

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE
Monday, 14th June 2004 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor John (Chair), Councillor Coughlin (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Beswick, Jones, Kagan, D Long, Lyon and R S Patel.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Fox and Thomas.

1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Coughlin declared a personal interest as a member of Brent Housing Partnership and did not take part in the discussion or voting on the Award of the Housing Management Service Contract for Private Leasing Schemes. Councillor Beswick declared a personal interest in the Main Grants Programme Funding report in so far as it related the Stonebridge Area Youth as Chair of the Board and also would not take part in the voting thereon.

2. Minutes

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th May 2004 be approved as an accurate record subject to the deletion of Councillors John, Kagan and Moher from the list of members present and the insertion of Councillor Coughlin as Vice-Chair in the Chair.

3. Revenue Budget 2004/2005

This report set out the latest position on the 2003/2004 outturn and the 2004/2005 Revenue Budget which was agreed by Full Council on 1st March 2004. It also sought approval for a number of virements and other budget transfers. Councillor Coughlin (Lead Member) pointed out that the outturn position would not be finalised for another month however the assumed level was on track. He drew attention to potential overspends in particular for agency staff, Willesden Sports Centre PFI and lamppost advertising. Budgets set aside for the implementation of the Licensing Act and food safety regulations could be reduced due to delays in implementation and he proposed that the sums deferred be transferred to increase voluntary sector grants and finance ward working proposals should the latter be agreed by Full Council.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the latest position on the 2003/2004 outturn be noted;
- (ii) that the latest budget in Appendix A of the report from the Director of Finance be noted;
- (iii) that approval be given to the virements in Appendix B;

- (iv) that approval be given to the reduction of the Environment budget by £94k for the Licensing Act 2003 with a further review later in the financial year;
- (v) that approval be given to the reduction of the Environment budget by £150k for the delayed implementation of the EU Food Hygiene Regulations and agree the pilot scheme for the HACCP;
- (vi) that £14k be added to the Voluntary Sector Grants budget;
- (vii) that it be noted that £230k is potentially available to fund Ward Working subject to a detailed report and agreement of Full Council.

4. The Best Value Performance Plan 2004/05

The 2004/05 BVPP was Brent's fifth published plan. It looked back over the last year and forward over the coming three years. Councillor D Long in introducing the report, pointed out that the style and content of the plan had changed resulting in a reduction in the amount of data required and a welcome decrease in printing costs. Additionally, as an authority assessed as 'fair' under the CPA categorisation specific detailed information was required to be set out in the Plan including information on strategic objectives for improvement, arrangements for addressing weaknesses and performance information on Best Value performance indicators. The Plan would be submitted to Full Council for approval.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to the format and content of the draft Best Value Performance Plan 2003/04 as presented at Appendix I of the report from the Director of Policy and Regeneration,
- (ii) that the 2004/05 performance plan be presented to full Council for agreement before the end of June 2004.
- (iii) that the Director of Policy and Regeneration and his staff be thanked for their work on the Plan.

5. Award of Contract for Housing Management Services for the Private Sector Leasing Schemes

This report requested authority to award a contract for housing management services in relation to the Private Sector Leasing Schemes as required by Contract Standing Order No 89. The report summarised the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of evaluation of the tenders, recommends the award of the contract.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained exempt information as specified in the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Housing to apply for an amendment to the Consent received from the Secretary of State under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985, given on 11 September 2002, in respect of the transfer of housing management functions to BHP, to enable BHP to perform housing management functions in respect of the PSL schemes from 1 August 2004;
- (ii) that the housing management functions necessary to give effect to the contract be delegated to Brent Housing Partnership subject to receipt of s.27 consent;
- (iii) that the Director of Housing be authorised to decide the exact wording of the delegation to be included in the contract;
- (iv) that the contract for the Housing Management Services for the Private Sector Leasing Schemes be awarded to Brent Housing Partnership Limited subject to the consent of the Secretary of State to the delegation of the relevant housing management functions to BHP.

6. Negotiations with the Stonebridge HAT in relation to Proposed Development Plans for Stonebridge Primary School and Our Lady of Lourdes RC School

Councillor Lyon indicated that this was an interim report requesting the Executive to note that discussions between officers of the Council and Stonebridge HAT have taken place for the re-provision of new build schools for Stonebridge School and Our Lady of Lourdes RC School and seeking agreement for negotiations with the Stonebridge HAT to proceed in consultation with the Schools, the Diocesan of Westminster, relevant stakeholders and, through the schools with their community. Both schools were in need of repair. Councillor John emphasised that decisions will not be taken without consultation and hoped that a better use of the facilities in the future would result in a decrease in anti-social activity nearby.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that officers continue negotiations with Stonebridge HAT to consider proposals for the development of two new 1 Form Entry school buildings at Stonebridge (to replace the existing buildings currently located at Shakespeare Aveune and Wesley Road), subject to such

proposals being cost neutral to the Council and being in the LEA's and the schools' longer term best interest;

- (ii) that officers ensure that the best possible deal is procured with the HAT to meet the needs of both the schools and the local community;
- (iii) that it be noted that a further report will be submitted to a later meeting of the Executive updating on progress in the negotiations with the Stonebridge HAT.

7. What Young People Want Best Value Review 2004 – Implications For Youth Service

This report informed members about the result of the 'What Young People Want' Best Value Review in relation to Brent Youth Service. Councillor Lyon referred to the recommendations and detailed action plan which may have funding implications. He also pointed out that the Youth Service was financially constrained and therefore a strategic overview was required. It was hoped that the Transforming Youth Work initiative would help achieve objectives. The Director Education advised the Executive that an external inspection was expected and Councillor John agreed that this was a very important report and review.

RESOLVED:

that the recommendations set out in pages 20 to 34 of the Best Value Review Document (Appendix A) be noted and agreement given to the action plan set out in appendix one to that document.

8. Evaluation of EDP2 (2003-4)

EDP2 was originally for the period 2002-7, but from 2006 there will be a single education plan, incorporating all statutory plans for education, of which the EDP is one. This report summarised the implementation of EDP2 in 2003-4.

RESOLVED:

that the progress made with EDP2 be noted, actions being taken endorsed and the report referred to the Lifelong Learning Panel.

9. Main Grants Programme Funding 2004/05

This report provided an overview of the Main Grants Programme, July 2004 – March 2005. It sought decisions from Members on the allocation of the budget. Councillor Lyon advised that this was the first report to be submitted under the new arrangements. The conditions were more stringent allowing officers to be clear as to the benefits being provided. Eight new organisations had applied for funding. The Executive noted the written representations from Real Action and Councillor Lyon stated that he

had spoken to the organisation's representative earlier in the day and clarified the reasons why they were not being recommended for funding.

Councillor John proposed an amendment in relation to the Bengali Educations following concerns raised about the management of the organisation. She added that this was the first time that grants were being allocated in accordance with priorities in the Council's Corporate Strategy. Organisations were being encouraged to seek alternative sources of funding elsewhere as the Council would not be in a position to continue providing grants from core funding year on year. The review of grant funding would continue to meet varying needs in a fair and equitable way.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to the allocation of the Main Grants Programme for July 2004 to March 2005 as recommended by officers in the report from the Director of Education and the attached appendices subject to conditions and other requirements specified therein save that in respect of the Bengali Community Education Centre no further monies should be paid to the organisation until the Executive is satisfied that there are no outstanding management issues;
- (ii) that the Hindu Council Brent be allowed to administer the 2004/05 Navratri and Dashera festivals subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 8 of this report and paragraph 5 of the Hindu Council Report in Appendix B1.

10. Deputation – School Meals Service

Mary Turner (GMBW) addressed the Executive on the tendering of of the School meals contract and the reasons why she felt it had not been successful. These related primarily to the conditions of the kitchens and equipment. She reminded the Executive of the importance of school meals given the current Government initiatives for drive for healthy eating and the fight against diabetes. She regretted the lack of consultation with the Trades Unions who represented meals staff many of whom were low paid. She considered unacceptable proposals to provide children with packed lunches and argued for the imposition of LEA guidelines. Staff doing equivalent work should be paid fairly and equitably and there should not be differing rates between schools. She asked for justice for the staff who were loyal to the Borough so they could return to providing the best possible service for the children.

11. Primary School Exemption from School Meals Tendering Process

The report before the Executive provided an update on the retendering of a schools meals contract on behalf of those schools which expressed an interest in being part of a centrally let contract. The report explained that the tendering process was unsuccessful as the Council received no compliant tenders and proposed that the Executive agree that for good

financial and operational reasons the schools may enter into new school meal contracts without complying with the tendering requirements contained in the schools Financial Regulations.

Councillor John in response to the deputation from Mary Turner (GMBW) clarified the Council's position which was one of facilitator since school meal provision had been outsourced to private contractors. Councillor Lyon agreed with the sentiments on the importance of school meals and regretted that the lack of consultation and the poor response to the tendering exercise. School governing bodies were responsible for decisions on school meal provision and were under obligation to go out to competition and achieve value for money. Staff conditions would be protected under TUPE provisions. John Christie (Director of Education, Arts and Libraries) added his regret to the lack of consultation with trades unions and emphasised the need to work with schools in adhering to national standards and improve services. He anticipated that only one school having to provide packed lunches as an interim measure. Brent Transport Services were also confident of a successful contract. Redundancies were not envisaged. John Christie also made reference to schools' appreciation of the service provided by meals staff recognising that the uncertainty had led to difficulties. However, he hoped new arrangements would be in place by September. Councillor Coughlin was also sympathetic to concerns raised by Mary Turner and looked forward to a new contract that would run for a number of years. It was noted that it would not be possible to bring the meals service back in house particularly given the capital costs that would be required.

The Executive noted that real concerns for staff's employment and position and pension provision and that a resolution was being sought. Councillor Lyon proposed a motion amending the recommendations in the report to refer to the requirements under the Council's Standing Orders and schools' financial regulations which was agreed.

The Executive also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained exempt information as specified in the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, namely:-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that where the estimated value of the contract is £150,000 or more that there are good operational and/or financial reasons, as set out in paragraph 6.25 of this report, for the schools detailed in Appendix 1 not to comply with the Council's Standing Orders in relation to the award of a school meals contract as otherwise required to do by the Schools' Financial Regulations;
- (ii) that the Director of Education, Arts and Libraries (or in his absence the Assistant Director, Planning, Information and Resources) be

authorised to assess whether the reasons set out in paragraph 6.25 apply to any school not included in Appendix 1 seeking to enter into a school meals contract and if he is satisfied that they do to approve an alternative process to be undertaken by the school which ensures value for money is obtained.

12. Consultation Feedback on Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4 (Spg4): Design Statements

This report gave Members feedback on the results of the public consultation process undertaken on a new draft Supplementary Planning Guidance note 4 (SPG4) Design Statements, and seeks approval of the document. The SPG had been produced to supplement the policies in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in January 2004 to replace the Borough's 1996 plan. Councillor Jones (Lead Member) advised that there had been wide consultation and no formal objections had been received.

RESOLVED:

that the SPG4 Design Statements, attached as Appendix 2, be adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

13. Willesden Sports Centre Closure - Relocation

This report provided Members with an overview of the relocation plan for individuals and clubs/schools that currently use the Willesden Sports Centre for the duration of the closure period. Councillor Jones advised that slippage in the redevelopment had been reallocated to other facilities and additional subsidy would be required. She outlined alternative arrangements for users during the closure period including transport arrangements. Councillor Jones congratulated staff for their management of the project which had involved a lot of work.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the proposed relocation strategy as set out in the report from the Director of Environment be noted and approved;
- (ii) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Environment to make adjustments to this strategy from time to time as necessary.

14. Cemetery and Mortuary Service and Parks Service Capital Spend Programme 2004/ 2005

This report made recommendations to Members detailing the capital spend programme for the Cemetery and Mortuary Service and the Parks Service. Councillor Coughlin queried Harrow Council's contribution to the cemeteries and mortuary service and reminded that any underspend in the capital programme should come back to the centre.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the capital spend be utilized as follows:

Cemeteries & Mortuary	% of Budget	Amount Of Budget
Memorial Safety	25%	£34k
H & S Works	10%	£14k
DDA works	37%	£50k
Mortuary Improvements	28%	<u>£36k</u>
Total		£134k
<u>Parks</u>		
Sports	32%	£200k
Best Value Improvement Plan	41%	£253k
Repairs and maintenance	27%	<u>£170k</u>
Total		£623k

- (ii) John Billam Capital receipt - that approval be given to the use of the John Billam Capital receipt as set out in paragraph 8.6.7 of the report subject to clearance by the Executive in July 2004 following a review of the Capital Programme for 04/05;
- (iii) 'Stables Art Gallery' – that the capital programme funding be used as set out in paragraph 8.9.4.

15. **Brent Playing Pitch Strategy 2003-2008**

This report provided Members with a covering report for the Brent Playing Pitch Strategy. The Strategy identified issues affecting the use and management of playing pitches in parks and at other open spaces in the Borough. The role of various partners involved in the provision of improvement opportunities of playing pitches and ancillary sports facilities was summarised. The Strategy made recommendations for improvement and detailed an action plan for delivery. The Playing Pitch Strategy provides detailed information that will contribute to the implementation of the Brent Sports Strategy.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the results of the Brent Playing Pitch Strategy 2003-2008 as set out in Appendix A to the report be noted;
- (ii) that approval be given to the Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan as set out in paragraph 9.3 of the Brent Playing Pitch Strategy 2003-2008 (Appendix A of the report refers).

16. A Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity In Brent 2004 - 2009

This report provided Members with an overview of the Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity in Brent. The Strategy identifies the key issues affecting participation in sport and physical activity in the borough and the various partners involved in the provision of sporting opportunities. The Strategy is for the development of sports and physical activity in Brent and not a document for the Council's Sports Service, although clearly it will inform the future work of the sports service. The Strategy recommends the key target groups, priority sports and themes that should become the focus of the Council's work.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the findings of the Strategy be noted;
- (ii) that agreement be given to the key themes within the Strategy as set out in paragraphs 8.12 of the report from the Director of Environment;
- (iii) that the identified target groups as set out in paragraph 8.18 of the report be agreed;
- (iv) that approval be given to the Council focusing its work on the foundation, participation and performance elements of the sports development continuum;
- (v) that the proposed 8 priority sports as set out in paragraph 8.19 of the report be agreed.

17. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm

A JOHN
Chair

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