



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 9 April 2025
at 6.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Kelcher (Chair), Councillor S. Butt (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Akram, Begum, Chappell, Dixon, Johnson and J Patel.

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interests

There were no declarations of interests made during the meeting.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:-

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on Wednesday 11 December 2024 and Wednesday 15 January 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

4. 24/2052 - 21 Copland Avenue, Wembley, HA0 2EN

PROPOSAL

Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of 4x 3-storey semi-detached dwellings including hard and soft landscaping, off street parking spaces, boundary treatment, alterations to existing drop kerbs and formation of new drop kerb, subject to Deed of Agreement dated xx under Section 106 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee resolve to GRANT planning permission subject to:

- (1) The prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as detailed within the committee report.
- (2) The conditions and informatives, as detailed in the committee report.

Nicola Blake (Principal Planning Officer) introduced the report, detailing the proposal for the demolition of the existing detached bungalow at 21 Copland Avenue and the redevelopment of the site to provide four new residential dwellings. The proposed development comprised two pairs of semi-detached, three-storey dwellinghouses — four units in total — all of which would be family-sized homes with either three or four bedrooms.

The dwellings would be arranged in two pairs. Plots 1 and 2 would front Copland Avenue, occupying a similar building line to neighbouring properties, while Plots 3

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and 4 would be positioned to the rear, fronting onto the head of the Copland Close cul-de-sac. The dwellings had been designed to reflect the scale and rhythm of the surrounding suburban context, with pitched hipped roofs and traditional materials such as facing brick and clay roof tiles, complemented by detailing such as soldier course brickwork around window and door openings.

The Chair thanked Nicola Blake for introducing the report. As there were no Committee questions raised at this point, the Chair then invited Graham Harris (who had registered to speak as an objector) to address the Committee in relation to the application, who highlighted the following points:

- Graham Harris, residing adjacent to 21 Copland Avenue, expressed strong opposition to the proposed development at 21 Copland Avenue.
- It was noted that the objection to the proposed development was supported by 6 nearby homeowners from roads Copland Close, and Crawford Avenue, as well as local ward councillors from both Graham Harris' ward and the neighbouring ward.
- It was highlighted that no support for the proposed development was noted during the consultation.
- The proposed development of four large, three-storey semi-detached properties on a small site was deemed an overdevelopment. The site was described as overly cramped and not in accordance with the space available in other properties backing onto Barham Park in the vicinity, either in Copland Avenue or Copland Close. It was felt that the development would result in approximately 30 residents on a site historically occupied by only two residents.
- The objector referenced Brent Design Guide SPD1 Principal 5.1, which stated that new developments should protect the privacy and amenity of existing properties. The objector felt that the proposed development would severely impair the privacy and amenity of the property, particularly the back garden and the rooms and windows at the rear of the house. It was also felt that the proposed semi-detached houses, positioned halfway up the neighbouring back garden, would overlook the objector's property, violating the guide's conditions on separation distances between habitable room windows and gardens.
- Graham Harris cited the London Borough of Brent Parking Policy 2020, which required residential developments to include some parking provision for residents. The site at 21 Copland Avenue was deemed too small to provide adequate off-street parking. It was noted that the proposed development would not comply with the policy, as there were no residents-only on-street parking facilities in Copland Avenue or Copland Close. It was further noted that the existing parking spaces were often occupied by police officers working at the nearby police station.

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- The objector expressed concerns about the impact on biodiversity, stating that the proposed development would devastate the biodiversity of 21 Copland Avenue and reduce the biodiversity of their property.
- Graham Harris noted that the boundary fencing on the right-hand side of his garden, featured in the plans, was the responsibility and choice of the owners of the property, not 21 Copland Avenue. It was highlighted that no consultation had been offered regarding this matter.
- The objector also referenced a restrictive covenant dated 14 January 1907, cited on the deeds of Copland Avenue, which restricted the height of front fences and development in the properties' back gardens.
- In concluding his response, Graham Harris argued that the proposed development represented an overdevelopment of a small site, leading to degradation rather than improvement of the area. It was felt that the proposed development was not supported by current residents, as evidenced by comments and consultation representations. It was, therefore, strongly recommended that planning consent should not be granted.

The Chair thanked Graham Harris for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- The Chair observed that the area had a high Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) as well as good transport links. It was also noted that the proposed development included x4 houses with three parking spots. As an initial query, the Chair requested further clarification on the parking concerns raised. In response, Graham Harris expressed that there was no on-street parking for residents. It was highlighted that Plot 2 had no parking facility and that police vehicles often parked on the road. It was also noted that all properties in Copland Avenue had two parking spaces, and it was inconsistent with the area to have a large house with no parking provision. The Chair acknowledged that small breaches of policy might be acceptable if the associated harm was not significant which would be assessed by officers in terms of parking.
- Views were sought around what Graham Harris would consider an acceptable limit for building on the site. In response, Graham Harris remarked that he would be content if there were no structures in the back garden. Satisfaction was expressed regarding the front buildings, but Graham Harris found that the back garden development would be too close and excessively cramped, impacting his privacy. The Chair explained that the Council's policies required maximising every site, and proposals that did not achieve this could be rejected, with different factors needing to be weighed.
- Members addressed the parking concern raised in the representation made to the Committee, stating as a point of clarity, that the police had no appropriated parking and that the street parking was public. It was also

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clarified that the public highway was available for anyone to park legally, and no one had exclusive rights to park outside their house unless it was a controlled parking zone. It was further noted that census data showed less than half of Brent households owned a vehicle, attributed to good transport links. In response, Graham Harris observed that most residents on the road had garages and at least two cars. The Chair conveyed that there was a downward trend in car ownership, with new residents likely to own fewer cars than existing residents.

- Members inquired about the method used to calculate the estimate that 30 people would reside in the x4 properties, as cited in his representation to the Committee. In response, Graham Harris explained that he calculated based on the presence of four bedrooms and an additional media room in the roof, leading to an estimate of 30 residents. It was conveyed that accommodating 30 individuals with merely three parking spaces was excessively cramped, contrasting with the historical occupancy of two residents over the past 70 years.

The Chair thanked Graham Harris for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to invite Councillor Rajan Seelan (who had registered to speak as an objector) to address the Committee in relation to the application, who highlighted the following points:

- Councillor Rajan Seelan, representing Wembley Central Ward, raised several objections to the proposed development at 21 Copland Avenue. The objections were based on concerns regarding parking, amenity, property value, and security, all of which were perceived to be compromised by the development.
- It was noted that the committee report stated that 'where proposed development adjoins private amenity or garden areas, the height of new development should normally be set below a line of 45 degrees at the garden edge, measured from a height of two meters'. However, it was felt that the proposed development measured from three meters at the other side of the garden, which was considered a breach of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- It was highlighted that the proposed development included a structure slightly lower than the ground level, which would influence water drainage. Concerns were raised around the absence of adequate drainage measures to prevent flooding of surrounding houses.
- There was a perceived lack of cycle parking provisions in the proposed development, which was felt to have not been adequately addressed.
- The rear of the site was considered an overdevelopment, establishing a bad precedent for not only the local area but also the entire Borough and called for a reduction in height.

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- Councillor Rajan Seelan raised concerns about major parking issues in the cul-de-sac, particularly with the turning cycle at the end. It was noted that the development's height and access would significantly impact residents' convenience and safety.
- It was opined that parking permits for the back of the development should be waived in accordance with London Plan policies.
- In concluding his response, Councillor Rajan Seelan stressed that many residents were distressed by the proposed development. While acknowledging the need to meet housing targets, it was argued that this should not be done at the expense of residents. It was conclusively asserted that the proposed development was excessive and required reconsideration and resizing.

The Chair thanked Councillor Rajan Seelan for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- The Chair requested clarification on the cycle provision, noting that paragraph 65 in the committee report referred to the policy requiring 8 secure bicycle parking spaces for a similar development. The plans indicated that a bike store would be situated in the front gardens of plots 1, 2, 3, and 4, which would meet the policy requirements. The Chair expressed uncertainty regarding the objection to cycle provision, as it appeared to be in line with policy. In response, Councillor Rajan Seelan stated that if cycle parking was permitted, then car parking for plots 3 and 4 should be excluded, and parking permitted rights should be waived.
- The Chair explained that the Council aimed to reduce car ownership and reliance and that a parking survey, referenced on page 70 of the committee report, indicated that the area was likely parked overnight. It was suggested that one additional car parked on the street at night would not cause a significant issue. In response, Councillor Rajan Seelan contended that the survey did not account for event days and needed to be reviewed.
- In addressing the confusion around PTAL ratings on the proposed site, the Chair provided clarification that the site straddled the boundary between PTAL ratings of 3 and 4, with houses 1 and 2 fronting Copland Avenue having a PTAL rating of 4 due to proximity to Sudbury Town station, and houses 3 and 4 fronting Copland Close having a PTAL rating of 3.
- Questions were raised around whether Councillor Rajan Seelan had encountered any waste collection issues on the road, to which Councillor Rajan Seelan stated that the road was wide enough for refuse trucks, but parking for Plots 3 and 4 would create difficulties for turning. Members suggested additional enforcement, such as double yellow lines, to ensure proper parking and clearance for vehicles. Following up, members questioned if there had been reports of any waste collection issues. In

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response, Councillor Rajan Seelan confirmed that there were parking issues, particularly on waste collection dates.

- Members referenced earlier points made by Councillor Rajan Seelan regarding parking, security, and amenity concerns and noted that officers had addressed these matters in paragraph 47 of the committee report by suggesting a condition to obscure windows on the flank wall overlooking the concerned resident's property. Members questioned whether this measure sufficiently addressed the overlooking issue, considering the housing need in Brent. In response, Councillor Rajan Seelan acknowledged the measure as reasonable but noted that the height contradicted SPD Policy and required further review. Flooding risk was also highlighted as a major concern that was perceived to not have been adequately addressed.

The Chair thanked Councillor Rajan Seelan for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to invite Richard Lewis (who had registered to speak as the applicant) to address the Committee in relation to the application, who highlighted the following points:

- The applicant had resided with their parents at 21 Copland Avenue until 1985. The property was a modest three-bedroom bungalow, the only bungalow on the street, which was otherwise comprised of seven pairs of semi-detached houses and five detached houses. The proposed semi-detached houses were deemed more in keeping with the area's established character and better aligned with the London Plan and local development framework.
- Richard Lewis shared that their father had passed away in 2015, and their mother's health had declined in the years following. The family's focus had shifted entirely to her care, allowing only essential maintenance. As a result, it was highlighted that the house had deteriorated and now required new electrics, plumbing, repointing, and likely a new roof. Despite this, the site was identified as having great potential due to its long back garden and side access. The proposed homes were aligned with 6 Copland Close to ensure they fit seamlessly into the street scene.
- The applicant expressed a desire to transform the neglected site into four modern family homes, each with a private garden and built to current standards. The location was highlighted as advantageous, being close to Barham Park, good local schools, the library, and excellent transport links. The design of the homes aimed to reflect the character of Copland Avenue and Copland Close.
- Richard Lewis extended thanks to the planning officer, Nicola Blake, for her collaborative work with the architect, Jack Jusek. This cooperation had been instrumental in shaping a thorough and well-evidenced application. Over the past six months, several important revisions had been made, including widening the pavement for disabled access, reducing parking, improving cycle storage, enhancing landscaping for biodiversity, and ensuring

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sustainable drainage. It was further mentioned that a substantial Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) commitment had also been made.

- In concluding his response, Richard Lewis described the scheme as small but thoughtful, supporting Brent's local plan and the wider goals of the mayor and government to deliver high-quality homes in London. The proposal was presented as a positive new chapter for the site, and the applicant expressed hope that the Committee would support the application by granting approval.

The Chair thanked Richard Lewis for addressing the Committee and invited members to ask any questions they had in relation to the information presented, with the following being noted:

- Members inquired about the pedestrian footpath, noting that it was two meters wide and that some land was being sacrificed for access, which was viewed positively. Confirmation was sought that the gate to Barham Park would be used exclusively by plot number 3, which was affirmed by Richard Lewis.
- Following up, members further queried whether flooding had been considered in relation to the lower ground at the back of the site. In response, Richard Lewis confirmed that flooding had been considered and had never been a problem on the site. Richard Lewis noted his familiarity with the site, as his parents had lived there since he was 21. It was explained that Barham Park could absorb a significant amount of rainwater and that the slight slope of the site accounted for the lower ground at the back of the houses. As a point of clarification, the Chair cited paragraph 99 on page 74 of the committee report, stating that the proposed application site was located within flood zone 1, indicating the lowest risk with a 0.1% annual probability of flooding. Consequently, the planning application did not require the submission of a flood risk assessment.
- Members questioned whether it was felt that the concerns of the previous objectors had been adequately addressed in the current application, to which Richard Lewis affirmed that the architect had worked diligently with the planning officer, Nicola Blake, to address all concerns and praised her efforts in ensuring that every concern had been answered.
- Details were sought round the potential considered for the site, including whether more or less housing had been contemplated and the discussions that led to the current development proposal. In response, Richard Lewis explained that the application site had an exceptionally long garden, which was not standard. The original plans had included additional bedrooms on the rear houses, but these were reduced in collaboration with Nicola Blake and architect Jack Jusek to fit with the local plan.
- Queries were raised around whether there had been any specific issues with waste collections. In response, Richard Lewis highlighted that there had never been any waste collection issues. It was noted that Copland Avenue was a wide road and that the corner plot provided a substantial turning circle

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before entering Copland Close Richard Lewis further mentioned that his elderly parents had always received excellent service from the waste collectors, who would take the bins onto the curtilage.

- Members sought assurance regarding the tree preservation order, noting that there was a preservation order on two trees and that nine new trees were to be planted. Confirmation was requested that the preserved trees would remain and the new trees would be planted. In response, it was confirmed that the preserved trees would remain and that the nine new trees would be planted. Richard Lewis emphasised his connection to the area and his commitment to ensuring that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the neighbourhood, which he described to be a nice, quiet area.

The Chair thanked Richard Lewis for responding to the Committee's queries and then moved on to offer the Committee the opportunity to ask the officers any remaining questions or points of clarity in relation to the application, with the following being noted:

- The Chair noted changes involving a contribution being made to relocate where cars passed over the pavement and requested an explanation as to why officers insisted on this change and how they anticipated it would function. In response, John Bowman (Principal Development Control Engineer, Highways) explained that the site had a maximum allowable number of car parking spaces, necessitating a vehicle crossover for the new build. The new houses, situated in a higher PTAL area, currently had two vehicle crossovers. One of these crossovers, located at the junction with significant highway safety concerns, was to be removed. Following on from the previous question, the Chair inquired whether the safety concerns addressed by the new development would also improve safety for existing residents. In response, John Bowman (Principal Development Control Engineer, Highways) advised that the removal of the vehicle crossover at the junction and the widening of the footpath around Copland Close would significantly enhance safety for existing residents. The width of footways would be increased from approximately 1.2-1.5 meters to 2 meters, the minimum width normally required. It was also noted that the current development, likely built in the 1930s, did not meet modern standards for pedestrian comfort, and the improvements would greatly increase pedestrian access for both existing and new residents.
- Members referenced Google Street View images showing bins left on the street to reserve parking spaces and noted around five crossovers forming part of the turning circle. Details were sought around whether recommendations for double yellow lines at that location would be addressed by the Planning Committee or the local Ward Councillor with the Highways team. In response, John Bowman (Principal Development Control Engineer, Highways) observed that there was insufficient space between vehicle crossovers for safe parking. It was suggested that any car parked there would obstruct other residents parking. It was indicated that the only theoretical parking space on Copland Close away from vehicle crossovers

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was within the location of the proposed vehicle crossover, which would eliminate the problem of obstructive parking.

- As a further issue raised, members questioned whether Veolia had expressed concerns about waste collection, given the potential congestion from increased parking and reserved spaces. In response, slides of the proposed plan were presented and John Bowman (Principal Development Control Engineer) indicated that the only current on-street parking location was where the large crossover was situated. It was noted that anyone parking there would obstruct the new occupants' right of access. The proposal included onsite bin stalls, with collection occurring within the site itself. No concerns from Veolia regarding access had been reported, and the existing highway layout would remain unchanged.
- Members cited Google Maps to illustrate their point, noting a 2.4-meter distance between parked vehicles, which was insufficient for refuse lorries requiring at least 2.5 meters. Enforcement measures, such as double yellow lines, were suggested to address parking issues and ensure waste collection access. In response, the Chair informed that this issue should be raised by the Ward Councillor. Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) further recommended that the Ward Councillor address the issue of double yellow lines between Nos. 5 and 6 Copland Close with the Highways team. It was noted that the application included a new crossover to the plots at the rear, a slight alteration to one on Copland Avenue, and the removal of the junction crossover. These changes would be secured through the section 106 agreement, along with works to widen the pavement, improving public accessibility for both proposed and existing residents.
- The Chair acknowledged the objections raised regarding overlooking, blocking out light, and access and requested that officers demonstrate any breaches or explain why, in their judgment, the development would not cause significant harm in terms of overlooking. In response, Colin Leadbeater (Development Management Area Manager) presented slides of the elevations for Plots 3 and 4. It was clarified that the 45-degree line, as per SPD 1 guidance, was measured from 2 meters above the boundary line of the garden adjacent to No. 19 Copland Avenue. However, for No. 6 Copland Avenue, the line was drawn from the top of an existing three-meter-high garage, as it would not affect any nearby habitable room windows. Broader questions regarding overdevelopment were addressed, noting that the site lay within a PTAL area of 3 to 4, identified in both the Brent local plan and London Plan policy H2 as a priority location for small site intensification. It was described that the site was generous in size, with an exceptionally deep garden, and could comfortably accommodate family-sized homes while exceeding private amenity space standards. The design reflected the suburban context with traditional materials and hipped roofs, respecting the existing street pattern. Issues of overlooking and loss of privacy were considered, with directly facing windows separated by approximately 20 meters from habitable rooms. Condition 9 was recommended to obscure glaze any side-facing windows to reduce potential overlooking.

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- Following up, the Chair sought clarification on the objector's concern that the second semi-detached dwelling higher up would not be in line with the precedent set by other properties. In response, Colin Leadbeatter (Development Management Area Manager) explained that the separation distances between habitable rooms exceeded 20 meters, and mutual overlooking of rear gardens was common in suburban areas. While acknowledging the change, it was considered acceptable when balanced against the merits of delivering additional family-sized accommodation. Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) additionally addressed the 45-degree line from the neighbouring garden, noting that the plans showed compliance with the 1:2 rule and the updated Residential Extensions Guide. The development would be similar to a two-storey extension in terms of depth from the rear windows of No. 6 Copland Close. Colin Leadbeatter (Development Management Area Manager) added that the ground level of the two units had been lowered by a meter to reduce their prominence and the amount of oblique overlooking from first-floor windows. Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) further stated that permitted development rights for the four new houses had been restricted through conditions, requiring planning approval for extensions and outbuildings.
- Members raised queries around the covenant mentioned earlier by a speaker, which restricted the height of front fences and development in the back gardens. In response, David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services) clarified that restrictive covenants were not a material planning consideration and would need to be addressed legally before development could proceed. It could not, therefore, be considered within the planning process.
- Member inquired about the specific location of the nine trees proposed for planting, questioning whether they would be planted in the rear or another specified location.
- Further information regarding the specific location of the nine trees proposed for planting was sought by Members, with it being questioned whether they would be planted in the rear or another specified location. In response, Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) clarified that three trees were being retained, with two situated within the garden of Plot 4 and one within the garden of Plot 1. The new trees were designated for the communal area. Following up, concerns were raised regarding the potential risk of subsidence and structural damage due to the roots of protected trees T3 and T4, querying whether this had been assessed. In response, David Glover (Head of Planning and Development Services) explained that the development would undergo the building regulations process, which included an assessment of the proximity of trees to determine if a different approach was required for the foundation. It was noted that deeper foundations might be necessary if the development was close to high water uptake trees. Colin Leadbeatter (Development Management Area Manager) further mentioned that a compliance condition had been recommended. The scheme was submitted with a horticultural impact

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assessment, and a condition was recommended to ensure the scheme was carried out in full accordance with the document, which had been reviewed and agreed upon by the tree officer.

- Members referred to an objector's concern about the potential devastation of ecology due to the proposed development and sought officers' comments on paragraph 85 of the committee report, which mentioned biodiversity enhancements. In response, Colin Leadbeatter (Development Management Area Manager) acknowledged that building on previously undeveloped land would have an impact. However, it was emphasised that efforts had been made to meet biodiversity and ecology requirements. It was confirmed that the proposed development complied with statutory and local policy requirements on biodiversity, urban greening, and ecology. A statutory BNG assessment submitted with the application confirmed a 10.05% net gain in habitat units and a 192% increase in hedgerow units, calculated using the Defra biodiversity metric. The scheme had satisfied the requirements under the Environment Act of 2021 and was policy compliant with BG11 of the Local Plan, London Plan policy G6, and national BNG requirements. Under the section 106 agreement, a Habitat Management Plan and monitoring for biodiversity net gain were included. Additional conditions were recommended for the installation of bird and bat boxes, hedgehog highways, and other wildlife-friendly features. Landscaping conditions, approved plans, and the tree replanting strategy aimed to add value through additional soft landscaping.
- Members requested further explanation regarding the removal of permitted development rights for the new houses. In response, Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) explained that permitted development rights for the four new houses had been restricted through condition. It was detailed that Schedule 2, part 1 of the General Permitted Development Order outlined various activities that could be undertaken on dwelling houses, including extensions, outbuildings, alterations, and roofs. Colin Leadbeatter (Development Management Area Manager) further clarified that land use classes were distinct from the classes of the General Permitted Development Order.
- As a final point, members referred to paragraph 109 of the committee report, which was deemed to strongly recommend air source heat pumps, and queried whether their installation was a requirement or a recommendation, noting condition 14, which specified that if air source heat pumps were installed, their noise level should not exceed 42dB(A). In response, Victoria McDonagh (Development Management Service Manager) informed that, from a planning perspective, there was no requirement for an Energy Strategy due to the size of the development. It was noted that air source heat pumps could be noisy, and the noise limits were specified to protect the amenities of neighbouring occupants. Colin Leadbeatter (Development Management Area Manager) additionally noted that, due to the removal of permitted development (PD) rights, normal PD rights for the installation of such equipment would not typically apply. The aim was to ensure future allowance for air source heat pumps while protecting neighbouring amenity.

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As there were no further questions from members the Chair then moved on to the vote.

DECISION

The Committee **RESOLVED** to grant planning permission subject to:

- (1) The prior completion of a legal agreement to secure the planning obligations as detailed within the committee report.
- (2) The conditions and informatives, as detailed in the committee report.

(Voting on the above decision was unanimous).

5. **Any Other Urgent Business**

There was no other urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.11 pm

COUNCILLOR KELCHER
Chair