

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

At an **ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** of the **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT** held at Brent Town Hall Forty Lane, Wembley, Middlesex on **Monday, 25th October 2004 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor A Shahzad

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor C Moloney

COUNCILLORS:

Beswick	D Long
Mrs N Blackman	J Long
R Blackman	Lorber
D Brown	Lyon
V Brown	McGovern
Chavda	Moher
N Colwill	Nerva
R Colwill	O'Sullivan
Coughlin	B M Patel
Cribbin	C J Patel
Davies	H B Patel
Dromey	R S Patel
Mrs Fernandes	Sattar-Butt
Fiegel	Sayers
Fox	Sengupta
Freeson	Shah
Gillani	Ms C Shaw
Gladbaum	Singh
Halder	Steel
Hughes	Taylor
John	Thomas
Jones	Thompson
Joseph	Van Colle
Kagan	Wharton
Kansagra	Zakriya
Lemmon	

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Arnold, Bellia, Crane, Duffin, Farrell, Kabir and Rands. Apologies for lateness were submitted on behalf of Davies, Mrs Fernandes and Nerva.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Councillor Lorber sought to move a number of motions relating to items of business included in the minutes of the last meeting. The Mayor ruled against this. His ruling was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the ruling of the Mayor not to allow motions to be moved relating to items of business included in the minutes of the previous meeting be endorsed;
- (ii) that the minutes of the meeting of full Council held on 20th September 2004 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

(Councillors Mrs N Blackman, R Blackman, N Colwill, R Colwill, Fiegel, Gillania, Kansagra, O'Sullivan, BM Patel, HB Patel, HM Patel, Sayers, Taylor and Van Colle asked that their dissent from the above motion be recorded).

3. **Declarations of Interests**

None declared.

4. **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor reported with great sadness the tragic death of teacher Robert Symons who worked at Queens Park Community School. The Chief Executive had written to the family conveying the Council's thoughts over the terrible circumstances surrounding his death.

The Council stood for a one minute silence in memory of Robert Symons.

The Mayor reported with regret the death of Councillor Lyon's father-in-law and Councillor Moloney's brother. The Council's condolences were extended to both families.

The Mayor was pleased to announce that Brent had been awarded a London in Bloom award. He stated that this reflected well on the work of the parks staff, local volunteers and local residents.

The Mayor reported that local police constable Taruna Mistry had been awarded an Asian Achievers award for her work in improving community relations. He congratulated her, adding that she had also helped set up the Metropolitan Police Hindu Association.

The Mayor reported that Brent Housing Partnership had received a grant from the Government's Decent Homes programme for upgrading and modernising homes in South Kilburn. This would mean investment of £14M in the project.

The Mayor was delighted to announce that the Council's Benefits Service had received a rating of 3 from the Audit Commission up from 1 when it was last inspected. He congratulated the service on this improvement.

The Mayor was pleased to announce that the Council's Noise Team had had been chosen to receive the John Connell highly commended award for outstanding contribution to noise reduction in the borough. Particular praise had gone to the 'no fireworks after 11pm' campaign.

The Mayor offered his congratulations to the Planning Service for coming second in an audit of 100 recent housing schemes published by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment which assessed the design quality of new homes provided by the larger housebuilders. The award was in respect of a scheme in Wellington Road, Kensal Green.

The Mayor reported that provisional figures, received from the Department for Education and Skills, showed that Brent had increased the amount of GCSE results for 5 A – C grades from 50% to 53.2%; compared to a national average of 51.2% and a London average of 51.7%.

The Mayor reported that the Fawood Children's Centre, developed in partnership with the Stonebridge Housing Action Trust, would be officially opened in November.

Finally, the Mayor reported on some forthcoming events:

- 30th October 2004 - launch in Brent of the Diwali celebrations at Alperton tube station
- 14th November 2004 - Eid
- 14th November 2004 - Borough Civic Remembrance service taking place at the Memorial site in Queen Elizabeth Gardens, Barham Park
- 11th November 2004 - remembrance service on the Town Hall steps at 11.00 am
- 11th December 2004 - the Mayor's charity dinner dance to which all member of the Council were welcome

5. **Appointments to Committees/Appointments of Chairs/Vice Chairs**

At this meeting there were none.

6. **Question Time**

Questions submitted under the provisions of Standing Order 39 had been circulated together with written responses from respective Lead Members. Members were invited to ask supplementary questions.

The following two questions had been selected by the Leader of the Conservative Group.

Webcasting Council Meetings

The question from Councillor R Blackman asked what proposals were being prepared to make Council meetings more democratic in light of the reports that the meetings were to be webcast. Councillor Blackman added that, whilst it was known that the Greater London Assembly webcast its meetings, it was not clear what lessons had been learned from this or from other Councils that did so. In a supplementary question, he asked whether the £40,000 proposed to be spent on webcasting Council meetings and meetings of the Executive would be met from the recently negotiated profit sharing scheme being discussed with casino operators, or, in a proposed deal for a S106 agreement.

Councillor Coughlin (Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Corporate Resources) replied that a tenuous link was being made between webcasting and the operation of a casino and that the £40,000 was not a figure he had quoted. The practice of other Councils would be looked at and until there was more information available on how it might be applied to Brent no amount of money would be identified. Once the information was presented then consideration would be given to possible funding sources but this would not be from any casino provider.

John Billam Sports Pavilion

The second question selected by the Leader of the Conservative Group was from Councillor R Colwill, asking whether the Council had received the capital receipt from the granting of a lease for the John Billam Sports Centre and, if so, what the money would be spent on. In his supplementary question, Councillor Colwill asked whether, in light of the fact that only a deposit of £50,000 had, so far, been paid over to the Council, would the interest accrued over the last 3 years on the £500,000 be paid to the Council and would the use of the changing facilities at the centre be open to all local clubs.

Councillor Jones (Lead Member for Environment and Planning) responded by saying that she did not have the answer to hand on the calculation of interest payments. She undertook to provide a more detailed response to Councillor Colwill on the questions he had asked

but pointed out that a lot of money was being put into the John Billam development.

The next question had been selected by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Former WASPS Rugby Ground

The question, from Councillor Lorber himself, regarded the section 106 agreement over the development of the former WASPS rugby ground. Councillor Lorber added that local people had lost out on the use of local sports pitches because of a breach in of the section 106 agreement and the terms of the lease of Council land. As a supplementary question, Councillor Lorber asked for assurances that the Council's freehold land would be repossessed and cleaned up, the club house repaired by the responsible party and made available to local groups, the outstanding sports activities for young people delivered on and the section 106 agreement fully implemented.

Councillor Jones (Lead Member for Environment and Planning) replied that sporting activities had already taken place as a result of this development. She asked for a written copy of Councillor Lorber's supplementary question so that she could respond to the other points he had raised.

There then followed three questions selected from Labour non-executive members.

Nuisance Caused by Pigeons

Councillor J Long had asked what was being done to control the nuisance caused by pigeons and how much it cost to clean up the mess left by pigeons in public areas and on housing estates. In her supplementary question, Councillor Long asked what was the point of notices that the people responsible for feeding pigeons clearly ignored? She aimed her question more directly at what the Council was doing to stop people loitering the streets in the interests of feeding pigeons and asked when was the last time anybody in Brent was fined for dropping litter and how it was intended to stop people feeding pigeons.

Councillor Jones (Lead Member for Environment and Planning) replied that the Council had no statutory obligation to deal with the problem of pigeons and all services required to clean up after pigeons came at a cost to the Council. The erection of notices was found to be the most cost effective action. She asked that her attention be drawn to key spots in the borough requiring a clean up of pigeon mess. Planning guidance could be added to new build developments on measures to help deal with the problem and problems around railway bridges would be referred on to Network Rail.

Empty Private Properties

Councillor Freeson had asked what action was proposed to bring into use the approximately 3,700 empty private dwellings in the borough to help re-house the similar number of registered homeless families in the borough. He added that it would take 10-15 years to clear the backlog, which was the highest in London. He stated that it would take 20 years to re-house the 3,700 registered homeless families and that a 3-4 year programme would not need the heavy upfront capital costs included in the reply he had received. He cast doubt on the costs included in the answer for refurbishing all the empty properties in the borough and suggested refurbishment of empty flats over shops would ease the housing situation at the same time as helping to regenerate local town centres. In his supplementary question, Councillor Freeson asked would a report be put to the Executive on expanding the Empty Homes Programme.

Councillor Thomas (Lead Member for Housing) acknowledged the concerns expressed but reiterated that the Council did not have the resources to embark on such an ambitious programme. However, the Council was working with the Government in trying to attract additional funds but he could not at this stage see the Council attracting the level of funding it would like. Nevertheless, as his answer to Councillor Freeson's original question showed, the Council had brought into use 277 units, which was quite an achievement and only bettered in London by Westminster. With the cutting of Council Tax discount on empty properties landlords were more likely to bring their properties back into use.

Anti-Social Behaviour Orders/Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

Councillor Harrod had asked whether the Executive felt it was right to have used ASBOs and ABCs as a means of dealing with problems of crime and disorder faced by his constituents. In the absence of Councillor Harrod, Councillor Singh asked whether, given the positive impact on the lives of local residents, the Council would consider using ASBOs again as a means of dealing with anti social behaviour.

Councillor John (Leader of the Council) replied by thanking Councillor R Blackman for his letter of support to the press for the Council's actions in defending the challenge brought by Liberty. She expressed regret that the Council's actions had not been supported by all sides in the Council Chamber. Councillor John stated that, if people did not change their anti-social behaviour, the Council would have no hesitation in using ASBOs again in the future.

There then followed four questions drawn from the general ballot.

Parking Fines Income

Councillor Mrs N Blackman asked which transport related projects the Council had re-invested in using the money obtained from parking

finer. She added that the profit from parking fines represented an opportunity for the Council to benefit local people and that decision-making in this area needed to be transparent. She questioned whether ward members were consulted on this and, in her supplementary question, asked who made the decisions on what transport related schemes were to be funded and, given the large surplus accrued in the parking account, what the basis was for deciding on priorities?

Councillor Jones (Lead Member for Environment and Planning) replied that the parking account was facing difficulties caused by the level of vandalism to parking meters. Nevertheless, the priority was to deal with the roads included in the annual condition survey but not funded by Transport for London. This programme was put together by the Council's engineers after having given Councillors the opportunity to raise cases they felt needed attention.

Kilburn Square – Design Brief

Councillor Thompson had asked why six months had passed without even a first draft of the design brief being made available. In thanking the Lead Member for her reply, he asked, as a supplementary question, whether the Lead Member was satisfied that it had taken three months before any action was taken and that it would be almost a year from the Inspectors report calling upon the Council to produce a brief to when a brief was expected to be in place. Given this delay could the process now be expedited?

Councillor Jones (Lead Member for Environment and Planning) replied that she was aware of the delay but did not consider it to be significant. It had been agreed to start work on 1st June 2004 and officers were now preparing to consult with members and report in January 2005. Quicker progress would have been possible if there was not such a high level of redevelopment taking place in the borough. Guidance would be produced prior to consideration of the planning application and developers were aware of this.

Broken Parking Meters

Councillor Joseph had asked how many parking meters had been broken in Brent in the past year. She added that residents had fought to get controlled parking zones implemented in their area and were frustrated when parking meters were out of action for long periods of time allowing anyone to park in the area at no charge. In her supplementary question Councillor Joseph asked what action was being taken to ensure parking meters were repaired swiftly?

Councillor Jones (Lead Member for Environment and Planning) replied by referring to reports of meter thefts and explained that steps were being taken to secure the meters more strongly and institute daily collections from the more popular machines. The Council was also in liaison with the police about this and considering alternatives such as purchasing parking tickets from local shops where this was feasible.

Member Training on Security at the Town Hall

Councillor O'Sullivan had asked when Councillors would be given training on security at the Town Hall. He added the threat of terrorism had increased with several arrests being made. A system of signing in visitors to the Town Hall had appeared to last only a few days. In his supplementary question, Councillor O'Sullivan asked what proposals were there to improve security and exactly what training would be provided for Members.

Councillor Coughlin (Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Corporate Resources) replied by confirming that the signing-in system continued to be operated on a daily basis. A booklet had been produced on security measures and briefings given to the political groups. He felt the current arrangements were adequate.

9. Report from the Executive

(i) Ninth London Local Authorities Bill

This report concerned the promotion of a further General Powers Bill on behalf of London Local Authorities in the next parliamentary session. At the request of the Association of London Government, the City of Westminster had agreed to act as lead borough in the promotion of the bill. Councillor Jones explained the intent behind the Bill and also explained that further consideration would be given to the powers the Council wished to use, including those proposed by the Council, when a second resolution was put to the Council after the Bill had been deposited with Parliament. Councillor Jones moved the recommendation before Council.

(ii) Update on Anti Social Behaviour Orders

Councillor John referred to the actions taken by the Council and that these had been received favourably within the neighbourhoods concerned. The impact had been to reduce crime in the Neasden area by 20%; the gang mentality had been broken up and local people had more confidence in going about their business. She added that any breaches of the orders needed to be treated seriously and action taken in consultation with local residents.

(iii) Wembley Update/2012 bid

Councillor John reported that the West London Alliance had presented their support of the 2012 bid to Lord Coe at a function on 8th October 2004. She referred to press reports around the development of a casino in the Wembley area and pointed out that the Council was being careful not to be drawn into commenting on this too much because of its role as the local planning authority. There had been an overwhelming response from local residents for event day parking restrictions and the outcome of this consultation would be reported to a meeting of the Highways Committee.

(iv) *Local Democracy Week*

Councillor John referred to the events that had taken place as part of Local Democracy Week, three of which she had attended. Councillor Kagan added that it was the first time the Council had participated in Local Democracy Week and referred to all the events that had taken place. She reported that Councillor Gladbaum had won the 'I'm a Councillor, get me out of here' event. She thanked the officers from Democratic Services, Communications Unit and Education Service for organising the events. It was hoped the Council could build on the success of the events and take part the following year.

7. Report from Chair of Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Taylor submitted his report and highlighted how busy Members had been in the various scrutiny activities taking place.

8. General Debate

Members debated the items included under reports from the Executive and Chair of Scrutiny Committee.

Reference was made to the large number of provisions contained in the London Local Authorities Bill, including potential charging items. The view was put that the report needed greater scrutiny before being put before the Council for agreement. Councillor Van Colle moved that the report be referred to scrutiny for consideration before being decided upon by Council. Specific mention was made of the proposals to include provisions dealing with cycling on the pavement, authorising the disturbance of human remains to enable existing graves to be used for further internments, strengthening the law relating to spitting in public places and providing for the control, or prohibition, of smoking in public places or the workplace. These examples were used to highlight the need for further discussions where the proposals could be more fully explained and decisions taken on whether to support or reject the proposals. Councillor R Blackman stated that questions on a number of the provisions had been asked at Forward Plan Select Committee without adequate answers being forthcoming. It appeared that many of the proposals lacked detail at this stage and it was felt by some that the Council should not approve such a wish list. Councillor Lorber moved a motion that, before endorsing the proposed provisions contained in the Bill, the implications of a number of the provisions be more fully explored.

Mention was made of the likely effect on Brent of the provisions contained in the Gambling Bill. It was questioned whether expanding the opportunity to gamble was a wise move. In noting the Leader's reassurance on the Council's position regarding any casino development it was stated that local people were nevertheless very concerned about this.

With reference to the 'I'm a Councillor, get me out of here' event that took place as part of Local Democracy Week, Councillor Nerva, as one of the contestants, commented that he had received interesting questions on a wide range of topics from the young people that had taken part. He thanked the schools that had taken part in the event. He urged that Members take the opportunity to look at the website and expressed the hope that some of the points raised could be fed into the overview and scrutiny process for consideration. Councillor Gladbaum spoke from her experience as a contestant and reflected on the feedback received. 60% of the young people taking part had admitted to knowing almost nothing about the Council, 20% felt they knew everything and 20% something. 50% of young people thought the most important thing the Council did was run elections, 50% thought it was refuse collection. In answer to a question posed to the young people asking what they would spend £100,000 of public money on, 50% had responded that they would spend it on preventing harm to young people. She felt such feedback showed the other side of youth to that referred to in earlier discussions around anti-social behaviour and that there were many wonderful young people in the borough. An alternative view on the success of Local Democracy Week was put that such activity should not just be contained within one week.

Councillor Lorber referred to the criticism Sarah Teather, MP had received for attending a ceremony where she presented an award to a member of the notorious Press Road gang, whose members had been subject to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). He pointed out that this was one of 50 awards made at an event supported by a government programme designed to develop the self esteem of black and ethnic minority youths. He stated that ASBOs were not criminal offences and it was therefore irresponsible of the Administration to name the MP in the way it had done. Councillor Lorber moved a motion that called on Lead Members to stop attacking projects aimed at enhancing the self esteem of young people, support the work of local community organisations, condemn the criticism of Sarah Teather, MP and congratulate all the young people recognised through the Brent Youth Spotlight scheme. It also called on the Leader and Councillor Beswick to publicly apologise for their criticism or resign.

Councillor Jones responded to the debate by saying that the London Local Authorities Bill still had a long way to go before it reached the statute book. It comprised of proposals put forward from most of the London Boroughs and co-ordinated by the Association of London Government. It was too early to remit it to scrutiny and the timetable would not allow this delay.

Councillor John then responded to the general debate. She referred to paragraphs 7.10 – 7.12 of the report on the London Local Authorities Bill, which explained that there was cross-party support at the Association of London Government for the Bill and that there would be

the opportunity for the Council to have more detailed discussions once the Bill had been deposited with Parliament. She commented on some of the provisions currently contained in the Bill. Councillor John stated that in her discussions with local people she had not come across overwhelming opposition to any casino development. Concerns around betting tended to be in relation to existing provision. Councillor John reported on her attendance at the first meeting of the Wembley Stadium Trust which was the mechanism established to consider the allocation of monies generated by the Wembley development for the benefit of the local community. She gave notice that she had asked that an update for Members on the Wembley redevelopment be arranged to take place soon.

The motions submitted by Councillors Van Colle and Lorber concerning the London Local Authorities Bill were put to the vote and declared LOST.

The Motion submitted by Councillor Lorber concerning the criticism of the Member of Parliament for Brent East was put to the vote and declared LOST.

RESOLVED:

that approval be given to the London Borough of Brent's participation in the proposed legislation and approving the inclusion in the bill (being promoted by the Westminster City Council under the name or short title of "London Local Authorities") of provisions effecting all or some of the purposes set out in the detail at paragraph 7.2 of the report; and to enact any additional, supplemental and consequential provisions that may appear necessary or convenient.

(Councillors D Brown, V Brown, Chavda, Hughes, Lorber, Shah and Wharton wished it recorded that they had voted in support of the motion moved by Councillor Lorber concerning the London Local Authorities Bill)

(Councillors Mrs N Blackman, R Blackman, N Colwill, R Colwill, Fiegel, Gillani, Kansagra, O'Sullivan, BM Patel, HB Patel, Sayers, Steel, Taylor and Van Colle wished it recorded that they had voted against the above resolution)

9. **Motions Selected by Leaders of the Opposition Groups**

(i) ***Anti-Social Behaviour Orders***

Councillor R Blackman introduced his motion, which welcomed the recent decision of the courts to uphold the Council's decision to 'name and shame' those people issued with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). His motion called on all Councillors to support the use of ASBOs but expressed concern over the measures being introduced requiring police to fill out a form when they stop an individual and calling for this to be scrapped. Councillor Blackman also warned against any notion that ASBOs were the only means by which anti-social behaviour could be dealt with and asked for the Council to carry out a review on how measures to prevent young people falling into a life of crime could be introduced by all the agencies involved.

Councillor Beswick pointed to the effectiveness of using ASBOs and moved the amendment to the motion circulated in his name, which sought to delete reference to criticism of the need for the police to fill in forms and include reference to the different position adopted by the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrat Party over the use of ASBOs.

The view was supported that prevention was better than having to resort to the use of ASBOs but the point made that they were nevertheless a tool that could be used effectively in extreme circumstances. It was put that those that opposed the use of ASBOs should tell this to local people whose lives had been improved through their use. It was pointed out to the Council that many measures were already in place to support people to stay away from a life of crime. Also that good housing was very important and a number of support agencies existed.

Councillor Hughes stated that his party believed in the judicial process but would take action against anti-social behaviour when necessary. He moved the amendment to the motion circulated in the name of the Liberal Democrat Group, which sought to acknowledge the many initiatives to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour being taken by Liberal Democrat controlled Councils across the country. The amendment also called for more police resources, the pursuit of different approaches to tackling unacceptable behaviour and noting and calling for action against other aspects of standards of behaviour.

Concern was expressed over the notion that potential offenders exhibiting anti-social behaviour could be identified as young as 6 years old and that lasting patterns of behaviour could not be predicted in children as young as this. Reference was made to the number of councillors who over their time on the Council had handed out awards without resorting to a vetting exercise on those receiving an award. As such, it was seen as unfair to criticise Brent East MP Sarah Teather for

handing out awards to a group of young people who included one of those subject to an ASBO.

In accordance with standing order 48 (c) the voting on Councillor Hughes's amendment was recorded as follows:

- FOR:** Councillors D Brown, V Brown, Chavda, Hughes, Lorber, CJ Patel, Shah and Wharton (8)
- AGAINST:** The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillors Beswick, Mrs N Blackman, R Blackman, N Colwill, R Colwill, Coughlin, Cribbin, Davies, Dromey, Fiegel, Gillani, Kansagra, Fox, Freeson, Gladbaum, Halder, John, Jones, Joseph, Kagan, Lemmon, D Long, J Long, Lyon, McGovern, Moher, Nerva, O'Sullivan, BM Patel, HB Patel, RS Patel, Sattar-Butt, Sayers, Sengupta, Singh, Steel, Taylor, Thomas, Thompson, Van Colle and Zakriya. (43)
- ABSTENTIONS:** None (0)

In accordance with standing order 48 (c) the voting on Councillor Beswick's amendment was recorded as follows:

- FOR:** The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillors Beswick, Coughlin, Cribbin, Davies, Dromey, Fox, Freeson, Gladbaum, Halder, John, Jones, Joseph, Kagan, Lemmon, D Long, J Long, Lyon, McGovern, Moher, Nerva, RS Patel, Sattar-Butt, Sengupta, Singh, Thomas, Thompson, and Zakriya. (29)
- AGAINST:** Mrs N Blackman, R Blackman, D Brown, V Brown, Chavda, N Colwill, R Colwill, Fiegel, Gillani, Hughes, Kansagra, Lorber, O'Sullivan, BM Patel, CJ Patel, HB Patel, Sayers, Shah, Steel, Taylor, Van Colle and Wharton (22)
- ABSTENTIONS:** None (0)

In accordance with standing order 48 (c) the voting on Councillor Councillor Blackman's motion as amended was recorded as follows:

FOR: The Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Councillors
Beswick, Mrs N Blackman, R Blackman,
R Colwill, N Colwill, Coughlin, Cribbin,
Davies, Dromey, Fiegel, Fox, Freeson,
Gillani, Gladbaum, Halder, John, Jones,
Joseph, Kagan, Kansagra, Lemmon, D Long,
J Long, Lyon, McGovern, Moher, Nerva,
O'Sullivan, BM Patel, HB Patel, RS Patel,
Sattar-Butt, Sengupta, Singh, Steel, Taylor,
Thomas, Thompson, Van Colle and Zakriya. **(42)**

AGAINST: Councillors D Brown, V Brown, Chavda,
Hughes, Lorber, CJ Patel, Shah and
Wharton **(8)**

ABSTENTIONS: Councillor Sayers **(1)**

RESOLVED:

- (i) this Council warmly welcomes the decision by the courts to uphold Brent Council's decision to "name and shame" those people issued with ASBOs recently. This Council believes that this action will assist in helping to make our streets safer;
- (ii) this Council calls on all Councillors to express support for the use of ASBOs as a weapon in the fight against crime and condemns those who refuse to support action against thuggish and yobbish behaviour. In particular, this Council condemns the Liberal Democrat Party for voting against this legislation;
- (iii) this Council notes that the Member of Parliament for Brent East recently presented an award for good behaviour to one of the people 'named and shamed'. This Council believes that the Liberal Democrats are soft on crime and tough on the victims of crime. In contrast to their behaviour, the Conservatives have supported both the Government and the Council in tackling anti-social behaviour. The Council believe it is incumbent on councillors, of all parties, to give priority to the victims of crime rather than to the perpetrators of crime;
- (iv) this Council also notes that signs of those who are potential offenders can be identified as early as 6 years of age but, if sufficient support is given to the family and the young people at an early age, the long spiral into a life of crime can be avoided. This Council believes that this requires the input of several agencies to achieve this end and calls for a review to be held on how such measures could be introduced. This Council believes

that this measure may help to prevent crime rather than having to punish perpetrators at a future time.

(ii) ***Effective Parking Enforcement for Residents***

Councillor Lorber introduced his motion by stating that it concerned the ability of the contractor to deliver a service that local people wanted. He pointed out that a recent audit inspection had revealed that the Council did not know how many parking attendants were on duty at any one time. He stated that, originally, controlled parking zones had been introduced for the benefit of local residents on a self funding basis not, as now, where a large profit was made. He alleged that attendants were deployed on a profit motivated basis and that the system of parking restriction and enforcement needed changing now.

Councillor Moher acknowledged the serious problems caused by dangerous parking and stated that the solution was often to put down yellow lines. In moving the amendment to the motion circulated in his name, Councillor Moher stated that the motion proposed by Councillor Lorber exploited the genuine concerns of local residents and he proposed a more positive way of dealing with the problem.

It was put to the meeting that the problem of parking was particularly acute in the south of the borough and that vehicles that caused dangerous obstruction were not dealt with. It was alleged that incidents amounting to harassment had occurred, including those with blue badges being the victims. Many meters did not work and/or had been vandalised. It was put that there should be greater discretion used by the attendants. The question was asked why the Council could not introduce a system of parking vouchers purchased at local shops.

Councillor Jones responded by saying that she did not receive masses of correspondence indicating that local residents were generally unhappy with the situation. The Council entered into many discussions with local residents to resolve the many issues parking caused. All profits from the parking account were ring-fenced to be spent on highways works. Reference to the Council not knowing the number of attendants deployed was misleading because this was only during a period when the Parking Manager left the Council's employment. The cost of making the first permit free would be £600,000 which would be an unfair burden on those people that did not have cars. The cost of a permit was amongst the lowest in London and the intention was to keep it that way.

The motion submitted by Councillor Lorber was put to the vote and declared LOST.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the Council noted that some residents had expressed concerns about controlled parking zones in the borough. It recognised that these concerns are listened to and often resolved;
- (ii) that the Council also noted the ongoing work to make junctions safe with the painting of visible yellow lines, as in the cases of roads in Sudbury ward recently, to the satisfaction of residents. It was clear that the efforts of the Council to tackle the many difficult and complicated traffic and parking issues which arose were hindered by blatant exploitation of such issues for narrow political purposes; nevertheless the Council was anxious to address all underlying genuine residents concerns and so these matters were kept under regular review;
- (iii) that this Council therefore request the Scrutiny Committee to consider whether further measures were necessary to address concerns about the **enforcement** of parking restrictions in controlled parking zones, exploring the following issues:
 - the process for residents to raise concerns and how this process could be improved
 - a comparison of parking charges across London with a view to establishing whether Brent's are good value
 - how planning powers in relation to parking might best be used

(Councillors D Brown, V Brown, Chavda, Hughes, Lorber, CJ Patel, Shah and Wharton asked that their dissent from the above motion be recorded).

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

A Shahzad
Mayor

Mins2004/05/Council/full/cm25oct