



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Tuesday 12 November 2024 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor M Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Farah, Grahl, Nerva and Krupa Sheth.

Also present: Councillor Long (for Item 5)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rubin (Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action) and from Alice Lester (Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration) with Gerry Ansell (Director Inclusive Regeneration & Employment) attending as her representative along with Rachel Crossley (Corporate Director Health & Wellbeing) with Rhodri Rowland (Director Strategic Commissioning & Capacity Building) attending as her representative.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Nerva declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item 7 (Draft Budget 2025 -26) as a member of the North West London Integrated Care Board given the link between NHS funding and delivery of services across the borough.

No other declarations of interest were made during the meeting.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 14 October 2024 be approved as a correct.

4. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None.

5. **Petitions (if any)**

5.1 **Keeping Brent's Streets clear from clutter**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) welcomed Mr Rehan Khan to the meeting, who had been invited to speak in support of a petition containing 174 signatures requesting the Council take action to ensure its pavements were kept free of clutter, including dockless bikes in order to ensure pedestrian safety. In thanking the Leader of the Council for the opportunity to present the petition, Mr Khan began by highlighting the major concern for residents in relation to the management of dockless e-bikes across the borough, specifically those operated

by Lime, which he pointed out were cluttering pavements and creating obstructions, particularly for wheelchair users, children in pushchairs and the blind or partially sighted residents. In terms of actions to address these concerns, the petitioners felt that limiting the number of dockless e-bikes in the borough would not solve the issue and that there was a need for better management and control in relation to their operation and authorised use. Referring to research on bike use in other European countries, Mr Khan highlighted that over 60% of residents in Copenhagen used bikes as a mode of transportation with very low reports of them creating clutter or causing a nuisance or danger to pedestrians. In referring to a petition he had submitted a number of years previously, Mr Khan highlighted the positive measures which had been introduced to improve pavements along Salmon Street on which the progress made was now at risk as a result of the nuisance being created by dockless e-bikes being abandoned or improperly parked in the area and with concern also expressed at any potential costs associated with personal injury or insurance claims relating to any hazards created as a result. In summing up, Mr Khan hoped the Council would be able to use its influence to secure enhanced measures were introduced to control and manage dockless e-bikes given the concerns highlighted in an aim to ensure that pavements were free of clutter across the borough.

As a supporter of the petition, Councillor Long was also invited to address Cabinet who felt it important to note that in addition to dockless bikes the petition was also focussed on the need to keep pavements free from other general clutter. Whilst recognising the work undertaken with Lime as the dockless e-bike operator in Brent, she highlighted the issue also being created by other providers operating in the borough, such as Human Forest, which involved similar issues being experienced and was keen to ensure these concerns were also addressed as part of the Council's wider response. Highlighting further concerns with regard to the technology supporting the operation of dockless e-bikes, Councillor Long felt that the issues identified could not be resolved until this was also addressed preventing bikes from being hacked.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement) thanked Mr Khan and Councillor Long for attending Cabinet in order to ensure the views of those supporting the petition were presented. She highlighted that the Council shared the petitioners' commitment to keeping pavements safe, uncluttered and accessible for everyone, especially pedestrians with the Council seeking to actively hold Lime to rigorous account through a comprehensive plan designed to prevent pavement obstructions. In responding to the points raised within the petition, Councillor Krupa Sheth shared the frustrations regarding the hacking of dockless e-bikes and confirmed the Council had also met with other dockless bike operators on the issue.

In detailing the agreement reached with Lime, Councillor Krupa Sheth highlighted that stricter parking requirements and designated bays would be introduced, with a funding commitment from both Lime and TfL to provide an additional 200 parking bays in the borough to significantly reduce the likelihood of the bikes obstructing pavements. There would also be a reduction in Lime's fleet in Brent by 30% and an increase in the local staffing team by 75% to ensure quicker response times for reported issues, with a commitment to removing reported bikes within two hours and the revised operational arrangements subject to regular monitoring and ongoing performance review through newly established Key Performance

Indicators. Provisions for safety and local investment were also being introduced, which included speed restrictions and restricted access in designated high-traffic areas. It was confirmed that any fines from abandoned or improperly parked bikes would be reinvested into Brent's community through the Brent Together for Net Zero grant scheme also adding social value to enforcement efforts. Councillor Krupa Sheth ended her response by stating that she believed this negotiated approach served the community best, as she felt an outright ban would not guarantee compliance and could lead to dockless e-bikes still being used in Brent without the same level of control. In terms of national regulation, she confirmed the Council's active support of campaigns seeking stronger regulation around e-bike management but until this was in place the Council remained confident that the current agreement with Lime would provide the best balance in terms of accessibility, safety and control. Residents were also encouraged to continue sharing their experiences and reporting instances of inappropriately parked Lime bikes and to participate in the upcoming residents forums where Lime representatives would be present in order to help shape the Council's ongoing approach as well as ensuring the necessary level of compliance and accountability.

In thanking Councillor Krupa Sheth for her response, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader) also took the opportunity to assure the petitioners that the concerns raised in relation to technology and the hacking of e-bikes had been raised with Lime and conversations involving other dockless e-bike operators also continuing to ensure the effective management of their bikes across the borough. In thanking Mr Khan and Councillor Long for presenting the petition he ended by confirming the Council would continue to hold Lime and any other companies to account to ensure they worked with the Council and residents in a manner that kept people safe with a strict enforcement approach applied where this was not felt to be the case.

6. Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)

There were no items referred from either the Community Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

7. Draft Budget 2025/26

Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) introduced a report which set out the Council's budget proposals for 2025-26. The report also provided a general update on the Council's overall financial position, including not only the Council's General Fund revenue budget but also Housing Revenue Account, Dedicated Schools Grant and Capital Programme as well as an overview of the current economic outlook.

In introducing the report, Councillor Mili Patel began by thanking officers involved for their efforts in preparing the draft budget proposals with the detail provided reflecting the Council's ongoing commitment to undertaking the budget setting and consultation process as transparently as possible involving key stakeholders such as local residents, business and other key stakeholders including the scrutiny function. Despite the considerable efforts to maintain financial control, the operating environment and wider economic context faced by the Council remained volatile. Since 2010, members were reminded that the Council had lost at least £222m from its core budget with the impact having been felt by everyone who lived and worked in the borough. Whilst recognising the efforts made to innovate,

identify efficiencies and generate income members were advised these measures alone would no longer be sufficient over the longer term with the need identified, as a result, to deliver £16m worth of cuts during 2025-26 in order for the Council to be able to continue standing still with the challenging nature of these additional cuts fully acknowledged for residents, staff and members alike. Without intervention, however, members were advised the risk of being able to move back to financial sustainability would become more difficult.

In highlighting how local authorities such as Brent were not alone in facing these challenges, with 18 Council's having to apply to the Government for Exceptional Financial Support and 1 in 4 identified as likely to require emergency support over the next two years, members also noted how the sector had also become the government's emergency provider of last resort delivering more services than ever before. This had involved picking up the challenges and costs in relation to areas such as children and adult social care and the housing crisis, making it increasingly difficult to explain to local residents how the financial burden in relation to Council Tax had been shifted to cover these pressures.

Whilst the government had now changed, and Chancellor's Autumn Statement had outlined a range of measures aimed at fixing the foundation of the economy and delivering a renewed focus on public services the challenges and pressures facing the Council remained the same and, it was highlighted, would now require a fundamental shift in approach given the ongoing impact of austerity. Highlighting the savings proposals identified for 2025-26 within Appendix A & B of the report alongside the updated budget assumptions and proposal to seek (at this stage) a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (based on a 2.99% general increase plus 2% for the Adult Social Care precept) which had been designed to enable the Council to set a balanced budget, Councillor Mili Patel recognised the challenging nature of their delivery with the options representing an aggregate of choices it was pointed out the Council would have preferred not to have been required to make.

In concluding her introduction, Councillor Mili Patel once again highlighted how challenging and difficult development of the budget proposals had been. Cabinet Members and officers were thanked for their support in the process with it noted that the priority remained to protect residents across the borough and in doing everything possible to ensure a safety net continued to be provided for the most vulnerable with the Council committed, in advance of the Local Government Financial Settlement, to taking the tough decisions required to deliver a balanced budget and minimise impact on the delivery of frontline services.

In supporting the budget proposals, contained within the report, Cabinet Members recognised the difficult nature of the challenges and financial pressures identified and also took the opportunity to thank the finance team for their work in developing the budget proposals whilst also seeking to safeguard, as far as possible, key services and support for local residents and ensure the Council's resources were being used as effectively as possible.

In terms of specific proposals and priorities, members welcomed:

- the ongoing commitment to strengthening Public Realm in order to ensure Brent remained a welcoming and vibrant place supported by ongoing investment in maintaining the borough's streets, highways, and public spaces

designed to create a cleaner, greener safer and a more accessible environment. The opportunity was also taken to outline the Council's commitment towards sustainability and improved recycling outcomes including not only the Extended Producer Responsibility Scheme but also an expansion of the garden waste collection service , making it easier for residents to participate in reducing waste and supporting recycling.

- The priority in seeking to maintain the wellbeing of residents across the borough given the pressures being experienced as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. This included an extension of the Resident Support Fund, to ensure those most in need continued to have access to resources and assistance including food and energy vouchers and emergency aid as a safety net. In addition, members welcomed the enhancements being delivered in relation to hub provision across the borough including redevelopment of the Wembley Hub Space and the New Horizon hub which it was felt demonstrated the Council's dedication to safeguarding the welfare of the borough's residents, fostering resilience, and building a Brent where everyone had the support they needed to thrive.
- The priority (recognising the financial constraints identified) to maintaining a focus on community safety in seeking to ensure neighbourhoods across the borough remained secure and resilient and able to foster a sense of well-being and security.
- The ongoing aim to continue prioritising the most vulnerable in society whilst also seeking to protect essential services particularly in relation to health and adult social care (including the support and care being provided through the expansion of Supported Living provision as a longer term alternative strategy to residential care) and in addressing the pressures and challenges in relation to services for children and young people (including support being provided through the Family Wellbeing Centres, SEND provision and the demand and increasing cost of residential care) in order to maintain support for residents across the borough and ensure the best possible outcomes for all. In noting the increased investment being prioritised by the Government in relation to the National Health Service members also recognised the importance of the ongoing collaboration and partnership work to ensure services (including prevention and community support) were being delivered in a coordinated way across the North West London region

In summing up Councillor Muhammed Butt highlighted the need to recognise the significant financial pressures and challenges that continued to be faced by the Council in seeking to set a balanced budget and operate in a financially sustainable and resilient way given the cuts in core Central Government funding since 2010, increasing burden falling on Council Tax payers as a result and reduction in number of Council staff. Whilst continuing to innovate and generate efficiencies, the opportunity was taken to reiterate that these measures on their own would no longer be enough to support the Council in the future which had resulted in the new savings proposals identified. These had included £4.4m of savings from services and £5m resulting from proposed changes to Council Tax Support, which, if approved following consultation and scrutiny, would need to be implemented during 2025-26 in addition to a further £6.5m of operating efficiencies in order to enable a balanced budget to be set, recognising the provisional Local Government Funding

Settlement still be announced and assumption on which the 2025-26 budget proposals had been based, as outlined in section 5.25 of the report.

In highlighting the focus to ensure the budget process remained priority led with resources aligned towards delivery of statutory responsibilities and the Council's core strategic as set within the Borough Plan, the Leader ended by outlining the commitment to ensure the consultation and decision-making process on the budget proposals was as transparent and open as possible and designed, as far as possible, to safeguard frontline services for the most vulnerable residents to ensure no one was left behind whilst seeking to deliver a balanced budget.

Having noted the current financial context in which the budget proposals had needed to be developed Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the overall financial position, as set out within the report.
- (2) To agree to consult on the new budget proposals, as set out in Appendices A and B of the report.
- (3) To agree to consult on a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (consisting of a 2.99% general increase plus 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept) in 2025/26.
- (4) To endorse the approach to the statutory process of consultation, scrutiny and equalities between November 2024 and February 2025, as set out in section ten of the report.
- (5) To endorse the changes to the technical budget assumptions underpinning the budget, as set out in section six and seven of the report.
- (6) To note the position with regard to the funding for Schools and the Dedicated Schools Grant, as set out in section eleven of the report.
- (7) To note the position with regard to the Housing Revenue Account, as set out in section twelve of the report.
- (8) To note the position with regard to the Capital programme, as set out in section thirteen of the report.

8. **Complaints Annual Report 2023-24**

Councillor Mili Patel (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) introduced a report detailing the Council's complaints performance for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The report focused on the nature of complaints and the learning they could provide to inform Brent Council's future approach to service improvement as well as including details on complaints performance relating to Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care, as detailed in Appendices A & B of the report, which it was noted were governed by separate statutory complaint procedures. Members noted the report also contained (as Appendix C) a comparison of the Council's performance with other London boroughs provided by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman alongside the Council's Housing Management Service Annual Complaints

Performance and Service Improvement Report for 2023-2024 (Appendix D) incorporating the Council's self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which was now a requirement of the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code.

Cabinet noted the key headlines relating to complaints performance in 2023-24 along with the outline of the root causes identified and service improvements which had been implemented as a result of the nature of complaints received. In welcoming the focus on the effective management of performance in relation to complaints, members were also keen to ensure that the outcomes continued to feed into the development of key corporate strategies including the Customer Access and Digital Strategy.

In thanking officers for their efforts in monitoring and managing complaints performance, members felt the issues and areas highlighted as key concerns reflected the nature of current challenges being experienced by many local residents requiring support and also the Council in being able to manage the increased level of demand for key services, especially in relation to housing. As such the report was welcomed as a means of continuing to focus on the approach towards service improvement for residents

Having considered the report and work being undertaken jointly by Cabinet Members with their relevant Corporate Directors to continue challenging performance **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note Brent's performance in managing and resolving complaints.
- (2) To note (having reviewed) Brent's self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code in Appendix D of the report.
- (3) To approve referral of the report to the relevant Scrutiny Committees for consideration and comment.

9. **Refresh of School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028**

Councillor Gwen Grahl (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools) introduced a report outlining the first refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028, which had originally been approved in October 2023.

In introducing the report, members noted the refresh of the strategy had been designed to reflect the continued focus on planning for the sufficiency of places and the sustainability of schools based on varying demand patterns currently impacting on school planning areas in the borough given the context of the current challenges being faced across the education sector and falling demand for places across some areas of the borough. Members were advised that the refresh included the latest assessment of school place demand across the borough based on pupil projections from the Greater London Authority (GLA) which had highlighted demand for primary school places continuing to fall not only in Brent but across London whilst demand for local special places continued to grow. Whilst recognising that lower demand would provide increased choice for places in some areas of the borough it was highlighted this also needed to be balanced against the organisational and financial

challenges on schools in seeking to manage reduced intakes, with the opportunity taken to pay tribute to the way in which schools were managing the process.

Based on the data within the strategy, members were advised that Brent had currently been assessed as requiring an additional 188 primary special places and 34 secondary special places in addition to those already being created as part of the current capital expansion programme and with the need projected to increase year on year. As a result, the refreshed strategy had proposed that where spare capacity was identified, the approach would be to repurpose existing sites to support that provision.

Whilst recognising the impact that some of the measures outlined within the strategy would have on pupils, parents and staff members acknowledged how the refresh had been designed to reflect the challenging context in which the school place planning process was having to operate, with the Council continuing to work in partnership, engage closely and consider feedback from school communities in an effort to avoid school site closures and ensure that in cases where that was not possible the sites were maintained for educational use.

Having recognised the challenges identified, particularly as a result of varying patterns of demand, Cabinet welcomed the approach outlined in terms of the refresh of the strategy, which it was noted had involved a detailed assessment of available data and balance needing to be achieved in relation to the process for managing any potential reduced demand for school places. The approach identified in relation to the provision of additional SEND provision was also welcomed and commended with members recognising the way in which the strategy had been designed to ensure fairness and transparency in terms of the objectives and operating principles underpinning the Council's approach to school organisation and planning in order to give every child in Brent the best start in life.

In recognising the importance in keeping the strategy under review given the challenges identified in terms of ongoing planning for the sufficiency of school places across Brent and impact of young people and their families, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2024-2028, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) To note the continued focus on planning for the sufficiency of places and the sustainability of schools, based on varying demand patterns impacting on school planning areas in Brent.
- (3) To note there continues to be increasing demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 and the intention to further develop the SEND estate capital investment programme with strategies to address this need, as set out in Section 4 of the report.
- (4) To note the school place planning actions completed in the first year of the strategy and the actions planned for the coming academic year as set out in section 5.1 of the report.

- (5) To note the update on the success measures set out in the original strategy in section 3.1.3 of the report.

10. **Statement of Licensing Policy**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment & Enforcement) introduced a report advising members of the duty placed on the Council, in its role as a Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003, to determine, publish and keep under review a Statement of Licensing Policy covering a five-year period. Members were advised that as the current Policy was due to expire on the 5 January 2025 the report presented the outcome of the current which had needed to be undertaken and changes identified as a result, prior to referral of the new Policy to Full Council for formal adoption.

In presenting the report, members were advised that the opportunity had also been undertaken (as part of the review) to ensure the changes made as a result reflected not only current statutory requirements but also the specific and evolving needs of local communities across the borough with the Policy key in defining the approach adopted towards the way licensing the sale of alcohol, late-night refreshments, and licensed venues was managed. As such, members noted the importance of the Statement of Licensing Policy as a key document in terms of providing guidance to applicants and license holders and also in setting out the Council's (as Licensing Authority) expectations on compliance, community safety, and the integration of the licensing approach with broader council strategies. Members were advised that, subject to formal approval and adoption, the new Policy would become effective from January 2025 with the content having been designed to carefully align with the Borough Plan priorities in terms of supporting Prosperity and Stability in Brent, a Healthier Brent, and Thriving Communities.

Members were advised that the new Policy had included a number of updates, which had reflected an evidence based approach towards their development as well as feedback from Responsible Authorities with the changes designed to address key issues such as alcohol-related crime, health impacts, and nuisance affecting local communities and introducing 32 specific policies. These included measures for twelve cumulative impact zones (based on areas identified as facing challenges due to high levels of street drinking and alcohol-related incidents) seeking to limit the growth of new off-licences and other alcohol-serving establishments in an effort to reduce cumulative impact on local residents. In addition, the Policy had also sought to address a number of critical and emerging areas and priorities including (in preparing for the introduction of Martyn's Law) measures for enhanced event and venue safety, including risk assessments and emergency preparedness; introducing targeted measures to improve safety and reduce harm for women and vulnerable populations focussed around the nighttime economy; provide enhanced oversight of delivery services and dark kitchens to ensure they meet (given the growth of these type of businesses) the same standards as traditional licensed premises and the introduction of clear expectations for licensees to prevent and respond to drink spiking, which were areas specifically welcomed and supported by members.

In noting the additional background papers circulated for reference purposes alongside the main report in relation to the Equality Assessment and consultation responses received as part of the review process, members highlighted a need to

ensure that the policy and any associated feedback was subject to regular review as further reassurance to local residents that the arrangements and approach adopted towards the management and enforcement of the Licensing Policy was as robust and proactive as possible.

Having welcomed the benefits being delivered through the approach towards designation of cumulative impact zones and also continued inclusion (as an outcome of the consultation process) of the voluntary minimum unit price policy, Cabinet in supporting the need for a process of regular review **RESOLVED** subject to the comments identified above:

- (1) To note (having considered) the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy (5 January 2025 – 4 January 2030) as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) In order to fulfill legal requirements to refer the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy to Full Council on 18 November 2024 for formal adoption.

11. **Statement of Gambling Principles**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment & Enforcement) introduced a report detailing the outcome of a review of the Council's Statement of Gambling Principles undertaken with the aim of bringing the policy in line with the Gambling Commission review timetable, given the current Statement of Principles was due to expire on the 31 January 2025.

In presenting the report, members noted that the requirement to produce a Statement of Gambling Principles had been introduced under the Gambling Act 2005 with each Statement covering a three-year period and designed to outline the principles to be applied in exercising the Council's functions as the Licensing Authority under the Act. Members were advised these functions included the issuing of premises licences for casinos, bingo halls, betting shops, adult gaming centres and licensed family entertainment centres as well as permits for gaming machines in pubs, clubs, and other alcohol licensed premises. Whilst the Statement had been subject to a comprehensive review during 2023, the current review had been designed to ensure it was brought in line with the Gambling Commission review timetable and involved amendments to website links as well as changes reflecting the outcome of the consultation process which had been undertaken to support the review. In noting the key role the statement fulfilled in terms of outlining local priorities and way in which gambling was managed and regulated in response to local concerns, based around the key licensing objectives, members were also reminded of the work currently being undertaken to develop a Joint Strategy Needs Assessment that would include an estimate on the scale of potential risk that gambling posed to the health of Brent resident recognising the restrictions on issues that could be included as matters for consideration in terms of the wider approach adopted towards regulation under the Gambling Commissions guidance. In concluding presentation of the statement, members also welcomed the reference provided to the additional work being undertaken by the Council, working in partnership with a variety of stakeholders, to ensure the new government was aware of the level of shared concern regarding the harm being caused by gambling and particularly around the approval of new gambling premises.

Once again having noted the additional background papers circulated for reference purposes alongside the main report in relation to the Equality Assessment and consultation responses received as part of the review process, members highlighted a need to ensure that the Statement and any associated feedback was subject to regular review as further reassurance to local residents that the arrangements and approach adopted towards the regulation of gambling premises was as robust as possible, in view of wider concerns identified around the public health impact and harm on local communities in the areas where this activity was focussed. Given the concerns identified, support was expressed for the work being undertaken in relation to the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment and lobbying of government in seeking the necessary interventions to address the level of risk, harm and concerns associated with the impact and concentration of gambling activity across specific areas and also the borough as a whole with members also keen to ensure the impacts were fully addressed within the associated Equality Assessment.

In once again supporting the need for a process of regular review Cabinet **RESOLVED** subject to the comments identified above:

- (1) To note (having considered) the draft revised Statement of Gambling Principles (31 January 2025 – 31 January 2028) as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) In order to fulfill legal requirements to refer the draft revised Statement of Gambling Principles to Full Council on 18 November 2024 for formal adoption.

12. **Staples Corner Growth Area Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Planning and Growth) introduced a report detailing the consultation feedback and officer consideration following the statutory consultation approved by Cabinet (28 May 2024) on the draft Staples Corner Growth Area Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SCGA Masterplan SPD) and recommended changes to the document identified as a result, in advance final approval of the SCGA Masterplan SPD for adoption

In presenting the report, Cabinet were advised that the Masterplan and SPD presented for consideration represented the outcome of an extensive process involving detailed work with a range of stakeholders aimed at delivering on the Local Plan commitment to encourage regeneration and growth including an ambitious vision to create a high quality and intensified industrial area sitting adjacent to a new urban community in not only the area covered by the Masterplan within the Staples Corner Growth area but also wider area as a whole. In outlining the way in which the proposals within the Masterplan set the framework to facilitate the delivery of high-quality homes, attract investment for more business opportunities and jobs, all supported by new infrastructure and community facilities members also recognised the way in which the proposals had been focussed on the delivery of the associated social infrastructure and an improved public realm to support the new mixed use residential community with business growth also strengthening the area's existing economy and providing space for emerging sectors, including logistics, light industrial units and workspace. Highlighting the

planned development of at least 2,200 new homes co-located alongside the new and refurbished industrial premises, members were advised of the intention to also ensure these were delivered in a way that would support the transition to a net zero carbon circular economy and the challenges of climate change.

In terms of the outcome of the statutory consultation process, reference was made to the broadly supportive nature of responses provided with 82% supporting the overall vision outlined. Having noted the feedback along with the areas of concerns also identified, an assurance was provided on the Council's intention to continue working closely with landowners, developers, residents, businesses and other stakeholders to bring forward the aspiration for change and to realise and maximise the potential opportunities identified within the area, including those linked to the wider Brent Cross development.

In considering the report, members took the opportunity to thank all those involved in development of the SCGA Masterplan SPD and who had engaged in the consultation process with the positive nature of the overall feedback recognised and specific support expressed for the level of new housing development to be delivered. In terms of wider opportunities, members were also keen to ensure the enhanced public transport connectivity delivered through the new Brent Cross West station development and potential West London Orbital scheme were also recognised as further benefits in seeking to secure the level of growth identified and encouraging investment across the area.

In support of the opportunities identified through the SCGA Masterplan SPD as a means of focussing growth and investment Cabinet **RESOLVED**, having considered the consultation feedback, officer consideration and recommended changes, to approve the Staples Corner Growth Area Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document for adoption, subject to any de minimus and non-substantial edits to the document.

13. **Authority to invite tenders for the provision of Street Lighting Maintenance Services**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment & Enforcement) introduced a report detailing proposals for the procurement of street lighting maintenance services

In presenting the report, members were advised that the current street lighting maintenance contract was due to expire in March 2025 with the need to secure a reliable and responsive provider highlighted in view of the importance of the service. Members noted that the proposed new contract would cover an initial term of four years, with the option provided for two additional one-year extensions and investment totalling up to £8 million over the full life of the contract, which it was felt reflected the Council's commitment to ensuring that the borough's streets remained safe, well-lit, and efficiently maintained for all residents.

Cabinet were advised that the proposals also included a short three month extension of the existing contract for street lighting maintenance services with FM Conway, which had been required (given delays in the procurement timescale) to avoid any disruption in service and allow sufficient time to complete the full procurement process.

In support of the approach outlined, Cabinet welcomed the inclusion of both planned and reactive maintenance and focus in prioritisation on response times including rapid fault rectification within 48 hours of any reported issue, and a swift two-hour emergency response in hazardous situations to ensure public safety was maintained and the borough kept safely on the move.

As a result, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve inviting tenders for the provision of Street Lighting Maintenance Services on the basis of the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.
- (2) To approve officers evaluating the tenders referred to in (1) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.3.1 section (vi) of the report.
- (3) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement to award the contract for the provision of Street Lighting Maintenance Services for a term of four (4) years with the option to extend by yearly periods up to a maximum of two (2) years (on a 4+1+1 basis).
- (4) To approve the variation of the existing contract for street lighting maintenance services with FM Conway to permit the extension for the reasons set out in paragraph 3.2.7 of the report.
- (5) To approve the extension of the Contract detailed in (4) above for a period of three (3) months from 1 April 2025 to 30 June 2025 in the sum of £333,000.00 for the reasons set out in paragraph 3.2.7 of the report.

14. **Authority to Invite Tenders in Respect of Appointing Charging Point Operator(s) to Supply, Install, Operate and Maintain Electric Vehicle Charging Points on Behalf of Brent in Relation to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Funding**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment & Enforcement) introduced a report detailing proposals to expand electric vehicle (EV) charging provision in Brent including a funding opportunity to further expand the charge point network in the borough with the Council, as part of a six strong London boroughs partnership, seeking to invite tenders in respect of appointing a Charge Point Operator(s) to supply, install, operate and maintain up to 2,723 additional electric vehicle charge points in Brent.

In presenting the report, Cabinet noted the way in which the approach outlined in partnership with the other London boroughs had been designed to deliver a shared commitment to greener transportation and a green future enabling the Council to streamline its resources and secure expertise and collaboratively lead the way in sustainable urban mobility. In support of the expansion being sought, the Council had also been actively pursuing funding opportunities through the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) who were providing support in strengthening local EV

infrastructure, which members were advised had resulted in £1.25m in LEVI funding having been awarded from OZEV.

Based on the funding support provided, the Council (in partnership with the other London Boroughs involved) was now in a position to move forward with a procurement process, which would be led by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, to appoint Charge Point Operators who would supply, install, operate, and maintain the new charge points. In highlighting the significant challenges faced not only with Brent but across London as a whole relating to congestion, air quality, and climate change members recognised the way in which the proposal had been developed to support the Council in delivery of a key priority to enable greener and more active and sustainable travel choices and was closely aligned with the Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy in seeking to support a reduction (by at least half) in petrol and diesel road journeys by 2030.

In considering the report, members supported the approach outlined, welcoming the funding secured and partnership work with neighbouring boroughs, as a means of offering local residents an accessible, efficient EV charging network that was also aligned with the Council's strategic goals, Climate Emergency Strategy and commitment to a sustainable future.

Having considered the report Cabinet therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the Council receiving Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure ("LEVI") funding provided by the Office of Zero Emission Vehicles ("OZEV") for the purpose of procuring additional on-street electric vehicle charge point infrastructure within Brent and entering into a funding agreement with OZEV in the sum of £1,250,000.
- (2) To approve the Council collaboratively procuring with five other London boroughs a Charge Point Operator(s) to supply, install, operate and maintain up to 2,723 electric vehicle charge points across Brent.
- (3) To agree that the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will act as the lead authority in the collaborative procurement detailed in (2) above for the reasons detailed in paragraph 3.4.1 of the report and accordingly that its Standing Orders and Financial Regulations will be used for the collaborative procurement.
- (4) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement, to award a fifteen-year contract(s) with the successful bidder(s) to provide up to 2,723 on-street electric vehicle charge points across Brent, as specified in the Heads of Terms set by OZEV.

15. **Authority to Award the contract for the provision of Integrated Treatment, Recovery Wellbeing and Substance Misuse Service**

Councillor Nerva (as Cabinet Member for Community Health & Wellbeing) introduced a report regarding delivery of the Integrated Treatment Recovery Wellbeing and Substance Misuse Service, and detailing proposals for the re-procurement of the service under the Provider Selection Regime.

In presenting the report, Cabinet were advised that the approach outlined in terms of re-procurement of the service had been designed to reflect the positive impact which evidence-based drug and alcohol services delivered in supporting improvements in health, reducing drug and alcohol related deaths along with blood borne viruses, improving relationships and reducing wider social harms and re-offending. Recognising these benefits, the approach outlined was therefore seeking to continue with the provision of what was regarded as a well-performing service already being delivered by Via (formerly Westminster Drugs Project) who, it was also noted, had continued to improve performance on key areas outlined in the 2021 National Drug Strategy. In outlining the extensive range of the treatment and recovery offer available to Brent residents, members noted the way in which this was also tailored according to individual health and social care needs, involving all those who accessed the service having a clinical assessment and individual care plan that would also include more holistic advice about health and wellbeing, 1 to 1 sessions, support groups, weekend services as well as a range of education, training and employment programmes and opportunities for volunteering with delivery supported by B3 (as the service user council whose members had completed or were in the process of completing their treatment and recovery journey through Via New Beginnings).

Highlighting the importance of the service, Cabinet were advised that there were currently just under 3,000 local residents engaged in structured treatment programmes within Brent with Via (in March 2024) having also reported the significant progress achieved in the micro-elimination of Hepatitis C within the local treatment population, making Brent one of just six boroughs nationally to be able report on that area at the start of the 2024-25 year with the partnership working between the Council, Via New Beginnings, the NHS and also service users identified as key to this milestone. The way in which the current service had also continued to deliver services beyond the scope of the contract was also highlighted, which had included the development of the Young People's Mental Wellbeing Service and an extensive outreach programme which had involved significant resident engagement and work to support street homeless/rough sleepers with entrenched drug and alcohol misuse, which members were keen to ensure was continued under the procurement of the service moving forward.

In considering the report, members recognised the positive value and vital nature of the work being delivered through the service including the focus on outreach activity with a need identified to ensure this covered as wide a geographical area as possible, including issues highlighted within Church End. Whilst supportive of the option involving a direct award of the contract to Via, recognising their integral role as part of the local health and care system and local partnerships, concern was expressed at the position regarding the limited length of award it would be possible to agree based on the availability of current grant funding. Whilst aware of the potential development of a new national drug strategy as a result of a comprehensive review planned by the new government and impact on public health commissioning arrangements and service models as a result, members advised they would be keen to continue lobbying for the provision of longer-term funding to support extended deliver of the current service arrangements. In the meantime, however, it was noted that existing grants would be maintained for a further 12 months from 1 April 2025.

In support of the work being undertaken by Via (supported through B3) in partnership with local stakeholders and continued commitment towards the delivery of better health outcomes in our borough Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note that the Integrated Treatment Recovery Wellbeing and Substance Misuse Service was currently provided to the Council by VIA Community Ltd.
- (2) To approve the direct award under the Provider Selection Regime of a replacement Integrated Treatment Recovery Wellbeing and Substance Misuse Service to VIA Community Ltd for a period of 1 year 4 months.

16. **Authority to tender for the provision of care and support at LD Supported Living sites**

Councillor Nerva (as Cabinet Member for Community Health & Wellbeing) introduced a report regarding the procurement of care and support for six supported living schemes and seeking approval to invite tenders for care and support at the following six Supported living sites - 57 Preston Road, 36 Woodhill Crescent, 54 Beechcroft Gardens, 63 Manor Drive, 115 Gladstone Park Gardens and 18 Ruby Street.

In presenting the report, Cabinet were advised that the approach outlined in terms of procurement of the supported living sites had been designed to support the Council's commitment towards the delivery of supported living accommodation which it was recognised enabled service users to live more independently, whilst promoting their wellbeing and reducing the potential need for access to residential care services. In terms of the wider benefits identified, it was felt the provision of an inclusive and accessible environment would also support the work being undertaken to tackle health inequalities and strengthen community ties through supporting people closer to home. Furthermore, it was highlighted how the sites identified would also support the local community through job creation and specialised training as well as enhancing the resilience of those communities in being able to foster supportive networks.

In support of the approach outlined Cabinet recognised the extensive work undertaken to align delivery of the contracts and to support the continued commitment and contribution towards the Council's aspiration in terms of promoting a healthier, more equitable, and unified community with better health outcomes for those in care.

On the basis of the support expressed, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve inviting tenders for care and support services at six supported living sites for adults with learning disabilities separated into 3 Lots on the basis of the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report. The 3 Lots are set out below:
 - Lot 1: Learning Disabilities Supported Living Service at Preston Road and Woodhill Crescent
 - Lot 2: Learning Disabilities Supported Living Service at Beechcroft Gardens and Manor Drive

- Lot 3: Learning Disabilities Supported Living Service at Gladstone Park Gardens and Ruby Street
- (2) To approve officers evaluating the tenders referred to in (1) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.3 section (vi) of the report.
 - (3) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Community Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Health and Wellbeing to award the contract for the 3 Lots identified in (1) above for care and support services at six supported living sites for adults with learning disabilities for a term of 3 years with the option to extend by yearly periods up to a maximum of 2 years (3+1+1)

17. Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

18. Any other urgent business

There were no items of urgent business.

Prior to ending the meeting, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader) advised members that following the announcement made at the previous Cabinet meeting Councillor Tatler had (with effect from 8 November 2024) formally stepped down as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth with him having assumed current responsibility for that portfolio. The Leader took the opportunity to formally thank Councillor Tatler for her support and time serving on Cabinet and to wish her well in her new role.

The meeting ended at 11.08 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair