



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on Monday 9 July 2018 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Arshad Mahmood

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi

COUNCILLORS:

Abdi	Aden
Afzal	Agha
Ahmed	M Butt
S Butt	Chan
Chappell	Chohan
S Choudhary	A Choudry
Colacicco	Colwill
Crane	Daly
Dar	Denselow
Dixon	Donnelly-Jackson
Ethapemi	Farah
Gbajumo	Gill
Hassan	Hirani
Hylton	Johnson
Kabir	Kansagra
Kelcher	Kennelly
Knight	Lo
Long	Mashari
Maurice	McLeish
McLennan	J Mitchell Murray
Naheerathan	Nerva
M Patel	RS Patel
Patterson	Sangani
Shahzad	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Southwood
Stephens	Tatler
Thakkar	

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Councillors Conneely, Hector, Marquis, Miller, W Mitchell Murray, Pavey and Perrin

1. **Mayor's Statement - Order of Business**

Before consideration of the formal agenda, the Mayor informed members of a change to the order of business set out on the original summons. The Mayor advised that as the report on Changes to the Constitution included a number of proposals relating to the way Council meetings operated, he was intending to take this as the first main item enabling any changes agreed to be implemented from the start of the meeting.

In addition, he advised of the need to complete a review of the representation of political groups at the start of the meeting, in order to reflect the outcome of the countermanded election in the Willesden Green ward prior to any membership changes being agreed and also highlighted that members of the public and Youth Parliament were also present for the public question session.

As a result he intended, in accordance with Standing Order 30, to move these items forward on the agenda for consideration following the Mayor's Announcements.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that

(1) The business to be considered at the meeting be re-arranged in the following order:

- Agenda Item 6 – Changes to the Constitution
- Agenda Item 7 – Representation of Political Groups
on Committees
- Agenda Item 8 – Appointments to Committees and
Outside Bodies
- Agenda Item 9 – Questions from Members of the
Public & Youth Parliament

(2) The remaining items of business follow in the same order as listed on the agenda

2. **Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor advised that direct apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Conneely, Hector, Marquis, Miller, Mitchell-Murray, Pavey and Perrin.

Apologies for lateness had been received from Councillor Ethapemi, Hassan and Patterson.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on Monday 14 May 2018 be approved as a correct record.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared by Members at the meeting.

5. **Result of countermanded election - Willesden Green Ward**

NOTED the results of the countermanded election held in the Willesden Green ward on 21 June 2018 with the Chief Executive and her team thanked for their work conducting the poll.

6. **Mayor's Announcements (including any petitions received)**

The Mayor made the following announcements:

(i) **NHS 70th Birthday**

The Mayor reminded Members that the National Health Service had celebrated its 70th anniversary on 5 July 2018 and asked Members to join him in thanking the NHS for the vital role it had played and would continue to play in everyone's lives.

He also took the opportunity to personally thank all the extraordinary NHS staff for the support and care provided to those in need and stated how pleased he had been to attend a number of celebratory events over the past few weeks in Brent.

(ii) **Windrush Celebrations**

Following the Government's recent announcement of a national Windrush Day, the Mayor was pleased to advise that a number of celebrations had taken place on 22 June 2018 to mark 70 years since the Empire Windrush had landed at Tilbury docks, carrying 492 passengers from the Caribbean.

As part of the celebrations, Willesden Green Library was currently hosting an exhibition of Brent's Caribbean heritage, which he reminded Members would be open until October 2018.

The Mayor advised he, like many other Members, had been pleased to attend events across the borough to celebrate the windrush community's contribution to Brent.

(iii) **Annual Remembrance Service at the Jewish War Memorial**

The Mayor informed Members that he had been honoured to attend a Service of Commemoration at the Jewish War Memorial held in Willesden on 10 June, along with the Deputy Lieutenant, Mei Sim Lai.

(iv) **Armed Forces Day**

The Mayor informed Members that Armed Forces Day had been held on 30 June 2018, which had provided an opportunity to show support for the men and women from the Armed Forces community. He was pleased to advise that the Council had proudly flown the armed forces flag above the Civic Centre in order to honour serving troops, their families, veterans and cadets.

(v) **Mayor's Civic Service**

The Mayor reminded Members that his Civic Service, hosted by the Chief Executive, would be taking place at the Civic Centre on Monday 30 July 18, starting at 6.30pm.

Members wishing to attend were asked to contact the Mayor's Office to reserve a ticket.

(vi) **Love Chalkhill Festival 2018**

The Mayor reminded all Members of an open invitation for them to attend the Annual "Love Chalkhill Festival 2018" on Saturday 14 July 2018. He hoped as many Members as possible would be able to attend.

(vii) **Pride Celebrations**

The Mayor advised that he had been delighted to see so many thousands of people lining the streets of central London for the city's annual LGBT Pride celebration, which had involved about 30,000 people from almost 500 LGBT groups.

(viii) **Teaching Award**

The Mayor took the opportunity to congratulate Shalina Patel of Claremont High School, who he advised had recently won a national teacher award. He also advised that, as a result, Shalina had been entered into a national teaching award in October for which he wished her well, on behalf of the Council.

(ix) **World Cup**

The Mayor congratulated the national football team for all they had achieved so far at the world cup. Like many others, he advised he would be watching the semi-final against Croatia and felt that whatever the outcome their progress represented an amazing achievement which showed how sport could play a role in bringing communities together.

On behalf of all Members he wished Gareth Southgate and the England team the best of luck.

(x) **Petitions**

Finally, the Mayor drew members attention to the list of current petitions along with action being taken to deal with them, which had been tabled at the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 66.

7. **Changes to the Constitution**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) introduced the report from the Director of Legal and HR Services which proposed a number of changes to the Constitution. As the changes involved a number of procedures in relation to the way Full Council functioned, Members were being asked to consider the recommended changes at the start of the meeting enabling any changes approved to come into effect for the meeting. In addition, the report also included changes to

the way Executive functions were exercised (including the introduction of delegated decision making to individual Cabinet members). The Leader advised that the proposals had been designed to enhance and provide more opportunities for Members to engage and participate in Council meetings and make the most effective use of time available at meetings.

As there were no other members who indicated they wanted to speak on the report, the Mayor put the recommendations to the vote by a show of hands and they were declared unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the changes to the Constitution as set out in the report and appendices, with the changes in relation to Full Council effective with immediate effect;
- (2) To authorise the Director of Legal and HR Services to amend the Constitution accordingly, including the making of any necessary incidental or consequential changes;
- (3) To note, to the extent that the changes relate to executive functions of the Council, they have been approved by the Leader.

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

Councillor Muhammed Butt introduced the report from the Director of Legal and HR Services which he advised fulfilled the Council's duty to review and determine the representation of different political groups on certain Committees as a result of the membership and political balance on the Council having changed following the result of the countermanded election in the Willesden Green ward on 21 June 18.

No Members indicated that they wished to speak on the report so the Mayor put the recommendations in the report to a vote by show of hands and they were unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the size of each Committee following the review, which it was noted would remain unchanged from the review undertaken in May 18;
- (2) To confirm the allocation of seats on committees (where the rules on political balance applied) to each of the Council's political groups, as detailed within the report;
- (3) To make appointments (where required) to the committees listed giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats; and
- (4) To note that the political balance on sub-committees for the General Purposes Committee and Licensing Committee would be reviewed at the first available meeting of both bodies.

9. **Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies along with the appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs (if any)**

The Mayor referred Members to the supplementary pack circulated in advance of the meeting, which contained a list of changes to appointments on Council Committees, Sub Committees and other bodies.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following appointments be approved:

- (1) To note the appointment by the Leader of Councillor Tom Miller as Cabinet Member for Community Safety
- (2) Councillor Tom Miller to replace Councillor Neil Nerva as a substitute Member of General Purposes Committee.
- (3) Councillor Elliot Chappell to replace Councillor Abdi Abdirazak as full Member of Planning Committee.
- (4) Councillor Abdi Abdirazak to replace Councillor Kieron Gill as a substitute Member of Planning Committee.
- (5) Councillor Suresh Kansagra to replace Councillor Reg Colwill as a full Member of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- (6) Councillor Tom Miller to replace Councillor Eleanor Southwood as a substitute Member of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- (7) Councillor Tom Miller appointed by Leader to replace Councillor Shama Tatler as a full Member of the Joint Boroughs IT Committee (Brent, Lewisham and Southwark).
- (8) Appointment of Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson to the vacant position as Vice Chair of Brent Connects Willesden
- (9) Councillor Ahmad Shahzad to replace Councillor Keith Perrin as a full Member of the Pensioners Service User Consultative Forum.
- (10) Whilst noting the following appointments would need to be made by the General Purposes Committee, Council agreed to amend Standing Order 51 of the Constitution to allow two additional members to be appointed as substitutes to the following Sub Committee in line with the increase in size of the Cabinet from 8 to 10 members:
 - (a) Senior Staff Appointments Sub Committee – to note the proposed increase in the number of substitute members by two with General Purposes Committee to agree the appointment of Councillors Tom Miller and Shama Tatler as the additional substitute members.
- (11) To note the recommendation to General Purposes Committee that:

- (a) Councillor Mary Daly and Councillor Thomas Stephens replace Councillor Ahmad Shahzad and Councillor Erica Gbajumo as full members of the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee; and
 - (b) Councillor Shafique Choudhary replace Councillor Keith Perrin as a full Member of the Brent Pension Board with Councillor Keith Perrin to replace Councillor Shafique Choudhary as a substitute member of the Pension Board.
- (14) To appoint Councillors Elliot Chappell, Fleur Donnelly-Jackson and Tom Miller to the three current vacancies on the Willesden Consolidated Charities for a four year term of office.
- (15) To appoint Councillors Elliot Chappell, Fleur Donnelly-Jackson and Tom Miller to the three current vacancies on the Willesden District Scout Committee.
- (16) To confirm the ongoing appointment of Councillor Amer Agha as the Council's representative on South Kilburn Trust

Before moving on, Councillor Abdi advised he wished to raise a number of concerns regarding his removal as a member of the Planning Committee, given what he felt to be the detrimental impact on his constituents and residents of the borough. The Mayor advised Councillor Abdi that his concerns had been noted and then moved on to the next item of business.

10. **Questions from Members of the Public & the Youth Parliament**

The Mayor advised that in accordance with Standing Order 33 one question had been received from the following member of the public:

Question 1 from Ms Kalb to Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council regarding the action being taken to combat crime and anti-social behaviour associated with phone boxes on Harlesden High Street and the surrounding roads.

Members noted the written response to the question, circulated with the agenda. The Mayor advised that Ms Kalb had been invited to attend the meeting in order to ask any supplementary question and as a result welcomed her to the meeting. He then invited Ms Kalb to put her supplementary question to the Leader.

Supplementary Question from Ms Kalb to Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council

Ms Kalb thanked Councillor Butt for his written response and took the opportunity to again highlight the way in which phone boxes in the Harlesden area were being used as a haven for crime. As part of wider links between economic deprivation and crime, she also referred to the continued placement of vulnerable and homeless families in the area and what she felt was a lack of planning and environmental enforcement activity in the area in relation to shops and illegal clubs which were all contributing towards residents not feeling safe to use the high street and surrounding area at night. She therefore asked if the Council had considered the possibility of pursuing BT in relation to their corporate social responsibility relating to use of the phone boxes.

In response Councillor Muhammed Butt thanked Ms Kalb for her question and attending the meeting and assured her that the issues raised were being taken seriously by the Council. In terms of planning and environmental enforcement activity he confirmed action was taken to follow up on reports received, however he recognised this may not always be as quickly as hoped by residents given the volume of issues being reported and need to obtain sufficient evidence to enable action to be taken. In terms of BT, he advised that he was in discussion with senior partners about the removal of some of the phone boxes in the area and would also continue to explore the option of holding them to account in relation to their corporate social responsibility, maintaining pressure to ensure a collective and holistic approach towards addressing the concerns raised on which he would ensure Ms Kalb was kept informed on progress.

As a local ward member, Councillor Mili Patel followed up the Leader's response by highlighting the corporate values referred to on BT's website which she also felt had been forgotten when it came to their phone boxes in the Harlesden area. There was no demand by local residents for such a dense collection of phone boxes in the area with evidence having been provided on the criminal and anti-social behaviour associated with their use particularly at night. She was therefore grateful for the response which had been provided by the Leader and advised that local ward councillors would be keen to support any ongoing lobbying activity with BT.

The Mayor thanked Ms Kalb for her question and attending the meeting and then advised Members that this was also the first Council meeting at which arrangements had been introduced to allow members of the Youth Parliament to participate in the public question session. He was therefore pleased to advise that the following two questions had been received from members of the Youth Parliament:

Question 1 to Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader, requesting details on the action being taken by the Council to bring communities together across the borough and reduce discrimination.

Question 2 to Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, requesting details on the measures being put in place by the Council to prevent the culture of violence that seemed to exist among some young people.

Members noted the written responses to the questions, circulated with the agenda and the Mayor advised that he was pleased to welcome Jai Patel on behalf of the Youth Parliament who was attending in order to ask a supplementary question on both issues.

Supplementary Question 1 from Jai Patel to Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader

Jai Patel began by thanking the Mayor for the welcome extended to the Youth Parliament and asked, with regard to the Council's involvement in the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme, whether it was felt the follow-up measures in place were sufficiently extensive to ensure the welfare of those on the programme, especially young people.

Councillor Muhammed Butt advised he would be responding on the specific issues raised, given the Syrian Resettlement Programme fell within his remit and provided an assurance of the Council's commitment to the Programme and to ensuring that the necessary support mechanisms were provided working with a range of partners including SUFRA and Brent Action for Refugees. The type of support being provided included access to English as a Second Language (ESOL) programmes; support into schools and the provision of employment and training opportunities. In addition, as a member of London Council's Local Migration Strategic Partnership he was also able to ensure that representatives of the Home Office and other relevant Government Departments were also held to account. Within Brent, he confirmed that the Council would continue to welcome and support these vulnerable individuals.

Supplementary Question 2 from Jai Patel to Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council

Recognising the reasons behind youth violence as being multi-faceted, Jai Patel asked whether the Council had undertaken a comprehensive diagnosis of the factors involved in order to help guide the measures being developed to address them.

In response, Councillor Muhammed Butt began by advising of a recent summit he had attended involving all 32 London Boroughs, the police and a range of other key stakeholders looking at how best to tackle youth violence and knife crime across London given the impact on all those affected. In addition he pointed out that the Council would be considering a report later on the agenda regarding a number of Outcome Based Reviews setting out plans to maximise the use of resources and develop a more joined up approach towards tackling issues such as gangs, domestic violence and children on the edge of care. In terms of other initiatives he also highlighted that the Council had bid for £3m to enable work with other London Boroughs in developing a joint approach towards tackling knife crime and of work being undertaken with the Borough Commander around the targeting of resources, with the Council having specifically funded 12 police officers. He felt these initiatives helped to demonstrate the Council's commitment towards addressing the concerns raised, but also highlighted the need, as set out within the motion for the Non Cabinet Members debate later on the agenda, for the Government to ensure that the police and Councils were properly funded to provide the necessary levels of support.

Having noted the responses to the questions raised, the Mayor, joined by other Members, again thanked Ms Kalb and Jai Patel for attending the meeting.

11. Reports from the Leader and Cabinet

Before moving on to consider this item, the Mayor advised that as part of the revisions to the Constitution agreed earlier in the meeting a number of changes had been made to the way in which these updates would be considered with effect from tonight's meeting. The time set aside for this item remained as 15 minutes with up to six minutes being provided for the Leader and other Cabinet to speak in order to highlight any significant issues within their portfolios and on which written reports would be circulated at future meetings. Once these updates had been provided,

the remaining time available would then be opened up for any non-Cabinet members to question (without the need for advance notice) Cabinet Members on matters relating to their portfolios.

The following updates were provided by the Leader and Cabinet Members:

(i) Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council

In accordance with Standing Order 14 (f) Councillor Butt reported use of the Key Decision and Forward Plan urgency procedure in relation to the following decisions:

- (a) Re-examination of the funding decision for Olympic Way Improvements following the announcement of the possible sale of Wembley Stadium to a private individual/company; and
- (b) Award of contract for Merchant Acquiring Services.

Members were also advised of the intention to focus the Non Cabinet Member debate at the September Council meeting on the Windrush Controversy. Having completed his update the Leader then invited Councillors Mili Patel (Cabinet Member for Children's, Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care) and Eleanor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform) to present additional updates in relation to their portfolios.

(ii) Councillor Mili Patel (Cabinet Member for Children's, Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care)

Councillor Patel was pleased to announce that despite the significant cuts in Government funding for Children's Services, Brent's Children's Service had been officially rated as "Good" following its recent Ofsted inspection. She was proud to announce this had been the best rating ever achieved in Brent for Children's Services and was keen to recognise the hard work and efforts of all involved. Despite further recent warnings from the LGA and children's charities in relation to the ongoing impact that the widening budget gap would have on the provision of services, she was also pleased to report that Inspectors had praised the effective and sensitive delivery of services in Brent identifying a range of good practice around forced marriage, female genital mutilation and gangs. Having highlighted these excellent results, Councillor Patel felt it was important to end her update by recognising the significant challenge that remained in terms of the continued delivery of these services, given the reduction in funding being provided by Government.

(iii) Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform)

Councillor Southwood took the opportunity to update Members on the recent extension of the Private Landlord Selective Licensing Scheme, which she advised now covered (with an addition of five wards) the following areas – Willesden, Harlesden, Wembley Central, Queens Park, Dudden Hil, Kilburn, Mapesbury & Kensal Green. Prior to its extension, 8000 properties had been licenced with an additional 2,700 applications received from landlords in the new wards, which would assist to provide better and more consistent standards in terms of the accommodation on offer. As well as a range of

inspection and enforcement activity the scheme also required more positive engagement and support for landlords, with Councillor Southwood highlighting as an example the success of recent landlord forums.

Following the updates provided, the Mayor advised that the remainder of time available would be open for questions from non-cabinet members to the Leader and Cabinet. As a result, the following questions were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Councillor Donnelly-Jackson sought further details regarding enforcement of the private sector landlord licensing scheme.

In response Councillor Southwood (as Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform) advised that enforcement of the scheme involved a range of activity, including unannounced visits and inspections but encouraged any specific concerns to be raised direct with either herself or officers so they could be investigated further.

- (ii) Councillor Denselow took the opportunity to highlight the significant levels of disruption being caused for residents of Chamberlain Road and the surrounding area within his ward as a result of highways work being undertaken by Utilities Companies. He asked the Cabinet Members with responsibility for Highways and Parking Enforcement if it would be possible to develop a joined up approach towards managing and controlling the impact of these works, with the Leader also asked if he could raise the need for better co-ordination at a strategic level through the London Councils Executive.

In response Councillor Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways & Planning) advised that she was aware of the specific issues in Chamberlain Road, which involved gas safety works requiring a TfL bus diversion. The impact of these works on local residents had been recognised and officers were planning further communication. Councillor Tatler also confirmed she would work with the Leader in raising the wider issues highlighted at a strategic level with London Councils.

- (iii) Councillor Nerva referred to a previous debate at Council regarding the Council's tree management policy and requested an update on establishment of crowd funding arrangements to enable local communities to fund replacement or additional trees and also on steps being taken with insurance companies to fund the replacement of trees removed as a result of insurance claims.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment) advised she would seek an update on the issues raised for feedback after the meeting.

- (iv) Councillor Choudhary sought details on the extent of any traffic management assessment undertaken on the proposals for the Olympic Way Pedway, particularly in relation to their potential impact on Engineers Way and Fulton Way.

In response Councillor Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways & Planning) confirmed that all decisions in relation to the proposals

for Olympic Way would need to be considered by the Planning Committee when dealing with the relevant planning application, which would also include consideration of the traffic management issues.

- (v) Following on from the reference made to the issues affecting residents in Chamberlain Road, Councillor Kelcher highlighted the difficulties being caused by the associated traffic management scheme for local residents in Kensal Green ward, which adjoined the area, and had led in some instances to penalty charge notices being issued for infringements. Given the difficulties and confusion being caused by the temporary traffic system he asked if the Cabinet Member would consider taking a more lenient attitude to the issuing and collection of these charges in cases where the infringement had not been deliberate.

Councillors Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways & Planning) and Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment) advised that whilst not able to comment on individual cases at the meeting they would be prepared to review the issue outside of the meeting to see what, if any, action could be taken.

- (vi) Councillor Chan expressed concerns, given the recent hot weather, at the fact that emergency repairs by Thames Water to a burst water main in Kensal Green ward had left local residents without access to water for several hours and asked if these concerns could be followed up by the relevant Cabinet Member.

In response, Councillor Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways & Planning) highlighted that whilst the Council would normally look to co-ordinate work with utilities companies in order to minimise impact on local residents, this was not always possible in the case of emergency repairs. Councillor Tatler, however, shared the concerns expressed about this incident and advised that if the ward councillors could provide further details she would consider what, if any, further action could be taken to address with Thames Water.

At this stage, the Mayor advised that time available had expired and he moved on to the next item, thanking all Members for their contributions.

12. **Deputations (if any)**

The Mayor informed Members that no requests for deputations had been received for the meeting.

13. **Petitions (if any)**

The Mayor informed Members that there were no petitions to be debated in accordance with the Council's petition procedure and Standing Order 66.

14. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

In accordance with Standing Order 34 the Mayor advised that the subject chosen for the Non Cabinet Member debate had been funding for the police and other services to assist in tackling crime.

Members were advised that the motion submitted as the basis for the debate had been circulated with the second supplementary agenda for the meeting and that as part of the changes agreed to the Constitution earlier in the meeting the time now available for the debate was 30 minutes, with any Member wanting to contribute having up to two minutes to speak.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Dixon to introduce the motion, who opened the debate by highlighting the recent series of tragic incidents and escalation in violent crime across the borough and capital since the start of the year alongside the impact upon the families and friends of those involved and also in terms of the local communities affected. In order to tackle these issues, she felt there was a need not only to ensure that the police were properly funded and resourced but also that partners and the local community were empowered to assist in addressing the root causes of crime. Having attended a recent public meeting on the recent surge in violent crime she had been impressed by the quality of contributions and efforts being made to tackle these issues, especially within schools and was keen to see this type of proactive engagement, preventative and rehabilitation work continue. It was, however, recognised that this would require strong and properly resourced public services and engagement by local communities as well as a robustly funded police service equipped to take more proactive action, which remained an issue in terms of the reduced level of Government funding being made available.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Knight, who felt the issue was a timely one to consider given recent incidents in her ward (Stonebridge) and the reality of the impact on those affected. Alongside a focus on resourcing of the police, she felt there was also a need to recognise the links between crime and the level of economic deprivation within local communities with specific reference made to the issues within Stonebridge which had one of the highest deprivation rankings both nationally and within Brent and had been made worse by the Government's ongoing programme of austerity. As a Council she advised there was, however, a need to recognise the actions being taken to address these issues focussed around housing, education, regeneration and employment attempting to build out crime hotspots and enhance life opportunities through employment and training opportunities. Whilst of concern, it was not felt that the current surge in violent crime reflected the true and dynamic nature of local communities and the borough as a whole but there was a need to ensure that public services, including the police, were properly resourced and local communities empowered to tackle and mitigate its main causes.

The Mayor then opened up the debate to other Members, with the following comments made during the discussion that followed.

Councillor Kabir highlighted that many wards across the borough were experiencing similar issues, including Queensbury and whilst supportive of the motion felt it was important to recognise, as one of the positive outcomes, the extent to which these concerns and a desire to help in preventing and tackling these issues had brought local communities together. She felt the Council and local councillors had a key

role to play in supporting these efforts with local councillors also encouraged to proactively facilitate and engage in this activity.

Councillor Murray, whilst supporting the concerns raised regarding the need to address funding for the police and public services also was keen to focus on the positive community action being taken locally referring, as an example, to the impact of football sessions he had attended at Willesden Sports Centre. Alongside funding for the police he felt it was important to ensure support was also provided for these type of community led initiatives, which Councillor Dixon advised she also supported, giving the example to a local boxing club.

Councillor Agha also took the opportunity to highlight concerns that had been expressed by local residents within his ward and the action being taken by the local community to address these. He also supported the motion, pointing out that residents wanted to see a much more visible local police presence for which there was a need to reverse previous cuts and ensure a properly funded police service.

Councillor Chan also spoke in support of the motion. Whilst keen to address the significant budget reductions faced by the police he also felt it was important not to forget the various other services and community based facilities such as libraries, youth centre provision and green spaces that also had an important role to play in addressing the problem. He was therefore keen to ensure that the provision of these services was also defended and supported in terms of opposing any further Government funding cuts.

Councillor Stephenson felt it was also important, as part of the debate, to recognise the impact of the budget reductions on British Transport Police highlighting the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour experienced at Sudbury and Harrow Road stations within his ward as a specific example.

Councillor Thakkar also took the opportunity to highlight issues within her ward and the efforts being made by local ward councillors, in support of previous comments during the debate, to encourage greater community cohesiveness and engagement with the local community as a way forward.

Councillor Colwill concluded the debate by highlighting concerns regarding the impact which he felt the re-tasking of local neighbourhood police resources from his ward to other parts of the borough was having on levels of crime and the ability to respond to these incidents within his area. He recognised this was linked to the need to prioritise more limited resources but felt the lack of responsiveness was also of concern to local residents.

As no other members indicated they wished to speak, the Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt to sum up and close the debate. Councillor Butt began by thanking Councillors Dixon and Knight for raising such an important issue, which he advised the Council would be looking to continue challenging the Government on. Whilst the Council continued to be faced by difficult funding decisions as a result of the Government's ongoing austerity programme he assured residents that the Administration would be looking to send a clear message to the Government that these were not sustainable. He recognised that library and youth services had been hit hard as a result of these austerity measures but assured local residents of the Council's commitment towards defending and protecting local services. He also

highlighted his support for the continued engagement of local communities and wider partners as part of a more localised approach towards addressing the upsurge in crime and advised he was therefore fully supportive of the motion.

As an outcome of the debate Members **RESOLVED** to approve the motion (as set out below):

“There have been a series of tragic incidents across our borough and capital since the beginning of the year. This escalation in violent crime is a scourge on our borough, and our city. We share the anger of our residents at the trail of destruction these abhorrent acts wreak upon families, friends and our communities.

Government funding for the Metropolitan Police has been cut by £700 million since 2010, with a further £325 million of cuts expected over the next three years. This means that there are 2,495 fewer police staff posts and 3,261 fewer support officers keeping our streets safe. London has grown as a city, leaving expenditure per head of the population reduced from £423 in 2012/13 to £337 in 2016/17. It is the deepest cut nationally at 20 percent, compared to 6 per cent across the country.

The average number of Metropolitan Police Officers in the last year of the Labour Government was 33,260. In 2016 it was 31,720 and if cuts to funding from Government are not reversed, it is estimated that number of officers will be below 27,000 by 2021.

This Council believes that:

Crime is keenly associated with economic deprivation and inequality within communities. London has the highest levels of income and wealth inequality in the country, exacerbated by years of prolonged austerity.

The reduction in police service funding has created a perfect storm for crime, where public services fight to mitigate the social conditions that are driving this surge in violence on our streets.

Cuts to police and rehabilitation services are a false economy, and have contributed to a rise in crime since 2014, starting under the previous Mayor.

This Council resolves:

To press the Government to reconsider their cuts to the Metropolitan Police to ensure that we have a properly resourced police service, with better support for prevention and rehabilitation programmes.

If we are to seriously tackle this wave of violence, we need a robustly funded police force equipped to be proactive, and have the correct services to empower communities and stamp out the root causes of crime.

To press the government to reconsider their cuts to Brent council so that we can tackle the financial crisis that we are now facing and the growing crisis in [adult social care](#) and [child protection services](#).”

15. Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members

Before moving on to consider the questions submitted by non-Cabinet members, the Mayor advised that as part of the amendments to the Constitution agreed earlier in the meeting a number of changes had been made to the way in which this item would now be dealt which would be effective from this meeting. In terms of the changes, a total of 30 minutes had been set aside to deal with this item which would begin with consideration of the written questions submitted in advance of the meeting along with any supplementary question. Once these had been dealt with, the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question Cabinet Members (without the need for advance notice) on matters relating to their portfolio.

The Mayor advised that four written questions had been submitted in advance for response by the relevant Cabinet Member. The written responses supplied had been circulated with the Council agenda. The Mayor then invited supplementary questions from the Members who had submitted the original questions.

15.1 Cllr Nerva thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt for the update provided on the plans being developed by the West London Alliance (WLA) to deliver the West London Orbital rail scheme and as a supplementary asked what further action would be taken to ensure the line was opened as soon as possible, given the interest now being shown by TfL and also what could be done to ensure the operation of the line (if not electrified) was carbon neutral utilising alternative fuel options. He also took the opportunity to recognise Councillors Colacicco and Choudhary for their longstanding efforts in seeking to progress the scheme.

In response, Councillor Muhammed Butt also recognised the efforts of those Councillors involved, reminding members that it had been Councillor Choudhary who had first presented a motion to Council on the scheme which had acted as a catalyst within Brent for its further development. In terms of progressing the scheme, he advised that discussion were ongoing with TfL following the scheme having been included in the Mayor for London's Transport Strategy and the new Deputy Mayor for Transport. In addition to the benefits arising from the improved access to transport, the scheme also had the potential to unlock significant housing, employment and workspace opportunities not only for residents in Brent but from across west London as a whole. In relation to operation of the line, he advised that options were already being reviewed in relation to battery rather than diesel powered trains which would continue to be explored and with efforts being progressed to bring the scheme to reality as soon as was practicably possible.

15.2 Councillor Gill advised that he was grateful to hear about the review of the Neighbourhood CIL programme and asked if the Lead Member could provide some examples regarding successful use of the funds to date.

In response Councillor Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning) outlined the background and use of Neighbourhood CIL and advised that there were a number of examples of its successful use from the two allocation rounds already approved. These included – support for community libraries in Preston, Kensal Green and Cricklewood; provision of a club house for Harlesden Town Garden; support for a youth project at the

Otherwise Club; provision of play equipment in Woodcock Park; support for a dementia hub at St Cuthbert's Church in Northwick Park; support for the House of Life Project at the United Synagogue in Willesden Jewish Cemetery, support for the Brent Youth Foundation hub, musical studios in South Kilburn and provision of trees in Alperton, Sudbury, Fryent, Wembley Central, Queens Park and Kensal Green. In total Members were advised that £2m had been allocated to schemes under Neighbourhood CIL. A further 70 applications had been received under Round 3 and members were encouraged to continue working with their local communities to identify future schemes that might benefit from the capital funding available and which represented another example of the benefits to arise from regeneration activities in Brent.

- 15.3 Councillor Kelcher highlighted the current media interest in the mattress tagging proposal and whilst recognising that the idea would need further development, encouraged the Lead Member to continue looking at how a scheme could be established in order for to be Brent seen as leading the way.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment) thanked Councillor Kelcher for the innovative idea, which she would continue to explore a way forward on working in conjunction with the Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform.

- 15.4 Having firstly taken the opportunity to thank three Welsh Harp residents present at the meeting for their efforts in litter picking in the ward, Councillor Mashari asked the Lead Member if she would be willing to meet with local residents in order to reconsider the designation of some recreation spaces, such as Neasden Recreation Ground as meadowland. Whilst aware of the financial pressures facing the Council, she pointed out that Neasden Recreation Ground was a well-used local facility which provided a valuable play area and safe space for local residents in her ward.

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) joined Councillor Mashari in thanking the residents attending from Welsh Harp for their efforts and advised that she looked forward to joining them on future clean up days. In terms of Neasden Recreation Ground she advised that she had already commenced a review of the designation and would be happy to meet ward councillors and local residents to discuss further.

The Mayor thanked Members for the supplementary questions and Cabinet Members for the responses provided and then advised that the remainder of time available would be used for an open question time session to the Leader and Cabinet. The following issues were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Councillor Colacicco highlighted what she felt to be the excellent Value for Money represented by the West London Orbital rail scheme, given its potential to improve access to public transport and relieve pressure on the existing transport infrastructure, especially in the Gladstone Road area. It was noted, however, that the initial proposals did not include provision for trains to stop at Gladstone Road and she therefore asked the Leader if a timetable could be provided as to when the proposed station in this area may open.

In response, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) advised that he was keen to progress the scheme as quickly as possible given that most of the infrastructure was already in place, however, as a first stage there was a need to secure the necessary funding. He recognised the issues needing to be addressed in relation to the scheme and impact of the Brent Cross development and advised that he was committed, working alongside the other members of the West London Economic Prosperity Board, to ensure that pressure continued to be applied on TfL and the Mayor for London in order to progress the scheme.

- (ii) Councillor Daly advised that she was aware of discussions at the Public Transport Forum on proposals to introduce electric buses in Brent. In her ward she advised of two local terminus located by Sudbury Town station and Harrow Road (adjacent to Williams Way) where concerns had been raised by local residents about the noise and pollution being created by diesel buses and therefore asked if would be possible to seek the early introduction of electric buses on the No.18 and 245 routes in these areas.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) advised that discussions were already underway with TfL on plans to introduce electric buses and on which she would ensure Councillor Daly was kept updated.

- (iii) Following on from the question in relation to the West London Orbital rail scheme, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson asked if consideration could also be given to ensure that the proposals being developed included accessible and step free access at all stations.

In response Councillor Muhammed Butt confirmed that this would be the aim in seeking to progress development of the scheme.

- (iv) Councillor Lo asked Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, if it was possible to provide any update on the potential sale of Wembley Stadium.

In response Councillor Muhammed Butt advised that the Council had put in a submission as part of the inquiry being undertaken by the Department of Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) on any potential sale. The Council was keen to ensure that Wembley retained its status as the national stadium whilst also looking to ensure the Council's interests along with those of local residents were safeguarded should any sale proceed. No firm timescales were, however, available at this stage with progress depending on the outcome of decisions by the Football Association and DCMS review scheduled for mid-July 18.

- (v) Councillor Kabir, having highlighted concerns in relation to public drinking in Queensbury ward, asked for an update on measures either in place or planned to tackle the issue and educate/change behaviour given the impact and tensions being caused as a result of associated anti-social behaviour in local communities.

As the Cabinet Member for Community Safety had given his apologies for the meeting, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) responded by

highlighting a number of initiatives in place. These included the specific tasking of police resources towards recognised hotspots; the current licensing policy consultation involving the potential to limit sales of alcohol in certain areas; working with colleagues from British Transport Police to focus on problems associated with transport hubs and the use of Public Space Protection Orders with associated enforcement action. He felt the key was to work not only with partners such as the police, but also local communities and businesses in order to develop a holistic and collective approach in addressing the concerns raised.

- (vi) Councillor Long asked if an update could be provided on any plans being considered to improve the highways environment for pedestrians across the borough given the current levels of clutter and unlicensed encroachment of a number of retail premises onto pavements.

Responding as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways & Planning, Councillor Tatler advised that the Council was already looking at ways to improve the highways and pavements for both pedestrians and cyclists. This included looking, in recognition of the concerns raised, to reduce the overall level of street furniture and enhanced enforcement activity and on which she would be happy to consider any further specific suggestions that Members may have.

- (vii) Following on from the earlier issue raised in relation to the potential sale of Wembley Stadium, Councillor Kelcher advised that he had been seeking details from the Valuation Office, as a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, about the basis of the new stadium sites current rateable value given the significant reductions agreed on appeal following the last three valuations. The Valuation Office had not been able to provide a response on the FOI so he asked what measures the Cabinet may be able to take in order to ensure that if any private sale of the stadium was to proceed the owners were required to pay their full share of business rates enabling this to be pooled under the devolved business rate scheme.

In response Councillor Butt advised that any organisation (including the Football Association) would be entitled to apply to the Valuation Office for a review of their rateable business value. Whilst the Council was able to input into the process, the final decision was one that rested with the Valuation Office but he would be willing to ensure, if anything changed in relation to ownership, use and the associated rateable value of the stadium, that this was followed up with them.

- (viii) Picking up on the response to the previous question, Councillor Ethapemi took the opportunity to question the potential benefits that may arise for the Council as a result of the potential sale of Wembley Stadium including the scope for any partnership arrangements.

Following his previous response, Councillor Muhammed Butt advised that the main focus for any investment decisions by the Council would need to be on areas with a maximum positive impact on local residents with priorities already identified for example in relation to housing and schools. Whilst keen to look at the potential benefits the Council may be able to obtain as a result of any

potential sale, it was not felt that any form of partnership investment would be affordable given the ongoing pressure on funding and level of investment that may be required in order to guarantee a return. In addition, he highlighted the need take account the potential impact on local residents arising from any sale in terms of the mixed experience from Tottenham Hotspur FCs tenure at the stadium.

- (ix) As a final comment, given the remaining time available Councillor Colwill highlighted his Group's support towards retaining Wembley as the national stadium within the borough.

Councillor Muhammed Butt thanked Councillor Colwill for his support and felt it was important to remember that the development of the new stadium had received financial support through the National Lottery. At the same time, he recognised the difficult position the Football Association found themselves in when having to look at commercial opportunities to maintain the necessary level of investment in the development of grass root football. Whilst it did not look as if consideration was being given to relocating the national stadium, he advised Members that as part of any potential sale he would be looking to ensure that the Council's objectives were also taken into account.

As the time available had expired the Mayor advised he would now move on to the next item and thanked all Members for their contributions.

16. **Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees**

Before being presented with the updates from each Scrutiny Chair, the Mayor advised that as part of the amendments to the Constitution agreed earlier in the meeting a number of changes had been made to the way in which the updates from each Scrutiny Chair would be considered with effect from tonight's meeting. These changes involved the time set aside for this item being extended to a total of 20 minutes, with each Chair having up to three minutes in which to highlight any significant issues arising from the work of their Committees and on which they would like the relevant Cabinet Member to respond. Once these updates had been provided, the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question (without the need for advance notice) the Scrutiny Chairs on matters relating to the work of their Committees.

The following updates were provided by each of the Scrutiny Chairs:

16.1 **Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Kelcher (as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee) introduced the report from his Committee. In terms of work planned for the coming year he advised that whilst the initial meeting of the Committee had needed to be rescheduled for later in July, the following Task Groups had already identified, in which he was keen to encourage maximum engagement and participation from both Members and key stakeholders:

- Affordable Elements in New Developments (building on the previous review of Permitted Development and involving a representative from Housing Scrutiny Committee);

- Budget Task Group (which would involve cross working with the other Scrutiny Committees);and
- Knife Crime.

16.2 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Ketan Sheth (as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee) introduced the report from his Committee, which had again been circulated with the agenda and outlined the work undertaken since the last update provided to Council in January 2018.

Whilst his Committee was also still to hold their initial meeting, he advised that key areas of focus within their work programme for the coming year would be as follows:

- Having celebrated the 70th anniversary of the NHS the Committee would be monitoring concerns around the continued fragmentation of service provision and impact of funding restrictions on health service delivery within Brent as well as the significant challenges created by the increasing demand on health services;
- The management of specific health issues within Brent – including TB; Child obesity and diabetes. The activity in relation to diabetes would involve the establishment of a specific Task Group including representatives from the NHS and a local Diabetes Charity;
- A review of measure in place to address the Mental Health and wellbeing of young people, under the “Every Opportunity to Succeed” Programme

Councillor Ketan Sheth ended his update by also taking the opportunity to congratulate Children’s Services for the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection. He was particularly pleased to note that Inspectors had rated services for children in care and young care leavers as outstanding.

16.3 Housing Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Long (as Chair of the Scrutiny Committee) introduced the report from her Committee, which she also advised had been circulated with the agenda and outlined the work undertaken since the last update provided to Council in January 2018.

Whilst her Committee was also still to hold its initial meeting, she advised that current areas of focus within their work programme for the coming year included:

- Ongoing monitoring of performance against targets by Brent Housing Management Service, including Grounds Maintenance on estates;
- Progress monitoring on implementation of recommendations from the Committee’s review on Fire Safety;
- Impact of the extension of Private Sector Landlord Licensing on key corporate performance targets such as fly-tipping within the areas now covered;
- Monitoring the establishment of communication channels between councillors and Registered Providers, following their engagement with the Committee over the last year;

- The establishment of a Task Group to review the newly introduced requirements around Estate Ballots and representation in the Budget Task Group

Councillor Long ended by highlighting she was looking forward to the Committee developing a close working relationship with the newly appointed Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform over the coming year.

The Mayor thanked each of the Scrutiny Chairs for their updates and it was **RESOLVED** that the content of each of their reports be noted.

Following the updates provided, the Mayor advised that the remainder of time available would be open for questions from non-cabinet members to the Scrutiny Chairs, with following questions raised and responses provided:

- (i) Following the update provided in relation to the work of the Housing Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Choudhary asked whether it was now felt that the borough was safe as a result of the review of fire safety in tower blocks

In response Councillor Long advised that it was difficult to comment for certain. The Council had developed a forward fund of £10m to finance fire safety works in blocks and whilst Government Building Regulations did not help, she also felt it was important to stress the need for residents to take responsibility for their own safety.

- (ii) In response to the update provided in relation to the work of the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Nerva requested further details on the introduction of the rapporteur concept by the Committee.

Councillor Kelcher advised that this had been based on a concept operated within other scrutiny authorities whereby individual scrutiny councillors would take responsibility for examining a specific issue and have responsibility for reporting back on the outcome to the main Committee, once their review had been completed. This had been used as a means of more effectively managing support whilst enabling the Committee to extend its focus (outside of the main reviews) on a number of smaller scale issues and he hoped would be a successful approach in Brent.

- (iii) In terms of the scrutiny function as a whole, Councillor Daly sought details on any work planned to review the overall enforcement landscape and different types of enforcement activity being undertaken by the Council on a joined up basis.

Councillor Kelcher responded by advising that scrutiny had not traditionally looked at enforcement activity as a single issue. He felt, however, that there may be opportunities to look at this area more generally as part of monitoring around complaints and rubbish dumping due to be undertaken by his Committee later in the year and also as part of the process for reviewing the retendering of various enforcement contracts due to be awarded in 2023.

- (iv) Given the links with the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee and reference made during the Chairs updates to the Scrutiny Budget Task Group,

Councillor Choudry asked for further details in relation to the planned approach towards budget scrutiny for the coming year.

In response Councillor Kelcher felt there was a clear distinction between the role of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and Scrutiny in relation to the budget. Whilst Audit would be responsible for ensuring the accounts complied with the necessary accounting requirements scrutiny's input was more focussed around reviewing the principles, priorities and savings proposals on which delivery of the budget had been based.

- (v) As a final question within the time available, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson sought details on any review activity planned by scrutiny in relation to life chances for adults with learning difficulties.

In response, Councillor Ketan Sheth (as Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee) advised that whilst the Committee's work programme was still to be published, this subject had been identified as an item for review and he would therefore welcome Councillor Donnelly-Jackson's and other members input into development of the review as part of the planning process..

As the time available had expired the Mayor advised he would now move on to the next item and thanked all Members for their contributions.

17. Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee

Before inviting Councillor Choudry to present his update, the Mayor advised that as part of the amendments to the Constitution agreed earlier in the meeting, the time available for the Vice-Chair to present this item would, with effect from this meeting, be three minutes.

Councillor Choudry (as Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee) thanked the Mayor for his reminder and began his update by referring Members to the report circulated with the main agenda which had provided a summary of the main activities carried out by the Committee since the last update to Council in January 2018.

Whilst the Advisory Committee was still to hold its initial meeting, he advised that a useful training session had already been held involving members of the Committee and the independent co-opted members who had joined following the merger between the Audit Advisory and Standards Committee.

The Advisory Committee, at their first meeting were due to receive the Statement of Accounts for 2016/17 and would also be reviewing the Council's Risk Register on which he advised comments would be welcome from Members.

In terms of the merger between the Audit Advisory and Standards Committee he advised that he was looking forward to working with the independent co-opted members in ensuring the merger was a success and in delivering the work programme for the coming year.

In concluding his update, Councillor Choudry advised Members that he would also be looking to meet with the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer in order to provide feedback on development of the internal audit work programme and on which further updates would be provided during the year.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Choudry for his update and it was **RESOLVED** that the content of the report be noted.

18. **Local Government Boundary Review - Council Size Submission**

Councillor Muhammed Butt introduced the report from the Chief Executive seeking approval of the submission prepared on behalf of the Council regarding its future size (in terms of the number of councillors) as the first stage of Brent's local government boundary review being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). The Leader of the Council drew Members' attention to the trigger for the review and key criteria on which preparation of the submission had been based, which had included a review of the Council's governance arrangements and representational role of councillors alongside an electoral forecast to 2023 based on current and planned future developments. As a result of the review, the submission was recommending to the LGBCE a reduction from 63 to 57 councillors within Brent.

Briefings had been provided for Members on the submission which, subject to approval, would then be submitted to the LGBCE Commissioners for consideration. This would then be followed by a formal consultation process undertaken by the LGBCE which all residents, key stakeholders and political groups would have the opportunity to engage with, seeking views on potential warding patterns.

The Mayor then invited comments from other Members with Councillor Nerva highlighting what he felt was a need for the LGBCE, as part of their consultation process, to take account of the unique nature of different areas of the Borough and also the various natural boundaries in considering the final warding proposals. In terms of the governance review within the submission, he also highlighted a need to ensure reference was included to both the Brent Connect User Forums and Public Transport Consultative Group within the list of Committees and Outside Bodies detailed in Appendix 2.

As there were no other members who indicated they wanted to speak on the report, the Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote by a show of hands and they were unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To amend the list of membership bodies included within Appendix 2 of the submission to include reference to the Brent Connect User Forums and Public Transport Consultative Group;
- (2) To agree the Council size submission attached as Appendix A to the report for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on the basis of a recommended reduction in councillors to 57 for the Council.

19. **2017-18 Outcome Based Reviews - Final Report**

Councillor Muhammed Butt introduced the report from the Director of Performance, Policy and Partnerships which he advised detailed the outcomes of the second phase of Outcome Based Reviews (OBRs) that had been focussed on domestic abuse, gangs and young people at the edge of care.

Members noted that the OBRs had been based on a design-led approach with the aim of facilitating closer cross council and inter-agency working in order to maximise the use of more limited resources and deliver more joined up, innovative and sustainable services. As a specific example of the outcomes achieved through this approach, the Leader highlighted the successful trial of the Harlesden Community Hub initiative. He advised Members it would be possible to arrange separate briefings, if required, on the planned actions outlined within the report.

The Mayor then invited comments on the report from other Members, with Councillor Kabir keen to know whether the OBR had taken account of the results of a previous Task Group review looking at violence against young women; and also ensure that the voluntary and community sector were fully engaged in development of the action plan to tackle the key outcomes identified in relation to the domestic abuse OBR.. In response Councillor Muhammed Butt advised that the Task Group report had been factored in to the review process which had also involved a wide range of stakeholders, including the Voluntary and Community Sector, as part of the process for looking at best practice and seeking a more joined up approach to service delivery referring, as an example, to the Community Hub initiative.

Councillor Donnelly-Jackson highlighted the importance of early intervention as a theme she felt ran through all three of the OBRs and was keen to ensure that the need to effectively engage with schools was also recognised as part of this approach. Councillor Muhammed Butt confirmed this had been recognised with schools having been involved in the review process and in ongoing discussion with the relevant Lead Members designed to identify opportunities to further extend the range of engagement wherever possible.

As there were no other members who indicated they wanted to speak on the report, the Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote by a show of hands and they were unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the Outcome Based Review (OBR) process and outcomes, as detailed within the report;
- (2) To note and endorse the interventions which have been developed through the OBR process, the benefits associated with the interventions and steps for taking these forward.

20. **Motions**

20.1 **Motion from the Labour Group – Palestinian Conflict**

Prior to the consideration of this item, Councillor Kabir moved a procedural motion seeking to suspend Standing Order 41 (h) in order to allow additional members to contribute to the debate on the Motion. In accordance with Standing Order 42 the procedural motion was put to the vote by the Mayor without discussion and declared **CARRIED**.

Before inviting Councillor Gill to move the Motion, the Mayor took the opportunity to remind Members of the Council's statutory duty to have "due regard" to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who shared protected characteristics and those who did not. He advised this represented the public sector equality duty and that the protected characteristics referred to included any race, religion or beliefs relevant to the motion. He concluded by reminding Members that they would, however, be free to express their own political opinions.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Gill to move the motion he had submitted on behalf of from the Labour Group who thanked Councillors Shahzad and Chan for their assistance in preparing the motion which he then read through and urged Members to support.

As a result of the changes to the Constitution agreed at the start of the meeting, the Mayor advised that the usual process would now be to invite up to three further members to speak (two from the Labour Group and one from the Conservative Group). In view of the procedural motion agreed at the start of the item he advised it would, however, now be possible to allow additional members to speak on this item if they so wished.

The Mayor then invited members to speak, with contributions received as follows:

Councillor Shahzad began by advising he was supporting and seconding the motion and supporting the concerns raised about reports from various Human Rights organisations that children killed during the recent protests had been unarmed. He advised he fully supported the call for these actions to be condemned alongside the need for work to continue in order to identify a viable solution towards ending the conflict and encouraging a peaceful two state solution. In support of this approach he also advised that he fully supported the call on the Council to urge the Government to review and cease the sale of arms that could be used in violation of international law.

Cllr Choudry recognised the strength of feeling generated around such a long running and sensitive issue and advised that he would also be supporting the motion. He highlighted concerns from a humanitarian perspective around the conditions in which ordinary citizens living in Gaza found themselves which he felt were being ignored and needed to be addressed with the motion recognising the key role of the British Government, given their historical involvement and current influence in the region.

Councillor Hassan whilst supporting the motion felt that it was not strong enough in terms of the action being sought. She highlighted the heavy toll of the conflict on those living in Gaza and felt the motion was relevant for debate in Brent given the moral responsibility in challenging the Government's foreign policy around the sale

of arms sales to Israel which she urged the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary about.

Councillor Nerva felt that care needed to be taken around debates such as this on matters of foreign policy with a clear view needed on what the Council could realistically achieve and potential impact on local community cohesion. Whilst recognising the suffering of citizens from both sides living in the region he questioned the focus of the motion on Israel referring as well to the role of other states in the region. From a community cohesion perspective he felt that many members of the Jewish community in Brent would feel concerned by the motion at a time when the Council were looking to move forward together.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Maurice to speak in response to the motion on behalf of the Conservative Group, who began by highlighting a need to recognise the difficulties faced by ordinary citizens on both sides of the conflict. As part of an ongoing conflict he also felt there was a need to recognise Israel's right to defend itself and her citizens and whilst recognising the need to address the poor conditions in which people found themselves living in the region felt there was also a need to question the role of the Government in Gaza in terms of the distribution of humanitarian aid and also the role of other key players in the region before condemning Israel. For these reasons he advised he would not be supporting the motion.

As final contributions, Councillor Kansagra advised that he supported Councillor Nerva's position on the sensitivity of the motion and would therefore be abstaining from any vote. This was then followed by Councillor Mashari, who advised that she would be supporting the motion, feeling it was important for the Council to condemn the attacks on any unarmed civilians and also to recognise the day to day suffering of those living in the occupied territories and need for humanitarian and other aid to alleviate their plight.

As no other Members indicated they wished to speak and Councillor Gill advised he had no further comments to make in exercising his right of reply, the Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was declared **CARRIED**:

"This council joins international condemnation of the recent killings of 130 Palestinian protestors by Israeli forces – firing live ammunition into crowds of unarmed civilians is illegal and must not be tolerated; any escalation in this long-running dispute is deeply regrettable.

This council is appalled that more than two thirds of Palestinians are reliant on humanitarian assistance, with limited access to essential amenities such as water and electricity.

This council supports the right to protest against such awful conditions, against the continuing blockade of Gaza, and occupation of Palestinian land, and in support of a viable two state solution.

This council calls upon the UK government to encourage the UN Secretary General to renew his call for an independent international inquiry into these killings, and review the sale of arms that could be used in violation of international law."

20.2 Motion from the Conservative Group - Parks & Open Spaces

The Mayor invited Councillor Colwill to move the motion he had submitted on behalf of the Conservative Group who began by highlighting the strength of feeling and number of complaints he had received from local residents regarding the meadowlands policy in parks and open spaces and requesting that the grass was cut. In addition he advised the motion had highlighted concerns about the potential impact of the policy on residents' safety and health, especially those suffering from conditions such as hay fever or asthma.

The Mayor then invited contributions from the Labour Group, with Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, responding to the motion by highlighting the importance of parks and green spaces as an essential part of city life, not only in terms of recreation and leisure but also in terms of bio-diversity and air quality. Whilst the decision to introduce the policy had been driven by budget constraints (agreed as part of the budget setting process) she pointed out there were also ecological benefits but recognised that the recent weather conditions had caused difficulties in terms of the growth experienced. Action now being taken to bring this back under control but she felt there was also a need to highlight that the policy was another example of the impact which the Government's austerity measures were having on the way services were now having to be prioritised by local authorities and whilst aware of the issues in relation to parks and open spaces, questioned the Conservative Groups focus on this policy over other key areas of service delivery.

As no other members indicated they wished to speak Councillor Colwill, in exercising his right of reply, advised that he had been asked to be kept informed about hospital admissions linked to breathing conditions affected by the policy, which he would ensure were shared with the Lead Member.

The motion (as set out below) was then put to the vote by a show of hands and declared **LOST**:

"We call on the Council to return our fields back into parks and do some studies on the way in which leaving the grass as meadows to grow long is affecting more and more people who suffer from hay fever and asthma.

Our residents pay a lot of money in council tax and surely a basic requirement of the Council is to keep our streets clean and tidy and at minimum risk to the health and safety of everyone."

21. Urgent Business

The Mayor advised Members there were no urgent items of business for consideration.

The meeting was therefore declared closed at 8:30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.30 pm

COUNCILLOR ARSHAD MAHMOOD
Mayor