



Brent

SUMMONS TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 10 July 2017 at 7.00 pm

Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

To the Mayor and Councillors of the London Borough of Brent and to each and every one of them.

I hereby summon you to attend the MEETING OF THE COUNCIL of this Borough.

CAROLYN DOWNS
Chief Executive

Dated: Friday 30 June 2017

For further information contact: Thomas Cattermole, Head of Executive and Member Services: 020 8937 5446, thomas.cattermole@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes, reports and agendas, and to be alerted when the minutes of this meeting have been published visit: democracy.brent.gov.uk

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting
Please note this meeting will be filmed for live broadcast on the Council's website. By entering the meeting room you will be deemed to have consented to the possibility of being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting.

Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest** in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also a Prejudicial Interest (i.e. it affects a financial position or relates to determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission, or registration) then (unless an exception at 14(2) of the Members Code applies), after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

***Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences**- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

(a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of trade union).

(b) The interests a of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward affected by the decision, the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who employs or has appointed any of these or in whom they have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000, or any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director
- any body of a type described in (a) above

Agenda

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence from Members.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1 - 8

To confirm as a correct record, the attached minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2017.

3 Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant personal, prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, and the nature of these, in any matter to be considered at this meeting.

4 Mayor's Announcements (including any petitions received)

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

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

To agree any appointments to Committees, in accordance with Standing Order 37 (g).

6 Reports from the Leader and Cabinet

To receive reports from the Leader and Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 38.

7 Deputations (if any)

To hear any deputations received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 39.

8 Questions from Members of the Public

For members of the public to ask questions to members of the Cabinet, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 39A.

9 Petitions

For Councillors to refer to any petitions received and debate a petition

with more than 200 signatures in accordance with the Council's petition rules and Standing Order 68.

10 Non Cabinet Members' Debate

To debate an issue raised in accordance with Standing Order 39B and to receive reports from Cabinet members in issues previously raised.

11 Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members 9 - 18

For questions to be put to members of the Cabinet in accordance with Standing Order 40.

12 Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees 19 - 26

To receive reports from the Chairs of the Council's Scrutiny Committees in accordance with Standing Order 41.

13 Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee 27 - 30

To receive a report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee in accordance with Standing Order 41A.

14 Changes to the Constitution 31 - 34

For Full Council to agree the changes to the Constitution as specified within the attached report.

15 Fire Safety in High Rise Tower Blocks 35 - 38

This agenda item provides an opportunity for Members to debate fire safety in high rise tower blocks.

16 Motions 39 - 44

To debate any motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 45.

17 Urgent Business

At the discretion of the Mayor to consider any urgent business, in accordance with Standing Order 37 (r).



Please remember to switch your mobile phone to silent during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on Wednesday 17 May 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Parvez Ahmed

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Bhagwanji Chohan

COUNCILLORS:

Aden	Agha
Allie	Bradley
Butt	Carr
Chan	S Choudhary
A Choudry	Colacicco
Colwill	Conneely
Crane	Daly
Davidson	Denselow
Dixon	Duffy
Ezeajughi	Farah
Harrison	Hector
Hirani	Hoda-Benn
Hossain	Hylton
Jones	Kabir
Kansagra	Kelcher
Long	Mahmood
Maurice	McLeish
McLennan	Miller
Moher	J Mitchell Murray
W Mitchell Murray	Naheerathan
M Patel	RS Patel
Perrin	Ms Shaw
Ketan Sheth	Krupa Sheth
Southwood	Stopp
Tatler	Thomas
Van Kalwala	Warren

Apologies for absence

The Mayor outlined that direct apologies for absence had been received from: Councillors Collier, Khan, Marquis, Mashari, Nerva, Pavey, Pitruzzella and Shahzad.

Before the formal business of the meeting began, the Mayor asked all Members and guests present to remember those dear to the Council and Civic Office who had passed away recently. He noted the sad passing of former Mayoress Rose Lebor, and former Councillor and Mayor, Cyril Shaw.

A minutes silence was observed.

1. **To elect the Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2017/2018**

The Mayor asked Members for nominations to the Office of Mayor of the London of Borough Brent for the Municipal Year 2017/2018.

Councillor Butt (Leader of the Council) proceeded to nominate Councillor Chohan. He stated that Councillor Chohan had been a committed Deputy Mayor over the last year and had been a vocal advocate for encouraging residential participation in community projects across the borough. He stated that he had every confidence that he would continue to encourage ties between the Council and underrepresented communities, to ensure that every resident had a voice.

Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader of the Council) seconded Councillor Butt's nomination for Councillor Chohan to become the new Mayor of Brent. She stated that she believed Councillor Chohan had proven himself to be capable and conscientious in his role as Deputy Mayor and that his grassroots experience of the voluntary sector was extensive and would prove to be an asset to the Mayoral Office.

There were no other nominations and it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor Chohan be elected Mayor of the London Borough of Brent for the 2017/2018 municipal year.

Councillor Chohan proceeded to sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor and took over the chairmanship of the meeting.

2. **To Appoint a Councillor of the Borough to be Deputy Mayor**

The new Mayor announced that he had appointed Councillor Mahmood as Deputy Mayor for the 2017/2018 municipal year.

The Mayor's robe and chain of office was then passed from Councillor Ahmed to Councillor Chohan. Councillor Ahmed was presented with the past Mayor's badge and ribbon and Mrs Lena Ahmed was presented with the past Mayoress' badge.

The Mayor thanked Members for electing him as Mayor and for their support during his year as Deputy Mayor. He also paid tribute to his predecessor, Councillor Ahmed, and expressed further thanks to the Officers at the Council who had already assisted him in a smooth transition to becoming Mayor.

He expressed his desire to continue the efforts of the previous Mayor in increasing ties between the Council and underrepresented communities across the Borough and that he believed that the Office of the Mayor was a figurehead to bring everyone together. The Mayor also announced that he would be supporting the Asian Women's Resource Centre and The Akshaya Patra Foundation UK in his role during the forthcoming municipal year.

He concluded by welcoming the new Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mahmood, to his role and that he looked forward to a prosperous civic year ahead.

3. Vote of Thanks to the Outgoing Mayor

The Mayor invited Councillor McLennan to propose a vote of thanks for Co-Opted Members serving on the Council's Committees.

Councillor McLennan stated that the Annual Meeting of the Council was an opportunity to highlight the valued work of the Council's Co-Opted Committee Members. She outlined that two long standing Co-Opted Members of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Dr Jeff Levison and Mother Christine Cargill, were standing down after many years of service. Members heard that whilst Co-Opted Members' roles comprised of being 'critical friends' to the Cabinet, their objectivity and counsel aided the Council drive for continued improvement in delivering services for residents. She concluded by thanking all of the Council's Co-Opted Members for their work on the Council's Committees over the past year.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Butt to propose a vote of thanks in the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Ahmed.

Councillor Butt stated that Councillor Ahmed had been an exemplary and dedicated Mayor to the people of Brent. This, he said, had been evidenced by the vast number of events he had attended and the amount of money he had raised for three charities based in the Borough (Brent Centre for Young People, Sufra North West London and Community Action on Dementia Brent). He stated that the outgoing Mayor had been a model of determination, grit and community spirit in his civic work and had also presided over some key decisions being made at Full Council meetings. Councillor Butt asked everyone assembled at the meeting to join him in offering their sincerest thanks to the work of Councillor Ahmed as Mayor of Brent during the 2016/2017 municipal year.

The Mayor invited Members to make additional contributions in thanking the outgoing Mayor.

Councillor Colwill (Leader of the Conservative Group) congratulated Councillor Chohan on his election as the new Mayor and thanked Councillor Ahmed for his year in office on behalf of the Conservative Group. He said that it had been a pleasure to accompany him to events in Westminster and his inclusivity to all was welcome. He praised his chairmanship of Full Council meetings over the past year where he had treated all Members fairly and equally. Councillor Colwill also referenced the Mayoral support to voluntary groups and placed on record his thanks to all voluntary groups across the borough who were doing invaluable work for residents.

Councillor Warren (Leader of the Brent Conservative Group) also thanked the Mayor for his achievements during his year in office. He praised the number of engagements which the outgoing Mayor had attended. He extended best wishes to Councillor Ahmed on the conclusion of his term and wished the new Mayor well in his role.

Councillor Kabir referenced the high number of events Councillor Ahmed had attended during the past municipal year, and highlighted that many of these were also outside of Brent itself. She stated that she had heard very positive feedback about the Mayor's presence at events outside of the borough, which had shown what an exemplary ambassador the outgoing Mayor had been for the Council. She also paid tribute to the outgoing Mayoress, Mrs Ahmed, stating that the Mayor would not have been able to achieve such a successful year without her.

Councillor Davidson said that Councillor Ahmed had been a tremendous Mayor of Brent. He mentioned how professional the Mayor had been in hosting an Ulster Unionist delegation, which had contributed to all of the delegation having a fantastic day in Brent. He agreed that Councillor Ahmed had been model ambassador for the Council.

Councillor Dixon praised Councillor Ahmed as being a role model for her. She noted how cheerful and warm he had been at every event and that he had been second to none on ensuring community cohesion. She said that it was a pleasure to represent Dollis Hill ward alongside him.

Councillor McLennan stated that it had been a fantastic and whirlwind year for the outgoing Mayor. She noted how many events he had been to over the course of the year and that residents had nothing but praise for his work. She said that he would be sorely missed in the role but was confident that his fine work would continue under Councillor Chohan. She concluded by also thanking Mrs Ahmed in her role as outgoing Mayoress.

Councillor Kansagra (Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group) praised the outgoing Mayor, stating that in his 17 years as a Councillor he had not seen a Mayor attend as many functions as Councillor Ahmed. He also commended his fundraising work and stated that he would welcome Councillor Ahmed back as Mayor again in the future.

Councillor Agha concurred with all the remarks already made. He stated that the outgoing Mayor had been a hugely popular Mayor and wished him all the best for the future.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Ahmed to respond and review his year in office.

Councillor Ahmed stated how proud he was to have been elected as the first Mayor of Brent of Bangladeshi origin. He placed on record his appreciation for all of the support from both Officers and Members that he had received during his Mayoral year. He welcomed Councillor Mahmood to his new role as Deputy Mayor and thanked Councillor Chohan and Mrs Chohan for all of their hard work during the 2016/2017 civic year. He gave a recap of his year in office, noting that he had attended nearly 800 events and had been privileged to meet so many inspiring, talented and generous people across the borough. He referenced the three charities he had been supporting (Brent Centre for Young People; Sufra North West London; and Community Action on Dementia Brent) and announced that over £40,000 had been raised to share between them over the course of the civic year. He thanked everyone who had been involved in the fundraising efforts. Councillor

Ahmed also took a moment to pay tribute and present a certificate to Councillor Thomas, who was celebrating 25 years as a Councillor in Brent and Newham.

The outgoing Mayor stated that it had been a privilege to represent the borough at so many events and welcome so many visitors to the Mayor's Parlour at the Civic Centre. He concluded by thanking his close friends and family for their patience and continued love and support throughout the year.

4. **Declarations of Interests**

There were no interests declared by Members.

5. **Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The minutes of the 27 February 2017 Full Council meeting be approved as a correct record; and
- (ii) The minutes of the 20 April 2017 Special Full Council meeting be approved as a correct record.

6. **Changes to the Constitution**

Councillor Butt directed Members' attention to the report on proposed changes to the Council's Constitution. He noted that the changes laid out had been through the Council's formal Constitutional Working Group (CWG) and had been the subject of countless discussions in order to draft the changes. He stated that the changes proposed were positive for the Council and that the envisaged creation of a new Housing Scrutiny Committee and Audit Advisory Committee would enhance democracy and accountability across the Council.

The Mayor invited Councillor Warren to speak on the Brent Conservative amendment (to delete Standing Order 13 (a) – Vote of No Confidence in the Leader). Councillor Warren stated that he had spoken about this issue before back in 2014 but that no progress had been made in changing the system of voting no confidence in the Leader of the Council. He said that this standing order, as things stood, lacked democratic legitimacy and accountability because of the raft of constitutional stipulations which needed to be undertaken before a vote could be held.

Councillor Kansagra commented that this issue had already been discussed and decided upon at previous Full Council meetings. He made the point that opposition groups should accept that the Leader will be comprised from the largest party at the Council and it is up to them to decide who the Leader will be. He outlined that the Council had a Constitution which it adhered to and that the proposed amendment was unnecessary.

Councillor Butt responded stating that Councillor Warren had always had the opportunity to attend internal CWG meetings and put forward his proposal but had chosen to come to the annual meeting to disrupt proceedings and to try and score political points.

Councillor Warren requested a recorded vote on the Brent Conservative Group's proposed amendment. The amendment was put to the vote and declared **LOST**.

Voting was recorded as follows:

FOR the amendment (3):

Councillors Carr, Shaw and Warren.

AGAINST the amendment (45):

Councillors Aden, Agha, Ahmed, Allie, Bradley, Butt, Chan, S Choudhary, A Choudhry, Colacicco, Colwill, Crane, Daly, Davidson, Denselow, Dixon, Duffy, Ezeajughi, Farah, Harrison Hector, Hirani, Hoda-Benn, Hossain, Hylton, Jones, Kabir, Kansagra, Long, Maurice, McLeish, McLennan, Miller, Moher, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Naheerathan, R Patel, Perrin, Ketan Sheth, Krupa Sheth, Southwood, Tatler, Thomas and Van Kalwala.

ABSTENTIONS to the amendment (2):

Councillors Chohan and Mahmood.

(Note: Councillors Conneely, Kelcher, M Patel and Stopp had left the meeting at the time of the recorded vote)

The recommendations on the changes to the Constitution contained within the report for agenda item number six were then put to a vote and declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The changes to the Constitution proposed within the report for agenda item number six and authorisation for the Chief Legal Officer to amend the Constitution be approved; and
- (ii) The proposed amendments to the Members' Allowance Scheme and authorisation for the Chief Legal Officer to fulfil the publicity requirements be approved.

7. **Representation of Political Groups on Committees**

The Mayor briefly introduced the report from the Chief Legal Officer which fulfilled the Council's duty to review and determine the representation of different political groups on certain Committees at its annual meeting.

No Members indicated that they wished to speak and the proposed recommendations in the report were put to a vote and declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The size of each Committee be agreed;

- (ii) The allocation of seats on Committees to each of the Council's political groups (where the rules of political balance apply) be agreed; and
- (iii) The political balance on the Council's Sub-Committees be reviewed at the first meeting of the General Purposes Committee.

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

The Mayor referred Members to the report which outlined the nominations for appointments to Committees, Joint Committees, Forums, Panels, Outside Bodies and nomination for Chairs and Vice Chairs, where necessary, for the 2017-2018 municipal year.

No Members indicated that they wished to speak and the proposed recommendations in the report were put to a vote and declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The proposed appointments of Members, Co-Opted Members and substitutes to Council Committees, Joint Committees, Panels, Forums and Outside Bodies for the 2017-2018 municipal year be agreed;
- (ii) The proposed appointments of Chairs and Vice Chairs for these Committees, Joint Committees, Panels, Forums and Outside Bodies for the 2017-2018 municipal year be agreed; and
- (iii) The appointments of the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and Joint Executive Committees and their respective Chairs and Vice Chairs for the 2017-2018 municipal year be noted.

(The full list of appointments can be found as part of Appendix A to the [supplementary pack](#) which was circulated before the meeting).

9. **Calendar of Council Meetings for the 2017/2018 Municipal Year**

The Mayor drew Members' attention to the report for agenda item number nine on the proposed calendar of meeting dates for Full Council and other meetings during the 2017-2018 municipal year.

He invited Councillor Warren to introduce the Brent Conservative Group amendment on adding a 20 November 2017 Full Council meeting to the calendar. Councillor Warren stated that he believed the plan to remove the November Full Council meeting from the calendar was a mistake and represented another example of a lack of democracy within the Council. He said that any residents who wished to make a deputation to Full Council would have to wait four months between September and January and that it was in the interests of democracy to reinstate the November Full Council meeting.

Councillor Butt responded by stating that Councillor Warren always had the opportunity to hold the Council to account through attending and speaking at Cabinet meetings, yet he rarely did so. He maintained that the Council was

improving democratic oversight through the creation of new Scrutiny and Audit Committees and that residents had the right to petition the Council at any time. He concluded by stating that the Labour group were always out on the doorstep across the borough listening to residents' concerns and opinions.

In response, Councillor Warren stated that when he did attend Cabinet meetings he was rarely given the opportunity to speak on issues. Councillor Duffy also added that he felt Councillor Warren's request for an extra Full Council meeting was reasonable.

Councillor Colwill asked to put on record the Conservative Group's dismay at Councillor Warren's behaviour at the annual meeting and apologised to all residents in attendance.

The Brent Conservative amendment was put to a vote and was declared **LOST**.

The proposed recommendations within the report were put to a vote and declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The proposed dates for Full Council and other meetings to take place during the 2017-2018 municipal year be agreed; and
- (ii) The Head of Executive and Member Services would be granted the authority to make any alterations deemed necessary to the municipal calendar during the course of the municipal year having consulted the Leader of the Council; the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group and the Chair of the affected meeting.

10. **Urgent Business**

There was no other urgent business to be transacted.

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm

COUNCILLOR BHAGWANJI CHOCHAN
Mayor



Questions from the Opposition and Other Non-Cabinet Members Full Council – 10 July 2017

1. Question from Cllr Crane to Cllr McLennan, Deputy Leader of the Council:

As local government moves into Q2 of an eighth consecutive year of austerity, would the Deputy Leader summarise what this borough has had to cope with and how we have fared?

Response:

In response to Cllr Crane's question on the impact of eight years of austerity in Brent, that as we know, received some of the highest levels of grant funding. The Council has already made significant savings of £150m between 2010/11 and 2017/18, with a further £14m already identified in 2018/19.

Further savings of £20 million will need to be made in 2019/20. Local Government funding fundamentally changed in 2013/14 where the formula grant was replaced by Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Business Rates (retained and top up).

However, RSG has reduced from £116m in 2013/14 to £43m in 2017/18 and will be zero in 2020, where the Authority's income reliance will be based on the collection of Council Tax, Business Rates and the Fees and Charges to residents.

In essence, the Council will need to ensure it earns the necessary income to support the most vulnerable services in the first instance.

2. Question from Cllr Colacicco to Cllr Southwood, Lead Member for Environment:

Can the Lead Member for Environment please assure residents that Brent council will fight all attempts to drill for shale gas in the borough, and put the health of residents and the environment before revenue?

Response:

I know that Cllr Colacicco is an ardent champion of the environment and has taken a lead in voicing local opposition on these matters. I welcome this important question and do appreciate the opportunity that it provides to reassure residents and remind would-be-frackers that this council has, as of 2013, made itself abundantly clear in its opposition to fracking. Before they can explore for shale gas, drilling companies need to have been issued with a PEDL licence (Petroleum Exploration and Development Licence) issued by the Oil and Gas authority.

At the moment, there is no authority granted for any company to do exploratory testing. For the avoidance of doubt, as well as ensuring that any speculative approaches are immediately and publicly rebuffed, in the strongest possible terms, this council will seek further assurance from regional and national government that all relevant policies and plans are sufficient to the task of guaranteeing that this borough's future remains frack-free.

3. Question from Cllr Conneely to Cllr M Patel, Lead Member for Children and Young People:

Could the Lead Member for Children and Young People remind Council how the previous Conservative government's proposals for reducing education funding in this borough would have affected Brent's schools and can she confirm that she is seeking assurances from this government that those plans have now been abandoned?

Response:

The Department for Education's consultation on the Conservative Government's previous proposals identified that Brent schools would have lost £3.8M of funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Brent primary schools all stood to lose funding under the proposals and even under the funding protection that was proposed, the average loss for Brent primary schools would have been £30k per primary school. This is a significant sum and whilst individual schools had not set out plans for managing this decrease, this amounts to a half time teaching post for example. Proposals to change funding for children with Special Educational Needs through a particular element of the DSG, the High Needs Block, were also a concern for Brent.

In addition to reducing funding, the proposals neglected to address the specific cost pressures that schools are experiencing, including the national living wage, higher employee contributions to national insurance and the teachers' pension scheme, and the apprenticeship levy. This made the impact of the proposals even more severe.

The Government's current position on schools funding is not clear. The Queen's speech at the opening of parliament made clear the government's intention to pursue what is described as a fairer funding formula, and also included a commitment to increasing the overall school budget as well as continuing the Pupil Premium. It remains to be seen whether this will be sufficient to protect schools from the spending power reductions referenced above. It is particularly important to hear the detail of any revised proposal regarding funding of education for children with Special Educational Needs through the High Needs Block of the DSG. We will continue to lobby through the Department for Education for a fairer funding scheme which supports Brent schools to continue to provide the education our children deserve.

4. Question from Cllr McLeish to Cllr Farah, Lead Member for Housing:

In lieu of effective national support or leadership, will the Lead Member for Housing set out how Brent has risen to the challenge of tackling what is a multi-layered housing crisis?

Response:

Political uncertainty following the General Election and the focus on Brexit negotiations, has contributed to delay in publishing much-needed detail for implementing change. For example, there is still a lack of clarity over the extension of the Right to Buy to housing association tenants and the proposal that local authorities should sell high value stock to fund the policy and continuing uncertainty about the timing and content of further welfare reforms affecting Housing Benefit.

More positively, the Mayor has secured the largest ever affordable housing budget for London to deliver new homes across all tenures, including homes at genuinely affordable rents.

In this context, long-term planning is more difficult and local approaches may be subject to change as national policy and legislation is clarified. However, the council has taken or is proposing a number of steps and, following completion of consultation, these will be set out in a revised Housing Strategy. These include:

- Bringing Brent Housing Partnership back in-house to deliver improved services to tenants and leaseholders.
- Introducing the Single Pathway for non-priority homeless households in anticipation of new duties on councils under the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- Implementing the Temporary Accommodation Reform Plan to reduce reliance on and improve the quality of housing for homeless households.
- A development programme for new council housing.
- The New Accommodation for Independent Living programme to deliver new homes for older and vulnerable households.
- A special purpose vehicle, Invest for Brent, to purchase homes in the private sector.
- New engagement structures and partnerships with Registered Providers to ensure Brent maximises investment in new homes through the Mayor's programme and other funding sources.
- Proposals to extend Selective Licensing in the private rented sector to tackle poor conditions and improve management standards (approved by Cabinet but subject to a final decision from the Secretary of State).

5. Question from Cllr Choudhary to Cllr Hirani, Lead Member for Community Wellbeing:

Can the Lead Member for Community Wellbeing confirm that this borough has at last received the extra funding for social care services as promised by government?

Response:

First let me dispel one myth. This is not extra money. The announcement in March's Budget was for £2billion 'extra' funding over the next three years. In Brent, the Tories and Lib Dems have taken over £150 million from Brent Council, significantly reducing the money that we have available locally to pay for social care.

The Government has completely ignored the fact that Conservatives and the Lib Dems have taken £5.5 billion out of social care in the last few years. In simple balance terms, the £2 billion puts social care in a net position of MINUS £2.5billion.

In addition, the Government has only committed this money for a three year period so as far as we can account for, in 2020, we will be back in the position of -£5.5 billion as the 'extra' £2 billion will no longer be there.

On the additional money, we are expecting the funding to be rolled in to the Improved Better Care Fund process but we have not had the final planning guidance for 2017/2018 nor do we have a publication date yet for this. Therefore, not a single penny of this money has reached a Brent resident to this date and we are well into this current budget year.

The Government is totally failing residents on social care by first cutting our funding, announcing imminent money back into the system and then not providing it. And more recently announcing its ill thought out Dementia tax proposals and we all know how well that went with the public.

6. Question from Cllr Krupa Sheth to Cllr Miller, Lead Member for Stronger Communities:

In recent weeks this city has suffered a series of tragic incidents. Understandably, many residents are feeling as anxious and vulnerable as they are angry and frustrated. Will the Lead Member for Stronger Communities set out how Brent has responded?

Response:

The council is united with its residents in its shock and condemnation of the recent incidents at London Bridge and in Finsbury Park. As the Leader said in his statement following the Finsbury Park attack, we can be proud of the fact that this has overwhelmingly resulted in displays of unity and compassion amongst the people of London.

Brent's current Stronger Communities Strategy has been in place since 2015. This rightly sought to draw upon our borough's natural strengths of diversity, engagement and mutual respect to build cohesive communities. This is our most effective defence against forces which seek to divide us, including violent extremists and those targeting individual groups with hate crime. From this strategy we launched our Time to Talk events, which have brought people together to share their concerns on a range of issues and focus on developing solutions. Violent extremism and hate crime have each been the topic of such events.

However, the world has moved quickly since the strategy was developed, and I have decided that the time is right to review and update it. We will be focusing on developing grassroots, community-led approaches to tackling these problems, and will engage and work more closely with faith groups, community champions, our local safeguarding boards, councillors and, through digital platforms, with the wider public. This revised strategy, and an action plan to implement it, will be launched in the autumn. Like the previous strategy, it will build on Brent's cohesion and strong sense of mutual pride and tolerance, but will also respond to a rise in hate crime, including that which followed Brexit, and outline a local approach to the Prevent strategy to demonstrate to our communities that they can have faith in us.

Overall, it is important to emphasise that our experiences with Prevent indicate that Brent does not have a visible problem with far-right activity, and there has been nothing major since the South East Alliance march in 2014, where many members attended the counter-demonstration. However, we will remain vigilant when it comes to rooting out and tackling far-right activity and radicalisation, and I will be working closely with Brent Multi-Faith Forum over the years ahead to build a multi-faith approach to tackling the evils of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

In the wake of the specific incidents themselves, the council has naturally increased its vigilance for incidents through CCTV, and monitored community and relevant cross-borough tensions, with few reported issues. Officers and I have consulted Brent Multi-faith Forum, as well as key community members and organisations, for any indication of concerns or experiences, and to offer any useful support. Everyone has been encouraged to report incidents to the police, but also to use third-party reporting sites if appropriate, as some members of the community are not comfortable reporting directly to the police. There have been two confirmed charges of hate crime linked to the attacks.

Officers have also liaised with supplementary schools to address their concerns, providing advice from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office both directly and through the supplementary schools newsletter. No concerns have been registered by mainstream schools when consulted.

Looking beyond the council's own response, the Metropolitan Police have enhanced levels of policing on the street by extending working hours, and providing high-visibility patrols around prominent mosques and Islamic locations – these sites are visited by a dedicated police vehicle at least once per shift. Brent Policing Safer Neighbourhood Teams visited all mosques in the run up to Eid, and our own Partnership Tasking Team of police officers have prioritised hotspot locations to help increase the resource in the borough.

7. Question from Cllr Colwill to Cllr Farah, Lead Member for Housing:

Following the tragic incident at the Grenfell Tower, the Conservative Group would like to know exactly how many buildings have been found to be a fire risk in Brent and the number of families that could be affected. How many of the Grenfell Tower residents have been re-housed in Brent?

Brent officers have stated that all of Quintain's buildings are up to the required safety standards. Are there other developers building on the Wembley site and have their buildings been checked for fire safety?

We would like a report from the Labour leadership of the location of any buildings which are at risk, what is being done to ensure that they are made safe for our residents and are sprinkler systems going to be installed into high rise flats in the Borough?

Response:

A comprehensive report including information on what is being done to manage the risk across the borough will be submitted to 10 July Full Council meeting. At the point of writing this response (30 June 2017):

- 3 developments have been identified through the government tests as being clad or partially clad with ACM cladding material. All 3 developments have been inspected by the fire brigade, who have stated they have a low risk of fire because they were purpose built, and have a range of fire safety measures in place. Therefore at this stage there is no indication that there will be any need for people to be asked to leave. However, both Housing Associations plan to remove and replace the cladding in the future
- Brent Council has not re-housed any K&C residents, but 2 housing officers were working in K&C and an offer of 10 properties and support to access to Private Sector properties in Brent was made to K&C, but was ultimately not needed.

Brent officers have reported that Quintain has assured them that all of their buildings are up to the required safety standards. Building control have written to all developers to seek similar reassurance, and are awaiting replies. A further update will be given across all of the issues raised in this question in the report to Full Council

8. Question from Cllr Ms Shaw to Cllr Butt, Leader of the Council:

I would like to ask the Leader of the Council - in the light of the terrible fire at Grenfell Towers and all the lives lost, quite naturally there are council residents in Brondesbury Park who are asking specific questions about their specific block. Questions have been sent to the Director of Housing for a response but as he is so inundated, no response has yet been forthcoming. This should not be the responsibility of local councillors but that of BHP and Brent Council until the transition takes place. Officers need to answer questions from residents so that their minds are set at ease.

For example a resident of 'Rosedene' requests that: *"It is important that there is transparency on information sharing, and would like Brent to confirm to residents that the cladding recently used on the roof is safe and meets the approved standard – they would also like a sample of this cladding"*.

Also, a different resident from another block is asking: *"In each high-rise block in the borough, have sprinklers been installed; is there an alarm system; have any flammable materials been used in the building construction; is there more than one exit from each floor; are the gas supply and wiring regularly monitored; are regular fire drills conducted in the blocks; have any adverse comments as to fire risks been made by the insurers"*.

Also, I would like a housing officer in charge of my area to be at hand to visit/or answer details needed from any of my blocks.

Response:

Officers in the Council and Brent Housing Partnership have been and continue to respond to all individual enquiries wherever they come from, including these. Initial responses were sent regarding the correspondence highlighted in this question, confirming what was known at the time and these have since been followed up with more information providing further reassurance.

BHP has carried out estate visits to all 37 of their high rise blocks in Brent. An estate inspector was also on-site on Rosedene on Tuesday the 27th June. The Council, BHP and other Housing Associations are also seeking to provide other opportunities to discuss individual concerns, for example: Local meetings in Alperton (19 June), Watling Gardens (20 June), and South Kilburn (4 July), and Member Briefings – 19 June and 3 July.

Individual enquiries at these events, and on email, are also informing the broader communication response, with Brent Council compiling key information and seeking to signpost to information being posted by other housing associations in the borough. This information can be found at:

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/housing/grenfell-tower/>

A comprehensive report including information on what is being done to manage the risk across the borough will be submitted to 10 July Full Council meeting.



Full Council
10 July 2017

**Report from the Director of Policy,
Performance and Partnerships**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Report from the Chair of Community and Wellbeing
Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Ketan Sheth**

1.0 Summary

This report provides a summary of the activities carried out by the Council's Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Standing Order 41. The report covers the period from 23 January 2017 and details its work programme, visits and engagement, committee discussions and training.

2.0 Detail

2.1 The remit of the committee as set out in the Constitution is overview and scrutiny of children's services, adult social care, public health, health services and the NHS, wellbeing and cultural services. There are eight elected members on the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. The members who were elected to committee in 2016/17 have been re-elected to the committee for 2017/18. The only change was that in February 2017, Cllr Suresh Kansagra replaced Cllr Reg Colwill as Vice-Chair of the committee.

The membership of the committee for 2017/18 is:

Cllr Ketan Sheth, Chair
Cllr Suresh Kansagra, Vice-Chair
Cllr Ahmad Shahzad OBE
Cllr Lesley Jones MBE
Cllr Claudia Hector
Cllr Neil Nerva
Cllr Aisha Hoda-Benn
Cllr Rita Conneely

In addition, there are six co-opted members of the committee, representing the Anglican diocese, Roman Catholic diocese, governors of primary schools, governors of secondary schools, Muslim faith schools and Jewish faith schools. They have been co-opted for the purposes of school-education.

Members of the committee are currently developing their annual work programme, which will map out and plan its activities for the municipal year 2017/18. It has also built-in enough capacity to ensure there is the flexibility to respond to events as they arise and space for issues that residents suggest.

On 21 June 2017, a member-led workshop developed a work programme for 2017/18 with input from officers from Brent Council and Brent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). This was done by filtering items according to the criteria for scrutiny and deciding what subjects or ideas would be appropriate for a task group report and what would be appropriate for a committee report. Members of the Cabinet also attended for part of the workshop.

The 2017/18 Work Programme will be agreed by committee at its meeting in July.

2.2 Engagement and development

Members of the committee undertook a visit at Northwick Park Hospital in March 2017 to meet the senior leadership team from North West London NHS Healthcare Trust for an update about services. As part of the 2017/18 Work Programme members will be considering which other visits they will want to make as part of their reports and which experts in particular policy areas from outside the local authority can complement the committee's work.

Members of the committee also continued to develop their work with the assistance of the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Councillor Sheth attended a conference organised in June 2017, which was on the theme of health scrutiny and accountability. He also presented to a meeting at the Institute of Local Government (INLOGOV) at the University of Birmingham on 30 June about the work of the committee and its approach to overview and scrutiny in the local authority. Cllr Sheth further attended the April meeting of the London Scrutiny Network in April and spoke about the activities of Brent's committee.

As well as the Centre for Public Scrutiny, members of the three scrutiny committees were involved in training in May with Cllr Barrie Taylor, who is a senior member in another London borough with significant experience of overview and scrutiny and wider policy development. .

2.3 Committee Meetings

Since the last report in January, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has met twice. A summary of the meetings follows.

On 1 February 2017, the committee received the following reports:

Annual report of the Brent Safeguarding Adults' Board

This was presented by the Independent Chair, and reviewed its work for 2015-16. Also attending the committee meeting, and taking part in the discussion, were the Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing and Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing.

The 2015/16 Annual Report provided a summary of safeguarding activity which had been carried out by the Board's partners across the social care, health and criminal justice sectors in Brent, and focused on four major areas: prevalence of abuse; multi-agency response to safeguarding risks; the Board's strategic priorities; and learning from case reviews to improve safeguarding practice.

At committee, members had a wide-ranging discussion with the Independent Chair about levels of commitment from statutory partners, the opportunities for local community and voluntary organisations to get involved in the work of the Board and the overall strengths of partnership work in Brent. There was discussion about the involvement in the work of the Board by contractors who provide housing and adult social care services for Brent Council. Members should note that the annual report of the Brent Local Safeguarding Children's Board was presented by the independent chair and discussed in November 2016. In 2017/18, it is intended that the two safeguarding reports will be heard together at Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

The Signs of Safety task group report, discussed in the last update to Council in January, also reported to the committee in February, with the recommendations presented to Cabinet in March.

On 29 March 2017, the committee received the following reports:

Annual School Standards and Achievement report 2015-2016

A report reviewing school standards and achievement for 2015-2016 was discussed. Currently, 96 per cent of Brent schools are judged good or outstanding by Ofsted, well above the national average. The arrangements which had supported this improvement were outlined to the committee. Collaborative, school-led partnerships were now a key feature of Brent's education provision. These themes were discussed with a number of Brent head teachers who attended the meeting.

Update on Specialist provision and the implementation of the SEND Reforms

Members also had a wide-ranging discussion about a report outlining the progress made in delivering reforms to services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). These reforms were required following the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014 and a new SEND Code of Practice in 2015. Among the issues discussed included progress to the deadline for conversion to the new Education, Health and Care Plans, engagement with the borough's parents, strategic commissioning with health partners and identifying children with SEND and in providing effective support to improve life chances. Members should note that as part of the 2017/18 Work Programme, members of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee are considering looking again at the SEND reforms.

The final meeting of the municipal year in May was cancelled because of the pre-election period. All of the items which were to be discussed will now be looked at in July 2017/18.

2.4 Scrutiny and Cabinet

The committee has sent a number of recommendations it made during its meetings in 2016/17 to the Cabinet for it to consider. These include recommendations about the SEND reform report which were referred to the Cabinet meeting which took place on 22 May 2017. Recommendations about contracts with housing and social care providers to encourage partnership working with the Safeguarding Adults Board referred to the Cabinet meeting which took place on 19 June 2016.

3.0 Upcoming Scrutiny Meetings and Activities

The first meeting of 2017-18 is scheduled for 19 July 2017 and the items which it will consider are:

- An update on the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP)
- A report on children's oral health
- A report on transforming primary care in Brent (presented by the Brent Clinical Commissioning Group), and
- Overview and Scrutiny's 2016/17 Annual Report.

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Full Council
10 July 2017

**Report from Director of Policy,
Performance and Partnerships**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Report from the Chair of the Resources and Public Realm
Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Matt Kelcher**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the work carried out by the Council's Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Standing Order 41. The report covers the period from 23rd January 2017 to present, detailing committee members, planned training, programme of work and items discussed during the committee meetings.

2.0 Detail

- 2.1 The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee covers corporate resources, (including Customer Services, Policy, Partnerships and Performance, Procurement and IT) as well as regeneration, regulatory services, environment, transport and community safety. The committee is composed of eight elected members.

In December 2016 Cllr S Tatler resigned from the R&PR Scrutiny Committee to take up a post on the Cabinet and Cllr Duffy was appointed to the vacant post. In February 2017 Cllr M Patel also resigned from the Committee to take up a post on the Cabinet and Cllr Mashari was appointed to the vacant post. Both were appointed to the Committee following approval by Full Council. At the AGM in May a new R&PR Committee was confirmed, and the committee has since completed its induction and work planning session for the coming year.

2017-18 Resources and Public Realm Committee Members:

Councillor Matt Kelcher (Chair)
Councillor Joel Davidson (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Abdi Aden
Councillor Lia Colacicco
Councillor George Crane
Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi
Councillor Sam Stopp
Councillor Roxanne Mashari

2.2 Engagement and development

As part of the 2017/18 Work Programme members will be considering which visits they will want to make as part of their reports and which experts in particular policy areas from outside the local authority can complement the committee's work. These may include Brent's high streets, a recycling facility, council assets and a regeneration project. The committee may also carry out other engagement activity with residents and groups, and observe the work of trading standards officers.

Members of the three scrutiny committees were involved in training in May with Cllr Barrie Taylor, who is a senior member in another London borough with significant experience of overview and scrutiny and wider policy development.

2.3 Committee Meetings

Since the last chair's report in January the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee has met twice. A summary of the meetings follows.

On 8 March 2017, the committee received the following reports:

2.3 *Environmental Sustainability*

A report summarising the work undertaken across key service areas to address the issue of sustainability was introduced to the committee by Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment). The report was wide ranging and addressed seven key areas: transport and travel; air quality; in-house carbon management; street lighting and parking; public realm and waste; parks and biodiversity; and flood risk management. The committee also welcomed representatives from the Environment Agency, Lee James (Team leader, London West Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team) and Edward Crome (Lead for engagement with Brent on planning matters) who outlined the borough's flood risks and explained the structures in place for responding to these.

Members questioned plans the council had to regenerate areas with persistently poor air quality, address traffic congestion in the borough and tackle proposals to include an incinerator in the Brent Cross Cricklewood development. They also discussed charges on diesel vehicles. Further questions were posed regarding the contractual arrangements for disposal of residual waste, referring to a BBC report which listed Brent as the second worst borough in London for fly-tipping. Members questioned whether there was insufficient targeting of enforcement activity and sought details of the level of evidence required to pursue prosecution.

2.4 *PREVENT Programme*

The committee received a report and introductory presentation on delivery of the Prevent programme in Brent. Kibibi Octave (Strategic Prevent Coordinator) highlighted that under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015, the council had a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The council approached this duty as a safeguarding concern, recognising the risks of grooming, extortion

and harm that vulnerable people could be subject to. The requirements of the Prevent Statutory Guidance, including the requirement to conduct risk assessments and develop an action plan, were outlined to the committee.

In the subsequent discussion the Committee sought further details regarding engagement with Brent's Muslim community. Members emphasised the importance of engaging the whole of a community, including seeking women's voices and of supporting good governance of community groups and organisations, including supplementary schools. Further questions were raised regarding any potential alignment with work relating to gang recruitment and activity and the provision of training to community leaders.

2.5 *Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny of Proposals Relating to Tackling Illegal Rubbish Dumping and Litter with Uniformed Street Patrols*

Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment) presented a draft report which would be finalised and submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 13 March 2017. The report reviewed the uniformed street patrol pilot which had been undertaken with Kingdom Security Ltd, outlined the available options for taking the service forward from June 2017 and concluded that the creation of an in-house service would be the most advantageous of these options.

In the ensuing discussion, several queries were raised by the committee including whether formal minutes had been taken of discussions between officers and Kingdom Security Ltd. Further information was sought regarding the intended balance of enforcement activity for minor littering offences with larger-scale illegal rubbish dumping and how amending this relationship could affect the viability of the model. Members questioned whether Kingdom Security Ltd were London Living Wage accredited, whether the anticipated wages for an in-house team were appropriate, and if the proposed future model was the best option.

On 3 May 2017, the committee received the following reports:

2.6 *Safer Brent Partnership Annual Report and Update on Community Safety Safer partnership item.*

This item was attended by Michael Gallagher (Borough Commander, Metropolitan Police), Councillor Miller (Lead Member for Stronger Communities), Karina Wane (Head of Community Protection) and Amar Dave (Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment). The committee questioned the work being undertaken to combat anti-Semitism and raised concerns regarding incidents of intimidating behaviour associated with religious sectarianism in Brent's Islamic communities. Referring to the statistics provided regarding hate crime in Brent, members sought further detail regarding the groups affected and questioned why there had been an increase in hate crime related to religion.

Members queried the procedure for information sharing with local councillors following the occurrence of a major crime in their wards. In view of the rising figures associated with anti-social behaviour and gang activity in Brent, the committee requested an overview of the work being undertaken to tackle such issues, including drug dealing and prostitution, and highlighted a number of

hotspots of illegal activity in the borough. Members questioned which initiatives were pursued with the borough's schools, particularly around issues of domestic violence and violence against women and girls.

2.7 *Task group report on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises*

The committee received a task group report on how the council can grow and enhance power of SMEs in the borough. Cllr Tatler welcomed this report and its focus on SMEs due to their importance as sources of employment. The Committee discussed businesses' online and high street presence and the council's role in supporting them to flourish in borough, as well as that of the West London Alliance and West London Business, and how the sub-region can promote and support investment. Members agreed the task group's recommendations on developing an SME support programme and a programme to improve skills, creating the role of business champion to advocate for SMEs, and investing in business incubation and support services. The report will be considered at Cabinet in July.

2.8 **Scrutiny and Cabinet**

The committee has sent a number of recommendations it made during its meetings in 2016/17 to the Cabinet for it to consider. These include recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny task group report; and the Small and medium-sized enterprises task group report which will go to Cabinet on the 10th July 2017.


3.0 **Upcoming Scrutiny Meetings and Activities**

The first meeting of 2017-18 is scheduled for 11 July 2017 and the items which it will consider are:

- Annual Overview & Scrutiny Report
- Current Financial Position, and
- Scoping paper - Use of food banks in Brent (task group).

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 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Full Council 10 July 2017</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee</p>
For Information	Wards Affected: All
<p>Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee</p>	

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the activities carried out by the Council's Audit and Audit Advisory Committees since the meeting of Full Council on 23 January 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Full Council is asked to note the content of the report.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Since the last update provided to Council the committee has met twice, on 20 March 2017 and 26 June 2017. As part of the constitutional changes agreed at the Annual Meeting the committee has been reconstituted as the Audit Advisory Committee for nearly all of its business, reflecting the fact that it is not primarily a decision making body. For those items where a decision is required – mostly limited to approving the audited annual accounts and one or two similarly important but predominantly technical items – a separate meeting of the Audit Committee will be held immediately on the rising of the meeting of the Audit Advisory Committee.
- 3.2 This distinction may seem rather obscure, but is particularly important as the committee, unusually, is chaired by an independent person (a retired senior local government officer) and also includes in its membership another independent (in this case the former chief executive of the Audit Commission). Under s102(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 the independent members were prevented from voting, but by reconstituting almost all of the business under the Audit Advisory Committee, which operates under different legislation

as it is not decision making, this legal impediment falls away, and so grants the independent members equal voting status with the elected councillors.

- 3.3 All of this matters because Brent is committed to open and transparent governance, and welcomes external scrutiny, which is why we have taken the care to ensure that the committee has two independent members (most local authorities don't even have one) and that their role is enhanced. The committee agreed to recommend to Council that the Chair should be reappointed for another two year term. He also chairs the Council's Pension Board and the Chief Finance Officer has advised that he considers that it would be appropriate for his appointment to that role also to be re-confirmed.
- 3.4 In March the committee's role was mostly to note the progress made in various pieces of audit work and to agree a plan of work for 2017/18. This will better target the work done by the audit team to those areas where most assurance is required.
- 3.5 At the most recent meeting, in June, the committee welcomed Michael Bradley as the new permanent Head of Internal Audit and Investigations. Mr Bradley is a very experienced and well regarded practitioner, and the committee expect that he will continue to strengthen the audit function. Mr Bradley, along with other specialists, also delivered a well-received training course for members of the committee a week before the meeting.
- 3.6 At the start of the meeting the committee received a presentation from the Chief Executive on the Council's response to the tragic events at Grenfell Tower. Clearly there is no room for complacency, and all of the facts about the situation within Brent are not yet known. The committee discussed the possibility of some joint work with scrutiny on the issue to ensure that there is a robust corporate review of the matter.
- 3.7 Otherwise, probably the most important item on June's agenda was the Council's Draft Accounts for 2016/17, and I would urge all members to read these: they set out how we accounted for over £1bn of public money. It is necessarily a technical document, and the Chief Finance Officer will support any member who needs any of the detail clarified. As part of this the draft annual governance statement was also reviewed, which presented a measured but positive view of the improvements made to corporate governance over the last year.
- 3.8 Members will be aware that an Objection was made to last year's accounts, and the appointed auditor, Mr Sayers of KPMG, explained the progress made in dealing with that in response to a question raised by a member of the public. We hope to receive a fuller report from the auditor shortly.
- 3.9 At the meeting we also received a report assuring us that the Council's lending and borrowing remained within approved limits and was properly managed. Members will surely recall that several years ago the Council initially lost £10m in its investments in Icelandic banks, and whilst almost all of this has now been recouped it is vital that the Committee continues to scrutinise this key function.

3.10 All of detail of the last two meetings is on the website for members to read at their leisure, but it is worth highlighting in particular that over 2016/17 the Council's Anti-Fraud Team recovered 44 illegally sub-let council properties. Given the scale of the housing pressures we face each and every property illegally sub-let for profit is a particularly unpleasant fraud, and the Council should note the vigilance of the audit team in tackling this.

3.11 Going forward, the Committee will of course continue in its key role of reviewing standards of control, the management of risks and scrutinising key financial information such as the accounts and lending and borrowing. In particular, it is worth highlighting to Members that the Committee will take a role in overseeing the performance of the Council's investment company, as a key part of good corporate governance.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Equality Implications

6.1 There are no diversity implications arising from this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 Not applicable

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 There are no staffing and accommodation implications arising from this report.


Background Papers

- Audit Committee Agenda - 20 March 2017
- Audit Committee Minutes – 20 March 2017
- Audit Advisory Committee Agenda – 26 June 2017

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 Brent	Full Council 10 July 2017 Report from the Chief Legal Officer
For Action Wards Affected: ALL	
Changes to the Constitution	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report proposes a number of small amendments, including a change to clarify the powers of the Chief Executive to make urgent decisions in the event of an emergency where she is acting as “Gold” on behalf of the London Boroughs.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council approves the change to the Constitution proposed in this report and authorises the Chief Legal Officer to amend the Constitution accordingly.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Chief Executive’s Urgency Powers: Under the constitution the Chief Executive has power to exercise any powers of the council, if that is lawful, in situation of urgency. It is proposed that an explicit confirmation that this power applies when she is acting as the “Gold” Chief Executive for London local authorities be added to the provision..

- 3.2 The proposed amendment to the Constitution is as follows:

2. Powers Delegated to Officers

.....

- 2.3.2 Exceptionally, (including at any time when the Chief Executive is acting as “Gold” on behalf of the London local authorities following the convening of the Strategic Co-Ordinating Group (“Gold Command”) notwithstanding

anything in this Constitution, the Chief Executive shall be authorised to exercise either executive or non-executive functions where the matter is urgent unless this is prohibited by law.

- 3.3 Contract Standing Orders: Amendments are proposed to the provisions in respect of collaborative procurements. These will make explicit that the requirement to seek the consent of the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Legal Officer (or for High Value Procurements, the Cabinet) if a collaborative procurement process or agreement is to depart from the Council's Standing Orders and/or Financial Regulations, applies when the council is leading the collaborative procurement as well as when another authority is leading.

Collaborative Procurement	Any arrangement between the Council and any other body under which the <u>council or the</u> other body undertakes a procurement process with or on behalf of the <u>Council/other</u> .
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85. Partnership Arrangements and Collaborative Procurement

.....

- (c) Any Collaborative Procurement shall comply with these Standing Orders and Financial Regulations unless;
- (i) agreed otherwise in writing by the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Legal Officer; or
 - (ii) in the case of a High Value Contract, the agreement of the Cabinet is obtained under Standing Order 84(a).

For the purposes of this Standing Order the contract value shall be calculated on the estimated value of the Council's part of the contract only.

- (a) Any agreement between the Council and one or more other body which includes any payment by the Council in respect of the costs of carrying out a Collaborative Procurement shall comply with these Standing Orders unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Legal Officer.

- 3.4 Standing Orders Relating to Staff: The following amendment is proposed so that express reference is made not just to the relevant standing order but also the detailed HR procedures, approved by the General Purposes Committee on 16 December 2015, which must also be followed in respect of the dismissal processes for three statutory officers:

78. Disciplinary action against the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer or the Section 151/Chief Finance Officer

- (a) No 'disciplinary action' as defined in regulation 2 of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 may be taken in respect of the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Section 151/Chief Finance Officer other than in accordance with Standing Order 79 and HR Procedures: Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for the roles of the

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 These are addressed in the body of the report.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council has a duty when exercising its functions to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not. This is the public sector equality duty. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

6.2 Due regard is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Background Papers

None

Contact Officers

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 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Council 10 July 2017</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Director Performance, Policy & Partnerships</p>
Wards Affected: All	
Report Title Fire Safety in High Rise Tower Blocks	

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out fire safety arrangements for residential accommodation in Brent and specific measures that the Council and Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) are taking in response to the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower earlier this month.

2.0 Recommendation:

- 2.1 That Full Council debate and note the contents of this report and its appendices (to follow), and in particular that all BHP tower blocks have up to date Fire Risk Assessments and comply with fire safety legislation.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1. This report provides an overview of the existing fire safety arrangements for high-rise buildings in Brent as well as actions taken and measures put in place by the Council and Brent Housing Partnership following the Grenfell Tower fire.
- 3.2 The Council and BHP take fire safety extremely seriously. Extensive measures are in place to ensure that our homes comply with fire safety regulations. Appendices detailing these measures will be sent out as a supplementary document prior to the meeting of Full Council.
- 3.3 BHP manages 37 tower blocks of 5 floors or more including 3 with cladding systems at Watling Gardens. However, the cladding used is completely different to the cladding used at Grenfell Tower and therefore we were not required to send a sample to the government for testing. The government testing is for cladding manufactured from Aluminum Composite Material

(ACM). We have double checked and the cladding is a non-combustible mineral wool material that would not promote the spread of flames externally. Residents from Watling Gardens had a demonstration from Rockwool, the manufacturers of the cladding, at a public meeting on Tuesday, 20 June to show the impressive fire resistance of the material.

3.4 Appendix 1 (to follow) to the report also sets out the Council's role in relation to homes in the borough which it does not own, and the actions we have taken to date to ensure that owners of high rise properties in the borough are responding appropriately following the Grenfell Tower fire, and the safety of residents prioritised.

3.5 The exact cause or causes of the spread of the fire at Grenfell Tower will not be known until an investigation has been carried out. Therefore, it is important to note that the scope of any investigations to be carried out on any fire safety risks and measures to be taken on the Council's high rise blocks may need to change as further information becomes available.

4.0 Finance

4.1 It is not possible at this stage to estimate the costs of any remedial works that the council may subsequently be advised are required or what, if any, government funding would be made available to cover any such costs

4.2 This report does not, at the date of despatch, recommend any immediate works that cannot be contained within existing budgets. An update will be provided at or before the meeting should this position change

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 Owners and landlords of buildings have to comply with various legal obligations to ensure the safety of others and to discharge the duty of care they owe. The practical manifestations of the Council's responsibilities will be set out in the Appendices referred to in this report and which are to follow.

5.2 As a local authority, the Council also has specified statutory duties and powers to take action against those exposing others to hazardous or dangerous living conditions due to safety risks which include fire safety.

6.0 Equality Implications

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications relating to this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 The first of two member briefing sessions took place on Tuesday 20 June 2017 with the second on Monday 3 July 2017.

7.2 In addition a series of resident briefings have taken place chaired by the relevant Member of Parliament. Barry Gardiner chaired an event Monday 19th June and Dawn Butler on Tuesday 20th June. The next one is scheduled for 4th July in South Kilburn and will be chaired by Tulip Siddiq.

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 There are no direct staffing or accommodation implications relating to this report.

Background Papers

- <https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/housing/grenfell-tower/>

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DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE, POLICY AND PARTNERSHIPS

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Full Council – 10 July 2017

Motion selected by the Labour Group

GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR FIRE SAFETY

That this council seeks urgent clarification from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as to the availability of funding for any and all post-Grenfell fire safety related works, including the possible renegotiation of contracts with external partners on development projects in progress or already underway.

This Council reminds the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP that, as we work through an eighth year of unrelenting public sector austerity, local authority budgets are under enormous pressure and, to ensure that finance is not a barrier, request immediate confirmation that the full cost of all necessary repairs and enhancements will be underwritten by government.

Councillor Rita Conneely
Kilburn Ward

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Full Council – 10 July 2017

Motion selected by the Conservative Group

GRENFELL TOWER TRAGEDY

The Conservative Group condemns the overt politicisation of the Grenfell tragedy by Jeremy Corbyn. We commend the calm and measured response from the Government to this tragedy, including the announcement of a public inquiry, substantial funding for the victims, re-housing and renewed fire safety checks on buildings across the country.

We acknowledge the speed with which Brent Council acted to support the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and all vulnerable residents.

Councillor Reg Colwill
Leader of the Conservative Group
Kenton Ward

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Full Council – 10 July 2017

Motion selected by the Brent Conservative Group

TRICYCLE THEATRE

This Council notes with dismay the recent awarding of £1m. to the Tricycle Theatre by Brent's cabinet.

This Council is particularly surprised at the decision in the light of.....

- apparent lack of monies in Brent's coffers.
- failure to invite other community groups to bid for the available £1m.
- the artistic discrimination previously shown by the Tricycle in cancelling the Jewish Film Festival.

This Council calls upon cabinet to allocate the £1m. through an open bidding process inviting applications from all community groupsnot just the Tricycle.

Councillor John Warren
Leader of the Brent Conservative Group
Brondesbury Park Ward

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