



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
held on Monday 17 September 2018 at 6.00 pm**

### **PRESENT:**

**The Worshipful the Mayor**  
Councillor Arshad Mahmood

**The Deputy Mayor**  
Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi

### **COUNCILLORS:**

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

### **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. As there were a number of requests to speak from the public, the Mayor advised he was intending, in accordance with Standing Order 30, to move the relevant 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 5 – Deputations
- Agenda Item 6 – Questions from Members of the Public

(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 Abdirazak, Dixon, Mashari, R.Patel and Pavey.

An apology for lateness was also received from Councillor Colacicco.

## 3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 9 July 2018 be approved as a correct record, subject to the spelling of Councillor Muhammed Butt's name being corrected under Minute 15 (iv) (Questions from Opposition and Non-Cabinet Members).

## 4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared by Members at the meeting.

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

The Mayor made the following announcements:

### (i) Civic Service

The Mayor thanked all colleagues, guests, friends and visiting Mayors from across London for attending his Civic Service on the 30<sup>th</sup> July which had been held to celebrate his year in office and promote his two chosen charities, SUFRA and the READ Foundation.

He advised this had been the first time the event had been held in the Civic Centre, which he thanked the Chief Executive for hosting.

### (ii) Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur

The Mayor took the opportunity to wish everyone who celebrated Rosh Hashanah a Happy New Year. He also reminded members that this week marked Yom Kippur, the most holy day of the Jewish calendar and therefore wished all those celebrating a happy Yom Kippur.

(iii) Flag Raising Ceremonies

The Mayor was pleased to advise Members that two successful Flag raising events had been held since the last Council meeting. The first to celebrate Pakistan's Independence Day on 14 August, and second India's Independence Day on 15 August, with both being well attended.

He also informed Members they would be welcome to attend a Nigerian flag raising ceremony taking place at noon on Monday 1 October in the Paul Daisley Garden.

(iv) Tokyo Metropolitan Visit

The Mayor informed Members that the Council had hosted a visit from representatives of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government on 21 August. As he had unfortunately been unable to attend, he thanked the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Ezeajughi for hosting the event.

The delegation had come to Brent to understand and learn about the Council's flexible working policy and how elected members functioned in a modern council with the visit including a tour of the Civic Centre. The delegation had been impressed by what was being achieved in Brent with diminishing funding.

(v) Srebrenica Memorial Event

The Mayor advised he had also recently been humbled to attend a Srebrenica Memorial Day event at the Civic Centre. The event, which was held all over Europe, had been held to commemorate the anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide during the Bosnian War in July 1995.

(vi) Civic Centre Floor walking

The Mayor informed Members that he, along with the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader, had over the summer, undertaken a series of floor walks across the Civic Centre in order to meet Brent's staff.

He had thoroughly enjoyed meeting and spending time with staff members, which had also provided a great opportunity to understand what happens in each department on a daily basis, along with a chance for staff to ask questions.

Further floor walks were planned over the coming weeks, which he felt provided a useful reminder of the great workforce in Brent and hard work being undertaken on a daily basis for residents.

(vii) London Remembers WWI Commemorative event

The Mayor advised Members that he had been honoured to represent the Borough at the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Greater London

commemorative Drumhead Service at the Royal Hospital Chelsea on 1 September. The event had been held to commemorate the actions of the London Division during the final hundred days of WWI.

(viii) Borough Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor was pleased to announce that planning was well underway for the Borough's Remembrance Sunday service, which this year would fall on Armistice Day.

The event commemorated the agreement to end fighting during the First World War, in 1918. This year marked the hundredth anniversary with the commemoration to include the Annual Remembrance Day Parade, followed by a service in Barham Park. All Members were urged to attend this important service.

(ix) Fundraising Gala Dinner

The Mayor was delighted to announce that his first gala fundraising dinner would be taking place on 1 December 2018 at the Pattidar Centre on Forty Lane. The evening would include food, entertainment, an auction and a raffle all to raise funds for his two chosen charities.

He advised that tickets would be on sale shortly, with all profits going to help SUFRA and the Read foundation.

(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.

**6. Deputations (if any)**

The Mayor advised that, in accordance with Standing Order 32, he had received a request for one deputation at the meeting, which had been submitted by Mr Tahmid Islam (representing Newman Catholic College Community School) and related to the installation of public lighting in Roundwood Park. The Mayor welcomed Mr Islam along with the pupils attending from Newman Catholic College Community School and then invited Councillor Kelcher (as one of the local ward councillors in Kensal Green where the school was located) to introduce the deputation.

Councillor Kelcher introduced the deputation, advising that the speakers would be pupils from Newman Catholic College Community School who had been working with Citizens UK on various initiatives designed to improve the safety of citizens in the Harlesden area. These initiatives had included the creation of a safe space scheme involving local shops in Park Parade and Harlesden High Street as well as various other outreach work in which a number of local councillors had been engaged. He was therefore pleased to be able to welcome and introduce the pupils to the meeting.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Kelcher for his introduction and invited the pupils to address the meeting. As part of the deputation Members were advised that pupils

at the school had been working closely with Citizens UK on various projects which had included the Safe Spaces community safety scheme, one of the largest in London for which the school had won an award. In addition, the pupils advised they were also campaigning for the installation of public lighting in the vicinity of the skate park within Roundwood Park as a means of preventing crime and improving safety in that area. As part of this process Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) had attended an election assembly at the school in March. The Leader of the Council had advised that whilst keen to light up the park, funding constraints would make this difficult with the cost of the additional lighting being sought for the Park estimated at between £55-60k. As part of their research for the deputation, the pupils had identified the potential use of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as an alternative funding source, with the estimated cost representing approx 8% of the current Neighbourhood CIL reserve. The pupils were therefore keen to explore with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways & Planning the basis for allocation of Neighbourhood CIL funding in support of community led initiatives for the local area in which the school was based, highlighting that the proposals were also backed by a 150 signature local petition, and to receive an update from the Leader of the Council on potential alternative means of funding the lighting proposals.

The Mayor thanked the pupils from Newman Catholic College Community School for their comments and then invited Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, to respond to the deputation. Councillor Krupa Sheth thanked the pupils for attending and congratulated them for all their efforts and work being undertaken, recognising its positive impact on the local community. In terms of funding, she confirmed that the Council was unfortunately no longer able to maintain a budget supporting the installation of new lighting but would, be willing to liaise with the Leader of the Council and Councillor Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning) in order to explore what other funding sources may be available.

At the same time Councillor Krupa Sheth felt it important to highlight that an analysis of anti-social behaviour data had identified a relatively low level of demand for new lighting in the park which may also have the unwanted impact of increasing numbers in the park late at night and the potential for anti-social behaviour. Recognising the concerns raised, however, Councillor Krupa Sheth advised that she would also would be willing to work with the school and meet again with the pupils in order to develop a programme of advice around staying safe in the park.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth for her response and advised that this now concluded the item before once again taking the opportunity to thank the pupils and staff from Newman Catholic College Community School for attending in order to present their deputation.

## **7. Questions from Members of the Public**

The Mayor advised that, in accordance with Standing Order 33, two questions had been received from the following members of the public:

Question 1 from Mrs Kalavatiben Patel to Councillor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform relating to Housing Association Right to Buy and housing transfers.

Question 2 from Ms Gaynor Lloyd to Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader, seeking assurances on the protection of Metropolitan open land and space at Northwick Park under the One Public Estate initiative.

Members noted the written response to the questions, circulated with the agenda. The Mayor advised that both members of the public had been invited to attend the meeting in order to ask a supplementary question. Whilst Mrs Patel had advised she would not be attending the Mayor welcomed Gaynor Lloyd to the meeting and invited her to put her supplementary question to the Deputy Leader, for which he advised she would have one minute.

### **Supplementary Question from Gaynor Lloyd to Councillor McLennan, Deputy Leader**

Gaynor Lloyd began by expressing concern at the time limit placed on her supplementary question, which was a restriction she felt had not been made clear in advance of the meeting. In response, the Chief Executive clarified that the purpose of this session of the meeting was to deal with supplementary questions rather than consider any wider contributions on the issues raised.

Highlighting the response received to a recent Freedom of Information request, Gaynor Lloyd began by highlighting comments made in relation to the content of a press release prepared to accompany the One Public Estate report to Cabinet in February 2018 on green space plans. She also advised that she had been made aware of the employment by the four current partners involved in the Northwick Park One Public Estate initiative of GVA consultants in order to prepare professional representations for the first Local Plan public consultation and options paper which residents had not been advised of in relation to concerns over the access road and One Public Estate proposals.

In view of the earlier clarification provided, the Mayor advised Gaynor Lloyd that she would need to move on to her supplementary question. As a result the Deputy Leader was asked to confirm why facts shared with a Developer Forum as part of the first Local Plan consultation about the possibility of Northwick Park involving a high density development had not been shared with local residents and also why the professional representations produced by GVA for the public consultation had also not been shared with local residents.

In response, Councillor McLennan, thanked Gaynor Lloyd for her question and highlighted that the written response provided to her initial question had included an update on where things currently stood in relation to the Northwick Park One Public Estate initiative, including the status of the site. She confirmed that no final decisions had yet been made and that the final proposals would be subject to public consultation. Councillor McLennan advised that she was not aware of the concerns raised in relation to the submission of consultant representations and Developer Forum and would therefore need to take this back for further consideration after the meeting with a response to be provided once further details had been obtained.

The Mayor advised that this now concluded the public question session and thanked Councillor McLennan for her response and Gaynor Lloyd for her attendance at the meeting.

8. **Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and 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 be approved:

- (1) To continue the Council's membership of the North West London Joint Health & Overview Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) until 31 December 2018 to enable a review to be undertaken, with Councillor Ketan Sheth remaining as the Council's appointed representative and Councillor Nerva as substitute member.
- (2) To confirm the appointment of William Goh as an Independent Person under the Council's Standards Framework for a two year term of office.

9. **Reports from the Leader and Cabinet**

The Mayor referred Members to the written report which had been circulated with the agenda providing updates from the Leader and Cabinet Members in relation to their portfolios. He then invited the Leader and other Cabinet Members to provide updates on any significant issues to be highlighted. Once these updates had been provided, he reminded Members that the remaining time available would 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:

(a) Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council

Councillor Muhammed Butt took the opportunity to update Members on work being undertaken to review the priorities within London Councils in order to ensure they were aligned with those of the constituent boroughs. Key priorities for focus had been identified as housing, employment and skills alongside managing the impact arising from implementation of the Government's programme of welfare reforms.

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

- (a) Cabinet (16 July 2018): Harlesden Neighbourhood Plan; and
- (b) Strategic Director Community Wellbeing (18 July 2018): Extra Care Schemes – Beechwood Court, Harrod Court and Tulsi House.

Having completed his update the Leader then invited Councillors Krupesh Hirani (Cabinet Member for Public Health, Culture and Leisure) and Amer Agha (Cabinet Member for Schools, Employment and Skills) to present additional updates in relation to their portfolios.

(b) Councillor Hirani (Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure & Culture)

Councillor Hirani took the opportunity to update Members on progress with preparations for the Borough of Culture highlighting the success of two recent summits held in order to seek views and further develop proposals. He reminded Members of the aim to place young people at the heart of the programme which was already being used as an opportunity to secure and focus investment in the arts, culture and young people across the borough. This had resulted in a number of positive changes across the borough supported by establishment of the “Love Where you Live” grant programme, which he was keen to encourage all Members to support working with their local communities. In addition he advised Members of the successful launch, following the recent summits, of the “Youth Stories of Brent” documentary produced by young film makers within the borough and of the opportunities being developed to link with the UEFA European Football Championship also taking place in 2020.

(c) Councillor Agha (Cabinet Member for Schools, Employment and Skills)

Councillor Agha took the opportunity to update Members on the progress and achievements being led by the Council’s Employment and Skills service. The service was involved in supporting the delivery of a number of key initiatives and he highlighted, as examples, the achievements in relation to the following schemes:

- Brent Start in supporting residents develop skills for life and employment;
- Brent Works in supporting residents seeking access to the labour market;
- The Living Room supporting the provision of careers advice and guidance to assist people into work;
- Work and Health Programme which had been commissioned by Brent and a number of partner boroughs across West London providing support for those with more complex needs and barriers to work.

Members were also advised that Brent had been selected as one of two pilot areas for the Moving on Up initiative aimed at improving employment outcomes for groups traditionally unrepresented in certain employment sectors across London and had applied to the Department for Work and Pensions for Community Budget Funding designed to offer training and employment opportunities for young people identified at greatest risk of offending or reoffending.

He ended by commending the strong performance in Brent’s schools in relation to GCSE, A-Level and vocational results.

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

- (i) Councillor Donnelly-Jackson sought details on plans to make the Borough of Culture programme as inclusive and accessible as possible.



In response Councillor Hirani (as Cabinet Member for Public Health, Culture and Leisure) confirmed that he was committed to ensuring an accessible and inclusive programme, highlighting the work already underway involving schools from all sectors across the borough including those supporting special needs. Measures had been taken to ensure the recent Borough of Culture summits were also as inclusive as possible including, as an example, signers at both events and these efforts would continue as the programme was developed.

- (ii) Councillor Kansagra highlighted community concerns about the placing of culturally insensitive advertisements on public toilets across the borough and sought an update on their removal. At the same time as raising the issue he also took the opportunity to thank the Leader of the Council for his apology to community representatives on the matter.

In response Councillor Hirani (as Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure and Culture) advised he recognised the cultural sensitivities involved and confirmed that as a result of the concerns raised the matter had been rectified with the advertisement removed and an apology issued. Moving forward he felt that the recent award of the six sheet advertising contract would ensure these type of issue were avoided in future.

- (iii) Councillor Nerva sought details on any plans being made by the Council to identify and, where possible, mitigate the potential risks and impact likely to arise from any “hard” Brexit. In raising the issue he highlighted, as an example, recent comments made by both the Mayor for London and local MP Tulip Siddiq in advocating a People’s Vote.

In response to the question, the Mayor advised that arrangements would be made for a report to be provided for the next Council meeting on the impact of Brexit.

- (iv) Councillor Choudhary regarding measures being taken to provide adequate funding for schools in order to maintain performance given concerns around the impact of Brexit and ongoing austerity.

In response Councillor Agha (as Cabinet Member for Schools, Employment and Skills) highlighted the Council’s ongoing commitment to working with schools in order to address the financial pressures being experienced as a result of Government funding reductions and also in terms of supporting them in their own fund raising efforts. He would also ensure that the report due to be presented to the next Council meeting on Brexit would address the associated impact on schools budgets.

- (v) Councillor Chan took the opportunity to congratulate the Council on its successful prosecution of the former headteacher and other former staff and governors at Copland School. Whilst pleased with the outcome in terms of funds the Council was now seeking to reclaim from those involved he also felt the Council needed to acknowledge the contribution made by Hank Roberts (as a member of staff at the school) in raising the initial “whistleblowing” concerns, which had led to the matter being exposed.

In response the Mayor confirmed that the acknowledgement requested had been **AGREED**.

- (vi) Councillor Colwill took the opportunity, as the final contribution during the open session, to highlight concerns regarding the financial losses from the operation of Bridge Park Community Centre in terms of the impact on funding available for the Council to focus on other priority areas such as Waste Collection, Community Policing, Adult Social Care, Schooling, Health, Mental Health, Potholes, Pavement Resurfacing and grass cutting.

Following on from the final point raised above, the Mayor advised that the time available for this item had expired and he moved on to the next item, thanking all Members for their contributions.

## 10. **Annual Report from the Leader**

The Mayor invited Councillor Butt, Leader of the Council, to present (in accordance with Standing Order 38) his annual report on the work of the Council and state of the borough.

By way of introduction, Councillor Butt reminded Members that as part of his last annual report he had referred to the various challenges as well as opportunities faced by the Council. Despite the significant pressures and challenges still faced by the Council, he felt it was important to focus on the key priorities set in relation to Housing, adult social care, education, safeguarding of children and keeping residents safe from harm.

In relation to housing the current Administration were committed to creating a fairer future for Brent's residents. In the absence of a lead from the Government, the Council was now taking steps to regulate the private rental market, take action against rogue landlords as well as being directly involved in providing good quality, genuinely affordable, and ethically managed homes with long term tenancies. As a council he was proud that this work had enabled the delivery of 49% more new build affordable housing than the London average.

In terms of Adult Social Care and ensuring dignity for elderly residents, whilst progress was being made in relation to the provision of higher quality, lower cost, independent living arrangements, payment of the living wage for carers and in attempting to relieve pressure on primary health services these efforts and innovations could only go so far. The fundamental issue remained the need for adequate government intervention as without proper regulation and sufficient funding, he felt the support being provided was at risk of being compromised.

In terms of education, whilst Brent's schools were amongst the best in London he felt there were still too many young people struggling and at the risk of being left behind. Whilst working to addressing these issues this was being made more difficult by the Government's ongoing financial restrictions.

In relation to safeguarding, Councillor Muhammed Butt was pleased to be able to report on the progress being made in meeting the challenge identified with the results of the recent Ofsted Inspection rating the levels of care provided to be

nothing short of outstanding. He felt this represented an even greater achievement when taking account of the ongoing financial pressure on the Council and was testament to the hard work and dedication of staff tasked with safeguarding young lives in Brent which deserved to be celebrated.

Turning to the financial pressures on the Council created by the Governments ongoing programme of austerity, he highlighted the extent of the difficult choices and decisions still needing to be made, which he felt would only be made worse by Brexit.

Concluding his annual report and commenting on the state of the borough, Councillor Butt felt it was possible to highlight a huge amount as being achieved but also much more to do based on an ambitious, but at the same time pragmatic set of priorities and commitments with an enormous financial challenge to continue to manage and overcome.

The Administration were, however under no illusion as to magnitude of the task and were ready to meet the challenge in terms of continuing towards achieving a borough of culture, empathy, and shared prosperity.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt for the report. Councillor Colwill (as Leader of the Conservative Group) advised he would not be responding and as no other members had indicated they wished to speak the Mayor advised that this concluded the debate with the Council having **RESOLVED** to note the Annual Report.

#### 11. **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.

#### 12. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

In accordance with Standing Order 34 the Mayor advised that the subject chosen for the Non Cabinet Member debate was on the Windrush generation.

Members were advised that the motion submitted as the basis for the debate had been circulated with the supplementary agenda for the meeting and that the time 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 Johnson to introduce the motion, who opened the debate by providing a brief history on the Windrush generation whose contribution, he was pleased to report, had now been formally recognised by the Government in the form of an annual celebration day on 22 June.

Whilst recognising the inhumane treatment of many members of the Windrush generation, Councillor Johnson advised he also supported the need to celebrate and recognise the contribution of what he regarded as the pioneers from this generation and wider Caribbean community. He felt that Brent, as one of the most diverse boroughs and home to many Black and Minority Ethnic communities could be regarded as a benchmark for community cohesion and cultural diversity and was therefore ideally placed to lead on the creation of a lasting legacy focussed not only

around the Borough of Culture but also by agreeing to hold its own annual Windrush event to coincide with the national day of celebration on 22 June.

In addition, he advised he was also keen as part of a wider approach towards recognising the contribution of that generation and celebrating the boroughs cultural diversity, to proactively support communities from across the borough in seeking to access Government funding to establish their own neighbourhood celebrations. He therefore urged all members to support the motion put forward for debate.

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

Councillor McLennan spoke in support of the motion highlighting her family history and links to the Windrush generation. Whilst the Government's recent position had, she felt, been shameful she also agreed with the importance of recognising the significant contribution made by the Windrush generation and wider Caribbean community to all aspects of British Life.

Councillor Maurice spoke to highlight the Conservative Group's support for the motion, recognising what he felt had been the enormous contribution made by the Caribbean community to the country. He also felt it was important for the Council to ensure that those individuals who continued to be affected by the recent problems were referred to the Home Office Compensation Scheme for support.

Councillor Patterson, in highlighting his family's connection to the Windrush generation advised he had been shocked when learning about how members of that original community had been treated. In supporting the motion, he hoped that the Government would take opportunity to learn from its mistakes in relation to how members of the community had been treated.

Councillor Mitchell Murray also took the opportunity to highlight her personal family history and experience as original members of the Windrush generation whose treatment, she felt, had been a scandal. Recognising the endemic nature of racism faced by members of the original community after they had arrived in Britain she felt there was no room for complacency in terms of the current treatment of different communities in such a diverse borough as Brent and as such also advised she was strongly in support of the motion.

Also speaking in support of the motion, Councillor Shahzad highlighted what he felt was the pressing need to ensure that those directly affected by the Windrush scandal were fully compensated by the Government and for lessons to be learnt moving forward.

As a final contribution to the debate, Councillor Daly outlined how she was still involved supporting a number of residents directly affected by the Government's recent handling of the issue. She also felt there was no room for complacency when tackling racism and supported the need to recognise as a lasting legacy the contribution which had been made by members of the Windrush generation both within Brent and across the country as a whole.

As no other members had indicated they wished to speak the Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, to sum up and close the debate.

Councillor Butt began by thanking Councillor Johnson for putting the motion forward for debate along with. Whilst recognising Brent's diversity and the contributions made by all communities across the borough he advised that he was keen to ensure that the specific contribution made by the Windrush generation and Caribbean community more generally within Brent and across the UK was properly recognised and was therefore fully supportive of the motion. Commenting on wider concerns raised relating to the Government's handling of the issue he shared the frustration that implementation of the Home Office Compensation Scheme appeared to have stalled and called for this to be expedited as a matter of urgency in order to ensure those requiring support received the necessary assistance as quickly as was possible and ended by to recognise the contribution from

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

"The Government has now recognised the contribution of the Windrush generation and has established a national Windrush day for 22nd June in Britain's calendar. This means that there will be a lasting memory of the Windrush Generation in perpetuity.

Brent is one of Europe's most diverse communities and home to many BAME people. It celebrates all cultures equally. Significant talented individuals from families of the Windrush generation have grown up in Brent. They have excelled in their respective fields of sport, health, politics, the arts, science and technology and much much more. I believe that we should be celebrating the fact Brent is well known for its cultural diversity. We have an opportunity to put on an exciting event in 2020 as we celebrate being the Borough of Culture.

But the Council should not just stop at the 2020 celebration. It should be celebrating the pioneers from the Windrush generation every year to make sure that it has a lasting legacy. This is to make sure that we remember the contribution of their efforts to rebuild Britain after the Second World War and the fact that the Windrush generation has fully contributed to all aspect of British life.

As a result Brent Council agrees the proposal to recognise the contribution of the Windrush generation by:

- (1) holding an annual Windrush event on 22nd June every year; and
- (2) Proactively supporting communities across Brent to access Government funding to celebrate Windrush annually."

Following on from the motion having been agreed, Councillor Choudhary asked the Mayor if it would be possible to consider extending its scope to also refer to all communities from the commonwealth. In response the Chief Executive advised that as the motion had now been agreed no further changes could be considered at the meeting with any request for a wider discussion therefore needing to be bought forward to a future meeting.

### 13. **Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members**

Before moving on to consider the questions submitted by non-Cabinet members, the Mayor reminded Members that 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 written questions.

13.1 Cllr Nerva thanked Councillor McLennan for the update provided on the action being taken to tackle Blue Badge fraud and as a supplementary asked:

- what consideration had been given about the further measures, if any, that could help to remind those applying that blue badges were for personal use; and
- what further action could be taken at a strategic level, working with other local authorities, to better co-ordinate enforcement activity and address concerns regarding improper use.

The supplementary question was responded to by Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform) who, recognised the importance of the scheme, and advised she was therefore keen to ensure that all necessary action was taken to prevent and tackle fraudulent and improper use. This would include looking to ensure as clear a message as possible was provided to those applying regarding permitted use of the permits and also at what further measures were in place or could be developed at a strategic level with other local authorities to co-ordinate action in relation to blue badge fraud and on which she would provide an update after the meeting.

13.2 No supplementary question was asked by Councillor Colacicco in relation to the response provided by Councillor Tatler (as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning) on the Cricklewood Waste Depot.

13.3 No supplementary question was asked by Councillor Donnelly-Jackson in relation to the response provided by Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform) on out-of-borough placements within Brent.

13.4 Councillor Maurice, as a supplementary question to Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) queried the consistency of the approach taken towards the introduction of 2 hour free parking provision along Wembley Park Drive when compared to the Pay and Display scheme which had been introduced in Preston Road and Bridge Road. On the basis of the response provided to the original question, he asked the Cabinet Member if she would be willing to consider removing the Pay & Display scheme in Preston Road

and Bridge Road should residents (as part of a subsequent consultation or ballot) indicate they were not supportive.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) felt it was important to recognise that the decision not to proceed with the introduction Pay & Display parking in Wembley Park Drive had been based on a recent consultation in Wembley Park Drive. The decision in relation to Preston Road and Bridge Road had been taken at a much earlier date based on a consultation undertaken at that time. Whilst not aware of any significant requests for changes to parking management on Preston Road or Bridge Road she would be willing to reconsider the need for a further consultation in relation to these locations should any significant interest be expressed by local residents.

The Mayor thanked Members for their 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 Shahzad expressed concern and requested a further update on action being taken to deal with the current backlog and delays in processing blue badge applications.

In response, Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform) recognised the concerns highlighted and apologised for the current delays in processing applications. She assured Members about the work being undertaken to clear the backlog given the critical importance to those affected.

- (ii) Councillor Gill, in highlighting increasing levels of concern relating to climate change, sought details on whether the Council had given any consideration to its investment strategy in relation to fossil fuel companies.

In response Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader) took the opportunity to advise of the work being undertaken as part of the Labour Energy Forum on this issue. As part of their current manifesto commitment she confirmed that she was looking, as part of the Council's Investment Strategy, towards divestment away from fossil fuel companies in recognition of the desire to improve air quality across the borough and provide a clean and safe environment for local residents.

- (iii) In view of recent concerns expressed by Internal Audit chiefs from across the private and public sector regarding the organisational risks posed by cyber security, Councillor Choudhary sought details on the approach within Brent to ensuring the Council's IT and data systems were protected and secure.

Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader) advised, in response, that the protection of systems and data formed one of the key priorities within the Council's Digital Strategy. Measures were in place to ensure the necessary safeguards were maintained not only for Brent's systems but also the other two local authorities and Local Government Association for whom Brent

provided IT systems and support and on which she would be willing to provide further details, if required, outside of the meeting.

- (iv) Councillor Long highlighted what she felt were current difficulties being caused for residents on low income in having to purchase books of visitor parking permits (in areas where controlled parking schemes applied) and asked whether it would be possible to offer the ability to purchase single visitor permits.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) advised that whilst willing to consider the proposal in more detail this would need to be balanced against maintaining the overall cost effectiveness of the scheme and ease of operation for residents.

- (v) Councillor Ahmed queried the approach being taken towards clearing of fly-tipping by the Council's contractors, questioning whether a more outcome based system could be introduced allowing rubbish to be cleared in an area the contractors were working in when spotted without the need for tasking through a specific report.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) felt it was important to highlight the ongoing impact of Government funding reductions in terms of how the service was now having to be prioritised and delivered. Notwithstanding these restrictions she was, however, pleased to advise that this had not prevented the Council still looking for alternative innovative solutions with reference made to a recent trial in Willesden involving the targeting of resources based on and without use of the Cleaner Brent App. Whilst the outcome of the trial was still being analysed she advised that she would be happy to provide Councillor Ahmed with a further update on the results once available.

- (vi) Councillor Kansagra highlighted concerns about the proposed introduction of a diesel surcharge for car owners in the borough, which he felt was unfair given that the majority of pollution was caused by larger vehicles such as lorries and buses. In view of these concerns he asked the Cabinet Member what measures were being considered to mitigate the impact of these charges on residents, particularly those on low incomes who were likely to be affected.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) highlighted the Administration's commitment towards improving air quality across the borough but at the same time took the opportunity to remind Councillor Kansagra that no final decision had yet been taken as consultation on the proposals was still ongoing.

- (vii) Having received a number of requests from local residents for the provision or removal of street furniture, Councillor Kelcher asked whether consideration had been given to ways in which the Council may be able to open up and improve how residents were able to control and influence decisions regarding the provision of street furniture.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) advised that this was an issue she would be willing to take back for



consideration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning.

- (viii) Councillor Long highlighted that she had received a number of complaints relating to the use and billing for allotments and sought details on the measure in place to address these issues.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) advised that she was keen to ensure use of allotment plots was maximised and confirmed she would take back the concerns raised regarding billing to make sure appropriate action was taken.

- (ix) Making reference to a recent Citizens Advice study regarding the extent of problems being experienced across the UK with the use of bailiffs, Councillor Choudhary asked what safeguards were in place within Brent, as part of the recent award of contracts for bailiff services, to ensure the Council avoided working with rogue bailiffs in pursuing debts.

In response Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader) thanked Councillor Choudhary for highlighting these concerns and outlined the approach being taken within Brent to protect vulnerable residents through introduction of a Council Tax Protocol, which the Council had worked hard to achieve. Under this protocol, efforts were being made to work with residents experiencing difficulties in meeting payments with enforcement action reserved for those cases where residents were refusing to pay.

- (x) Given frustrations highlighted by local residents in his ward, Councillor Chan sought details on what action it would be possible for the Council to take in order to ensure that delays in repairs to utility company equipment on the highway were addressed by the companies concerned.

In response Councillor Tatler (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning) advised that she shared the frustrations expressed regarding the difficulties in communication and being able to ensure these types of repairs were undertaken by utilities companies when reported. As a result, Councillor Tatler advised that she was currently looking at how communication with utilities companies could be improved to ensure that these type of issues were picked up and actioned as quickly as possible.

At this stage in proceedings the Mayor advised that the time available for the open session had now expired and ended by thanking all Members for their contributions.

#### **14. Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees**

Before being presented with the updates from each Scrutiny Chair, the Mayor reminded Members that the time set aside for this item was now 20 minutes, with each Chair having up to three minutes in which to highlight any significant issues arising from the work of their Committees 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:

#### **14.1 Housing Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Long (Chair of the Committee) introduced the report and advised that issues considered at the most recent meeting (not included within the report) had been as follows:

- Consultation on the Council's Allocation Policy, including retention of the choice based lettings system and proposals to place residents in private sector rather than temporary accommodation;
- Performance on the Estate Grounds Maintenance Contract, with members highlighting concerns regarding the contrast in service between certain estates and also in relation to detail available on the website. Members had also requested further detail on the possible use of Neighbourhood CIL on estate improvements;
- Impact of the extension of the Private Sector Landlord Licensing Scheme and action being taken to address the backlog of licensing applications, improve the availability of information for tenants and also in relation to enforcement activity on issues such as dumping of rubbish linked to licensed properties.

#### **14.2 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Kelcher (Chair of the Committee) introduced the report with the following issues identified for response by the relevant Cabinet Members:

- As part of the Committee's review on the Highways Contract Performance concerns had been highlighted in relation to the self-monitoring nature of performance against the contract. The Committee had therefore been keen to seek an assurance from the Cabinet Member regarding plans to phase out the use of these type of contracts in future.

Responding to the issue raised, Councillor Tatler (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning) took the opportunity to thank the Committee for their work in this area and advised she was pleased to be able to report the signing of a Deed of Variation on the Highways Contract effective from 1 October designed to address the concerns identified in terms of managing and monitoring performance.

- As part of the Committee's review of progress on the Digital Strategy and outcomes for vulnerable people, Members were keen to seek further details on the work being undertaken to target more vulnerable residents excluded or unable to access online services; encourage and incentivise residents to set up a My Brent Account and monitor how and where residents were accessing on-line services.

In response, Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader) advised that the need to ensure access to services was maintained for more vulnerable residents had

already been recognised within the strategy including action to target specific groups in order to identify and address the barriers in the being able to access services and ensure they were not disadvantaged.

- As part of their review around Area Based working, the Committee had been looking at the role of Town Centre and Neighbourhood Managers. Having met with officers in these roles at a Focus Group session, the Committee had been impressed by their level of professionalism and dedication. As an issue highlighted during the managers Focus Group details were sought on what further training was available to support the managers in maximising use of social media and other online forums as an additional means of picking up local issues.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment) advised that she had taken back the issue highlighted in order to ensure that training was provided and the Neighbourhood Managers (of which a further two had recently been appointed) and Town Centre Managers were also establishing the necessary links with ward councillors in their areas.

### **14.3 Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Ketan Sheth (Chair of the Committee) introduced the report with the following issues identified for response by the relevant Cabinet Members:

- As part of the Committee's review on the management and prevention of Diabetes, Members had been impressed with the work being achieved through the Diabetes Community Champions and therefore keen to seek an assurance that the support currently being provided by the Council for this initiative would be maintained and, if possible increased.

Councillor Hirani (responding as Cabinet Member for Public Health, Leisure and Culture) advised that the Council had been working closely with Diabetes UK to establish and train 50 volunteers as Diabetes Community Champions across the borough. As with the Scrutiny Committee, he had recognised the positive impact achieved and reaffirmed the Council's commitment towards maintaining the current level of support and cohort of volunteers.

- The Committee had been disappointed to note the outcome of the recent Care Quality Commission Inspection of the London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust which had rated them as "requiring improvement". Given the concerns raised, further detail was sought from the Cabinet Member (in advance of the next Joint North West London Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee due to be hosted by Brent) on how the Council would be looking to engage and work with the leadership of the Trust in order to ensure the necessary improvements were made.

Councillor Farah (responding as Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care) advised that he shared the disappointment expressed and was committed to working with partners as well as the leadership of the Trust in order to secure the necessary improvements and ensure updates were provided as progress was made.

- An update was requested on plans being developed to address concerns regarding the attainment of black and Afro-Caribbean pupils and other underachieving groups in schools across Brent.

In response Councillor Agha (Cabinet Member for Schools, Employment & Skills) advised that work had already commenced in this area with a Steering Group established to lead on the process involving schools parents and other key stakeholders. The need to address these concerns had been recognised and he advised Members that further updates would be provided as work progressed with the approach also focussed around provision of appropriate employment and skills opportunities.

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 on from the update provided in relation to the work of the Resources and Public Realm Committee, Councillor Choudhary asked for an update on the review of the Assets and Property Strategy.

In response Councillor Kelcher advised that whilst the review was ongoing progress had been made with the provision of a spreadsheet of council property assets. In reviewing the initial information provided the Committee had identified the need for further information having noted that in some cases values were difficult to assess and were also keen to see the inclusion of an assessment of social value in terms of the contribution made by each property asset. He advised that further updates could be provided as the review progressed.

- (ii) In response to the update provided under the report from the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Daly sought further details on the potential response from the Scrutiny Committee to the concerns raised in relation to the outcome of the CQC Inspection on the London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust.

In response Councillor Ketan Sheth advised that he was already liaising with scrutiny colleagues in Ealing and Harrow on the options available. Possible ways forward included a special meeting or joint commission to review actions being taken by the Trust to address the issues identified or referring the matter to the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A final decision on the most appropriate option was still to be made but he assured Members we would keep them updated as the review was progressed.

- (iii) Following on from the update provided in relation to the work of the Housing Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Choudry sought further detail on the work being undertaken in seeking to promote and encourage the private sector to work more closely with the Council and other Registered Providers in terms of access to housing supply.

In response Councillor Long advised that much of this work was being led by the Cabinet, however as part of their review of the changes being proposed to the Council's Housing Allocation Policy the Scrutiny Committee had noted the inclusion of proposals to encourage much closer working between the Council, Housing Associations and private rented sector involving lease arrangements and access to Housing Benefit. Tenants experiencing problems in securing rent deposits could also seek advice from the Council but she felt it was also important to recognise the impact which increasing rent levels across London would have in terms of limiting access to the supply of affordable accommodation for those on low income, highlighting the importance of the Council's overall housing strategy in this respect.

As no further questions were raised, the Mayor advised he would move on to the next item and thanked all Members for their contributions.

#### 15. **Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee**

The Mayor invited Councillor Choudry (as Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee) to introduce his report updating members on the work of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee.

As part of the report, Councillor Choudry referred to the update which had been provided on counter fraud and reference to an ongoing police investigation which he advised Members it would not be possible for him to comment on in any more detail pending the outcome of that process. Whilst pointing out that it was not unusual for organisations as large and complex as the Council to experience various types of fraud and not being complacent, he was keen to reassure Members about the robust nature of the Council's anti-fraud and corruption strategy and work being undertaken by the Internal Audit function to combat fraud and ensure the necessary controls were in place.

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

Before moving on to deal with the next item, the Mayor advised Members that he had been handed a letter submitted by a member of the public during the meeting relating to specific housing matters. He confirmed that he had received the letter and would arrange for it to be passed on to the Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform for response outside of the meeting.

#### 16. **Safer Brent Community Safety Strategy 2018-2021**

Councillor Tom Miller (Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities) introduced the report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment seeking approval of the Safer Brent Community Safety Strategy for 2018-2021.

In introducing the report he highlighted the positive steps made in relation to the CCTV upgrade, funding of additional police officers, stricter licensing policies, improved partnership working and tasking of resources with the strategy designed to guide the future direction of partnership working. Whilst the priorities within the strategy were not exhaustive development of the strategy had provided an

opportunity to review progress and assess what more needed to be achieved as a partnership including as more long term strategic aims a move towards a more public health based approach in relation to prevention and less fragmentation of services.

Councillor Miller felt it was important to recognise the challenges still needing to be addressed within Brent and across London as a whole based on the resource restrictions imposed by central Government and also the impact arising from longer terms issues of social deprivation but felt that the focus on the key priorities within the strategy relating to violent crime; prevention and tasking of resources would provide a realistic outcome based approach towards tackling these issues under the Safer Brent Partnership.

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 approve the detailed Community Safety Strategy 2018-2021 and Action Plans, as agreed by Cabinet in August 2018.
- (2) To note that the information provided within the report would also be considered as part of planning of the Council's wider operational development.

## 17. **Treasury Management Outturn Report 2017/18**

Councillor McLennan introduced the report from the Chief Finance Officer which provided an update on Treasury Management activity and confirmed that the Council had complied with its Prudential Indicators for 2017/18. Members noted that the report had been approved and referred on to Council for consideration by Cabinet on 12 September 2018 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

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 unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that Council note the 2017/18 Treasury Management Outturn Report in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

## 18. **Motions**

### 18.1 **Motion from the Labour Group – Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement**

The Mayor invited Councillor Kelcher to move the motion he had submitted on behalf of from the Labour Group who began by highlighting the importance of the Good Friday Agreement in marking the end of the conflict in Northern Ireland and outlining why he felt, given its significant impact, this deserved to be properly commemorated and celebrated. Having noted the positive impact which the

Agreement had had in the region and on the Irish community in Brent, Councillor Kelcher advised he was concerned at the threat which he felt was now posed arising from the prospect of a “hard Brexit” and potential for a hard border. The motion, he pointed out, was therefore seeking support not only in recognising and celebrating the historic impact of the Agreement but also in terms of looking to maintain and defend its key principles, especially in relation to the potential outcome of the Brexit process.

The Mayor then invited up to two other contributions from the Labour Group, with the following members speaking in support of the motion:

Councillor Conneely highlighted the importance of the Agreement for the Irish community in Brent. Having recognised the bravery of those involved in securing the Agreement she was concerned at what she felt to be its consistent undermining by successive Conservative Governments since 2010 and advised that she was therefore proud to be supporting the motion in seeking a shared future of peace.

Councillor Gill felt it was important to recognise the impact of the conflict which had been ended by the Agreement and need to ensure that, as a result, the peace created over the last 20 years was protected. He therefore urged all Members to support the motion.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Colwill to respond to the motion on behalf of the Conservative Group who confirmed his Group would also be supporting the motion in recognition of the historic impact and importance of the Good Friday Agreement. Whilst supportive of the motion he felt that an option in relation to addressing the concerns raised about the potential impact of any hard border from the Brexit negotiations, would be for the Council to consider supporting the border solution put forward by the European Reform Group.

In exercising his right of reply, Councillor Kelcher thanked members for their support and in recognising the impact and importance of the Agreement.

The Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**:

“This council recognises that:

The Irish Troubles were an horrific conflict which, in just three short decades, costs the lives of over 3,500 people and injured 47,000 more the vast majority of these victims were innocent civilians.

The Troubles claimed victims all across these islands, including in our city of London which in particular saw the Docklands attack, the most financially costly terrorist attack in the history of the United Kingdom.

This council notes with pleasure that this seemingly intractable conflict was ended twenty years ago this year with the signing of the Belfast Agreement (aka Good Friday Agreement), and; that this milestone agreement has undoubtedly saved hundreds of lives and directly benefitted the many thousands of families with Irish heritage in Brent.

This council endorses the principles of the Agreement which include:

- consent;
- self determination;
- abandonment of violence;
- recognition of both identities in Northern Ireland;
- power sharing;
- devolution;

This council notes with concern that in its twentieth year the Belfast Agreement has never been as threatened as it is today by the prospect of a hard border on the island of Ireland imposed by Britain's exit from the European Union, which would undermine the ideas of inter-island cooperation, recognition of dual identities and self-determination in the Agreement.

This council resolves to:

- celebrate the Belfast Agreement as an historic achievement in all of its cultural work in Brent;
- register its opposition, on behalf of the Irish community in Brent, to a hard border between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland in writing to the relevant Secretary of State;
- continue to promote the values of consent, harmony and cooperation in its community work in the spirit of the Belfast Agreement.”

## **18.2 Motion from the Labour Group – Charter Against Modern Slavery**

The Mayor invited Councillor Kabir to move the motion she had submitted on behalf of the Labour Group who began by highlighting the prevalence and different forms of modern day slavery which she felt it was unacceptable to still find examples of in countries such as the UK. Whilst supportive of the requirement introduced under the Modern Day Slavery Act 2015 for businesses to report annually on the steps being taken to ensure modern slavery and human trafficking were not practices supported in their business or supply chain operations the concern was that this only applied to organisations with a turnover of £36m. For these reasons, Councillor Kabir, whilst recognising the actions already being taken by the Council in terms of its procurement practices, commended the adoption of the cooperative charter detailed within the motion.

The Mayor then invited up to two other contributions from the Labour Group, with the following members speaking in support of the motion:

Councillor Shahzad felt that modern day slavery and human trafficking represented the worst type of human right violation and was therefore keen, in supporting the motion, to ensure the Council did everything possible to condemn and seek to prevent these type of practices.

Councillor Chohan highlighted his concern at the extent of these type of practices within the manufacturing, catering and domiciliary sectors and was also therefore keen to support the motion, as a means to address exploitative and abusive employment practices.



The Mayor then invited Councillor Kansagra to respond to the motion on behalf of the Conservative Group who advised his Group would also be supporting the motion. Having welcomed the approach outlined he felt it was, however, also important to recognise the contribution made by Theresa May, in both her current role as Prime Minister and previous role as Home Secretary, towards tackling these concerns who had led on introduction of the Modern Day Slavery Act.

Having thanked Members for their support, Councillor Kabir advised she had no further comments to make in exercising her right of reply, so the Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**:

“As a major employer, and investor in local, regional, and national supply chains, this council recognises that, far too often, exploitative, unscrupulous, and abusive employment practices exist. This council condemns those practices and is committed to rooting them out

As part of its determination to tackle modern day slavery, this council adopts the following cooperative charter which sets out strategies for more rigorous supply chain management and reporting processes.

Whilst recognising the action already being taken, Brent Council will:

- Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply’s (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply.
- Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for noncompliance.
- Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery.
- Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
- Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
- Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.
- Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery.
- Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.

- Refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.
- Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually."

### **18.3 Motion from Conservative Group – Anti-Semitism**

Prior to the consideration of this item, 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 Maurice to move the motion, submitted on behalf of the Conservative Group who whilst recognising the sanctuary traditionally provided within the UK for those seeking to escape persecution expressed concern about the increase in anti-Semitic hate crime which had led to some sections of the Jewish community feeling threatened and unwanted. He felt this had been expounded by the rise of the Momentum movement. Referring to a poem by Martin Niemoller he concluded by advising that in order to provide reassurance for those communities affected, the motion was seeking to reiterate support for the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism and to ensure this was included within the Council's Members and Employee Codes of Conduct.

The Mayor then invited contributions from the Labour Group, with Councillor Tom Miller, as Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities, responding to the motion by highlighting that the Labour Group had welcomed and would be supporting its content recognising the need to focus on community relations. He reminded Members that Brent had been a trailblazer in this respect, having adopted the full IHRA definition back in September 2017 with the Council committed to working with the Jewish community to tackle all forms of anti-Semitism. He concluded by advising that if Members were minded to support the motion it was recommended that reference to the IHRA definition would be included within the Member and Employee Codes of Conduct as a footnote which Councillor Maurice advised he would be willing to support.

The Mayor advised that it would be possible to take a further two contributions (one from each Group) during the debate on the motion, with the following Members speaking:

Councillor Nerva, in supporting the motion advised he was proud of the original decision taken by the Council in September 2017 to adopt in full the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism and of the decision being sought under the current motion to ensure this was enshrined in Council policy and procedure. Having recognised and accepted the problems experienced within the national Labour Party relating to adoption of the definition he was supportive of the continued efforts being made to build broad alliances within the Party in order to maximise support for IHRA and for

the wider focus in eradicating all forms of anti-Semitism, which he felt the Conservative Party also needed to consider in relation to how they dealt with Islamophobia.

Councillor Kansagra endorsed the comments made by Councillor Nerva. Whilst keen to ensure that discrimination was not tolerated in any form he felt there was a need to recognise the strong level of community cohesion within Brent and record of the Council in encouraging good community relations, which we was keen to see maintained.

In exercising his right of reply, Councillor Maurice thanked Members for their support and advised from a personal perspective that he had been fortunate whilst living in Brent not to have experienced any form of anti-Semitism. He did recognise, however, the concerns being expressed and felt there was a need to educate those seeking to preach anti-Semitism or Islamophobia and to demonstrate by continuing to work together as a Council, that this type of behaviour would not be tolerated.

The Mayor then put the motion (as set out below) to a vote, by show of hands, which was unanimously declared **CARRIED** with Members noting that reference to the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism would be included within the Member and Employee Codes of Conduct as a footnote:

“With anti-Semitic hate crimes rising across London and the United Kingdom – this Council expresses that it is appalled at the increase in anti-Semitic Hate Crimes, and reiterates its support for the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism.

This Council is shocked at the recent spate of anti-Semitic posters that have been going up across TfL run bus stops, and it is further shocked at the recent comments by those who have described the recent condemnation of anti-Semitic language and behaviour as a ‘Zionist’ movement – using anti-Semitic language and imagery in campaigning and online, further enflaming anti-Semitic hatred across the Borough.

This Council will immediately adopt, into its councillor and public workers code of conduct, the full and complete IHRA definition of anti-Semitism\*, and implement policies to ensure that hate crimes against Jewish people are acted upon quickly and decisively.”

#### 19. **Urgent Business**

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

The meeting was therefore declared closed at 8:25pm.

COUNCILLOR ARSHAD MAHMOOD  
Mayor