A Plan for Twenty-First Century Insourcing” setting out its radical blueprint to support and rebuild public services under a future Labour Government.

This council further notes:

- In procuring services over the last two years we’ve created 164 jobs through contracts; 94 new apprenticeships and 277 training opportunities at BTEC and NVQ equivalent level.

- Over the next two years, through diligent contract management a further £26m will be spent in Brent's local supply chain.
- We have driven up social value, by connecting the widespread regeneration of Brent with the supply chain at our regular "Meet the Buyer" events; with contracts worth a cumulative total of £100m on offer to over 140 small and medium sized enterprises.
- We work with local anchor institutions, recently providing finance to the United Colleges Group for a new site, enhancing post-16 Education and potentially unlocking over one thousand desperately needed homes, at their site in Willesden Green.
- We are proud to have been an accredited a London Living Wage employer through the London Living Wage Foundation since 2013; and, we continue to offer the first business rates discount in the UK for accredited Living Wage Employers in the borough.
- We continue to make in-house and Brent-based options for the services we provide; with this Labour Council insourcing amongst a crowded field: the estate cleaning service, housing management, uniformed street litter patrols, council tax collection and crucially our procurement service.

This Council believes:

- That residents are 8 times more likely to trust local councillors to take decisions on their behalf over and above MPs and Ministers. Furthermore, 5 times more people trust their local councils over and above Government to take the best decisions on their behalf.
- That while residents support their local councils to run services and redistribute wealth, Local Government still requires the financial resources to catalyse new social contracts and make public services, local.

This Councils resolves to call on Cabinet:

- (1) To develop a Social Value and Ethical Procurement Policy setting out how this council can ensure that our local community is central to the way we purchase goods and services, setting out how our small changes can have big impacts across the local economy.
- (2) To demystify the Council's procurement process, through regular training sessions, upskilling more local businesses on the tendering process – to enable Brent based traders to compete on a level playing field with larger corporations and work with Brent Council to provide vital works, services and goods.
- (3) To continue to make provision for in-house services the default option, whilst setting out the strong standards for tendering, bid evaluation and contract management for any other alternative."

### **16.3 Motion by the Labour Group – Our Community, Our Health Care**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Daly to move the final motion submitted by the Labour Group.

Councillor Daly began by recalling the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' initiative of 2012, which, she pointed out, had been declared a failure and abandoned by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. She spoke of the poor state of healthcare in Brent and particularly highlighted the chronic delays in diagnosing curable cancers due to cuts in services. She went on express concern about the plans recently announced by the North West London Collaboration of Clinical Commissioning Groups to redress their vast deficit, which, whilst difficult to identify the exact scale of given the sparse nature of the information currently available, she felt would result in more reductions and delays to accessing health services.

Councillor Daly felt that the ethos of the NHS was being eroded and urged Members to support the campaign against the cuts. In recognising the strength of feeling and level of opposition to any further reductions in local health services she felt that an additional meeting of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee should be convened in order to fully scrutinise the CCGs financial recovery plan and impact on the residents of the Borough.

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Kabir advised that she fully supported the opposition to any further reductions in local health services with specific concerns raised about the proposed termination of overnight services at the Central Middlesex Hospital Urgent Care Unit. She went on to detail other areas falling victim to the budget deficits including the closure of the Cricklewood Walk-in Centre, the reduced patient intake at Pembridge Palliative Care Unit and limited capacity at St Luke's Hospice, poor access to GP services and limitations in patient consultant referrals along with the reduction in social care. Councillor Kabir therefore felt it was important for the Council to oppose any further reductions in health provision and work to engage with the North West London Collaboration of CCGs to secure better services for residents and ensure that any risks were minimised.

Councillor Nerva spoke of the pride in the NHS and how it should be uniting the Country. He was concerned, however, that health care provision was becoming a two-tier system in terms of those who could and could not afford care and supported the ongoing challenge towards local reductions in health services. Recognising the challenging position in North West London compared to other areas, he felt there was also a need to explore why the North West London CCG had been so badly affected.

Councillor Kansagra advised that whilst not agreeing with some of the detail within the motion, he would be supporting the resolution.

Councillor Mitchell-Murray spoke about her own personal health issues and experiences in accessing health care and advised that as a result, she was fully supportive of the motion.

Councillor Maurice took the opportunity to praise Northwick Park Hospital for the personal treatment he had recently received. Whilst highlighting that the private sector was not always the best option he did feel there was a need to recognise the level of health funding wasted by successive governments in seeking to implement new systems.

Councillor Kelcher in referring to the comments raised in relation to waste and inefficiency felt it was important to recognise that the implementation of new systems and a more top down approach towards the management and delivery of health care had involved ideological and political decisions. Given the high approval rating for the NHS prior to the last coalition and subsequent Conservative Government, he felt this could have been avoided.

Councillor Farah, in concluding the debate as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, thanked Councillor Daly for moving the motion and highlighted the wide ranging and detrimental health outcomes being caused by funding reductions to local health care services. Acknowledging the cross party cooperation on this issue he advised that he looked forward to campaigning in opposing any further reductions and in support of local health services.

As the remaining time available for the debate on motions had expired, the Mayor then invited Councillor Daly to exercise her right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Daly echoed that she also had excellent experience of using the NHS and wanted to pay tribute to the NHS workforce whom she said, at all levels, were keeping the service running. Given the impact on local residents, she urged all members to support the motion.

The Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

“This Council notes:

- The Government has presided over the longest funding squeeze in the NHS’ history; deepened by cuts to Public Health Services and Adult Social Care.
- There are currently over 100,000 staff vacancies in NHS England, including 41,000 nurses and nearly 10,000 doctors. This figure could easily rise to 350,000 by 2030 according to research conducted by The King’s Fund, the Health Foundation and the Nuffield Trust.
- There are similarly 17,000 fewer hospital beds now than in 2010.
- The impact of Conservative cuts to public services and rising poverty are evident in the new Long Term Plan, with NHS England calculating that socioeconomic inequality causes £4.8 billion a year in greater numbers of hospitalisations.
- Nine years of austerity, cuts and privatisation have resulted in nearly 2.8 million people waiting over 4 hours in A&E last year, over 540,000 patients

waiting over 18 weeks for treatment and NHS waiting lists growing to over 4.3 million.

- The underlying deficit of nearly half of the NHS trusts which provide secondary care to patients referred by a GP is close to £5 billion.

This Council further notes, the consequences of these swingeing cuts:

- North West London Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) face a significant deficit in the forthcoming year, with a projected deficit of £112m. The clinical commissioning group for Brent represents £9m of this debt.
- While North West London's population has grown by 5%, funding is stagnant, and worsened by unplanned emergency care rising by 25%.
- In 2018, London North West Healthcare Trust received a second Requires Improvement report from the CQC.
- Proposals to merge eight CCGs in North West London into one CCG by April 2021 will lead to yet more re-organisation, change and ultimately disruption to residents.
- Public Health funding for Brent services such as smoking cessation and alcohol recovery treatment have again been cut by the Government, by £0.5m for the next year.
- Age UK states there is a "perfect storm" in the Adult Social Care sector with parts facing "total collapse"; with £8 billion needed to stabilise the system and tackle increasing complex care. The latest promised Government green paper on the sector has been delayed at least six times over the last 18 months.
- According to the Royal College of Psychiatrists, Mental Health Trusts have less money in real terms to spend on mental health now than in 2012 and the number of mental health nurses has fallen by 4,000.
- IFS analysis indicates that if we leave the EU, the public purse is likely to lose enough money each year to fund the whole of NHS England for 3 months.

This Council believes:

- The NHS belongs to the people; it is Labour's proudest achievement, designed for universal healthcare for all on the basis of need, free at the point of use - the NHS should always have the resource to provide a comprehensive system, where everyone counts.
- The NHS should work across organisational and geographical boundaries, to facilitate services for every resident.
- The Government has passed the buck with cuts to public services delegated to our local NHS, resulting in a hollowing out of services in Brent and the surrounding area.

- Residents and members of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee are concerned about the styming of access to GP services across the borough and upon its boundaries: with Cricklewood GP Centre under consultation to cease its walk-in provision; and Central Middlesex Urgent Care Centre consulting to curtail its hours of operation; and Pembridge Hospice in Ladbroke Grove closing its doors to new admissions.
- The reduction of services from Central Middlesex UCC will impact on our poorest residents, without access to their own vehicles, with alternative services involving lengthy journeys by public transport at night, upwards of an hour.
- These changes will be felt far and wide across the health economy, as more residents seek support through accident and emergency or via their general practitioner.
- The sustained reduction in the ability of the NHS to provide essential services affects everyone, young to old and certainly those most vulnerable.

The Council resolves:

To work with Brent's Members of Parliament, to voice our opposition to any future arrangements in which alterations to local NHS services threaten the safety of patients or residents alike, and re-affirm the need for health services to put people at the heart of any future plans."

#### 17. **Urgent Business**

The Mayor advised Members there were no urgent items of business for consideration and the next Full Council Meeting would be on 25 November 2019.

The meeting was declared closed at 8:15pm

COUNCILLOR ERNEST EZEAJUGHI  
Mayor