



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

### **Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Held in the Grand Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 20 September 2021 at 6.00 pm**

#### **PRESENT:**

##### **The Worshipful the Mayor**

Councillor Lia Colacicco

##### **The Deputy Mayor**

Councillor Abdi Aden

#### **COUNCILLORS:**

Abdi	Afzal
Agha	Ahmed
Akram	M Butt
S Butt	Chan
Chappell	Chohan
S Choudhary	A Choudry
Colwill	Conneely
Crane	Daly
Dar	Denselow
Dixon	Ethapemi
Ezeajughi	Farah
Gbajumo	Georgiou
Grahl	Hassan
Hector	Hylton
Johnson	Kabir
Kansagra	Kelcher
Kennelly	Knight
Lo	Long
Mahmood	Maurice
McLeish	Miller
Naheerathan	Nerva
M Patel	Sangani
Shah	Shahzad
Ketan Sheth	Krupa Sheth
Southwood	Stephens
Tatler	Thakkar

#### **1. Mayors Introductory Statement**

The Mayor welcomed all those present to the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance in person.

## 2. **Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor reported that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Hirani, Lloyd, McLennan, Mashari, Mitchell-Murray, Murray, R.Patel & Perrin.

Councillors Lloyd, R.Patel & Perrin had submitted apologies as they were unable to attend meetings in person due to reasons requiring them to continue isolating related to Covid-19.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 12 July 2021 be approved as a correct record.

## 4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

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

The Mayor made the following announcements:

### (i) Pride of Brent Youth Awards

The Mayor advised that she had been delighted to participate in the Pride of Brent Youth Awards, which had taken place in August in order to celebrate the achievements of young people across Brent making a difference in their community.

### (ii) Count Us In

The Mayor advised members about the introduction of the "Count Us In" engagement platform, which had been set up with the aim of encouraging residents, businesses, schools/young people and council staff to make a pledge to take climate action. Further details on its launch would be released over the coming month.

### (iii) Long Service Afternoon Tea

The Mayor advised she had also been pleased to recently attend a Long Service Awards afternoon tea recognising those members of staff who had completed 25 or 40 years' continuous service and contributed so much to Brent Council.

### (iv) 999 Emergency Services Flag Raising

Referring to the use of social media, the Mayor advised of her recent support and involvement in a flag raising ceremony undertaken on 9<sup>th</sup> September 21 to celebrate 999 Emergency Services Day.

The event recognised what she felt had been the heroic contribution made by approximately 2 million individuals who worked and volunteered across all of the UK emergency services as well as more than 7,500 individuals who had tragically lost their life in the line of duty working for the emergency services over the last 200 years.

Turning her attention to the last 18 months, the Mayor commended the emergency services for the way in which they had continued to provide essential support during such a difficult time often putting themselves in harm's way to keep everyone safe.

(v) Participatory Budgeting – “You Decide”

The Mayor then moved on to highlight the plans being developed to introduce a ‘Participatory Budgeting’ approach within the borough.

Members were advised that further information about the initiative - called ‘You decide’ were due to be made available shortly.

(vi) Petitions

Finally, the Mayor referred members to the list of current petitions tabled at the meeting, in accordance with Standing Orders which also detailed the action being taken to deal with them.

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

The Mayor referred members to the list of changes circulated in relation to appointments to Council Committees, Sub Committees and other bodies.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following changes in Committee and Outside Body membership:

- (1)** Councillor Kennelly to be replaced by Councillor Grahl as a full member of the Licensing Committee.

**7. Deputations (if any)**

The Mayor advised that no request for any deputations had been received for consideration at the meeting.

**8. Questions from Members of the Public**

The Mayor advised that the following five questions had been received from members of the public:

Question 1 from Nicholas Kollgaard to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, regarding the Council's use of flexible car sharing schemes.

Question 2 from Carmen Meagher-Mansilla to Councillor Nerva, Lead Member for Public Health, Culture and Leisure, regarding the provision of leisure and cultural facilities in areas of regeneration, including those surrounding Gladstone Park.

Question 3 from Gordon Aldrich to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, regarding parking enforcement on Queensbury Station roundabout and local footways in the surrounding area.

Question 4 from Pam Laurence to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, regarding progress against the Brent Climate & Ecological Strategy First Year Delivery Plan 2021-22.

Question 5 from Keith Anderson to Councillor Eleanor Southwood, Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, regarding the development proposals for Kilburn Square and preference identified for a reduction in scale and lower density scheme.

Members noted the written responses provided on each of the questions, which had been circulated with the agenda. The Mayor advised that each member of the public had been invited to attend the meeting. Whilst Nicholas Kollgaard and Carmen Meagher-Mansilla had been unable to attend, members were advised that Gordon Aldrich, Pam Laurence and Keith Anderson were all present in order to ask a supplementary question. The Mayor welcomed them to the meeting and invited each of them in turn to put their supplementary question to the relevant Lead Member.

#### **Supplementary Question from Gordon Aldrich to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment**

Having thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth for her written response, Gordon Aldrich asked a supplementary question regarding the steps the Council was taking to enforce the double yellow lines at Queensbury Station roundabout.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth began by highlighting that the double yellow lines and kerb markings at the roundabout had been refreshed to make it clear that waiting and loading was prohibited. She advised that a number of Penalty Charge Notices had been issued in the past month, and offered to undertake a site visit with local ward councillors to explore any further action which might be deemed necessary.

#### **Supplementary Question from Pam Laurence to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment**

Pam Laurence thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth for her written response and asked a supplementary question regarding the availability of carbon reduction data to the public and any opportunities for independent scrutiny.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth offered to meet Pam Laurence in order to consider the issues she had raised in more detail. In terms of further opportunities to engage she highlighted the establishment of the Brent Environmental Network, which had been specifically set up to focus on engagement and consultation around Brent's Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy and to provide residents with the opportunity to comment on or suggest any further proposals.

#### **Supplementary Question from Keith Anderson to Councillor Southwood, Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform**

Having thanked Councillor Southwood for her written response, Keith Anderson asked a supplementary question highlighting local residents concerns regarding the impact of the development and seeking a commitment to a reduction in scale and lower density housing scheme not incorporating the satellite blocks and focussed around the south eastern corner of the site.

In response, Councillor Southwood advised that having carefully reviewed the design and considered residents' comments and concerns the Council had now agreed to undertake further work on design of the scheme. This would involve a process of further engagement with residents, tenants and leaseholders on the Estate, on which further details would be communicated in due course. Recognising the importance of the scheme in terms of addressing wider housing need, residents were thanked for their engagement to date and encouraged to continue participating in the process moving forward.

Having noted the responses provided, the Mayor thanked Gordon Aldrich, Pam Laurence and Keith Anderson for their supplementary questions and for attending the meeting along with the Lead Members for their response. As there were no further questions to be dealt with the Mayor advised this now concluded the public question session.

## **9. Petitions (if any)**

Moving on the Mayor then advised members that she had agreed to accept under the Council's Petitions Scheme two petitions for presentation at the meeting, due to the number of signatures each contained, which both related to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

The first of these was in support of the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) across the borough with Josie Warshaw as lead petitioner. The second was objecting to the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in the Cricklewood area and seeking assurances around public consultation, displaced traffic and equalities with Sarah Dever as lead petitioner.

The Mayor advised that unless otherwise indicated by Members, she intended to allow each of the nominated speakers up to five minutes to address the meeting in order to present their petitions. She would then provide Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning with an opportunity to respond jointly to the issues raised, for which she would also allow up to five minutes.

As no issues were raised in terms of the approach outlined, the Mayor then moved on to welcome Josie Warshaw to the meeting and invited her to present the first petition, with the following issues highlighted.

Josie Warshaw began by thanking Council staff for their hard work in implementing LTNs across the borough given the challenge of the pandemic. In supporting the benefits of LTNs, she highlighted the positive impact the schemes had in tackling air pollution, road safety, traffic congestion along with their wider environmental, social and health benefits including supporting the move away from cars and towards more active forms of travel.

Highlighting the potential for LTNs to deliver long term transformative change as part of the recovery from the pandemic, she also recognised the importance of local engagement as crucial to the success of LTNs and welcomed the ongoing engagement, monitoring and evaluation of the trial schemes taking place across the borough.

The risks of taking no or only minimal action or removing schemes prematurely prior to them bedding in and their impact being monitored were also highlighted. In representing the views of Healthy Neighbourhood Groups across the borough she ended by outlining how the petition was designed to express support for healthy neighbourhoods as a means of improving air quality, reducing traffic, increasing active travel and providing safer space for cycling, improving physical and mental health as well as community relations. Given the social and safety benefits associated with LTNs the Council was therefore urged to continue with its active travel plans and ensure LTN schemes remained an integral part of this process.

The Mayor thanked Josie Warshaw for presenting her petition and then welcomed Sarah Dever before inviting her to present the second petition on which the following issues were highlighted.

Sarah Dever began by advising that she was speaking on behalf of a number of residents in the Cricklewood area who felt that local LTNs introduced in the Olive Road and Dollis Hill areas had been implemented without adequate consultation, notification or monitoring of their impacts. She felt that LTNs had made traffic in the area worse, resulting in increased pollution, noise and danger to pedestrians which had resulted in a negative impact on local residents and also safety concerns in relation to emergency service access.

Concerns were also highlighted in relation to the community engagement process around the Healthy Neighbourhood Schemes being led by Living Streets. Highlighting that her petition contained over 1000 signatures members were asked to consider the immediate reversal of the road closures in Cricklewood arising from the roll-out of LTNs. This was on the basis they were not felt to have delivered any of the reported benefits in terms of social distancing or in providing a more conducive environment for walking and cycling and instead were felt to have created an increase in pollution and traffic as well as reducing road safety. It was therefore felt they had failed to achieve their original objectives or provide value for money.

In terms of future action, the petition also called on the Council, prior to implementation of any further schemes to:

- undertake a full public consultation in each area including provision of modelling data and metrics to demonstrate how the potential impacts had been assessed and with details on how the effects of any changes would be evaluated with a clear timescale.
- seek to ensure that any scheme did not lead to the displacement of traffic from one area to another in order to avoid worsening air pollution and congestion.
- undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment for each area, including surrounding roads, before any changes were implemented.
- avoid road changes creating an unfair disadvantage on anyone living in an LTN area, particularly groups protected by the Equality Act 2010.

- ensure that any road closures and filters avoided dividing communities or adversely affecting local businesses.
- ensure that the emergency services were fully consulted and their concerns addressed to ensure they did not experience any delays due to displaced traffic or restrictions.

In summing up, Sarah Dever encouraged the Council to ensure local residents and stakeholders were fully consulted prior to the implementation of LTNs and any associated introduction of ANPR cameras to enforce the schemes and that local residents and businesses were not unfairly discriminated against by their implementation.

The Mayor thanked Sarah Dever for presenting her petition and then moved on to invite Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration Property and Planning to respond to the comments raised under both petitions.

In response, Councillor Tatler began by highlighted the Council's responsibility to address the climate emergency and related public health issues whilst also acknowledging the need to engage with residents and key stakeholders to ensure any action taken worked for all parties.

As part of this approach, the opportunity was taken to outline a number of Active Travel initiatives the Council had introduced to address these issues (including expansion of the School Street Programme & Cycling Networks). The petitioners were also advised that the Council would soon be publishing its draft Long Term Transport Strategy, which would outline its ambitions for transport within the borough and how these would also contribute towards addressing the climate emergency and related public health issues. She also encouraged residents to reflect on the changes that could be made to their own lifestyles and behaviour in order to address these issues, whilst providing an assurance that the Council would seek to work with residents in order to develop the necessary infrastructure to support such changes.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Tatler for her response and advised that this now concluded the consideration of both petitions.

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

The Mayor then moved on to advise members that the Leader's Annual Report would be provided verbally. She then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, to present his Annual Report on the work of the Council and State of the Borough.

Councillor Muhammed Butt opened his annual report by reflecting on the continued impact that the pandemic was having on the borough, and sharing his relief (albeit cautious) that all members and staff present had been fortunate to have avoided its worst extremes, which had led to the loss of almost 900 lives across the borough.

Whilst sharing his optimism at the safe and effective impact of the vaccines along with the increased testing capacity also now available, he reminded everyone of the need to ensure that the wider measures in terms of social distancing, wearing of masks and washing of hands were also maintained. This was in order to reduce

the spread of the virus and risk of infection and allow residents to continue living with the increased freedom and flexibility so highly valued, recognising how quickly things could worsen if a more reckless approach was taken.

Alongside tackling and responding to the pandemic, Councillor Muhammed Butt also highlighted a need to recognise the wider difficulties currently face by many local residents in relation to the increasing cost of living, availability of secure and affordable housing, unstable nature of the labour market and lack of community connection. Whilst reflecting on the impact of the pandemic and current challenges being faced by residents, the Leader also felt it was important as part of his report to highlight the positive action being taken by the Council in order to address these issues and maximise the support and opportunities available. These included:

- The measures being taken to tackle the climate emergency, which threatened not only current but also future generations.
- Confronting and intervening to address historic and institutionalised inequality and discrimination.
- Working to maximise support and access to opportunities in order for local residents to prosper.

In summing up, Councillor Muhammed Butt felt it was important to recognise the importance of all of the above as shared objectives. This would involve a need for real and lasting partnerships within and between the many and varied communities, neighbourhoods and organisations across the borough in order to ensure everyone was able to move forward together whilst also continuing to support the most vulnerable within their communities.

The Mayor thanked the Leader for his Annual Report and then advised that she would open up the debate for contributions from other members, starting with a response from the Conservative Group.

In responding to the Annual Report Councillor Kansagra, as Leader of the Conservative Group, felt it was important to highlight the level of funding received by the Council from central government in support of its work responding to the pandemic. Whilst recognising the efforts of the Council in responding to the pandemic locally, he felt it should be remembered that this been as supported by significant funding provided from government. Concern was also expressed that it appeared a proportion of the funding received had not yet been spent, given the challenges still needing to be addressed in the recovery from the pandemic, with the Council encouraged to ensure all funding was fully utilised.

The Mayor then moved to invite contributions from other members. As no other members indicated they wished to speak the Mayor invited the Leader to sum up and close the debate on his Annual State of the Borough Report.

Councillor Muhammed Butt began his response by emphasising the role he felt the governments ongoing austerity measures had played in creating the inequalities which had been highlighted by the pandemic. In contrast, he took the opportunity to highlight and commend the work undertaken by the Council in stepping in to fill these gaps and ensure the necessary support was provided for local residents, especially those more vulnerable members of society. He also assured members



about the level of available funding, which would continue to be fully utilised in order to ensure the best possible outcomes for residents.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt for his response and advised that this concluded the debate. As a result, it was therefore was **RESOLVED** to formally note the Annual State of the Borough Report.

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

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, to introduce the report updating members on the work undertaken by the Cabinet and significant issues identified within their remit. In presenting the report, the Leader highlighted the extent of work being undertaken across each Cabinet portfolio along with the commitment of members to provide ongoing support and services depended on by residents across the borough. Finally, members were asked to note the list of Executive decisions tabled at the meeting which had been taken under the Council's urgency procedures.

The Mayor thanked the Leader for his report and it was **RESOLVED** to formally note the update provided.

## 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 within the agenda. The Mayor then invited supplementary questions on the responses which had been provided:

12.1 No supplementary question was raised by Councillor Chan in relation to the written response provided by Councillor Stephens, Lead Member for Schools, Employment & Skills, to his question regarding the attainment of Year 11 & 13 students across the borough under the revised assessment arrangements and support being provided to enable pupils to realise their future potential.

12.2 Councillor Daly thanked Councillor Nerva, as Lead Member for Public Health, Culture and Leisure, for the written response in relation to her question regarding the steps being taken by the Council with the NHS to plan for the upcoming winter flu season. Councillor Daly then asked a supplementary question seeking details on progress on rollout of the winter flu vaccination programme across the borough.

In response, Councillor Nerva advised that whilst the flu vaccination rollout was being run by the NHS, the Council had been working closely to support

them and would ensure that regular progress updates were made available to members.

- 12.3 Councillor Ezeajughi thanked Councillor Southwood, Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, for her written response in relation to a question regarding the Council's ongoing commitment towards the delivery of high standard homes and housing services across the borough. Councillor Ezeajughi then asked a supplementary question seeking details on the current master planning development proposals relating to St. Raphael's Estate.

In response, Councillor Southwood highlighted the positive engagement undertaken with local residents and ward councillors in developing proposals for the estate. Whilst recognising the disappointment that it would no longer be possible, as a result of funding issues impacting on the financial viability of the scheme, to offer the choice between full redevelopment and infill an assurance was provided on the approach agreed by Cabinet towards the infill "plus" option. She advised this would continue to be community led and focussed on providing meaningful investment to secure real and tangible change for residents on the estate, including the consideration of wider objectives such as health and economic recovery.

- 12.4 Councillor Kansagra thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, for the written response in relation to a question regarding the Council's response to the Baroness Casey review on the issues experienced around Wembley Stadium in the build up to the UEFA European 2020 Championship Final. Councillor Kansagra then asked a supplementary question seeking details on the progress being made with the review and Council's response in respect of licensing arrangements.

In response, Councillor Muhammed Butt whilst condemning those who had caused the problems on the day felt that rather than focussing on the negatives it was also important to acknowledge and highlight the hard work of Council staff involved in organising all of the events hosted at Wembley Stadium during the Championship. He assured members that the Council was closely working with Baroness Casey in support of her review and that the findings would be made available once finalised.

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

- (i) Councillor Chan regarding the Council's efforts to support residents' use of electric vehicles.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, advised of the progress made with installation of electric vehicle charging points across the borough and plans to further increase the number of charging points over the coming months, including the trial of a new style and provider. Should it be required, she advised that she would be willing to provide further details including the charging point locations outside of the meeting.

- (ii) Councillor Kennelly regarding the concerns highlighted by local residents in relation to the design and impact of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme within his ward.

In response Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning, took the opportunity to thank ward councillors for their input on the scheme within Preston ward and for highlighting the concerns expressed in relation to its design. As part of the ongoing engagement process she advised she would be willing to continue working with ward councillors in relation to the design and impact of the scheme and in seeking to encourage more active modes of travel, including walking and cycling.

- (iii) Councillor Georgiou regarding the Council's policy on development of tall buildings, with specific concerns identified in relation to Alperton and response to the GLA Planning & Regeneration Committee's recent review in relation to the impact of Tall buildings and density in relation to Covid-19.

In response Councillor Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Property and Planning, advised members of the specific background to the GLA Planning & Regeneration Committee's review and evidence which had provided in support of that process. In terms of Brent's Local Plan she assured members that this, along with the Tall Housing Strategy, had been produced on the basis of robust evidence. Given the significant demand and pressure being experienced on the supply of affordable housing, not just locally but regionally and nationally the Council had needed to look at ways in which they could maximise supply. This approach had been supported through the Local Plan and Tall Building Strategy but she assured members that the Council was continuing to work with all London Councils and the GLA in relation to how best to address the ongoing need, including the use and impact of tall buildings.

- (iv) Councillor Long, who whilst welcoming establishment of the Resident Support Fund and Poverty Commission, was keen to seek further details regarding the promotion of credit unions to Council staff and residents of the borough.

In responding Councillor Southwood, Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, began by recognising and welcoming Councillor Long's ongoing efforts to promote and support Credit Unions. In terms of Brent, she highlighted the Council's strong relationships with the existing Credit Unions operating across the borough as a means of providing valuable support to assist residents in accessing funds and tackling debt. Assuring Councillor Long of her support in this matter, she advised that working with the Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Resources, the Council would continue to work and encourage the promotion of Credit Unions.

- (v) Councillor Choudhary regarding further funding from central government for infrastructure in the borough.

In response Councillor Tatler, as Lead Member for Regeneration, Property & Planning, advised of the work already underway to finalise and approve the Council's Infrastructure Funding Delivery Plan. In terms of Government funding concerns remained, however, in relation to the ongoing uncertainty

around the current Local Government Spending Review and also potential impact of the Government's levelling up agenda, on which the Council would be continuing to make representations.

- (vi) Councillor Miller regarding the Council's relationship with the community and voluntary sector following the pandemic.

In response Councillor Knight, Lead Member for Community Safety & Engagement, took the opportunity to formally recognise and welcome the benefits delivered through the immediate and active support of the voluntary and community sector and civil society as part of the response to the pandemic. As a result, she advised that the Council were committed to look at how this work and the benefits achieved could feed into the wider community engagement process in order to learn from, strengthen and support the development of future engagement structures and mechanisms.

- (vii) Councillor Georgiou regarding the action and time being taken to address issues raised in relation to the condition of the Council's social housing stock.

In response Councillor Southwood, Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, recognised the variable quality of housing across the borough which the Council was seeking to address, particularly in relation to use of the private rented sector as a means of supporting the provision of temporary accommodation. Whilst this position was not unique to Brent she highlighted, as an example, how the Council had sought to address this issue through the provision of its own dedicated supply of properties to provide temporary accommodation. In terms of the Council's own housing stock an assurance was provided on the frequency of stock condition surveys in order to assess and understand the nature of the stock and its current condition. Given the financial pressure on the Housing Revenue Account, through which any repairs or improvement works would need to be funded, there had, however, been a need to prioritise these works. In view of the concerns raised members were urged to ensure they reported any concerns regarding stock condition or repairs which she advised housing officers would seek to respond to as quickly as possible.

- (viii) Councillor Kennelly regarding the Council's support for veteran identified as homelessness within the borough.

Highlighting the importance and timing of this issue Councillor Southwood, as Lead Member for Housing & Welfare Reform, felt it important to recognise the varied challenges faced by those either currently serving or having recently served in the Armed Forces or Reserve Forces in relation to housing and other related issues. In responding to the question, members were advised that the Council's Housing Allocations Policy already include priority for those within this category needing to be rehoused as a result of a medical issue or disability and also for spouses or partners if they need to be rehoused from Armed Forces property as a result of their partner having lost their life. Councillor Southwood ended by advising she would be willing to consider any further ideas members had in relation to additional types of support that may be required.

At this stage in the proceedings, the Mayor advised that the time available for the open question session had expired. She therefore thanked all members for their contributions and advised that she would now move on to the next item.

### 13. Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees

Before being presented with the updates from each Scrutiny Committee, the Mayor reminded members the time set aside for this item was 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 Committee Chairs on matters relating to the work of their Committee.

Councillor Ketan Sheth was then invited to introduce the update report on the work being undertaken by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, with the following issues highlighted:

- The outcome of the additional meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 23 August 21 in response to the CQC inspection of Northwick Park Hospital and their maternity services, which had caused significant concern amongst both members and residents. The Committee had received evidence from a range of senior responsible NHS officers as well as other relevant partners and also considered the maternity service improvement plans with key lines of enquiry related to governance, leadership, women centred care and culture. As a result of the review a number of proposed suggestions for improvement had been identified along with requests for additional information. A progress update on the delivery of the maternity service improvement plan was due to be received by the Committee early in 2022.
- The ongoing engagement of the scrutiny function in the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee with Councillor Ketan Sheth informing members of his recent election as Chair and the last meeting having considered the development of the North West London Integrated Care System, NHS Recovery Plan and progress with the Covid 19 vaccination programme. Members were advised that the next meeting was due to be hosted in Brent on 23 September 21.
- The focus at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on housing issues including homelessness and family services and the performance of Brent Housing Management with an additional update on progress with the GP Access Scrutiny Task Group.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Ketan Sheth for his update and advised that as Councillor Mashari had given her apologies the report on the activity of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee would be noted as submitted.

As a result it was therefore **RESOLVED** that the contents of both update 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 Chair in attendance. The Mayor reminded members of the need to ensure that questions raised were focused on the updates provided or the work being

undertaken by the relevant Committee. The following questions were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Following on from the update provided in relation to the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Kabir also highlighted her concern at the recent CQC Inspection of services at Northwick Park Hospital and serious issues identified in relation to maternity services. Support was expressed for the work being undertaken by the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in their ongoing monitoring of actions being taken to address the issues identified with relevant partners.

In response, Councillor Ketan Sheth, as Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, recognised the significant level of concerns expressed and assured members on the robust nature of the review the Committee had undertaken at their additional meeting in response to the inspection findings and associated improvement plan. This had included a number of senior NHS officers being called to give evidence. Members were reassured that the Committee would continue to carefully monitor progress on delivery of the improvement plan and the supporting recommendations made as a result of the scrutiny review.

- (ii) Councillor Maurice regarding his experience of the high quality of care recently received at Northwick Park Hospital. Whilst recognising that not all aspects of care at the hospital had been rated as inadequate, Councillor Ketan Sheth felt there was a need to ensure the Committee remained focussed on those areas where issues or significant concerns had been identified.

As no further questions were raised the Mayor thanked Councillor Ketan Sheth and members for their contribution before moving on to the next item.

#### 14. **Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee**

The Mayor invited Councillor Lo, as Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee, to introduce the report updating members on the work of the Committee.

In terms of issues highlighted, Councillor Lo drew members attention to the work undertaken by the Committee since the previous update in July 21 which had included a focus on the Councils draft statement of accounts as well as Annual Governance Statement and Corporate Risk Register.

Focussing on the Committee's role in relation to compliance and control he also outlined and commended the nature of the work being undertaken in relation to various governance matters including internal audit activity, the regulatory framework and members' standards of conduct.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Lo for the update provided and it was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

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

In accordance with Standing Order 34, the Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda was the non-cabinet member debate, with the subject chosen for consideration being the government's plans to cut Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit.

Members were advised that the motion submitted as the basis for debate had been circulated with the agenda and that the time available for the debate was 25 minutes.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Chappell to introduce the motion. As context for the debate, Councillor Chappell highlighted the government's plans to reverse the Universal Credit uplift meaning a cut of £20 per week for claimants, which it was felt would have a detrimental impact on those affected and in worsening increasing levels of poverty. He questioned central government's insistence that the change would drive down unemployment, noting that many of those affected were already in work. Highlighting what he felt to be the unfair nature of the policy, Councillor Chappell urged all members to support the motion submitted as the basis for the debate and called on central government to reverse the planned cut, extend the uplift to other benefit schemes and support local authorities in their efforts to tackle unemployment and increasing levels of poverty and hardship.

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

Councillor Kansagra began by highlighting the financial support provided by central government during the pandemic along with the need to prepare for these costs having to be recovered at some stage in the future. Whilst highlighting that the uplift in Universal Credit had only been introduced as a temporary measure, he supported the view that ending the temporary uplift at the same time as the furlough scheme would create additional hardship and therefore felt there was a need for the Government to reconsider withdrawing the uplift at the current time.

Councillor Shahzad, in supporting the motion, highlighted the difficult winter ahead for residents with increasing fuel, energy and food prices. He felt that the heaviest burden would fall on the poorest residents, and as such urged central government to rethink its planned cuts to Universal Credit.

Councillor Mahmood also expressed his support for the motion, highlighting the impact that the cuts would have on the finances of those in receipt of Universal Credit. He urged all members to unite in asking central government to reverse its decision and postpone the cuts until the economic situation had improved.

Councillor Georgiou, also in support of the motion, felt that the planned cuts were yet another attack on the most vulnerable members of society at a time in which Government support was truly needed. He questioned the economic and moral sense in placing further unnecessary pressure on struggling families during the recovery phase of the pandemic along with the impact of the Government's levelling up agenda and called on all members to send a clear message to central government that it did not agree with the planned cuts.

Councillor Afzal, in supporting the motion, expressed concern at the Governments actions over recent months given what he felt was there disproportionate effect on

those more vulnerable members of society, including the increase in National Insurance and withdrawal of the uplift in Universal Credit. He felt this highlighted the Government's complete disconnect with the poorest and most vulnerable communities along with the disregard for their welfare as part of the recovery from the pandemic. He felt this was particularly highlighted when compared with the approach taken to support financial institutions during the last financial crisis and which and felt justified calls for the introduction of a wealth tax.

Councillor Choudry expressed his surprise at central government's plans to reverse the Universal Credit uplift, especially in light of the financial pressures people were under and concerns expressed by a range of independent organisations including the CBI and CIPFA regarding its impact. In supporting the motion, he also was keen to encourage the Government to reverse its decision.

Councillor Miller, echoing the sentiments of previous speakers, highlighted the fact that the majority of people in receipt of Universal Credit were in work and felt that central government's plans to reverse the uplift were unfair, inequitable wrongly calculated and represented yet another attack on working people.

Councillor Dixon, reflecting on the pandemic, highlighted the increased reliance of residents on community and voluntary organisations, as well as on Council services. Having witnessed at first hand the impact of current levels of poverty and hardship being experienced by many of the most vulnerable she felt the Government needed to reconsider withdrawing the uplift, which was providing much needed support and expressed her support for the motion.

Councillor Maurice also expressed his concerns at the timing of the decision by the Government, which he felt was mistaken and needed to be reconsidered and reversed. As a result he advised he would also be supporting the motion.

Councillor Johnson highlighted the disproportionate effect the cuts to Universal Credit would have on black and minority ethnic communities, as well as on the unemployed, single parents and those families with children. He felt the Governments' approach was unnecessary and would force some of the poorest and most vulnerable to have to make even more difficult choices at a time when the cost of living was increasing. On this basis he also expressed support for the motion.

As no other members indicated they wished to speak the Mayor then invited Councillor Southwood, as Lead Member for Housing and Welfare Reform, to sum up and close the debate.

Councillor Southwood began by thanking members for highlighting many of the challenges faced by some of the most disadvantaged residents in the borough over the coming months. In responding to the debate she felt the Governments actions in ending furlough, removing the restrictions on tenant evictions, increasing National Insurance and removing the uplift in Universal Credit at a time when the cost of living was rising so sharply highlighted the actions of a Government out of touch with the poorest and most vulnerable in society. Highlighting the work and progress being made in delivering the recommendations from Brent's Poverty Commission she was, however, proud to recognise the Council's efforts in seeking to support local residents during and in the recovery from the pandemic, including establishment of the Resident Support Fund. Whilst this continued to be an



important means of support she acknowledged that this alone would not alleviate all hardship and therefore ended by urging the Government to reverse the planned withdrawal of the uplift in order to continue supporting those most vulnerable residents experiencing hardship.

The Mayor thanked all members for their contributions and as an outcome of the debate it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the motion as set out below:

“This council understands how hard this borough has been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the tragedy that is the loss of more than 720 lives, the uncertainty of a local economy put on hold, and the hardship of tens of thousands of Brent’s residents either furloughed or out of work and reliant on an inadequate Universal Credit.

Therefore, the announcement of this government plans to cut Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit later this year comes with serious implications, especially in light of the furlough scheme coming to an end in September.

This council is concerned at the soaring figures of food bank usage in the borough coupled with the increase in gas prices as we wind down into the colder months forming a perfect storm. One which emerging research has shown will force thousands of families into severe poverty.

This council notes its efforts to shield its residents from the full impact of the economic downturn in recent years, particularly in anticipation of the furlough scheme ending.

Thus far this council has:

- Set up significant monetary support through the Brent Resident Support Fund which has been access by thousands of residents.
- Contributed a further £500k to Brent works to extend this scheme as furlough ends.
- Organised two Job Fairs to help connect residents with potential employers.
- Worked with businesses to place young people into ‘kick start’, a new youth work placement scheme, helping to provide a much needed boost to youth employment in the borough.
- Employed an ethical approach to financial inclusion which is reflected in Brent’s Ethical Debt and Debt Write Off policy.
- Supported private renters to sustain tenancies and avoid eviction.

However this council recognises the limits of its abilities to mitigate the economic downturn for its most vulnerable residents and calls upon the government to step up to its duty to protect those most at risk.

This council points out, that families most at risk of deepening poverty will not benefit from the increases because they are subject to the benefits cap. Migrants without recourse to public funds, many of whom work in industries hardest hit by the

lockdown, have also been left out in the cold and millions of families reliant on the legacy benefit system did not receive the uplift channelled through Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit.

This council therefore calls upon the Government to:

- Continue the £20-a-week increase to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit early contributions which was brought in to help households deal with the impact of COVID-19.
- Extend this to other benefit schemes to help residents who are most in financial need and have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Support Councils through better funding to help them up skill and retrain residents at risk of unemployment as furlough ends.”

## 16. **Continuation of Temporary Delegations**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, to introduce the report from the Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations. In introducing the report the Leader advised that the report was seeking approval to extend the additional delegations granted to the Chief Executive following expiry of the Regulations enabling Local Authority meetings to be held on a remote basis during the pandemic. This was in order to reduce, where necessary, the number and length of meetings which currently required personal attendance by members and officers.

As no members indicated they wished to speak and Councillor Muhammed Butt had confirmed he did not need to exercise his right of reply the Mayor then put the recommendations in the report to the vote and they were declared **CARRIED**.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) agree that the delegated powers set out in Appendix 1 of the report remain in place until the 2022 Annual Council meeting.
- (2) note that delegated powers 1 – 4 in Appendix 1 of the report had also been agreed by the Leader for the same period in respect of executive functions.

## 17. **Motions**

Before moving on to consider the motions listed on the summons, the Mayor advised members that a total of 30 minutes had been set aside for the consideration of the 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 she advised that the remaining time available would be split between the remaining motions on a rolling basis.

### 17.1 **1<sup>st</sup> Motion (Conservative Group) – Illegal use of E-Scooters**

The Mayor invited Councillor Maurice to move the first motion which had been submitted on behalf of the Conservative Group. Councillor Maurice, in moving the

motion, began by highlighting what he felt to be the dangerous and often illegal use of e-scooters especially when ridden on pavements. In highlighting his concerns Councillor Maurice felt it was only a matter of time before the use of an e-scooter caused either a serious injury or death and whilst praising the efforts of the police in taking action against their illegal use, advised that his motion was calling on the Council not to support their use, or participate in any trial e-scooter schemes.

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

Councillor Tatler, in responding to the motion, advised that whilst the safe and properly regulate use of e-scooters was seen to support the development of more active and sustainable forms of travel the Council had decided at this stage not to participate in the trial scheme being operated across a number of London Boroughs by Transport for London (TfL). Whilst not ruling out the Council's future participation in the scheme, the basis of this decision had been to allow more time to review how the trial scheme was operating and the safety concerns identified were being addressed in order to ensure any future use was appropriately regulated. For these reasons she advised she would not be supporting the motion.

As no further members had indicated that they wished to speak the Mayor invited Councillor Maurice to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Maurice advised that given the concerns raised he would continue to lobby against the sale and illegal use of e-scooters and given the safety issues identified urged members to support the motion.

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

"This Council is concerned at the rise in the illegal use of E-scooters which are often dangerously ridden and ridden on pavements without insurance.

This Council is especially concerned that it is only a matter of time before a pedestrian, cyclist or other vulnerable person is seriously injured or killed as a result of the illegal actions of the E-scooter rider.

This Council will not take part in any plans to join a scheme, whereby riders can hire these scooters as there is no guarantee that they will be ridden safely.

This Council notes and praises the Police for taking action against illegal scooter riders by confiscating the scooter and charging the rider with driving without insurance and driving not in accordance with a licence.

This Council would also like to see those individuals who are caught riding E-scooters on the pavement, charged with dangerous driving as well as having no insurance.

Having given consideration to the above, this Council agrees to lobby the Government to ban the sale, importation and use of these dangerous machines in the UK."

Councillors Colwill, Kansagra and Maurice voted in favour of the above motion.

All other members present at the meeting voted against the above motion.

## **17.2 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion (Labour Group) – End the Fire and Rehire Practice**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Kennelly to move the second motion which had been submitted on behalf of the Labour Group. Councillor Kennelly in moving the motion began by expressing concern at the increase in what he felt to be the unethical use of fire and rehire tactics by certain employers, often as a means of forcing staff to accept unfair terms and conditions and a reduction in wages. Whilst welcoming the stance taken by the Council against the practice, as outlined in Brent's procurement strategy, the motion was seeking to support the campaign promoted by Barry Gardiner MP, in seeking to end the practice in order to protect employees and safeguard local residents.

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

In supporting and co-moving the motion, Councillor Grahl also expressed concern at what she felt to be the unethical nature of the practice given its impact on workers rights and their terms and conditions. Highlighting the TUC's research regarding the practice and significant number of workers who had already been impacted, she expressed her pride at the actions taken by the Council as an ethical employer to defend workers rights and in seeking to work with Trade Unions to support the campaign against the practice along with the Great Jobs agenda and real living wage campaign as a means of securing fair pay and meaningful work.

As a further contribution, Councillor Chan also spoke in support of the motion with the pandemic, he felt, having been used as a basis for justifying the implementation of a number of poor practices by certain employers. Supporting the stance taken by the Council in recognising the loyalty and dedication shown by so many workers in responding to the pandemic, he was pleased to be able to support the proposed actions in order to ensure that ordinary workers were not scapegoated by corporations or large scale businesses as a result of their loss of profits or business.

Councillor Miller, again speaking in support of the motion, thanked Councillors Kennelly and Grahl for bringing forward the motion and felt it was encouraging to see the campaign against the fire and rehire practice not only building locally but also nationally.

Councillor Maurice also spoke to highlight his support for the motion, based on his own personal experience.

Speaking on behalf of the Conservative Group, Councillor Kansagra also expressed his support for the motion as a means of tackling the practice by those employers seeking to exploit their workforce. At the same time, however, he also highlighted to need to recognise that employers would need to maintain some flexibility in being able to adapt their working practices, where appropriate, to ensure they could continue as viable businesses.

As a final contribution, Councillor Stephens, as Lead Member for Schools, Employment and Skill, also expressed his support for the motion in seeking to end what he felt was an unacceptable and unethical employment practice which had no place in the borough or nationally. Highlighting the earlier reference made by Councillor Grahl to research undertaken by the TUC, he felt it important to recognise that according to their study during the pandemic 1:10 employees had been forced to reapply for their jobs on reduced terms and conditions which increased to 1:5 for young people. He felt the fact this had been allowed to happen, was a worrying indictment of the Government's levelling up agenda and their lack of focus, as part of the economic recovery strategy from the pandemic, in seeking to raise standards and support workers. In terms of the actions identified within the motion, Councillor Stephens highlighted the work already underway to address the issues and concerns raised, focussed around the Council's ethical and social value commitments within the Procurement Strategy and work also being developed to bring forward plans for a local employer charter based around the Mayor of London's Good Work Standards. These actions were also designed to reflect on the objectives and commitments made within the Borough Plan, Black Community Action Plan and Poverty Commission to ensure that Brent's economic recovery plan was focussed on supporting local residents and in the provision of good work and jobs.

At this stage the Mayor advised that the remaining time available for the debate on this motion (within the overall time limit provided) had expired so then invited Councillor Kennelly to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Kennelly thanked Councillor Grahl for her support in moving the motion and all members for their support and contributions in seeking to end what he felt to be such an unscrupulous and unethical employment practice,. He ended by expressing concern at the extent to which the practice was still being used by employers and at the Government's stance and unwillingness to end the practice in order to protect employees terms and conditions, and again urged all members to support the motion.

The Mayor then put the motion, as set out below, to a vote which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion:

"This council notes the unethical use of the fire and rehire tactics by certain employers, forcing their staff to accept unfair terms and conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay.

While the Prime Minister has called this "unacceptable" he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom by some employers.

This council notes that this practice has been rejected here at Brent as is specifically outlined in the procurement strategy. Furthermore, we have ensured all our service providers abide by these terms.

This council stands with the campaign that has been promoted by our local member of parliament, Barry Gardiner MP who has spotlighted this unsavoury practice,

working with trade union partners to defend the right of workers against unscrupulous employers.

Workers should not be scapegoated to carry the burden of lost profits.

This council therefore believes action is required to ensure local residents are protected against such unethical practices and agrees:

- (1) To request that the Leader of the Council write to the Prime Minister demanding the full protection of employees subject to these terms and conditions.
- (2) To continue to encourage fellow councils to exclude from their authorised list of suppliers any business' using these Fire and Rehire Tactics and to update their procurement and social value policy to reflect that of ethical practices. Furthermore we call upon them to update existing contracts with suppliers in accordance with this commitment.
- (3) To continue to foster good working relationships with Trade Unions here at Brent.
- (4) To work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans for the introduction of a local employer charter for companies to work toward with Trade Unions. This should include worker rights, support for the TUC Great Jobs' agenda and with the real living wage campaign at its heart.

Brent council notes its records as a good and ethical employer, and truly believes that all workers deserve well-paid secure and meaningful work."

### **17.3 (3<sup>rd</sup> Motion) Labour Group Motion – Refugee Support**

The Mayor invited Councillor Hassan to move the third and final motion submitted on behalf of the Labour Group. In doing so, Councillor Hassan highlighted the sadness widely expressed at the unfolding and ongoing humanitarian crisis being witnessed in Afghanistan along with the concern at what was felt to be the inadequate efforts of the UK Government to assist and provide the necessary levels of support and sanctuary for those who had been displaced. As a contrast she highlighted the work being undertaken by the Council to welcome and support refugees, not just from Afghanistan but also other parts of the world, in seeking to provide sanctuary and offer those fleeing persecution the chance to regain control of their lives and build real and lasting futures. Whilst recognising the scale of the refugee crisis and need for a co-ordinated international response, Councillor Hassan advised members that the motion was calling on the Government to commit to a more extensive and balanced Afghan resettlement scheme as well as the creation of safe and legal routes for all those seeking sanctuary from danger and persecution.

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

Councillor Conneely in supporting the motion, highlighted the specific need to ensure that the move towards more extensive and balanced settlement schemes

was also supported by provision of the necessary funding by the Government. This was in order to support Councils in being able to deliver the levels of humanitarian aid, health, education and social care often required given the traumatic experiences faced by so many of those seeking sanctuary.

Speaking on behalf of the Conservative Group, Councillor Kansagra also expressed his support for the motion and need for a co-ordinated international response referring to his families own personal experience in having to resettle in the UK.

As a further contribution Councillor Afzal also spoke in support of the motion expressing concern at what he felt to be the lack of compassion shown by the Government in the way those seeking refuge were treated along with the inadequacy of the current Afghan resettlement scheme for those most in need of support and care.

As a final contribution Councillor Knight, as Lead Member for Community Safety & Engagement, in expressing her support for the motion, outlined the Council's commitment to continue doing all it could to provide sanctuary and shelter for refugees in order to ensure they had a safe place to call home within the borough and access to the necessary support.

As no further members had indicated that they wished to speak and given the support expressed during the debate, Councillor Hassan indicated she did not want to exercise her right of reply. The Mayor therefore moved on to put the motion, as set out below, to a vote which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion:

"This Council notes with deep sadness the unfolding and ongoing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

This Council profoundly regrets the developments over the last few months following two decades of progress towards a more stable, and prosperous Afghanistan. Our thoughts are with the Afghan people and our residents who have family there at this time.

This Council is therefore ashamed at the slow and inadequate efforts this government has pledged for the near quarter of a million displaced Afghan people, the number which continues to grow rapidly.

As a Council we call on the UK government to stand by what should be a non-negotiable obligation to provide sanctuary to those in need, not least our British Nationals and Afghan partners who remain in-country desperately awaiting evacuation.

Thus far, this government has pledged to home 5000 Afghan refugees this year who have supported the Armed Forces through the 'Afghan locally employed scheme', with a view to increase this number to 20,000 in the coming years. This would equate to a meagre six people rehomed per constituency in the UK, falling extremely short of our humanitarian duty as a nation.

Focussing on the humanitarian crisis, the Council remains committed to providing as much direct and immediate help and support as possible to inbound refugees, and is determined – highlighting the need for adequate resources to be made readily available by government – to enable our newest residents to regain control of their lives and, in time, build for themselves real and lasting futures.

As part of this approach, the Council is working closely with the Home Office and has provided shelter for two Afghan families, whilst planning a more cohesive welcome programme for further Afghan families arriving in Brent in the coming months.

Furthermore, this Council notes the lobbying efforts it and other Councils have launched to highlight the needs of its migrant communities and the necessity to appropriately resource Councils in this endeavour. In terms of the wider picture, this Council also notes the support and shelter it has provided for refugees from other parts of the world and is committed to continuing to lead these efforts for our new residents.

The Council recognises that the scale of the refugee crisis will require an international response and urges the UK to lead that effort by committing to a much more extensive and balanced Afghan resettlement scheme. Along with the creation of safe and legal routes for those suffering at the hands of the Taliban.

The Council therefore reiterates its call:

- (1) For open safe and legal routes for all those seeking a sanctuary from danger.
- (2) To increase the number of families given asylum and the need for a balanced refugee resettlement across the UK. Not just a heavy focus on London.
- (3) To increase funding to support councils such as our own, in further more extensive resettlement schemes as well as humanitarian aid.

This Council is proud that it is able to give sanctuary to the thousands of refugees that call Brent home. We want to be able to offer a brighter future for families through a chance at a proper education, good employment opportunities and a safe place to call home.”

## **18. Urgent Business**

There were no urgent items of business raised at the meeting so the Mayor, in closing the meeting, thanked all members for their co-operation and support and advised that she looked forward to seeing everyone again in person at the next Full Council meeting on Monday 22 November 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

COUNCILLOR LIA COLACICCO  
Mayor