



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

**Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held on Monday 8 July 2019 at 6.00 pm**

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Lia Colacicco

COUNCILLORS:

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

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Councillors Donnelly-Jackson and Naheerathan

1. **Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor advised that direct apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Donnelly-Jackson and Naheerathan.

2. **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 two items relating to the Council's scrutiny function he advised that in accordance with Standing Order 30, he was intending to amend the order so both items could be considered at the same stage.

In addition, the Mayor announced that the Conservative Group had, prior to the meeting, withdrawn their proposed amendment to Motion 16.1 – "Standing up to racism, discrimination and prejudice in Brent", which members indicated they would be happy to confirm.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

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

- Agenda Item 11 – Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2018-19
- Agenda Item 12 –Update reports from the Chair of each Scrutiny Committee

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

3. **Statement from Lead Member for Community Safety & Engagement**

The Mayor then moved on to advise that he had agreed to allow Councillor Miller (Lead Member for Community Safety & Engagement) to make a short urgent statement to Council at this stage in proceedings, regarding fatalities that had occurred within the borough over the weekend.

Councillor Miller thanked the Mayor and asked Members to join him in condemning the acts of violence that had taken place in Brent over the weekend. Taking the opportunity to convey the Council's sympathy to the families and communities involved, Councillor Miller also felt it was important to recognise that communities across Brent were stronger than the violence experienced and condemned its perpetrators. He pointed out that whilst incidents of serious crime and knife crime, in particular, had significantly dropped across the borough there was a need to unite and maintain the focus on police resources and community support given the significant drop in central funding being made available.

Councillor Miller concluded by again offering condolences and pledged the Council's support to those affected by the recent crimes.

4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday 1 May 2019 be approved as a correct record.

5. **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared by Members at the meeting.

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

The Mayor made the following announcements

(i) Recent fatalities in Brent

The Mayor opened his announcements by echoing the sentiments expressed by the Lead Member for Community Safety and Engagement regarding the fatalities in Brent over the weekend. He had been devastated to learn of the events, one of which was in his ward and the other very close to where he lived. He offered his thoughts, prayers and sympathy in support of the victims and their loved ones.

(ii) Death of former Mayor Les Ford & Joyce Bacchus

The Mayor advised that it was with great sadness he had to announce the deaths of two former Councillors and Mayors - Joyce Bacchus MBE and Les Ford.

He recognised that many councillors would have known Joyce, who was well loved and respected by colleagues, residents and council staff alike.

As a mark of respect, the Mayor asked those present to stand in order to observe a minute's silence in respect of both Joyce and Les and also to remember the young lives recently lost within the Borough.

A minute's silence was observed

As a number of Members had indicated they wished to formally pay tribute to Joyce Bacchus MBE, the Mayor then invited contributions from other councillors.

Councillor M Butt opened the tributes by highlighting how he and his family had known Joyce since 2005. He remembered with fondness her attention to the small details in life, which had made her so well liked and respected by all she knew and the communities she represented. Councillor Butt said it had been an honour to have been able to work with Joyce and hoped that her commitment and dedication to the people of Brent was something which all Members would aspire to.

The following members also spoke in tribute:

- Councillor Colwill also spoke about how privileged he had been to know Joyce whom he highlighted had been an intelligent, highly respected and dedicated

advocate for the residents she had represented. He recalled her resilience, especially after a car accident she had been involved in.

- Councillor Long advised she also had many memories of serving with Joyce and particularly recalled her willingness to support other members. Highlighting the respect Joyce commanded from residents, particularly in her ward, she pointed out that she would be missed and remembered with affection.
- Councillor Hector also took the opportunity to highlight Joyce's attention to detail and commenting on the tributes paid at her funeral felt she would have been touched by the fondness with which she had been remembered and how much she would be missed by all those who had known and served with her.
- Councillor Kansagra concluded the tributes by highlighting how he had got to know Joyce whilst serving with her as a Magistrate in Brent. He also remarked on her integrity, fairness and lack of bias and pointed out how much she would be missed by all who had known her.

The Mayor thanked everyone for their kind and touching tributes.

(iii) London Finals of Young Enterprise – HSBC Bank

The Mayor congratulated Kingsbury High School for their achievement in reaching the finals of London's Young Enterprise awards, which had been supported by HSBC bank. Whilst not winning, he highlighted how well they had done to get to the finals and asked Members to join him in congratulating them with a round of applause.

(iv) Teachers Award – Barham Primary School

The Mayor advised he was also pleased to announce that Tina Murray, a trainee Head teacher and SENDCO at Barham Park School, had won a Silver Pearson National Teaching Award in The Award for Excellence in Special Needs Education. He remarked that this was a fantastic achievement for the school community and wished Tina well, as she now moved on to be considered for a Gold Teaching Award.

(v) Windrush Event – Thank you for support

The Mayor advised that he had been delighted to see so many councillors, officers and past Mayors join the Council for its Windrush celebration on Saturday 22 June. As the Council's first event on National Windrush Day he felt it represented a fitting tribute to the Windrush Generation and their contribution and legacy. The Mayor took the opportunity to thank staff on the organising committee for ensuring the event was a success along with all councillors involved in its organisation, with special mention to Councillors Hylton, Johnson, McLennan, McLeish, Muhammed Butt and Mitchell Murray.

(vi) Civic Service – 23 July 2019

The Mayor invited Members to his Civic Service, which he advised would be taking place on Tuesday 23 July 2019 at the Civic Centre. The service was being held to celebrate his civic year and also the work to support and promote his two chosen charities; the Jason Roberts Foundation and the Sickle Cell Society. Any members wishing to attend were asked to contact the Mayor's Office.

(vii) LGBTQ+ pride month

The Mayor took the opportunity to remind Members about the recent 50-year anniversary (28 June 1969) of the Stonewall Uprising, which had started a series of events that had kicked off the modern Pride movement. This year's London Pride had celebrated the Jubilee anniversary, remembering fifty years of activism, protests and victories which he pointed out had helped to shape today's Pride movement. Recognising that Pride in London was all about the people, he was pleased that it had been possible to celebrate 50 years since the birth of the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement.

(viii) Eid al-Fitr (end of Ramadan)

The Mayor advised that he had recently been delighted to host the Big Iftar at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Monks Park and thanked all those who attended the event with him.

(ix) Jack Petchey award

The Mayor asked Members to join him in congratulating Princilla Agyemang from St Gregory's Science College, on winning the Jack Petchey Award as part of the Speak Out Challenge. Over 20,000 pupils aged 14 to 15 from state schools in London and Essex had taken part in the competition and he was pleased to be able to recognise Princilla's wonderful achievement, with all members joining him in a round of applause.

(x) Armed Forces Day

It was with honour that the Mayor announced he had been able to mark Armed Forces Day at the end of June, which had provided an opportunity for the Council to show its support for the men and women making up the Armed Forces community including not only currently serving troops but also service families, veterans and cadets.

(xi) Co-operative Day

The Mayor advised how pleased he had been to be able to join colleagues at the Civic Centre in order to raise the co-operative flag in celebration of International Co-operative Day. This was an annual celebration of the co-operative movement, observed on the first Saturday in July with the Mayor thanking Councillor Long for organising the event.

(xii) Neasden Festival

Following on from the co-operative flag raising celebration, the Mayor advised that he had also been delighted to join the local community for the fourth Neasden

Festival at the Neasden Shopping Centre. The Mayor advised that he had very much enjoyed attending the event.

(xiii) Petitions

The Mayor ended his announcements, by drawing 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 Orders.

7. **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**:

- (1) that the following appointments be approved:
 - (a) Councillor S.Choudhary be appointed to replace Councillor Long as a substitute member on the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and Audit & Standards Committee.
 - (b) Councillor Perrin be appointed to replace Councillor Stephens as a substitute member on the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and Audit & Standards Committee.
 - (c) Councillor Colacicco be appointed to fill a vacancy as substitute member on the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and Audit & Standards Committee.
 - (d) Councillor S.Choudhary be appointed to fill a vacancy as substitute member on the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.
 - (e) Councillor S.Choudhary and Councillor Stephens be appointed to fill the two vacancies as full members on the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee.
 - (f) Councillor S.Butt to be replaced by a vacancy as a full member on the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee.
 - (g) Councillor S.Butt be appointed to replace Councillor Stephens as substitute member on the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee.
 - (h) Councillor Daly be appointed to replace Councillor W.Mitchell Murray as chair of Brent Connects – Wembley with Councillor Patterson to replace Councillor Daly as vice-chair.
 - (i) Councillor Krupa Sheth to be appointed as the main Council representative on the London Councils Transport and Environment Committee with Councillor Tatler to replace her as deputy member and Councillors Agha, Hirani and Miller to be appointed as additional deputy members.

- (2) to note the following changes notified by the Leader of the Council in relation to Cabinet and Executive Joint Committee appointments:
- (a) Cabinet portfolio remits amended as follows:
- Regeneration, Highways & Planning amended to Regeneration, Property and Planning
 - Community Safety amended to Community Safety & Engagement
- (b) Councillor Tatler appointed to replace Councillor Muhammed Butt as full member on the West London Economic Prosperity Board with Councillor M.Butt appointed as substitute member.
- (c) Councillors McLennan and Agha (Deputy) replaced by Councillor Miller as full member on the London Councils Grants Committee and Councillor Hirani as deputy member.
- (d) Councillor Tatler appointed as additional full member on the London Housing Consortium.
- (3) In addition to the changes in (1) above, to note that the following membership changes were being recommended to General Purposes Committee for approval:
- (a) Councillor Abdirazak to be replaced by a vacancy as full member on the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee.
- (4) To note the correction to the Council's representation on Lee Valley Regional Park Authority with Councillor Hirani having been appointed to serve a four-year term of office expiring in May 2021.

8. **Deputations (if any)**

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

9. **Questions from Members of the Public & Brent Youth Parliament**

The Mayor informed Members that no questions had been received from members of the public or Brent Youth Parliament for consideration at the meeting.

10. **Petitions (if any)**

The Mayor confirmed that no requests for debates on any petitions under the Council's petition rules and Standing Order 66 had been received.

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

The Mayor began by reminding Members that under the changes agreed to the Constitution in February 2019 a total of three minutes had now been set aside for Council to receive and consider the update report from the Leader and Cabinet.

The Mayor explained that the changes had been designed to provide time for the Leader and any other Lead Members to speak in order to highlight any key or significant issues from within their portfolio with a written update from each of the Lead Members having already been circulated with the Summons. Once any further specific updates had been provided, he advised that the meeting would then move straight on to deal with questions from opposition and other non-cabinet members, which would include the opportunity to ask questions of relevant Lead Members.

The Mayor then invited the Leader to present the update report.

Reiterating the explanation provided, Councillor M. Butt (Leader of the Council) felt it was important to highlight that the change in procedure had been designed to enable members to focus their time on the opportunities available to question and hold Cabinet Members to account.

In terms of updates, the Leader reported that he and other Members had recently attended the LGA Annual Conference. One of the main issues highlighted at the event had been the ongoing financial challenges being experienced not just in Brent but within Local Authorities across the country as a result of the reduction in Central Government finance. Concerns had also been raised in relation to the uncertainty around the outcome of the Government's Fair Funding Review and Autumn Statement, given the need for stability and continuity in order for local authorities to be able to continue planning for the provision of key services that local people depended on. He felt this remained one of the biggest challenges faced by local authorities and their partners.

Lead Members were thanked for their individual updates provided within the report, with the opportunity also taken to highlight the collaborative work being undertaken with a range of strategic partners in relation to ownership and delivery of the Borough Plan and opportunities to engage in the London Borough of Culture being co-ordinated through Partners for Brent.

At this stage, the Mayor advised that the time available for this item had expired and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to formally note the updates provided by the Leader and Cabinet prior to moving on to councillor questions.

12. **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 for this item, which would begin with consideration of the written questions submitted in advance of the meeting along with any supplementary questions. Once these had been dealt with, the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question Lead 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 Lead Member. The written responses supplied had been circulated with the Council agenda. The following supplementary questions were then received:

- 12.1 Councillor Kennelly thanked Councillor Agha (Lead Member for Schools, Employment and Skills) for his response in relation to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance on the teaching of Relationship Education. Before moving on to his supplementary question he took the opportunity, following on from the Mayor's Announcements, to also pay tribute to Pride and the LGBTQ+ community and to express his support for the Armed Forces community in recognition of Armed Forces Day. In terms of a supplementary question, whilst recognising that the Lead Member had acknowledged the challenges faced in addressing the myths surrounding the DfE guidance, Councillor Kennelly asked what further assurance could be provided in terms of the support being made available for schools in order to address any concerns or difficulties experienced.

In response, Councillor Agha advised that the Council was using a number of different strategies and methods such as the Brent School Partnership, the Schools Forum and the Annual School Governors Conference to disseminate advice and guidance and provide support to schools and their governors to assist them in complying with the statutory guidance. He felt it was important to remember, however, that the way in which the curriculum was taught would be a matter for individual schools and their Governing Bodies. Whilst expected to consult with parents prior to its introduction, schools and their Governing Bodies would have the ability to amend their final approach, if felt necessary, in order to support pupils and families at the school. He therefore reminded members of the importance of Governing Bodies and encouraged any members not already involved to consider becoming school governors in order to be able to individually offer their help and support.

- 12.2 Councillor Hassan confirmed that she had no supplementary question for Councillor Krupa Sheth in relation to the response provided on the scale of carbon reductions relating to the roll-out of the borough wide LED street lighting programme.
- 12.3 Having thanked Councillor McLennan (Deputy Leader) for her response in relation to council tax arrears, Councillor S. Butt asked the Deputy Leader if further details could be provided about the measures being taken to support residents struggling with payments and charges, including progress with the Anti-Poverty policy and Council Tax Protocol developed in consultation with Citizens Advice (which he commended the Council for having in place since 2017). He felt this was particularly relevant given the fact that queries relating to council tax arrears were one of the most common member enquiries.

Councillor McLennan advised that she was delighted to respond by highlighting that Brent had been the first Council to adopt such a Protocol. This had been designed to ensure that the Council could work with those identified as in genuine financial hardship to help them in dealing with and managing their arrears. As a result, Councillor McLennan was pleased to note that despite the diverse nature of the borough and challenges given the levels of deprivation in some areas, Brent had been able to achieve one of the highest levels of Council Tax collection working in conjunction with its

residents. In overall terms she advised members that whilst the Council would look to deal robustly with wilful non payers, the Protocol would ensure that those willing to pay but experiencing financial difficulties were dealt with sensitively and fairly and supported in managing their arrears and was proud that Brent had once again led the way in adopting the Protocol.

- 12.4 Having noted the written response provided to his question, Councillor Maurice did not feel this had addressed the issue raised and therefore asked Councillor Tatler (Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning) whether she would be willing to consider reducing the rate of £120 per day charged to traders seeking to use space at the Civic Centre in order to demonstrate her support for small business within the borough.

In response, Councillor Tatler felt it was important to recognise that traders making use of the space within the Civic Centre were not trading there on a full time basis, meaning they would not be subject to the full cost outlined within the question. In terms of support for small businesses she was proud to be able to highlight many examples of the type of assistance being provided, which included the development of enterprise space across the Borough for small and medium sized enterprises; the introduction of policies around affordable workspaces alongside the investment in Town Centres and Town Centre Managers. As a result, she was also pleased to highlight that Brent had been shortlisted by the Association of Town Centre Managers for partnership working and had been shortlisted by the Federation of Small Businesses for its overall support of small businesses, which she felt made it difficult to criticise the Council's overall record in this respect.

The Mayor thanked Members for their supplementary questions and Lead 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) Taking the opportunity to highlight his support for the introduction of the Streets for School initiative currently in operation at two schools within the borough, Councillor Johnson sought further details on any plans being developed for its wider roll-out and the criteria that would be applied to determine the areas for any extension.

In response, Councillor Tatler (as Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning) recognised the success of the Streets for School initiative which, having been introduced on a London wide basis by The Mayor for London and Transport for London (TfL), had now been rolled out at Wykeham and Harlesden Primary Schools. The schools in Brent had been selected on the basis of safety and air quality issues in those areas with the initiative having made a huge difference to the health and wellbeing of the children. Given its success, the Council was keen to continue supporting the initiative and were in the process of identifying other schools that may benefit by joining the programme. These would be prioritised according to air quality, safety records and the distance children would have to travel as well as the feasibility and costs of installing the necessary cameras. Councillor Tatler advised that she would be happy to work with ward councillors on

identifying priority areas and also in seeking to generate the necessary funding to support expansion of the scheme, given the associated benefits.

- (ii) Councillor Kelcher, highlighting concerns regarding the management and scheduling of road works at the junction of Furness Road and Harrow Road in Kensal Green and communication undertaken with local residents, felt there was a need to ensure lessons were learned in terms of the planning and management of similar schemes in the future. He therefore asked the Lead Member if she would be willing to consider how the process, communication and scheduling of combined works with utilities companies could be improved in future in order to address and mitigate the issues identified.

In response Councillor Tatler (Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning) acknowledged the concerns raised and communication issues experienced, recognising the need for local residents to be able to report concerns and faults as easily as possible. In terms of the specific location highlighted, she felt there was a need to recognise the unusual complexity of the works undertaken. In normal circumstances a Notice of Works would be issued to partner organisations three months in advance of the work commencing with consultation taking place in order to defer other non-emergency works in the area and minimise disruption as far as possible. Recognising the concerns raised, however, Councillor Tatler advised that she would be willing to review the lessons learned and, if necessary, produce further guidance in order to improve the process and minimise disruption for residents arising from these types of works in future.

- (iii) Councillor Nerva sought further details regarding action the Council could take in highlighting concerns about performance and repeated service disruption and also in seeking secure an upgrade and improvements to operation of the Euston to Watford Junction train line with Transport for London (TfL) and Network Rail, recognising the number of local residents using the service.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (Lead Member for Environment) advised Members that she would be willing to raise the issue with TfL and Network Rail in order to seek an update.

- (iv) Councillor Long sought further details on the progress made since the Council had announced in May 2017 that it would be seeking to adopt and sign up to the British Sign Language Charter.

In response, Councillor M. Butt (Leader of the Council) advised that a programme of training had been provided for staff to assist them in supporting residents who were deaf or suffering with hearing difficulties. The Council had also met with Brent and Harrow Deaf Association in order to continue ensuring that the necessary guidance and support was available with the aim, he pointed out, of ensuring that all communities within the borough, regardless of disability, were able to continue accessing services as easily as possible.

- (v) Councillor Kennelly, took the opportunity to highlight concerns raised by parents, staff and local residents regarding the proposals currently being consulted on to undertake a phased closure of Roe Green Roe Green Strathcona School. Commenting on the strength of feeling in the local area he asked for an assurance regarding the continued involvement of local ward councillors and residents in discussions as the formal consultation process regarding the future of the site was progressed.

In response, Councillor Agha (as Lead Member for Education, Employment and Skills) felt it important to recognise that local councillors had been involved in all stages of the consultation process to date. In terms of formal consultation on the proposals, he advised that this process had opened on 26 June and would run until 24 July with comments and views welcomed from all parties, including local ward councillors. He assured members that no final decision had yet been taken and that both he and officers would be willing to continue meeting with local ward councillors as required.

- (vi) Councillor S.Choudhary sought further details on the teaching of relationship education in schools, particularly given concerns around parents seeking to withdraw their children from relationship and sex education as a result of cultural and religious beliefs. He asked the Lead Member for his views on what more could be done to inform and educate parents on the new guidance in order to dispel the myths identified relating to its introduction and impact.

In response, Councillor Agha (Lead Member for Education, Employment and Skills) advised that it was important to recognise that the Council could not issue any direction in this matter and that it would be up to individual schools and their Governing Bodies to decide how they would teach the curriculum and implement the guidance from the Department of Education. He pointed out that the introduction of the new guidance would need to be undertaken in consultation with parents, taking account of the religious background of all pupils as part of the planning process, with the Council offering support and guidance, as required, in order to ensure schools were complying with the necessary requirements.

- (vii) Councillor Dar, highlighting the removal of litter bins across the borough, sought further details on any plans being developed to mitigate the impact around schools including the possible use of bin liners, as an alternative.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (Lead Member for Environment) advised that she would be willing to liaise with the neighbourhood teams and Councillor Agha (as Lead Member for Education, Employment & Skills) in order to review any impact and how this could best be addressed.

- (viii) Councillor Kennelly took the opportunity to seek an update on activity being undertaken by the Council in order to support those within the Armed Forces looking to gain access back into employment, with reference to the Armed Forces Covenant and local businesses.

In response, Councillor Agha (Lead Member for Education, Employment & Skills) highlighted the work being undertaken by the Council with partners

across Brent in order to promote employment and apprenticeship opportunities as part of this process. Councillor Miller (as Lead Member for Community Safety and Engagement) also advised that he had met with the British Legion in order to review compliance with the Armed Forces Covenant and look at what further measures the Council could take to support veterans in the Borough. Both Lead Members advised they would be happy to continue working with Councillor Kennelly in order to consider any further suggestions or proposals as to how the support available could be enhanced.

- (ix) Following on from the question raised by Councillor S.Choudhary in relation to implementation of the new guidance relating to teaching of relationship education within schools, Councillor Thakkar felt it was important to return to the issue in order to explore how it was intended to respond to parents who felt that the teaching of relationship education should be a parental responsibility rather than undertaken through the school.

In response, Councillor Agha (Lead Member for Education, Employment & Skills) reiterated that it would be up to individual schools and their Governing Bodies to decide how they would teach the curriculum and implement the guidance from the Department of Education having consulted with parents. Whilst the Council would support schools in this process, parents would need to be encouraged to feed views into their Governing Bodies who would be expected to take these into account when planning for the introduction of the new curriculum. The role of local councillors as school governors and also the parent governor representatives was therefore highlighted as key in this respect. In addition, Councillor McLennan (as Deputy Leader) reminded Members that the Equalities Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty would also apply in this respect requiring the fostering of good relations and inclusivity for all.

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

13. **Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2018-2019**

The Mayor advised that, following the change agreed to the order of the agenda, the meeting would now move on to deal with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for 2018-19.

Referring to the accompanying report from the Assistant Chief Executive, which contained the Annual Report, he advised members that as this related to the work undertaken by all three of the Scrutiny Committees in the last year, his intention was to seek a variation to Standing Order 42 in order to allow each Chair to speak when introducing the report. As no objections were received the variation to Standing Order 42 was agreed and the Mayor advised that he would therefore allow each Chair up to one and a half minutes in order to introduce their section of the Annual Report.

The Mayor then invited Councillors Long, Kelcher & Ketan Sheth to jointly introduce the Annual Report.

Councillor Long, began by introducing the report of the former Housing Scrutiny Committee, highlighting that whilst much had been achieved during the operation of the Committee some slippage had occurred in terms of the delivery of recommendations agreed following various reviews undertaken. Specific reference was made to delivery of the Brent Housing Asset Management Strategy on which additional scrutiny had been recommended. Councillor Long advised that it had been an enjoyable experience serving on scrutiny and, highlighting a need to ensure a continued focus on housing, advised that this would be something she continued to monitor moving forward.

Councillor Kelcher then introduced the report relating to work undertaken by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee highlighting what he regarded as the following five key achievements:

- the ability to be able to set the agenda citing as examples the recommendations made as a result of the review of the draft budget proposals in relation to library hours and a tourist tax along with proposals (as a separate review) to increase recycling in flats;
- the increasing levels of engagement with the local media;
- the range of external visits undertaken by the Committee during the year in order to better understand issues and raise awareness;
- the increasing levels of engagement with the public as a means of raising awareness around scrutiny; and finally
- development of the external focus of scrutiny including, as an example, a review undertaken with the Football Association in relation to the economic impact of Wembley Stadium; work in relation to Air Quality and a visit to the House of Commons which had been reported in the Brent Magazine.

Councillor Ketan Sheth then concluded the introduction by highlighting what he felt had been the important principles underpinning the work undertaken by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee as outlined within the Annual Report. These had included:

- the aim of the Committee to identify and commence work on significant issues at an early stage, with the example provided of the meeting held in order to review plans being developed for delivery of the London Borough of Culture;
- seeking to engage and involve as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, with the example provided of the work undertaken with Brent's Clinical Commissioning Group, Director of Public Health, Lead Member and other professionals from a wide number of national and local organisations and charities around tackling Diabetes; and
- encouraging the Committee to get out and about as part of their reviews with the example provided of a visit to Bessborough Family Hub in Pimlico.

Councillor Ketan Sheth concluded by thanking all those who had contributed to work of the Committee and its achievements over the last year, including the co-opted members and other observers who regularly attended.

As no other members indicated they wanted to speak on the report the Mayor moved straight on to put the recommendation to the vote by a show of hands and it was unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to note the Annual Scrutiny Report 2018-19.

Before moving on the Mayor took this opportunity to formally thank Councillor Long and all other members involved for the work undertaken by the former Housing Scrutiny Committee.

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

Before being presented with the updates from each Scrutiny Chair, the Mayor reminded Members that as part of the changes agreed to the Constitution in February 2019 the time set aside for this item was now 12 minutes, with each Chair having up to three minutes in which to highlight any significant issues arising from the work of their Committees. 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 **Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Ketan Sheth introduced the update report from his Committee, highlighting the following issues:

- The current focus on the significant changes impacting on local health services, with the Committee due to review a proposal from Brent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to alter the present opening hours for the Urgent Care Centre based at Central Middlesex Hospital. When the A&E units at Central Middlesex and Hammersmith Hospitals had been closed, as part of the Shaping a Healthier future (SaHF) initiative, an assurance had been provided that the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex would be available to treat residents with minor illnesses and injuries on a 24/7 basis. Brent CCG were now proposing that due to its limited use in the early hours the Unit should be closed from midnight to 8am in order to better utilise available resources. As a result, the Scrutiny Committee would be seeking assurances in relation to communication with residents regarding the proposed changes, alternative measures to be established for those requiring treatment outside of any revised opening hours; the impact on patient safety and whether it would be possible to reverse any reduction in hours to cope with additional seasonal demand and what the likely impact would be on Northwick Park A&E and Urgent Care Centre should the proposed change go ahead.
- In addition, he advised that the Committee would be closely monitoring the proposed merger of the eight separate CCGs across North West London into one single body as part of implementation of the new NHS Long Term Plan and Integrated Care System. As a member of the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Sheth advised that he had recently been able to question the Chief Officer of the North West London Collaboration of CCGs on the proposal and timescales involved. Whilst it was recognised that the merger was still to be agreed by NHS England, Councillor Sheth had been keen to stress the need to avoid rushing into any arrangement given the huge scale of the change proposed, which would not only impact on over 2.2 million residents but also involve significant financial,

governance and accountability issues needing to be resolved. Whilst the NHS appeared keen to complete the merger process by 2020 he advised the Committee were also keen to ensure the process was not rushed and allowed sufficient time to engage with all affected partners.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Ketan Sheth for his update.

14.2 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Kelcher was then invited to introduce the update report from his Committee highlighting the following issues raised at their most recent meeting:

- Members were advised that the Committee had agreed to establish an Air Quality Task Group, chaired by Councillor Stephens and involving representatives from a range of other organisations with expertise in this area;
- The Committee had also reviewed the Annual Report from the Safer Brent Partnership, which included a focus around the process and factors influencing the reporting of crime. As a result, the Committee had felt it would be helpful to include a wider range of indicators designed to reflect not only levels of reported crime but also public trust in the police and partnership and how they felt crime was being tackled;
- The focus on the Safer Brent Partnership Annual Report had also included a separate discussion concerning sex work and what action the Council could take to assist in minimising and designing out the issues being caused. Suggestions had included improvement to street lighting and removal of public phone boxes in problem areas;
- The Committee had also identified a need to consider the new tri-borough police borough command arrangements given concerns over reporting mechanisms and communication with ward councillors and Panels over local ward issues. In order to clarify the position, the Committee had requested that the Lead Member for Community Safety and Engagement raise the issue with the police in order to develop a clear reporting process and rights to information;
- As a final update, members were advised that the Committee had also received an interim update report on progress being made by the Knife Crime Scrutiny Task Group, who were due to conclude their final review in September 2019.

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. In opening this item, the Mayor reminded Members of the need to ensure that questions raised were focussed on the updates provided or work being undertaken by each Committee. The following questions were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Referring to the update from the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in relation to the tri-borough police command arrangements Councillor Nerva asked Councillor Kelcher whether he thought it may be

helpful to undertake more joint scrutiny with Barnet and Harrow in relation to issues involving the police, given they were now being managed on a cross borough basis and in order to facilitate easier communication and engagement.

Councillor Kelcher felt this would be a sensible suggestion to explore as it would not only provide a better opportunity to scrutinise issues relating to the police on a cross borough basis but was also likely to be less resource intensive for the police. He advised he would therefore be happy to raise the suggestion with his counterparts in Barnet and Harrow in order to seek their views.

- (ii) Councillor Dar took the opportunity to seek Councillor Ketan Sheth's view on the prospect of Brent CCG being encouraged to oppose the proposed closure by Barnet CCG of a GP practice on the border of Cricklewood, which would have a direct impact on Brent residents.

Councillor Ketan Sheth advised that he would unfortunately not be able to respond directly on the specific proposal as this related to a matter of policy for Barnet CCG. He did, however, reassure Councillor Dar that the Committee had been monitoring a range of health related matters, which had included a meeting dedicated to examining the roll-out of GP hubs and on which he would welcome further engagement from members.

At this stage in proceedings the Mayor advised that the remaining time available for questions to the Scrutiny Chairs had expired. As there were a number of Members who indicated they still wanted to speak it was **RESOLVED** that the time available to complete the question and answer session be extended by an additional 5 minutes.

- (iii) Councillor Choudry continued by seeking further details on the approach being developed in relation to scrutiny of the 2019/20 – 2020/21 budget proposals including the possibility of seeking examples of best practice from other boroughs.

In response, Councillor Kelcher advised that he was always willing to speak with colleagues in other boroughs in order to identify and consider best practice. Recognising the important compliance role of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee in the process, he highlighted how the approach being adopted by scrutiny was more focussed on the nature of the proposals being developed and their implementation from a policy perspective. He felt this approach worked well and would be important to maintain as a framework moving forward and in considering any other examples of best practice.

- (iv) Returning to the issue of the reduction in hours being proposed for the Urgent Care Centre at Central Middlesex Hospital, Councillor Gill highlighted a recent visit he had made which appeared to contradict the view that the facility was being under-utilised during the early hours. He therefore sought details as to how the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee were proposing to scrutinise the proposals and explore in more detail the reasons for the change.

Cllr Ketan Sheth advised Councillor Gill that the Committee had undertaken a recent visit to the Urgent Care Centre in order to review the situation during which time usage had been low. He reminded Councillor Gill, however, that the Committee would be fully considering the proposal at their meeting on 9 July and invited any members with an interest to attend in order to express their concerns and directly question representatives from the CCG on the basis for their decision.

- (v) Referring to work previously undertaken by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Councillor S.Choudhary expressed concern that World Health Organisation targets in relation to MMR child immunisation were continuing not to be met and sought detail on what further action it was felt could be taken in order to follow up the scrutiny review on this issue.

In response, Councillor Ketan Sheth highlighted that this issue had been subject to a robust and challenging scrutiny review, which had led to a number of recommendations being made. He assured Councillor Choudhary that the Committee were continuing to closely monitor progress on the implementation of these recommendations but no provision was currently available within the scrutiny work programme for any further specific review at this stage.

- (vi) Returning to the issue of air quality, Councillor Kansagra sought details on whether any response had been provided on plans to replace the Council's fleet of diesel vehicles and whether the fleet would be subject to the same surcharges as introduced for diesel vehicles within CPZs

Councillor Kelcher advised that as this issue involved a matter of policy he would need to direct the question towards the relevant Lead Member rather than respond on behalf of scrutiny.

- (vii) Following the updates on the work being undertaken by both Scrutiny Committees and discussion at a recent Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Gbajumo sought further details and views on the potential introduction of a scrutiny recommendation and data request tracker.

By way of further background, Councillor Kelcher provided a brief outline of the proposal considered by his Committee which he advised he had discussed further with scrutiny officers. As a result, he was pleased to be able to advise that officers had been working to design and implement a simple tracker system which would be piloted from the September meeting of his committee onwards.

At this stage, the Mayor advised that the additional time allocated for questions had now expired and he would therefore be moving on the next item with all members thanked for their contributions.

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

In terms of issues highlighted, Councillor Choudry drew members attention to the important work undertaken by the Committee in reviewing and approving the Council's Statement of Accounts, following their preparation and review by the Council's External Auditors. He was pleased to be able to report that no significant issues had been identified or were anticipated in terms of the final approval process. He was also pleased to be have been able to welcome the Council's newly appointed External Auditors (Grant Thornton) whilst also taking the opportunity to commend the work being undertaken by the Council's Internal Audit function.

Focussing specifically on the Internal Audit remit in relation to compliance and control, he highlighted the range of work being undertaken in monitoring and follow-up on internal audit recommendations, particularly where risks or control issues had been identified. He also highlighted the important role played by the Committee in developing and monitoring delivery of the Internal Audit work programme which, given its significance, he was keen to encourage as many members to engage with as possible.

Finally, Councillor Choudry also took the opportunity to draw members' attention to the Corporate Risk Register and Annual Governance Statement, which had both recently been subject to review and approval by the Committee. He was keen to ensure that members were aware of the importance of both documents given their significance to the Councils overall control and governance arrangements.

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

16. **Non Cabinet Members' Debate**

The Mayor reported that no item had been submitted for debate at this meeting and therefore move on to the next item on the agenda.

17. **Fire Safety & Housing in the London Borough of Brent**

Councillor Eleanor Southwood (Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform) introduced a report from Assistant Chief Executive, outlining the Fire Safety arrangements for housing in Brent.

Introducing the report, she highlighted that keeping residents safe in their homes remained one of the Council's top priorities, with the report having been prepared to provide an update on fire safety activities being undertaken or led by the Council in response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy. Members were advised that the report included actions being taken by the Council in relation of its own housing stock, which included intrusive fire safety checks to highlight areas of risk and the development of a programme of works designed to address fire safety issues including improvements to fire doors, installation of sprinkler systems in high rise blocks and the introduction of a zero tolerance approach towards litter and rubbish in communal areas.

In addition, Councillor Southwood highlighted the close work being undertaken by the Council with Housing Associations and took the opportunity to particularly thank the residents of Merle and Dan Courts for their patience during the disruption recently experienced as residents of Catalyst Housing Association. The report had also focussed on action being taken in relation to landlords in the Private Rented Housing Sector, which was being driven and regulated through the mandatory, additional and selective private sector and Houses in Multiple Occupation landlord licensing schemes. Councillor Southwood felt these schemes remained the best way to regulate safety and ensure compliance, with all members and local residents encouraged to participate in the consultation on extension of the scheme currently being undertaken. Given the range of activity identified, Councillor Southwood advised she had no hesitation in commending the report and recommendations to Council.

The Mayor then opened up the debate for other members to speak on the report.

Councillor Johnson welcomed the report and thanked Councillor Southwood for the update provided. Whilst recognising the importance of the work being undertaken he felt there was also a need to outline the extent of the costs involved and to challenge the level of funding being provided by Central Government to support local authorities in undertaking this work.

Recognising the role undertaken by Housing Scrutiny Committee in monitoring and reviewing the Council's response towards fire safety, Councillor Long felt it was also important to consider the control of parking on housing estates, given the problems identified in relation to blockages and access for emergency vehicles.

As no further members had indicated they wished to speak Councillor Southwood, in exercising her right of reply, responded to the issues raised during the debate by highlighting that the Council's Cabinet had agreed to invest £10m in terms of capital funding to support the programme of housing fire safety works. Whilst funding had been sought from Central Government as a means of recouping these costs this had been unsuccessful. She pointed out that whilst the Government had subsequently made it easier for Housing Associations and Private Sector landlords to claim back funding for associated fire safety works no such support had, to date, been provided for local authorities. In terms of parking on housing estates, Councillor Southwood advised that this had been recognised as an issue with the difficulty remaining enforcement in areas where there was no controlled parking arrangement in place. Whilst consideration of the schemes available remained under review one option also being considered involved the enforcement of pavement parking on estates, which it was felt would assist in addressing the problem.

The Mayor then put the recommendations to the vote by a show of hands and they were unanimously **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to note the report and accompanying appendix setting out the fire safety arrangements for housing in the borough.

18. **Motions**

Before moving on to consider the motions listed on the summons, the Mayor reminded members of the changes agreed last year to the way in which the debate on motions would be undertaken. He advised that a total of 30 minutes would be set aside for the consideration of all three motions submitted for debate, based on an initial allocation of 10 minutes per motion. Should the time taken to consider the first motion be less than 10 minutes he advised that the remaining time available would be split between the remaining motions on a rolling basis.

18.1 Motion from the Labour Group - Standing up to racism, discrimination and prejudice in Brent (adopting the definition of Islamophobia as set out by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims)

Prior to inviting Councillor Shahzad to move the first motion, the Mayor reminded Members that given the subject matter to be considered, the Council had a 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 a protected characteristic and persons who did not. This was known as the public sector equality duty with the protected characteristics relevant to the motion including race and religion or belief. At the same time, he pointed out that Members would, however, be free to express their own political opinions during the debate.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Shahzad to move the motion submitted on behalf of the Labour Group.

Councillor Shahzad advised he was honoured to move the motion to oppose Islamophobia which, he felt, reinforced the message that the London Borough of Brent was a truly diverse, multi-cultural and multi-religious society and a borough that cared about and respected all its residents. He felt this aspect of the borough’s culture had also been reflected in the motion previously adopted to oppose anti-Semitism and was concerned to see any form of intolerance taking place in Brent, whether against Muslims or people of other faiths. Highlighting what he felt was the worrying advance of the far right, he pointed out how this was causing fear and concern within the Muslim community who wanted to be able to live a peaceful and productive life and convey the universal message of peace and friendship to all. The motion, he felt, highlighted the need for action to be taken in order to prevent the targeting of hate on people and communities based on their faith whilst also encouraging people to stand together in order to demonstrate that racism and hatred towards Muslims or any other faith would no longer be tolerated.

In commending the motion to Members, Councillor Shahzad believed its adoption would strengthen community relations and deliver the message that Brent was united in standing up for everyone regardless of their faith.

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Dar, speaking in support of the motion, highlighted what he felt to be the alarming increase in Islamophobia within the UK and across the world as evidenced by the recent mass shootings in New Zealand. He felt these served as a terrible reminder of the growing threat and need for action to be taken. In highlighting a need to ensure that whole communities were not held collectively responsible for

the acts of single extremist groups, he hoped that the motion would receive the support of all members and provide a positive approach to securing a more tolerant society.

Councillor Mahmood, highlighting the work he had undertaken as Mayor in representing all communities across the borough, took the opportunity in supporting the motion to thank the all-party parliamentary group for their appropriate and timely hard work in defining Islamophobia. Highlighting the diverse nature of Brent, he felt there was a need to ensure that all communities felt safe, secure and were treated equally. Taken alongside previous Council motions passed in relation to anti-Semitism, LGBTQ+ and minority rights, he felt the motion, which he hoped all boroughs would eventually adopt, would further enhance the measures being taken to tackle racism and hatred and provide the Muslim community with the confidence that their rights were equally protected.

At this stage in proceedings the Mayor advised that the time allocated for the debate on the motion had expired. As there were a number of Members who indicated they still wanted to speak it was **RESOLVED** that the time available to complete the debate be extended by an additional 5 minutes.

Councillor Nerva, expressing solidarity with members of the Muslim community and other councillors, felt it was important to highlight the many positives of living in Brent including its diversity and way in which racism against all minority groups was fought against and not tolerated. He hoped that all councillors would support the motion as a demonstration of how seriously these values were upheld.

Councillor Dixon then spoke and also commended the all-party parliamentary group for the work they had undertaken in seeking to define and ensure the motion on Islamophobia was adopted. The outcome of the work undertaken would, she felt, have a similar impact to that of the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry given the wide and extensive scope of the definition provided.

Councillor Hassan also spoke in support of the motion, highlighting as a specific concern gender Islamophobia and its effect on women. In view of the increase in Islamophobic attacks and the increase in the activity of the far right she advised that alongside the adoption of the motion, she would like to see the Council strengthening its work with the Police to highlight and tackle what she pointed out was often an under reported crime.

As a final contribution to the debate, Councillor Kansagra also spoke in support of the motion which he felt set out a number of principles that he hoped many people would already have in their nature to support and accept. In supporting adoption of the motion, he also highlighted the need for education as a means of addressing intolerance and hatred.

At this stage the Mayor advised that the additional time allocated for the debate on the motion had now expired and therefore invited Councillor Shahzad to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Shahzad thanked Members for their contributions and their support in bringing forward the motion for debate. He spoke of the rise in

Islamophobic attacks, particularly on women, across the world and felt it was therefore appropriate to commend the motion as a means of demonstrating unity.

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

“This Council notes:

Brent Council adopted the definition of antisemitism in September 2017, including its examples, set out by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, and now, seeks to adopt the definition of Islamophobia, including its examples, as set out by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims.

The charity Tell Mama reported that in the week after 50 innocent, Muslim worshippers were massacred in the Christchurch New Zealand terror attack, Islamophobic incidents increased by almost 600 per cent back in Britain.

This Council believes:

That words have consequences within political discourse.

We unequivocally condemn all forms of pernicious racism, Islamophobia, antisemitism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, pregnancy and maternity discrimination, ableism and sexism and reaffirm our commitment to fighting against them.

This Council resolves:

To adopt the APPG on British Muslims – Working Definition of Islamophobia as follows:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

Contemporary examples of Islamophobia in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in encounters between religions and non-religions in the public sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, instigating or justifying the killing or harming of Muslims in the name of a racist/ fascist ideology, or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Muslims as such, or of Muslims as a collective group, such as, especially but not exclusively, conspiracies about Muslim entryism in politics, government or other societal institutions; the myth of Muslim identity having a unique propensity for terrorism, and claims of a demographic ‘threat’ posed by Muslims or of a ‘Muslim takeover’.
- Accusing Muslims as a group of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Muslim person or group of Muslim individuals, or even for acts committed by non-Muslims.

- Accusing Muslims as a group, or Muslim majority states, of inventing or exaggerating Islamophobia, ethnic cleansing or genocide perpetrated against Muslims.
- Accusing Muslim citizens of being more loyal to the ‘Ummah’ (transnational Muslim community) or to their countries of origin, or to the alleged priorities of Muslims worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Applying double standards by requiring of Muslims behaviours that are not expected or demanded of any other groups in society, e.g. loyalty tests.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic Islamophobia (e.g. the Prophet Muhammed being a paedophile, claims of Muslims spreading Islam by the sword or subjugating minority groups under their rule) to characterize Muslims as being ‘sex groomers’, inherently violent or incapable of living harmoniously in plural societies.
- Holding Muslims collectively responsible for the actions of any Muslim majority state, whether secular or constitutionally Islamic.”

18.2 Motion by the Conservative Group - Surcharge on Diesel Vehicle Owners

The Mayor then invited Councillor Maurice to move the motion on behalf of the Conservative Group who began by highlighting what he felt to be the unfair nature of the recent surcharge imposed on resident parking permits for diesel cars, particularly as it included vehicles classified as Euro 6 and Ultra Low Emission Zone compliant. In commenting on the stated aims of the proposal he felt it would actually do very little to improve air quality across the borough, given the significant levels of pollution caused by larger vehicles such as heavy good vehicles (including the Council’s fleet of vehicles) and buses, which he pointed out were all exempt from the surcharge. Councillor Maurice also felt it was important to recognise that many diesel vehicles had been purchased at a time when there were very few alternatives available and also raised concerns at the lawfulness of the potential use of any surplus funds generated as a result of the surcharge and its compliance with the current policies of the Mayor for London. On this basis he commended the motion to Council.

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Kelcher, speaking against the motion, queried its focus in terms of expressing concern about the action being taken to address levels of pollution across the borough. Whilst the motion recognised the concern in relation to air quality across the borough he pointed out it was actually seeking to reject one of the key measures available to tackle the problem. Given that Brent included four out of the ten most polluted roads in London, with cars responsible for almost half of all harmful emissions, he supported looking at how it would be possible to incentivise local people to buy and use cleaner and greener cars, with Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) one of the few levers available for local authorities to achieve this. Having also highlighted the Green Party’s objection to a recent consultation on

a CPZ in Dollis Hill, he urged those members who were serious about tackling air quality to reject the motion.

Councillor Krupa Sheth advised that she would also be opposing the motion on behalf of the Labour Group. Highlighting the next motion due to be considered relating to the declaration of an ecological and climate emergency, she felt it was ironic that the Council were now debating a motion on whether diesel vehicles, one of the biggest contributors to pollution, should be exempt from the efforts to improve air quality within the Borough. Referring to recent research she outlined the recognised impact of emissions from diesel engines on air quality and reminded Councillor Maurice that, following consultation on the policy, she had held also held an all member briefing to explain the background at which he had not been present and assured members that the decision to introduce the surcharge had not been taken lightly and had involved a range of options being considered (including exemptions for certain types of vehicles). Given the impact on air quality, however, it had been felt that the measures approved were vital in order to ensure the health of future generations.

As no further members had indicated they wished to speak and having ruled out a point of order raised by Councillor Colwill in relation to wider environmental concerns, the Mayor then invited Councillor Maurice to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Maurice declared that he owned a diesel vehicle which he had purchased as Euro 6 compliant. He felt it was important to recognise that the motion was not seeking a total exemption for all diesel vehicles and advised he would have no objection to a surcharge being applied to older more polluting vehicles. He did, however, feel strongly that those vehicles which were compliant should be exempt from the surcharge and in commending the motion to members, also felt there was a need for the Council to consider the implications in relation to its own current fleet of diesel vehicles.

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

“This Council notes, with grave concern, the surcharges that are being imposed on all diesel vehicle owners who have or are applying for a Residents Parking Permit in a CPZ. (Controlled Parking Zone) in the London Borough of Brent.

This Council appreciates that there are high levels of pollution in Brent and London as a whole, but that the way this has been implemented is draconian and very unfair. These charges will have little if any impact on reducing the levels of pollution within the borough and that it appears to be nothing more than a means of raising revenue.

This Council therefore calls on Cabinet to cancel the policy and requests that a new policy is formulated in which all diesel cars, taxi's and vans that meet the Euro 6 standards be exempt from any surcharges. It also proposes that surcharges be applied to older Petrol vehicles that do not meet the Euro 4 standard.

These proposals will bring Brent in line with the policies set by The Mayor of London & TFL.”

18.3 Motion from the Labour Group – Declaring a Climate and Ecological Emergency

The Mayor invited Councillor Mashari to move the final motion submitted on behalf of the Labour Group which she advised was seeking the Council's immediate approval to the declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency. The motion had been based on a warning from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change regarding the dangers and need to ensure that the ongoing rise in global temperature was kept below 1.5 degrees in order to avoid a climate catastrophe. Highlighting the current impact of climate change in relation to the planet, as well as more locally in Brent, she was concerned at the lack of positive action by the Government and support for policies identified as harmful to the environment such as fracking. Given the severe social, economic and environmental implications associated with climate change, Councillor Mashari felt there was a need for immediate and radical action as set out in the motion. In commending the motion to members she ended by highlighting the need for collective strategic action in order not only to empower people but also to future proof the local economy and protect local habitats.

The Mayor then invited other Members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Gill, speaking in support of the motion, felt it was important for members to recognise the scale of the emergency needing to be addressed referring, as an example, to the recent record breaking temperatures across Europe and number of the major world economies included within the list of top five global polluters. Given that global climate change often impacted hardest on the poor and vulnerable he felt it was important for the Council to act now and do all it could before the situation spiralled any further out of control.

Council Kennelly also advised that he fully supported the motion in seeking to declare a climate emergency and within this context took the opportunity to challenge the proposals for a third runway at London Heathrow.

Councillor Maurice, replying on behalf of the Conservative Group, also felt there was an important need to recognise the environmental, social and economic impact created by the global rise in population which was an issue he regarded as key in also addressing the concerns highlighted.

Councillor Choudhury also spoke in support of the motion highlighting the contributing effects of global warming in terms of natural disasters such as flooding and the severe weather recently experienced across Pakistan and India.

As a further contribution, Councillor Tatler reminded members that as community leaders it was up to them all to encourage their communities to make the necessary behavioural changes that would help to address the current issues. In this respect she advised she was pleased to see students and young people leading the way and being at the forefront of climate change protests and action and advised she would also be supporting the motion.

Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Lead Member within whose remit climate change was now included, advised she also fully supported the motion and was looking forward

to working with residents, members and officers, along with the Mayor for London, in order to tackle the challenge head on. In terms of Brent, she highlighted the extent of the work already undertaken through initiatives such as the reduction in carbon emissions, introduction of wildflower meadows and bee corridors and role they had played in terms of increasing biodiversity. Recognising that everyone had their part to play in tackling the emergency she advised that she would also be keen to seek funding from central government in order to support and move forward with the Council's various initiatives.

As the remaining time available for the debate on motions had expired, the Mayor then invited Councillor Mashari to conclude by exercising her right of reply.

In summing up Councillor Mashari thanked Members for their contributions and support and advised she was looking forward to working with Councillor Krupa Sheth and other members in order to progress the various initiatives and development of the strategy outlined within the motion. She ended by highlighting how pleased she also was to see the Labour Party leading on the issue at both a local and national level.

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

“This Council notes:

Humankind is at an unprecedented point in its history; faced with a stark choice between continuing to live beyond its means, or using all necessary measures to avert catastrophe.

So profound are the changes that man has wreaked upon the world that we live in an age known as the Anthropocene, the age of man. And how is humankind's stewardship of the planet faring?

Our seas are warming, acidifying and choking with plastic.

Our insects, a vital part of our eco-system, are disappearing, whilst globally wild animals are hunted, killed and driven to starvation in unprecedented numbers.

Extreme weather events are occurring more frequently, causing destruction and misery when they strike, whether it be storm or sea-surge, flood or fire.

And the whole world is heating up. Global temperatures have already increased by 1°C from pre-industrial levels. The UN's panel of climate change experts (the IPCC), state it is essential that the rise in temperatures is kept below 1.5°C, as if we fail in this endeavour and the temperature rises by 2°C, the possibility of a 'snowball effect', of problems feeding into and worsening other problems, becomes too risky to even countenance. We have only one planet to sustain us, and no country will be immune from the fallout if our systems fail.

In Brent, the consequences of inaction to address this climate emergency will include:

- Increased risk of flooding and damage to buildings, infrastructure and the local economy.
- Health problems, particularly for children, older people and those with pre-existing conditions.
- Higher living costs including energy, food, travel and insurance costs.
- Increases in social injustice and inequality.
- Financial and emotional consequences for residents with families around the world adversely affected by the impact of a changing climate

The rise of international movements of non-violent civil disobedience such as the Student School Strikes and Extinction Rebellion shows the degree to which ordinary citizens are concerned about our future, and we all have a role to play. Cities and city regions such as Brent must be in the vanguard of the low carbon transition, as cities consume over two-thirds of the world's energy and are responsible for as much as 70% of man-made greenhouse gas emissions.

This Council further notes:

- Brent Council's Civic Centre is recognised as the greenest public building in the UK – constructed using methods which produced 26% less carbon emissions across the supply chain.
- In the first initiative of its kind in London, the council is sowing 22 urban meadows to create a seven-mile long “bee corridor” of wildflowers to boost the number of pollinating insects and increase the biodiversity of the borough.
- Brent Council has committed to a wholesale ban of fracking in Brent since 2013.
- Research shows, greenhouse gas emissions have reduced in Brent by 26% over the last decade.
- By 2021 carbon emissions from the Council are on track to decline by 60% from 2010/11 levels.
- The Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy recently announced that the Labour Party will launch a Green New Deal, with the goal of decarbonising the UK's economy and creating new jobs in the renewable energy sector in the most deprived areas of the country.

This Council believes that:

That a changing climate will have severe and enduring social, economic and environmental implications, and that tackling climate change is an issue of inequality as the greatest impact will be on the most vulnerable and those least able to protect themselves.

Thus this Council resolves:

- To join our Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan in declaring a Global climate emergency. This is essential to protect our only planet, not only for us, but for all the life on it and, hopefully, all the generations of life to come.
- Do all reasonable in the Council's gift to aim for carbon neutrality for 2030 and work with government to achieve the national 2050 target.
- Develop a Carbon Offset Fund and strategy, to enshrine the principle that developments, could and should fund projects that reduce carbon emissions elsewhere in the borough.
- At every opportunity, redirect our investments into renewable energy projects and carbon free or carbon neutral technologies.
- To continue delivering reductions in greenhouse gas emissions via the development of district energy networks and support for renewable alternatives
- Request that the appropriate scrutiny committee review the actions taken to reduce carbon emissions in Brent and the Council at the end of the municipal year.
- To empower a Lead Member to take responsibility for tackling climate change in Brent and charges that person with the responsibility to produce a report on this subject within 6 months, one that emphasises and promotes the importance of local biodiversity.
- Make representations to national government to urge them to provide the power and resources to the Mayor of London and local authorities to hasten the pace of carbon reduction and to immediately end the £10.5 billion of hidden subsidies with which central government supports the Fossil Fuel industry in this country.

Explore the viability of there being an annual Green summit for interested parties, where issues can be discussed, good practice shared and ideas promoted.”

19. **Urgent Business**

The Mayor advised Members there were no urgent items of business for consideration. Before closing the meeting, he took the opportunity to wish all Members a restful break over the summer prior to the next Full Council meeting on 16 September 2019.

The meeting was declared closed at 8:25pm.

COUNCILLOR ERNEST EZEAJUGHI
Mayor