



**Full Council – 11 July 2022**

**Amendment submitted by the Labour Group to the Conservative Group Motion**

***Proposed amendment – To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated***

**Pollution of the Wealdstone Brook**

The Wealdstone Brook, which runs in open water, starts in Harrow, runs through Woodcock Park in Kenton and then into Wembley past all the new developments around the stadium before reaching the River Brent, has been heavily polluted with untreated human sewage and toxic chemicals for some considerable time.

The Wealdstone Brook has nothing living in it – it is effectively a dead river. The toxic smells which have come from liquids evaporating at low temperatures from the Brook water are nauseating and residents who live close to the Brook or have been walking close to the Brook in Woodcock Park, have been feeling physically sick as a result of these noxious odours.

Thames Water, who have been investigating the sources of the pollution, have admitted liability for cleaning up the pollution. They have agreed that the pollution of the Wealdstone Brook is one of the worst they have come across but as a result of the shared responsibility for the maintenance of the Brook as it passes through Brent, Brent Council and the Environment Agency must also share some of the responsibility.

As a result the residents living nearby have expressed their disgust at the state of the Brook and this council considers that ~~Brent Council~~ Thames Water should have ~~declared this to be a 'Major Incident'~~ acted with greater urgency once it had reports of untreated human sewage, toxic gases and smells vaporising from the water of the Wealdstone Brook.

This council notes that almost £19bn was paid out in dividends to shareholders in the nine major water companies operating in England between 2010 and 2021.

**This Council therefore resolves:**

To do whatever is necessary and within the Council's power to ensure that the water in Wealdstone Brook is cleaned up.

To ask the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the Opposition Groups to write to the Secretary of State for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency; to call for additional support for Brent Council to respond to the pollution in Wealdstone Brook and enforce the principle, of the 'polluter pays'.

To support the Labour Party pledge of common ownership of water services to unlock the desperately needed investment in water infrastructure and create services that are run on behalf of consumers, not shareholders profit.

To do what the Council can to ensure that the agencies concerned take the necessary steps to detect and rectify all wrongly connected foul sewers which run into the Brook and to put them right at no cost to Council tax payers, in Brent.

To seek legal opinion as to whether legal action can be taken against the agencies that have responsibility for ensuring that the Wealdstone Brook is free of pollution if there is no immediate rectification of the problem.

To ensure in light of a serious risk to public health and as a matter of urgency the necessary actions are taken as soon as possible to put the foregoing into practice.