

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, 29th October 2007 at 7.15 pm**

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor H B Patel

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor R Fox

COUNCILLORS:

Ahmed	Joseph
Allie	Kansagra
Anwar	J Long
Arnold	Lorber
Mrs Bacchus	Malik
Baker	Matthews
Bessong	Mendoza
Beswick	Mistry
Blackman	J Moher
D Brown	R Moher
V Brown	Moloney
Butt	Motley
Clues	O'Sullivan
Colwill	Pagnamenta
Corcoran	CJ Patel
Coughlin	H M Patel
Cummins	Powney
Detre	Shah
Dunn	Ms C Shaw
Dunwell	Singh
Eniola	Sneddon
Farrell	Steel
Gupta	Thomas
Hashmi	Tullett
Hirani	Van Colle
Jackson	Van Kalwala
John	Wharton
Jones	

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Chavda, Mrs Fernandes, Shah and Tancred.

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting of full Council held on 10th September 2007 be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

3. **Declarations of Interests**

Members declared interests in the following items in the report on the Local Development Framework:

Councillor Dunwell declared a personal interest in the Kingsbury Pool site;

Councillor Clues declared a personal and prejudicial interest in sites 27a-d relating to Church End;

Councillor Steel declared a personal interest in the Sainsbury's site.

Councillor V Brown declared a personal interest in the Sainsbury site because she lived opposite the site.

Councillor Cummins declared personal interests in the Tricycle Theatre and Cinema, Paddington Churches Housing Association and the Dollis Hill House Trust;

Councillor HM Patel declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item relating to Post Office closures because his wife worked in a post office.

4. **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Zaffar Van Kalwala to his first meeting of Full Council and congratulated him on his election.

The Mayor was delighted to announce that he had attended the Borough's Eid celebration on Sunday 21st October which was very successful and thanked everyone who was involved in making it such a memorable occasion.

The Mayor announced that he had had the pleasure of welcoming Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to Brent on Thursday 18th October when she attended the 25th Anniversary of the Citizen Advice Bureau in High Road, Willesden. He took the opportunity to discuss with her the diversity of the borough, which she very much appreciated.

The Mayor thanked Richard Cotton for organising a sponsored walk from Brent Town Hall to Alexandra Palace on Sunday 14th October in support of the Paul Daisley Trust and his charity appeal. He congratulated all of those who successfully completed the walk for their efforts to raise money.

The Mayor announced that this was the last Council meeting that Linda Silver would attend as the Conservative Group's Member Services Manager. She had worked with the Conservative Group for nearly 21 years and he wished her a very happy retirement. On a personal note, he thanked Linda for helping him in dealing with his casework and for her guidance from the time when he was a newly elected councillor. The Mayor presented flowers to Linda.

The Mayor announced that the Borough's Diwali celebrations would be taking place on Saturday 3rd November at Ealing Road and Barham Park from 1pm throughout the day and he asked all members to join him in the parade.

The Mayor drew the attention of members to the Borough's Remembrance Day Services taking place on Sunday 11th November at St John the Evangelist Church and at Barham Park. He encouraged as many members as possible to attend the occasion in memory of all of those who had lost their lives during various conflicts.

The Mayor announced with sadness the death of David Harvey who had passed away over the weekend. David Harvey was a Brent Councillor in the 1970's and Leader of the Conservative Group in 1982.

The Mayor stated that this Council Meeting was the first one that Councillor Bertha Joseph had attended as a Conservative Councillor having left the Labour Group on 28th September 2007.

The Mayor drew the attention of members to the schedule circulated as usual showing progress of those petitions received in accordance with standing order 68.

With the permission of the Mayor, Councillor Joseph spoke about her decision to join the Conservative Party.

Councillor Blackman paid tribute to David Harvey who had represented the Tokyngton Ward and Sudbury Court residents before moving to Westminster and becoming the Lord Mayor. Councillor John, on behalf of the Labour Group, extended sympathy to the family of David Harvey.

Councillor Blackman also informed the Council meeting that Janet Cowan, who had served as Mayor of the London Borough of Harrow in 2006/07, had recently died. He extended his Group's sympathy to her husband and family.

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

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that Councillor Joseph be appointed chair of the Harlesden Area Consultative Forum in place of Councillor Powney,
- (ii) that Councillor Bessong be appointed chair of the Black Minority Ethnic User Consultative Forum in place of Councillor Joseph,
- (iii) that Councillor Van Kalwala be appointed as an additional member on the Black Minority Ethnic User Consultative Forum,
- (iv) that Councillor Jones be appointed chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee,
- (v) that Councillor Van Kalwala be appointed as a member of the General Purposes Committee,
- (vi) that Councillor Van Kalwala be appointed as a member of the School Admission Forum,
- (vii) that Councillor Wharton be appointed to the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee in place of Councillor Cummins.

6. **Result of By Election held on 13th September 2007**

RESOLVED:-

that the election of Councillor Zaffar Van Kalwala to represent Stonebridge Ward be noted.

7. **Local Development Framework – Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations, Submission to Secretary of State**

The Director of Environment and Culture introduced the report before Members which presented the proposed submission versions of the Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations Development Plan Documents for consideration as part of Brent's new Local Development Framework (LDF). Members had been sent under separate cover an amended version of the description for site 57, Sainsbury superstore.

Councillor Kansagra spoke in support of including site 117, Roe Green Park for leisure/sports including swimming pool and A3 uses, public open space and area of open character. He reported that the Planning Committee had agreed to this proposal noting that it was included in the current Unitary Development Plan as such and should be retained in the emerging LDF. Councillor Kansagra expressed the view that if

this site was not designated for a swimming pool it would be very difficult to attract a pool elsewhere in that part of the borough.

Councillor John moved a motion asking the Director of Environment and Culture to ensure that the possibility of incorporating swimming facilities in the re-development of Kingsbury High School be pursued. She added that the redevelopment of the school might present possibilities and that this would avoid taking any of the park land which was now in a good condition.

Councillor R Moher moved a motion seeking the Council's agreement to renew its commitment to facilitating the provision of a pool and associated indoor sports facility in the north of the borough and to make the appropriate amendment to this effect in the Core Strategy. The motion sought to stipulate that the site should be determined following receipt of the sports needs consultants report referred to. Councillor Blackman moved an amendment to Councillor R Moher's motion proposing that reference to the sports needs consultant's report be deleted. This was accepted by Councillor R Moher.

Councillor Van Colle explained the significance of the Council agreeing the two documents for submission to the Secretary of State. He felt that Members generally wished for the same outcome on providing a swimming pool in the north of the borough.

Councillor Van Colle moved a motion on site 11 – London Transport Sports Ground, Forty Avenue, seeking to delete reference to a new school and inserting “commercial use”.

Councillor Van Colle also moved a motion on site 57 - Sainsbury superstore, seeking to revise the wording under the heading 'Allocation' set out in the revised description separately circulated.

Views for and against the motions moved were submitted before the Director of Environment and Culture responded to the points made. He stated that he stood by the officers' advice given at the Executive and Planning Committee concerning site 117 – Roe Green Park that to allocate the site for a swimming pool would make the provision of such a facility in the area too restrictive and that site 11 - London Transport Sports Ground, Forty Avenue, was the best site for the provision of a new school within the timescale required. He considered the suggested rewording of the allocation paragraph for site 57 – Sainsbury superstore as acceptable. He did not have anything to add on the other motions moved.

In accordance with standing order 47 (d) Councillor Lorber asked that the voting on each of the motions moved be recorded.

The motion moved by Councillor Kansagra on site 117 – Roe Green Park was put to the vote and declared LOST.

In accordance with standing order 47 (d) the voting on Councillor Kansagra's motion was recorded as follows:

FOR: The Mayor and Councillors Baker, Blackman, Colwill, Detre, Dunwell, Joseph, Kansagra, Malik, Mendoza, Mistry, O'Sullivan, HB Patel, Steel and Van Colle. (15)

AGAINST: The Deputy Mayor and Councillors Ahmed, Allie, Anwar, Arnold, Mrs Bacchus, Bessong, Beswick, D Brown, V Brown, Butt, Clues, Corcoran, Coughlin, Cummins, Dunn, Eniola, Farrell, Gupta, Jackson, John, Jones, Hashmi, Hirani, Long, Lorber, Matthews, J Moher, R Moher, Moloney, Motley, Pagnamenta, CJ Patel, Powney, Shah, Ms Shaw, Sneddon, Singh, Thomas, Tullett, Van Kalwala and Wharton. (42)

ABSTENTIONS: None (0)

The motion moved by Councillor John to explore the provision of swimming and sports facilities as part of the redevelopment of Kingsbury High School was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

In accordance with standing order 47 (d) the voting on Councillor John's motion was recorded as follows:

FOR: The Deputy Mayor and Councillors Allie, Arnold, Ahmed, Anwar, Mrs Bacchus, Beswick, Butt, Corcoran, Coughlin, Cummins, Eniola, Farrell, Gupta, Hashmi, Hirani, Jackson, John, Jones, Long, Lorber, J Moher, R Moher, Moloney, Pagnamenta, CJ Patel, Powney, Ms C Shaw, Singh, Sneddon, Thomas, Tullett, Van Kalwala and Wharton. (34)

AGAINST: The Mayor and Councillors, Baker, Blackman, Colwill, Detre, Kansagra, Joseph, Malik, Mendoza, Mistry, O'Sullivan, HM Patel, Steel, Van Colle. (14)

ABSTENTIONS: Bessong, D Brown, V Brown, Clues, Dunwell, Dunn, Matthews, Motley and Shah. (9)

The motion moved by Councillor R Moher as amended by Councillor Blackman seeking a commitment to providing a swimming pool and sports facilities in the north of the borough and including the appropriate amendment in the Core Strategy to reflect this was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

In accordance with standing order 47 (d) the voting on Councillor R Moher's motion as amended was recorded as follows:

FOR: The Deputy Mayor, Allie, Arnold, Ahmed, Anwar, Mrs Bacchus, Bessong, Beswick, Butt, D Brown, V Brown, Clues, Coughlin, Corcoran, Cummins, Dunn, Eniola, Farrell, Gupta, Hashmi, Hirani, Jackson John, Jones, (42)
J Long, Lorber, Matthews J Moher, R Moher, Moloney, Motley, Pagnamenta, CJ Patel, Powney, Shah, Ms C Shaw, Singh, Sneddon, Thomas, Tullett, Van Kalwala and Wharton.

AGAINST: The Mayor, Baker, Blackman, Colwill, Detre, Kansagra, Joseph, Malik, Mendoza, O'Sullivan, H M Patel, Steel and Van Colle. (13)

ABSTENTIONS: Dunwell and Mistry. (2)

The motion moved by Councillor Van Colle relating to site 11 – London Transport Sports Ground, Forty Avenue was put to the vote and declared LOST.

In accordance with standing order 47 (d) the voting on Councillor Van Colle's motion was recorded as follows:

FOR: The Mayor and Councillors Baker, Blackman, Colwill, Detre, Kansagra, Joseph, Malik, Mistry, Mendoza, O'Sullivan, H M Patel, Steel and Van Colle. (14)

AGAINST: The Deputy Mayor and Councillors Allie, Arnold, Ahmed, Anwar, Mrs Bacchus, Bessong, Beswick, D Brown, V Brown, Butt, Clues, Corcoran, Coughlin, Cummins, Dunn, Eniola, Farrell, Gupta, Hashmi, Hirani, Jackson, John, Jones, J Long, Lorber, Matthews, Motley, J Moher, R Moher, Moloney, Pagnamenta, CJ Patel, Powney, Shah, Ms C Shaw, Singh, Sneddon, Thomas, Tullett, Van Kalwala and Wharton (42)

ABSTENTIONS: Dunwell. (1)

The motion moved by Councillor Van Colle relating to site 57 – Sainsbury superstore was put to the vote and declared CARRIED.

In accordance with standing order 47 (d) the voting on Councillor Van Colle's motion was recorded as follows:

FOR: The Mayor and Councillors Allie, Anwar, Baker, Bessong, Blackman, V Brown, Clues, Corcoran, Colwill, Cummins, Detre, Dunn, Dunwell, Gupta, Hashmi, Hirani, Jackson, Kansagra, Joseph, Malik, Mendoza, Mistry, Lorber, Matthews, Motley, O'Sullivan, Pagnamenta, CJ Patel, HM Patel, Shah, Ms C Shaw, Sneddon, Tullett Van Colle and Wharton. (36)

AGAINST: The Deputy Mayor, Arnold, Ahmed, Mrs Bacchus, Beswick, Butt, Coughlin, Eniola, Farrell, John, Jones, Long, J Moher, R Moher, Moloney, Powney, Shah, Singh, Steel, Thomas, Van Kalwala. (22)

ABSTENTIONS: Beswick, D Brown, Dunwell. (3)

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the commitment to facilitating the provision of a swimming pool and associated indoor sports use in the north of the borough be renewed and the Director of Environment and Culture be authorised to make an appropriate amendment to the Core Strategy to reflect this;
- (ii) that the Director of Environment and Culture be requested to ask the consultants to evaluate the possibility of incorporating swimming and other sports facilities in the redevelopment of Kingsbury High School;
- (iii) that the second sentence under the heading of 'Allocation' relating to site 57 – Sainsbury superstore, be amended to read 'Development must be restricted to the northern part of the site, as part of a redevelopment of the existing store, so as to improve integration with the Kenton Road High Street, and to ensure there is no impact of development on properties along Draycott Avenue. Vehicular access to the site will be limited to existing locations'.

- (iv) that the Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations as amended by the above resolutions, be agreed for a six week consultation period and submission to the Secretary of State on or around 5th November 2007;
- (v) that the Director of Environment and Culture be authorised to make minor, non-material changes to the Development Plan Documents as necessary.

(In addition to those members who had earlier declared an interest in the above item the following members declared interests:

Councillor Gupta declared a personal and prejudicial interest in site 27(a) included in the Local Development Framework;

Councillor Long declared a personal interest in the above item by virtue of being a member of Fortunegate Community Housing;

Councillor Hirani declared a personal interest in the above item by virtue of being a member of Fortunegate Community Housing;

Councillor Moloney declared an interest in site 3 Twyford Tip, Abbey Road;

Councillor Thomas declared an interest as a board member of Willow Housing

(Upon consideration of sites 27 (a), (b), (c) and (d) and site 57 Councillors V Brown, Clues and Gupta left the meeting room and took no part in the decision making).

8. Proposal for a Borough Wide Controlled Drinking Zone

Members considered the report before them which provided a review of the pilot Controlled Drinking Zone (CDZ), in the Kilburn High Road area within Brent, from 1st July to 31st December 2006 and presented further options and the financial implications of designating the whole of the borough as a CDZ.

Councillor Matthews (Lead Member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety), put forward the proposal to designate the whole of the borough as a CDZ. She stated that the pilot CDZ had generally been successful and the Police were supportive of the proposal.

Some Members referred to discussion of the proposal at the Forward Plan Select Committee and whilst expressing support in principle expressed concern that there remained some unanswered questions arising from the pilot, particularly around providing resources to support those who wanted to stop drinking. Councillor Powney moved that implementation of the proposal should be deferred to allow more time to examine the implications of designating the whole of the borough a

CDZ, especially around the support offered to those street drinkers who wished to stop drinking. This motion was put to the vote and declared LOST.

RESOLVED:

that the implementation of a Controlled Drinking Zone covering the whole of the Borough of Brent be approved, in accordance with Section 13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

9. **Changes to the Planning Code of Practice, Licensing Code of Practice and the Protocol on Members' Rights of Access to Information**

The report before Members set out the changes that were required to be made to the Planning Code of Practice, the Licensing Code of Practice and the Protocol on Members Rights of Access to Information as a result of the adoption of the new Member Code of Conduct by the Council at its last meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the recommendation of the Standards Committee that the changes to the Planning Code of Practice, the Licensing Code of Practice and the Protocol on Members Rights of Access to Information, as set out in the appendices to the report, should be adopted be noted;
- (ii) that the changes to the Planning Code of Practice, the Licensing Code of Practice and the Protocol on Members Rights of Access to Information set out in the appendices to the report be adopted.

10. **10th London local Authorities Bill**

London Councils recently conducted a consultation process to establish whether it was necessary to promote a further London Local Authorities Bill. The 10th London Local Authorities Bill was the result of that consultation and the report before Members commented on the proposals in the Bill and the procedural requirements to partake in the Bill.

RESOLVED:

that approval be given to the inclusion in a bill or bills to be promoted by Westminster City Council or, as the case may be in a bill or bills to be promoted jointly by Westminster City Council and any other person as appropriate, of provisions effecting all or some of the following purposes -

- (a) to make provision about the decriminalisation of offences relating to public health, highways and road traffic and making contravention of the relevant legislation subject to a civil penalty charge regime; the introduction of a local levy, administered by London borough councils, on the provision of disposable shopping bags or to introduce a prohibition on the provision of disposable shopping bags; the introduction of a local levy administered by the London borough councils on the sale of chewing gum; an extension of the type of premises in respect of which a street litter control notice can be issued under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to include a wider range of non-domestic premises; to enable councils to better control the feeding of wild birds; to enable borough councils to make charges for the use of urinals; to make further provision about the control of the placing of items on the highway; altering London borough councils' powers to fix signs and apparatus to buildings; amending London borough councils' powers to charge for the provision of amenities on highways under Part VIIA of the Highways Act 1980; controlling the placing of household waste in street litter bins; to enable London borough councils to recover costs incurred by them in rectifying damage caused by them when removing unlawful advertisements; to enable London borough councils, as local housing authorities, to take enforcement action and recover costs in cases where there has been a failure to comply with a duty imposed in relation to the management of houses in multiple occupation under regulations made under Section 234 of the Housing Act 2004; imposing a requirement in respect of food premises which are subject to inspection by London borough councils under the Food Safety Act 1990 to display copies of inspection notices or summaries thereof on the premises; to impose a new licensing regime for social clubs; to alter the requirements relating to the service of documents under the City of Westminster Act 1996, which deals with sex establishments; to enable London borough councils to exert better control over the licensing of premises which, but for the Licensing Act 2003 would be required to be licensed as sex encounter establishments; to enable London borough councils to delegate their functions under existing street trading legislation and enable other bodies to manage street markets; to alter the street trading legislation in the City of Westminster so as to enable Westminster City Council, without a court order, to dispose of articles seized under the Act; to make further alterations to street trading legislation in London; to control the distribution of free refreshments on the highway and in other public open places; to enable the highway authority to recover traffic management and street cleansing costs incurred as a result of public events and to have the power to close or manage traffic for certain special events; to enable the highway authority to provide charging points for electric vehicles in the highway; to enable local planning authorities to require that a deposit is

provided prior to commencement of development, to be offset against costs arising from making good damage to the highway caused by the construction of the development; to enable action to be taken against persons who interfere with gates placed in pursuance of powers under road traffic legislation; to enable councils to better control pedicabs; to enable councils to serve penalty charge notices by post where there has been a parking contravention, and where service was prevented by the vehicle driving away; to allow decriminalised enforcement in respect of advanced stopping areas for cyclists at traffic lights; to allow decriminalised enforcement in respect of the use of mobile phones whilst driving; to enable London borough councils to vary fixed penalty levels for cycling on the footway; to enable the better control of the depositing of builders' skips on the highway; and to provide for a decriminalised regime of enforcement in relation to the driving of abnormal vehicles on the highway;

- (b) to enact any additional, supplemental and consequential provisions that may appear to be necessary or convenient.

11. **Question time**

The selected questions submitted under the provisions of standing order 39 had been circulated together with written responses from the respective Lead Members. The Members who had put the questions were invited to ask their supplementary questions.

The following five questions had been selected by the Leader of the Labour Group.

Charges for visitor parking scratch card booklets

The question from Councillor Butt had asked where the decision had been taken to increase the cost of a booklet from £5 to £10 and how it could be justified. Councillor Butt pointed out that he was referring to visitor parking and not the level of penalty charge notices. In his supplementary question he asked how much had been raised by this increase and how long would it be before the charge was doubled again to £20.

Councillor D Brown replied that the level of charge had not been reviewed since 1997 and costs had obviously risen since then. The details had been reported to the Executive nearly one year ago when it was estimated that £165,000 would be raised from increasing the charge for visitor parking. This had not made up for the substantial amount of money lost due to the wording of tickets found to be inappropriate but it was a step towards getting the parking account back on to a proper footing.

Staff at Carlyon Print

The question from Councillor R Moher had asked how many members of staff had been offered redundancy. Councillor R Moher stated that the answer she had received indicated that there were 10 workshop employees made redundant, 12 given early retirement and only one redeployed within the Council. As a supplementary question, she asked that, given the Council was falling well short of its own target of having 5% of the workforce made up of people with disabilities, what steps were being taken by the Council to try to redeploy the 22 employees released from Carlyon Print and why it was possible to place only one.

Councillor Colwill replied that the Worksteps employees were provided with training on job searching by Brent in2 Work. The local Job Centre Plus staff including the Disability Employment Advisers and the Benefits Advisers attended the Carlyon workshop to give staff individual appointments. All Worksteps employees were supported to make claims with Job Centre plus and where requested arrange interviews with the Disability Employment Advisers. All staff were given information about vacancies and the opportunity to apply for vacant posts in the Council during the redundancy notice period. They were supported to make an application if they wished. Two staff were redeployed, one of the Workstep employees and one of the management staff. The remaining 26 staff were made redundant of whom 15 were over 50 and were granted early retirement (12 Worksteps and 3 management staff). Nine of the staff had been offered links with the specialist Stonebridge Projects group (employment support service for people with learning disabilities) and three staff were currently using the service and attending interviews for jobs/training. All Brent resident staff had been offered the opportunity to attend the weekly Job club at Brent in2 Work, following the training offered to them.

Spitting

The question from Councillor Farrell had asked what progress was being made on introducing a bye-law to control spitting. Councillor Farrell welcomed the reply she had received to her question indicating the action taken so far. In a supplementary question she asked when the preparatory work for the bye-law would be completed and if the Local Strategic Partnership would be involved as she felt partnership working on this issue was crucial to addressing the problem.

Councillor Van Colle undertook to reply in detail to Councillor Farrell in writing.

Staffing levels at South Kilburn Housing Office

The question from Councillor Arnold had asked what the reduction in staffing at the housing office had been and if it had been an efficiency saving, in which case what was the value of the saving. Councillor Arnold stated that the withdrawal of the tenancy service in the south Kilburn office in addition to the closure of the One Stop Shop was an abrupt reduction after years of partnership working to improve service quality for local people. As a supplementary question she asked how the Council and Brent Housing Partnership justified the decision at a time when additional support was needed to prepare for the stock transfer ballot and transition to Hyde Housing management and how it would consult with and keep people informed and safeguard the special service for vulnerable tenants.

Councillor Allie replied that the question needed to be directed to Brent Housing Partnership but he was confident that the Partnership was committed to providing a quality service and would continue to consult and listen to the views of local residents.

Library strategy

The question from Councillor Powney had asked how the proposal to keep open all the existing libraries and extend opening times squared with the Council's financial strategy. Councillor Powney felt that the reply he had received indicating that opening hours would be reconfigured, not necessarily increased did not tie in with the Library strategy now out for consultation. He drew on examples from the strategy that indicated that resources would be needed to extend opening hours and that the current library service could not be sustained within current revenue allocations and that major capital funding was also needed. He asked as a supplementary question if the Lead Member would agree that any member of the public reading the strategy would be misled into believing that the Administration was soon to increase resources for the library service and that therefore the consultation on the strategy was misleading just as the Leader's pledge last year to freeze the Council Tax had been.

Councillor Van Colle replied that the Administration was still having to deal with the £300,000 underfunding of the Library Service it had inherited. It was the intention of the Administration to have a better library service at the end of its term than it had inherited. There would be the budget necessary to run the library service plus the extra £300,000 already put into it.

The following three questions had been selected by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Police Community Support Officers

The question from Councillor V Brown had asked what the positive impacts of the decision to provide an extra 16 PCSO's had been. As a supplementary question she asked what other initiatives had been introduced by the Administration to improve public safety.

Councillor Matthews outlined some of the initiatives being introduced. She referred to the earlier decision of the Council to introduce a borough wide Controlled Drinking Zone, a reduction in the number of burglaries from 'cold calling' scams, investment in CCTV for Willesden High Road with other areas to follow, an awareness campaign on the dangers posed by the up and coming festive season, crime reduction partnership working targeted at young people who were often themselves a victim of crime, particularly personal robbery on their way to and from school and an advocacy project in schools dealing with conflict resolution. She concluded by saying that the Council was continuing to work with its partners to improve safety in Brent.

Plastic recycling

The question from Councillor Sneddon had asked what progress had been made on extending plastic recycling to flats. He welcomed the plans already underway and as a supplementary question asked what the timescale would be and when would residents be able to practically benefit from the proposals.

Councillor Van Colle apologised for not including this information in his original answer. He stated that the plan was to begin in December collecting on an estate by estate basis with all estates included by March 2008.

School Academies

The question from Councillor Shah had asked what progress the Council had made on Academies. In the absence of Councillor Shah, Councillor Bessong asked as a supplementary question whether the Academy approach was the only option, how the Academies would be financed and what costs would fall on the Council.

Councillor Wharton replied that the capital costs were met by Government with the indicative cost of the proposed Wembley Academy being £31M. This was why the academy option was the only option currently open to the Council. The earliest opportunity the Council would have to get government funding would be in 2011 through the Building for the Future schools programme which did not currently recognise Brent's existing needs.

UPVC windows in conservation areas

The question from Councillor Baker asked if the policy on replacement windows in conservation areas could be amended to allow the use of UPVC in some cases. Councillor Baker stated that many people felt they were being punished for living in conservation areas and had moved into their houses before the area had been designated a conservation area. He added that current UPVC windows could be 98% matched to the original wooden ones. As a supplementary question he asked if this important fact could be taken on board and a less draconian policy introduced which would still retain the correct character and appearance of Brent's conservation areas.

Councillor Van Colle replied that the replacement of wooden windows with UPVC was often a matter of taste and was cheaper. The whole point of a conservation area was to retain its existing quality and until the officers employed to maintain standards could be convinced that UPVC was as good as wood it was likely the policy would be retained. Nevertheless he undertook to ask officers to review the issue.

Rucklidge Avenue Social Club

The question from Councillor Joseph asked what assistance the Council could give to alleviate the dangers of the boarded up Rucklidge Avenue Social Club. She added that the police had recently attended the site on two occasions to remove people from it and had found a collection of ladies handbags. As a supplementary question she asked if the Lead Member was aware that there were people now squatting in the premises.

Councillor Van Colle replied that he was not aware of this and that as it was not a building owned by the Council it was not for the Council to take action to remove any squatters. A Section 215 notice had been issued and the owners were now talking to Registered Social Landlords regarding the future use of the building. If it proved necessary the Council would use compulsory purchase powers. In the meantime there were other actions the Council could take to minimise the nuisance caused by the building and he suggested Councillor Joseph speak to officers direct on this.

12. Items Selected by Non-Executive Members

(i) Kingsbury Swimming Pool site

Councillor Dunwell introduced the item he had raised which expressed regret that the site specific allocation for the Kingsbury Swimming Pool site had been dropped from the Local Development Framework. He felt this was a mistaken decision and would lead to further delays in getting a swimming pool into the area.

Reference was made to discussion on this topic under minute 7 above when it had generally been agreed that a swimming pool in the area was needed but that it should not be site specific.

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture) replied that he was satisfied that the decision taken by Council earlier in the meeting would not undermine the provision of a swimming pool in the area. He anticipated that there would be many more reports on this issue and it was included in the Council's sports strategy soon to be submitted to Members so there was no need for the Executive to take any additional action on the matter.

(ii) Recycling of plastics

Councillor Sneddon introduced his item which asked the Executive to take steps to ensure people living on estates who did not have access to a green box were also able to recycle plastics. He hoped that the Executive could effectively tap into the huge demand in Brent to recycle.

The additional issue of collecting organic waste and cardboard from all properties was also raised with the request that this be further examined.

Councillor Van Colle (Lead Member for Environment, Planning and Culture) replied that the recycling of plastic was one of the most pressing issues for the Council. Plastic was light and this led to difficulties when waste was measured by weight. Fortunately for the Council the facility used for the recycling of plastics had significantly increased its capacity and he expressed the view that he would like to see the Council have greater access to it. Councillor Van Colle accepted that more had to be recycled but the Executive had to work within budget on this.

(iii) Employment of disabled persons

Councillor Jones introduced the item she had raised calling on the Executive to consider how the changes introduced by the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 could be used to support the employment of disabled people in Brent. She added that if the Executive had implemented the regulations it would have been able to save some of the jobs at Carlyon Print.

It was suggested that the issue around the viability of Carlyon Print dated back to well before the introduction of these regulations and as such had not been dealt with at the time. There were issues of investment and quality that meant that Carlyon Print could not be viable. It was said that the Council was now providing specific assistance to the people previously employed at Carlyon Print to help

them move into proper jobs. The question was asked however as to what the Executive was doing to support people with disabilities to get jobs.

Councillor Colwill (Lead Member for Adults, Health and Social Care) stated that every effort had been made to save Carlyon Print and that nobody could claim not to know the issues that had long been facing it. He stated that the Executive would consider the regulations by calling for a report on the matter.

RESOLVED:-

that the responses from the Executive on the above items be accepted.

13. **Report from the Executive**

(i) *Brent Primary Care Trust*

Councillor Lorber informed members that the PCT continued to demand substantial sums of money from the Council and the response back to the PCT was that it should be approaching the Government for this money.

(ii) *Brent libraries*

Councillor Lorber stated that the Executive was supporting the library service by reversing the £300,000 cut in the service imposed by the previous administration and investing further in Kingsbury and Neasden libraries and, subject to a successful bid, Harlesden library.

(iii) *Cleaner Streets*

Following the extra investment put into the contract, Councillor Lorber stated that improvement in the cleanliness of the streets could be seen.

(iv) *Landfill tax*

Councillor Lorber reported that £3m of Council Tax was paid in landfill tax and this was set to rise by £930,000. This would result in an increase of £1.6M in the cost of waste removal.

(v) *Growing population*

Councillor Lorber informed Members that it was estimated that Brent's population was under-estimated by 18,000 people. If this was fairly recognised it would lead to extra government grant of £9M. He stated that if the Council's MPs were to support the Council in getting a fair recognition of the true

population of the borough it could lead to a freeze on Council Tax and extra investment in Council Services.

(vi) *Government grants*

The grant settlement to be confirmed in December showed only a 1% increase.

(vii) *Record recycling*

Councillor Lorber was pleased to report a significant increase in the recycling rates

(viii) *Closure of Willesden Hospital beds*

Councillor Lorber called for a responsible health service and stated that it was a scandal that the rehabilitation ward within Willesden Hospital was not open and that it was time to reopen this facility.

RESOLVED:

that the report from the Executive on the above items be noted.

14. **Report from the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

In the absence of the vice chair of the Committee, Councillor Sneddon introduced the report from Overview and Scrutiny and welcomed Councillor Jones as the new chair of the Committee. He drew attention to the recommendations to establish a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in response to the proposed consultation process by NHS London on the findings of the recent '*Healthcare for London: A framework for action*' report.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee be established with such other authorities as are consulted;
- (ii) that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council's Health Select Committee be appointed as the representative and alternate member of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (iii) that the terms of reference of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee be the same as those that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree to adopt.

15. **Guillotine**

At 10:15pm Members took a vote on whether to extend the guillotine given that the remaining business could not be dealt with in the time remaining.

RESOLVED:

that the guillotine be not extended and that upon 10:30pm the business remaining to be dealt with be adjourned to the next meeting.

16. **Motions Selected by the Group Leaders**

Say no to Stonebridge tower blocks

Councillor John introduced her motion by pointing out that local residents were in attendance to hear the debate. Her motion was not against the redevelopment of the area but sought assurances that decent places would be provided for people to live in. The Housing Action Trust Masterplan had provided for development no higher than 4 storeys. The remaining sites to be developed for mixed tenure indicated seven storeys with buildings butting up to the pavement. Councillor John acknowledged that a planning application had yet to be submitted and expressed concern over the protection of the trees in Winchelsea Road which the local residents had fought to keep and on which there now existed Tree Preservation Orders.

Councillor Corcoran moved an amendment to the motion which sought to delete reference to rejecting proposals to build tower blocks in Stonebridge South and inserting a number of points to note on redevelopment within the borough.

Councillor Blackman referred to the consultation carried out with residents on the Stonebridge Estate. He stated that some people did not mind living in high rise blocks but most people did not like the medium rise developments. Building high rise dramatically increased the density in an area and a change in the Mayor of London's policies was needed to redress this. He understood that 17 Tree Preservation Orders had been granted on the trees referred to and this was good news for the area.

At this point in the meeting the guillotine applied so members moved to the vote.

The amendment to the motion moved by Councillor Corcoran was put to the vote and declared LOST.

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

The meeting ended at 10:30pm

HB PATEL
Mayor