



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 9 December 2024
at 10.00 am

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received at the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No 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 Tuesday 12 November 2024 be approved as a correct.

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

None.

5. **Petitions (if any)**

5.1 Queen's Park Healthy Neighbourhood proposals

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) welcomed Mr Alastair Balfour (as a local resident in Queens Park and lead petitioner) to the meeting, who had been invited to speak in support of a petition containing over 1,400 signatures requesting that the Council reconsider the Queen's Park Healthy Neighbourhood proposals which were currently subject to consultation, given concerns in relation to their design and the engagement process undertaken by MP Smarter Travel. In thanking the Leader of the Council for the opportunity to present the petition, Alastair Balfour began by highlighting that whilst the proposals would appear to benefit residents in the area, many had experienced disruption caused by the current traffic restrictions and therefore felt the proposals being consulted upon were ill conceived, unfair and would lead to problems being experienced in other parts of the ward creating division and potentially creating a risk to the health and safety of many children attending schools on the boundary roads as a result of displaced traffic, increased congestion and pollution.

As a result of the concerns raised in relation to the approach adopted, it was felt damage was being caused to the community and trust in the Council which had

resulted (since an MP Smarter Travel engagement event at the start of November 2024) in the creation of the current petition, a leaflet being produced and delivered to 2,000 residents, a video objecting to the proposals being circulated on social media, and local media also picking up the story.

Concerns were also raised in relation to the engagement process being undertaken by MP Smarter Travel, which the petitioners felt to be flawed and unreliable. In terms of specific issues highlighted, the engagement materials were felt to be confusing and to lack technical analysis, with changes to the online questionnaire mid engagement process not having been effectively communicated. Outlining widespread opposition to the options, including from those who it appeared would benefit from the scheme, Alastair Balfour also queried the focus of MP Smarter Travel's role on modal shift rather than as traffic management experts, which it was felt had resulted in a lack of clear objectives and indicators of success or failure being established. Whilst recognising that the issue was highly complex the petitioners, as a way forward, felt that if Cabinet wished to improve the situation there was a need to go back to basics with joined up thinking, taking into account the views of local stakeholders. Recognising the budgetary constraints on the Council, Mr Balfour proposed that officers should look to utilise the skills and resources that existed within the community to assist in developing a project roadmap and identifying solutions to ensure transparent engagement and community support in seeking to deliver a healthy neighbourhood scheme that worked for everybody. In supporting a process of wider engagement and transparent co-operation it was hoped that the Council would be willing to work with the local community to deliver a successful scheme, recognising the balance needing to be achieved.

In summing up, Alastair Balfour thanked Councillor Muhammed Butt for the opportunity to address the Cabinet in relation to the petition and for the confirmation it would be considered as part of the engagement process, and as a final way forward concluded by seeking a commitment on the following actions:

- To stop what the petitioners felt was the flawed MP Smarter Travel engagement process;
- To halt all hyper local traffic schemes until data-led area impact assessments had been conducted;
- To sit down with local community representatives to define the most pressing traffic issues (focussed on boundary roads and schools) and agree a process roadmap the whole community could support and commit resource behind, based on transparency in terms of data sharing and communication, with the petitioners also keen to ensure lessons were learnt from the current experience in seeking to develop a scheme that would support the Council's objectives for healthy neighbourhoods whilst also prioritising health, safety, equity, prosperity and quality of life across the entire neighbourhood.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth (as Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement) thanked Mr Balfour for attending Cabinet in order to ensure the views of those supporting the petition were presented. In outlining the Council's shared commitment to road traffic safety and the promotion of sustainable travel options, Councillor Krupa Sheth also acknowledged there were strong views within the

community on how best to tackle these issues involving a range of diverse opinions. Pointing out that residents had consistently called for measures to reduce traffic, improve safety and enable more active modes of travel, the difficulty in balancing the differing views on how to achieve these objectives effectively and fairly were also highlighted and recognised as requiring an inclusive approach.

On this basis, Councillor Krupa Sheth took the opportunity to reassure the petitioners that no decisions had been made on the proposals at this stage, with the activity undertaken to date purely designed as an engagement exercise to better understand the views of all members of the community with the feedback provided playing a central role in shaping any future decisions. In response to concerns raised relating to the role of MP Smarter Travel, the petitioners were advised they had been commissioned to collect evidence through a variety of inclusive methods which had included face to face engagement and pop-up events designed to reach groups less able to participate through traditional channels.

In concluding her response, Councillor Krupa Sheth acknowledged and welcomed the invaluable contributions from local residents and resident groups who it was recognised had worked hard to provide a wide range of feedback that would be carefully reviewed. The opportunity was also taken to reaffirm the Council's commitment to listen and engage with the community throughout the process to determine the best path forward, reflecting the needs and aspirations of the community and ensure local neighbourhoods remained safe, healthier and sustainable for everyone.

Councillor Nerva (as local ward councillor) advised he was also keen to endorse the remarks made by Councillor Krupa Sheth and the approach being taken by the Council to deliver this work and continue learning throughout the process.

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 would be considered in bringing any proposals forward. He acknowledged that whilst there were many different opinions, these would be captured and feedback, in order to develop a way forward designed to work for all to ensure the delivery of a healthy neighbourhood.

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. Infrastructure Funding Statement 23/24

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Planning & Growth) introduced a report which set out the Council's 2023-24 Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), prepared in accordance with the Community infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted the outline provided relating to the purpose of CIL and s.106 as a funding mechanism to assist in the delivery of a wide variety of infrastructure to support development of the area and annual requirement within the IFS to detail how Brent's CIL and s.106 funding had been spent in line with

regulations. In addition, the IFS was designed to set out future spending priorities on infrastructure in line with the commitments included within the Borough Plan and other key strategic plans such as the Local Plan, Affordable Workspace Strategy, Climate Strategy and Inclusive Growth Strategy.

Whilst recognising the criteria regulating use of funding generated through CIL and s.106 receipts and the impact of the current financial and economic climate on the programme of development across the borough, members noted the continued strong performance of the Council in terms of the collection of CIL and s.106 receipts, as detailed within section 3 of the report. In thanking officers for their efforts in relation to performance on the collection of receipts during such a challenging period, members also recognised the positive impact being delivered in relation to the wide ranging and diverse nature of both local and regional infrastructure projects being supported through the strategic CIL process, including the delivery of highway and town centre improvements, medical, external amenity and community facilities. Members were also keen to commend performance in relation to the use and allocation of CIL in support of community projects such as those at The Avenue School being supported through the Neighbourhood CIL programme designed to benefit all communities across the borough.

In commending the transparent nature of the detail provided within the IFS and having noted the performance outlined in relation to CIL and associated benefits being achieved through its use to support the wider growth and regeneration programme across the borough Cabinet **RESOLVED** to note the content of the report and approve the Brent Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023-24, as detailed within Appendix A of the report, for publication on the Council's website.

8. **Request for Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Allocation for the South Kilburn Primary School and South Kilburn Urban Park**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration, Planning & Growth) introduced a report which set out proposals for the use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding to deliver a new build primary school and enhancements to the South Kilburn Open Space as social infrastructure projects within the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme.

In presenting the report, Cabinet noted the way in which the proposals had been designed to reflect the Council's ongoing commitment to deliver a programme of meaningful and long-lasting change within the South Kilburn area as well as utilising SCIL as a means of supporting schemes that would benefit both current and future residents. In outlining the detailed nature of the proposals, Cabinet was advised these would involve a new build primary school, future-proofed to be capable of expanding from a 1 Form Entry to a 2 Form Entry school, alongside enhancements to the South Kilburn Open Space which would enhance green infrastructure and promote the physical and mental well-being of residents. The proposals had been developed to align with the Council's strategic objectives outlined in the Borough Plan, Brent Local Plan, the South Kilburn Masterplan, and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan addressing current deficiencies while anticipating future demands and delivering high-quality educational facilities and green infrastructure that would ensure long-term community stability and growth

recognising South Kilburn as a strategic priority area for driving transformational change and regeneration.

In welcoming the proposals, the opportunity was taken to highlight the way in which development of the new build primary school had been designed to align with the Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2024-28 focussed around the sufficiency and sustainability of school places and to commend the work undertaken (as part of this process) involving the amalgamation of the existing two local schools (Carlton Vale Infant School and Kilburn Park Junior School) in order to progress delivery of the new build school proposal. Subject to approval of the necessary SCIL funding, members noted the indicative timescales for the school and open space delivery programme.

Having considered the report and recognised the positive nature of the outcomes that it was anticipated would be delivered for the benefit of young people and the wider local community as a result of the proposals identified, Cabinet **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To approve the use of £12.9m of SCIL funding, for the construction of a 1 FE primary school with a nursery and the infrastructure to expand to a 2FE school (including decanting of Carlton Vale Infant school to Kilburn Park Junior school and the associated building works), as part of South Kilburn Regeneration Programme.
- (2) To approve the use of £4.4 m of SCIL funding, for the enhancement of the South Kilburn Open Space, as part of the South Kilburn Regeneration Programme.
- (3) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth to approve the most appropriate procurement process and to approve pre-tender considerations as set out in Contract Standing Order 89 in respect of the procurement of contractors for the development of the new school and improvements to the open space.
- (4) To approve inviting tenders in respect of the procurement of contractors for the development of the new school and improvements to the open space in accordance with Contract Standing Order 88.
- (5) To approve officers evaluating tenders on the basis of the pre-tender considerations referred to in (3) above.
- (6) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning and Growth, to take all necessary steps to acquire the land at Kilburn Park Junior school for the regeneration of South Kilburn, and thereafter pursue Secretary of State approval to dispose education land for non-educational uses.
- (7) To note that consultants required for design development and procurement of the contractor(s), will be procured using powers delegated to officers under the Constitution.

- (8) To note the indicative time scales, next steps and key risks associated with the delivery of the school and improvements to the open space.

9. **Corporate Performance Q2 2024-25 report**

Councillor Rubin (Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation & Climate Action) introduced a report, which provided Cabinet with an overview of corporate performance in Quarter 2 2024-25.

In presenting the report, Cabinet noted that the performance monitoring update provided a detailed assessment against the full suite of Key Performance Indicators developed to monitor delivery of the desired outcomes and corporate priorities within the new Borough Plan 2023-2027 focussed around the delivery of prosperity, sustainability, and thriving communities across Brent. In terms of a brief overview members attention was drawn to the 49 Borough Plan key indicators included with the performance scorecard of which 21 had been identified as green (on or above target), 4 as amber (just off target) and 9 as red (off target) with 15 included as contextual information.

In recognising the efforts being made to ensure the continued delivery of services and work being undertaken jointly by Cabinet Members with their relevant Corporate Directors, in seeking to manage and mitigate against the financial challenges and strategic risks identified as part of the overall wider approach towards supporting local residents and in support of the priorities within the Borough Plan, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the Borough Plan 2024-25 performance reporting for Q2 as set out in section 3 and Appendix A of the report
- (2) To note the current and future strategic risks associated with the information provided and agree the remedial actions on strategic risks identified as appropriate alongside the challenge on progress being provided with responsible officers as necessary.

10. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

11. **Any other urgent business**

There were no items of urgent business.

As this was the final meeting prior to the Christmas and New Year holiday period Councillor Muhammed Butt took the opportunity to thank all members for their support over the year and to wish everyone all the best for the festive season.

The meeting ended at 10.28 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair