

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
FULL COUNCIL – 30TH JUNE 2008

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE

1. Items to be reported by the Executive

The Leader has given notice that the Executive will report to Council on the following items:

- (i) Making representations to the Post Office
- (ii) Success with cleaner streets
- (iii) The roll out of compulsory recycling
- (iv) Refurbishment of Harlesden library
- (v) Increase in participation at Kingsbury library
- (vi) Redevelopment of Kilburn library garden
- (vii) The roll out of Ward CCTV
- (viii) Recognition from London Cycle Network
- (ix) START
- (x) Learning Disabilities week
- (xi) Reallocation of funding for projects for young people
- (xii) Toilets in Queens Park
- (xiii) Greater liaison and scrutiny with Housing partners

2. Decisions taken by the Executive under the Council's urgency provisions

Under the provisions of rule 38 of the Access to Information Rules in the Constitution, the Executive is required to report to the next Full Council for information on any key decisions taken by them but which did not appear in the Forward Plan.

- (i) *Clarendon Gardens 10mph zone and gated closure*

The above item was considered by the Highways Committee on 22nd January 2008 when the decision was taken to approve the implementation of additional measures to protect the area from rat running prior to the removal of the existing experimental gated closure in May 2008.

Reason why it was impractical to defer the decision until it could be included on the Forward Plan:

The Clarendon Gardens gated closure and its forthcoming removal following a decision by Highways Committee was a highly controversial issue because of the likely reoccurrence of the rat running that it prevented. In

order to be able to comply with Highways Committee's previous recommendation to introduce alternative measures before the gate was removed in May 2008, the consultation, which closed on 9th January 2008, needed to be reported to Highways Committee for decision in order that the traffic order processing and implementation could take place to remove the gate by this date. There was insufficient time to complete this process in time if this matter was deferred to a future Highways Committee meeting.

(ii) Petition – Preston Road/East Lane junction

The above item was considered by the Highways Committee on 22nd January 2008 when the decision was taken to note the petition, to instruct officers to proceed with the scheme as consulted to implementation; and to monitor the effectiveness of the scheme and consider any opportunities for further parking and loading facilities in the area.

Reason why it was impractical to defer the decision until it could be included on the Forward Plan:

The petition was received subsequent to a public consultation in October 2007. The petition, if accepted, would have prevented the proposed scheme from being implemented as it demanded further measures to be designed. No funding existed for such additional measures and delay would result in the existing scheme not being built in this financial year, which was the only year for which funding was available. For the scheme to proceed utilising available funding, members were required to receive and decide upon the officers recommendations.

(iii) Brent House lease

The above item was considered by the Executive on 11th February 2008 when the decision was taken to agree the taking of a 10 year lease at Brent House from ground to 4th floors at Brent House.

Reason why it was impractical to defer the decision until it could be included on the Forward Plan:

A report was made to the Executive on 11th September 2007 and the principle of a 10 year extension was agreed for ground to part 4th floor. There is a second lease of part 4th which it was intended to renew under existing delegated powers. It only recently came to light in the last few days that the delegated approval did not enable to the Council to wrap these two leases into one. Having one lease only will assist the Council greatly in other outstanding lease and rent review negotiations elsewhere.

(iv) Housing management arrangements for South Kilburn temporary accommodation scheme

The above item was considered by the Executive on 18th March 2008 when the decision was taken to enter into a formal agreement with Brent Housing Partnership Limited for the management of voids in respect of the provision of housing management services for the South Kilburn Temporary Accommodation Scheme for an initial one year period and to then procure a longer term contract for the provision of housing management services for both the South Kilburn Scheme and the Brent Direct Leasing Scheme.

Reason why it was impractical to defer the decision until it could be included on the Forward Plan:

Officers believed that this decision should be considered at the March Executive as this was in the best interests of the Council and service users. Decanting of tenants in South Kilburn into alternative permanent accommodation has already commenced in accordance with the master plan, and there are already void properties. These properties could be used as temporary accommodation for homeless households, which would assist the Council in reducing numbers in hotel accommodation and the associated loss of Housing Benefit subsidy that these hotel placements incur. In addition, using the vacant properties in this way would reduce the possibility of squatting and vandalism in the blocks. This type of anti-social behaviour would result in costs to the Council, including increased management costs and security measures, as well as impacting on the tenants still in residence in the blocks in question. There were therefore strong financial reasons for considering this at the March meeting, since officers are unable to progress the scheme without a decision from Members.

(v) Brent House, High Road, Wembley – acquisition of freehold

The above item was considered by the Executive on 18th March 2008 when the decision was taken to acquire the freehold of the office building at Brent House, High Road, Wembley.

Reason why it was impractical to defer the decision until it could be included on the Forward Plan:

The owners of Brent House are currently marketing this property which is already predominantly occupied by the Council on a leasehold basis. An opportunity arose to purchase the freehold of Brent House which would secure the Council's medium term future in this building and also have a positive overall financial effect. The owners required an early completion of the purchase and as the Council was effectively in competition with other interested parties it was not possible to adhere to the usual reporting timetable as it was likely that any delay would mean that the property would be sold to another party. The acquisition of this building would provide a strategic opportunity to develop the Council's overall accommodation strategy. There was a very strong financial case that supported the acquisition.