



## **LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

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

**Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 21 November 2022 at 6.00 pm**

#### **PRESENT:**

**The Worshipful the Mayor**

Councillor Abdi Aden

**The Deputy Mayor**

Councillor Orleen Hylton

#### **COUNCILLORS:**

Afzal	Agha
Ahmadi Moghaddam	Ahmed
Akram	Bajwa
Benea	M Butt
S Butt	Chan
Chappell	Chohan
Choudry	Collymore
Conneely	Crabb
Dar	Dixon
Donnelly-Jackson	Ethapemi
Farah	Fraser
Gbajumo	Georgiou
Grahl	Hack
Johnson	Kabir
Kansagra	Kelcher
Kennelly	Knight
Long	Lorber
Mahmood	Matin
Maurice	Miller
Mistry	Mitchell
Moeen	Molloy
Nerva	M Patel
Rajan-Seelan	Rubin
Shah	Ketan Sheth
Krupa Sheth	Smith
Southwood	Tatler

1. **Mayors Introductory Statement**

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

2. **Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor reported that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Begum, Hirani and Jayanti Patel.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 21 September 2022 be approved as a correct record.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

5. **Mayor's Announcements**

Prior to commencing his announcements the Mayor took the opportunity to thank Councillor Hylton, as Deputy Mayor, for her support in covering the mayoral engagements whilst he had been away. He then moved on to make the following announcements:

(i) Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor advised he had been honoured to attend the recent ceremony held to commemorate Remembrance Sunday and all those who had lost their lives in various conflicts throughout the world.

The ceremony had been held at the Barham Park Memorial with the Mayor thanking everyone who had attended in order to pay tribute.

(ii) Black History Month

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank the Cultural Diversity Network for the work undertaken to prepare and deliver such an engaging and successful programme of activities during Black History month.

Particular highlights had included the 21-day virtual equality challenge and the Black History month Civic Centre takeover undertaken in partnership with the local community, Public Health and the Gender Network, included as new events in the programme both of which had been well received by staff and residents.

(iii) Islamophobia Awareness Month

The Mayor advised he was also pleased to be supporting Islamophobia Awareness month which, as part of the programme of activities, had included him joining the Brent Multi-Faith Forum peace walk and tree planting. This event had been undertaken to symbolise peace, unity and solidarity between all communities and to raise awareness in an attempt to bring people together to stand against discrimination and hate crime.

Other events included Stand against Islamophobia, which members were reminded was being held at the Civic Centre on Wednesday 23 November 2023.

#### (iv) Petitions

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

### **6. Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies**

The Mayor advised that there were no appointments to Council Committees, Sub Committees and other bodies which had been received for consideration so moved straight on to the next item.

### **7. Deputations (if any)**

The Mayor advised that no deputations had been requested for presentation at the meeting.

### **8. Questions from Members of the Public & Brent Youth Parliament**

#### **8.1 Questions from the Public**

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

Question 1 from Nichola Rogers to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action regarding the introduction of a plant-based food policy where catering was provided at Council and Civic events and also within schools.

Question 2 from Jeanette Audrey to Councillor Knight, Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security, regarding the impact of current housing infill development proposals on local residents at Windmill Court

Question 3 from Siobhan Culhane to Councillor Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning, regarding the transport assessment undertaken as part of the infill development proposals at Windmill Court.

Members noted the written responses provided on each of the questions, which had been circulated with the agenda. The Mayor advised that each member of the public

had been invited to attend the meeting and all three were present in order to ask a supplementary question following the written responses provided.

Having been welcomed to the meeting, the following supplementary questions were asked of the relevant Cabinet Member(s).

**Question 1: Supplementary question from Nichola Rogers to Councillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action**

Having noted and thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth for the written response provided, Nichola Rogers advised she was pleased for the acknowledgement regarding the impact that consuming less meat and reducing food waste would have as part of Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and in reducing the effects of the climate crisis. Whilst welcoming the efforts being made, however, she felt that the Council could take an even more proactive approach and as a supplementary question therefore asked if the Council would consider introducing a plant based food policy at all future Council and Civic catered events, as had been the case in other local authorities.

In thanking Nichola Rogers for her question, Councillor Krupa Sheth advised that whilst willing to work with the Mayor in terms of future Civic events, the Council already ensured plant-based options were available at the limited range of events where catering was now provided, in support of the theme relating to consumption, resources and waste within the Climate Emergency Strategy.

**Question 2: Supplementary Question from Jeanette Audrey to Councillor Knight, Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security.**

Having noted the written response provided, Jeanette Audrey highlighted concern at what she felt had been the lack of consultation and engagement with local residents regarding development of the infill proposals. In expressing specific concerns at what was felt to be an unacceptable loss of daylight and sunlight amenity to surrounding properties and overall negative impact of the development, she again asked the Cabinet Member to justify the basis on which such an excessive development had been able to proceed given what local residents felt to be its adverse and overbearing effect on the amenity of the surrounding area and overall financial viability in terms of the provision of genuinely affordable housing.

In thanking Jeanette Audrey for her question, Councillor Knight began by assuring residents that development of the scheme had been subject to careful consideration and detailed assessment, which included the impact in relation to daylight and sunlight amenity on surrounding properties. This assessment had identified that the proposed development was in line with local, regional and national planning policy and had been the basis on which the planning application had been progressed. Whilst understanding and appreciating the concerns expressed and acknowledging that the development would have some impact on local residents, the associated improvements being delivered in relation to security and the communal green space were also outlined. Councillor Knight also felt it important to highlight the wider context in which the proposals had been brought forward as part of a programme to address the shortage of genuinely affordable housing in Brent with 24,000

households on the housing waiting list, over 1,700 families currently living in temporary accommodation and a further 240 families in priority need of transfer due to issues such as overcrowding. Whilst the building of new homes was a priority she advised of the efforts also being made to ensure these developments worked for people living in the area. Although recognising the concerns raised, Councillor Knight ended by highlighting the level of engagement undertaken with residents to seek their views and create proposals which had been designed to balance the provision of new affordable housing with improvements that would also benefit and seek to mitigate any potential impact on them arising from the development.

### **Question 3 from Siobhan Culhane to Councillor Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning**

In noting and thanking the Cabinet Member for her written response, Siobhan Culhane as a supplementary question sought further details on the assessment undertaken by the Transport Consultant in relation to vehicle access to Windmill Court as part of the Infill development planning application process, especially in relation to access by large high reach fire appliances. As a result of a recent Freedom of Information request it appeared an assessment had been completed which had identified that large sized appliances would not be able to negotiate the site layout but details had not been provided on the assessment in relation to access by smaller sized first line ariel appliances, which had previously needed to be deployed in Windmill Court. Post Grenfell, Councillor Tatler was therefore asked if, as Cabinet Member, she was satisfied the Council had demonstrated its commitment to incorporating the highest standards of fire safety in development of the scheme proposals.

In thanking Siobhan Culhane for her question Councillor Tatler took the opportunity to assure local residents of the seriousness in which fire safety was treated in relation to all planning applications and development proposals. In highlighting that the main regulatory framework for fire safety measures was focussed around Building Regulations she advised it was the Council's Building Control team who were responsible for considering detailed fire safety provision within scheme proposals to ensure the necessary conditions were placed on any development, working in conjunction with the Fire Brigade. Referring to her written response, Councillor Tatler felt it important to recognise that the assessment of vehicular access for fire safety as part of the Windmill Court development had therefore been based on the likely vehicles that the Fire Service would deploy to attend a fire at the site.

Having noted the responses provided, the Mayor thanked the members of the public in attendance for their supplementary questions and Cabinet Members for their response and then moved on to deal with the question submitted by Brent Youth Parliament.

## **8.2 Questions from Brent Youth Parliament**

The Mayor advised that the following question had been received from Brent Youth Parliament:

Question 1 from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools regarding support for the Youth Parliament's "Education for Life" campaign aimed at improving how life skills were taught in schools and to involve young people in decision making relating to local education matters.

The Mayor thanked Brent Youth Parliament for their question, with members noting the written response provided. As representatives from the Youth Parliament had unfortunately been unable to attend the meeting members were advised there would be no supplementary question.

With no further questions to be considered, the Mayor advised that this now concluded the public question session and moved on to the next item.

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

The Mayor advised that no requests for debates on any petitions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

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

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, to introduce the report updating members on the work being undertaken across each Cabinet portfolio in order to provide ongoing support and services to residents within the borough.

In presenting the report, the Leader began by highlighting the challenging nature of the current economic position faced by the Council. This was not only in terms of the impact of the Government's recent fiscal interventions and programme of austerity in terms of funding available for services across the public sector but also level of savings which the Council and other key public sector stakeholders had needed to identify and deliver as a result, ongoing uncertainty in relation to future funding settlements and impact of the cost of living crisis and ongoing economic uncertainty on inflation and interest rates. Despite these challenges, the Leader highlighted how the report detailed the work being undertaken to manage the Council's finances as efficiently as possible whilst also seeking to deliver on the emerging priorities within the Borough Plan and protect the most vulnerable including the continued support for the Residents Support Fund, Council Tax Support Scheme and Brent Hubs. In closing his update, the Leader advised that given the nature and extent of the financial challenges needing to be addressed he was keen to encourage as many people as possible to engage with the upcoming consultation on the budget proposals for 2023-24. Finally, members were asked to note the details on Executive decision(s) that had been taken under the Council's urgency procedures, since the previous update provided for the Council meeting in July, as tabled at the meeting.

The Mayor thanked the Leader for his report and it was **RESOLVED** (having allowed a brief point of order to be raised by Councillor Kansagra) to formally note the update provided.

## 11. Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members

Before moving on to consider the questions submitted by non-Cabinet members, the Mayor reminded Members that a total of 30 minutes had been set aside for this item, which would begin with consideration of the written questions submitted in advance of the meeting along with any supplementary questions. Once these had been dealt with, the remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question Cabinet Members (without the need for advance notice) on matters relating to their portfolio.

The Mayor advised that five written questions had been submitted in advance of the meeting for response by the relevant Cabinet Member and the written responses circulated within the agenda were noted. The Mayor then invited supplementary questions on the responses which had been provided:

11.1 Councillor Fraser thanked Councillor Nerva, as Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care, for the written response in relation to her question regarding the recognition, impact and support available for residents and staff experiencing the impact of long covid. As a supplementary question, she asked whether Councillor Nerva agreed that central government should recognise long-covid in legislation and require that employers make reasonable adjustments for those experiencing symptoms.

In response, Councillor Nerva expressed concern at the current waiting time of 6-8 weeks in being able to access support in relation to long-covid and agreed with the need for a national approach to be developed in addressing the issues identified supported through legislation, where necessary. Whilst recognising the new service established by the NHS to address post-covid syndrome he also felt it important to recognise the disproportionate impact of covid within Brent meaning that the number of people requiring support was also likely to be higher. In order to reflect this position and recognise the associated strain being placed on health services, Councillor Nerva was also keen to encourage the NHS across North-West London to continue seeking long-term funding from central government to support the ongoing provision of support. Recognising not only the health but also social, emotional and financial legacy of long covid, Councillor Nerva also praised the support being provided through initiatives such as the Brent Health Matters programme, in order to assist residents seeking access to NHS and community support, and the Resident Support Fund. Given the importance of the issue, Councillor Nerva ended by advising members that he would also be seeking to continue monitoring the impact of long-covid on residents and the health service in Brent through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

11.2 Councillor Gbajumo thanked Councillor Grahl, as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools, for the written response in relation to her question on support available for Looked After Children (LAC) and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis as part of the Council's Corporate Parent role. In welcoming the support outlined within the response, Councillor Gbajumo, as a supplementary question, sought clarification on the extent to which it was felt

the cost-of-living crisis had been connected to the increase in number of Looked After Children within Brent.

In response, Councillor Grahl thanked Councillor Gbajumo for the question and felt it important to recognise and highlight the impact that the cost-of-living crisis was having on the borough's most vulnerable children as more families began to struggle with poverty. As an example, she highlighted the link between the increase in poverty and concerns relating to child abuse and neglect, with increased deprivation also making it harder for women to flee domestic violence. Whilst the demand in relation to children's social care had increased pressure on already stretched resources, Councillor Grahl assured members of the measures being taken by the Council to ensure support was available for those families most in need making specific reference (as examples) to the Resident Support Fund, Family Wellbeing Centre's and adoption of the Council's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. In outlining the additional pressures created as a result of the Government's funding restrictions on local government she ended by assuring members of the current work being undertaken by the Council in an effort to ensure that no child would be left behind.

- 11.3 Councillor Akram thanked Councillor Mili Patel, as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform, for the written response to his question regarding the impact of the current economic uncertainty on the Council's budget and ongoing provision of services, and the need for reform of the current system for funding local government. In commending the work being undertaken to manage the Council's finances in such challenging circumstances, Councillor Akram (as a supplementary question) asked whether the Deputy Leader would also be able to confirm what work was being undertaken with other finance leads across London to lobby central government on the reform of local government finance and Council Tax.

In response, Councillor Mili Patel thanked Councillor Akram for recognising the hard work being undertaken to manage the Council's budget whilst also seeking to continue the delivery of vital services and for highlighting the major problems with the current system of local government funding and Council Tax. Rather than addressing the need to ensure local authorities were properly funded with clarity on future funding settlements, Councillor Mili Patel highlighted the Government's current solution involved lifting the cap on Council Tax increases, which it was felt would not provide the long-term solution required. This view was also supported by cross party LGA commissioned research, which had revealed that the proposed increase in the cap on Council Tax would not be sufficient to meet current pressures or address the significant gaps already identified in relation to local government funding. Councillor Mili Patel also took the opportunity to highlight what she advised had been widely recognised as the regressive and unfair nature of Council Tax, particularly as it related to areas with higher levels of deprivation and low incomes. Highlighting the funding issues and challenges being experienced by many local authorities and difficulties being experienced as a result, she advised that she would be continuing to work with other finance leads to actively lobby the Government on the need for local government finance and Council Tax reform.



11.4 Councillor Mistry thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action, for the written response to her question on the need for parking enforcement in cycle lanes along Kingsbury Road. As a supplementary question she sought details on what further measures could be taken to ensure more vigorous and visible enforcement of the current restrictions and use of the cycle lane by the Council's parking enforcement contractor.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth thanked Councillor Mistry for highlighting the issues being experienced in terms of the vehicles blocking the cycle lane and pavement along Kingsbury Road and reiterated that the Council would continue to work with Serco to ensure a fair and more visible enforcement presence in order to address the issues identified.

11.5 Having noted the response to his question by Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action regarding the consultation and proposed changes to the recycling and street cleaning arrangements across the borough Councillor Lorber, in highlighting his concern at the impact of the proposals, sought further details as a supplementary question as to when the results of the public consultation used to support the procurement process and trial arrangements would be published.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth assured Councillor Lorber that the results of the public consultation were due to be published, however it would not be possible to provide further detail at this stage on the detailed contractual arrangements as the procurement process was still to be concluded. Councillor Krupa Sheth also felt it important to highlight the challenging financial position which had needed to be addressed as part of the procurement process and proposed reconfiguration of services but ended by outlining how the Council was focussed on ensuring that Brent remained a clean and green borough that everyone was proud to live and work in.

The Mayor thanked members for their written questions and Cabinet Members for the responses provided to the supplementary questions. He then advised that the remainder of the time available would be used for an open question time session to the Cabinet. Questions relating to the following issues were raised and responses were provided, as set out below:

- (i) Councillor Kansagra seeking reassurance on the measures the Council was taking to tackle and reduce knife crime in the borough.

In responding Councillor Farah, as Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection, felt it important to highlight the overall reduction in crime rates across the borough. Knife crime had, however, been recognised as a continuing area of concern and whilst not complacent, he assured Councillor Kansagra of the Council's ongoing efforts working in partnership with relevant stakeholders to address the issue with a particularly focus on prevention and early intervention.

- (ii) Councillor Afzal expressing concern at what he felt to be the discriminatory tone and approach being taken by the Government in their response to issues such as Windrush, Grenfell, refuge and asylum seekers. In comparing this to the positive approach being taken by the Council in terms of the ongoing delivery of recommendations made by the Poverty Commission and within the Black Community Action Plan (BCAP) and through the Multi-Faith Forum in relation to community cohesion, he was keen to seek views on how this difference in approach reflected on the borough.

In response Councillor Donnelly-Jackson, as Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture, supported the positive recognition of the approach adopted within Brent towards championing the borough's diversity working in partnership with the Multi Faith Forum. As an example she referred to the recent programme of activities delivered as part of Inter Faith week designed to bring communities together as well as the Council's ongoing support working with the local community to deliver the recommendations within the Black Community Action Plan and other cultural activities including (as a further example) the recent public artwork installed in Gladstone Park designed to uncover and acknowledge the hidden truths regarding the transatlantic slave trade.

- (iii) Councillor Lorber raising concerns at what he felt to be the detrimental environmental impacts arising from the Local Plan in terms of the approach being taken towards achieving delivery of the new homes target across the borough and how this compared to the priorities within the emerging Borough Plan relating to a cleaner and greener borough.

In response Councillor Butt, as Leader of the Council, felt it important to recognise the key objectives within the emerging Borough Plan and Local Plan which had been focussed on delivering the necessary infrastructure (including housing and employment) needed to ensure all residents had the opportunity to succeed. Whilst the Local Plan had been ambitious in its approach, he was keen to stress this was in an attempt to ensure no one was left behind with the Council seeking to encourage a positive rather than negative approach towards the potential for new development, where this was considered appropriate.

- (iv) Councillor Kelcher seeking clarification regarding the plans to ensure residents were aware of the changes due to be implemented in relation to voter identification (ID), in order to avoid anyone being disenfranchised.

In response Councillor Donnelly-Jackson, as Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture, recognised and supported concerns regarding the potential risk of individuals being disenfranchised as a result of the recent introduction of the voter ID requirements by the Government. In order to raise awareness of the change, a comprehensive communications campaign was being designed to ensure voters were fully aware of the new requirements, with those unable to access the permitted forms of photographic identification also able to apply for a free local voter ID card via the Government's dedicated online portal.

- (v) Councillor Georgiou seeking clarification on the Council's position regarding Shared Ownership and whether this should be classed as a genuinely Affordable Housing option in the development of housing schemes within Brent.

In response Councillor Tatler, as Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning, advised that whilst its use was not a priority option within Brent Shared Ownership could be classified as an intermediary affordable housing product available for use, where appropriate to support the delivery of new homes.

In response to an additional comment made by Councillor Georgiou in relation to ward members representing their constituents at Planning Committee meetings Councillor Butt, as Leader of the Council, highlighted the comprehensive nature of the assessments made by members of the Committee in considering applications before them. Whilst aware of the pressures in relation to housing demand, he felt it important to recognise that these assessments would be based on an objective consideration of relevant planning considerations rather than any more negative, ideological based approach.

- (vi) Councillor Kennelly, who in highlighting his personal experience, sought confirmation of the Council's ongoing support for the LGBTQ+ community across the borough, particularly given its location as the home of the Football Association (FA) and national football team and stance taken by Qatar as the host nation of the FIFA World Cup.

In response Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, reassured Councillor Kennelly of the Council's unwavering commitment to support and represent all residents within the borough regardless of their beliefs or sexual orientation in order to tackle all forms of discrimination and ensure no one felt vulnerable or without support.

- (vii) Councillor Long sought reassurance on the measures in place to prevent the use of rental e-bikes on pavements across the borough.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, advised of the work being undertaken with the suppliers and users of e-bikes within the borough to address the issues highlighted on which progress continued to be monitored.

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

## 12. **Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees**

Before being presented with the updates from each Scrutiny Committee, the Mayor reminded members the time set aside for this item was 12 minutes, with each Chair having up to three minutes in which to highlight any significant issues arising from the work of their Committees. Once these updates had been provided, the

remaining time available would then be opened up for any other non-Cabinet members to question (without the need for advance notice) the Scrutiny Committee Chairs on matters relating to the work of their Committee.

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

- Key issues considered at the previous Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee had included a review of the Council's Early Help Strategy and Family Wellbeing Centres, with Brent recognised as being ahead of the national debate on Early Help with the introduction of its hub model of service delivery. In addition, the Committee had reviewed the impact arising from implementation of potential changes to the services for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including the High Needs Funding Block, as set out within a recently published Green Paper. The Committee had been keen to focus these reviews on the outreach support being provided for the most vulnerable families as well as the engagement with key partners and associated funding impacts.
- In terms of the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) the committee remained focussed on the emerging priorities of the newly established North West London Integrated Care System (ICS), with the previous meeting having included a review and made a number of recommendations in relation to the primary care strategy and performance across North West London. In addition, the Committee had reviewed and made recommendations in relation to Accident and Emergency Pathways and London Ambulance Service Performance across North West London before receiving an update on the Community based specialised Palliative Care Improvement Programme and work streams being progressed by the North West London ICS with the ongoing importance in scrutiny continuing to work in partnership with the NHS to ensure the best outcomes were being delivered for local residents again highlighted.
- As a further update, members were also advised of the first meeting of the four acute provider Trusts in North West London which Brent had been pleased to host, given Councillor Ketan Sheth's role as Chair of the North West London JHOSC. It was felt this provided further evidence of the increasing collaboration between acute Trusts across North West London as well as highlighting Brent's ambition to contribute towards and support the vital role of the NHS across North West London.
- As a final update, Councillor Ketan Sheth also highlighted the progress being made by the Task Group establishment by the Committee to explore and review the use of social prescribing in Brent along with their participation in the Scrutiny Budget Task Group.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Ketan Sheth for his update and then invited Councillor Conneely as chair of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to introduce the update report on the work being undertaken by that Committee. The following issues were highlight as part of the update:

- The broad ranging nature of the Scrutiny Committee's ongoing work programme for 2022-23. Key issues considered at the Committee's previous

meeting had included the Council's community grants programmes, development of the emerging Borough Plan 2023-27, Safer Brent Annual Report 2021-22 along with an update on police engagement within Brent.

- As part of the work undertaken at the previous meeting the Committee had been pleased to welcome a number of voluntary and community sector representatives and local residents in order to review their experience on delivery of the community grants and "You Decide" participatory budgeting programmes, with members keen to ensure the funding being awarded as a result were focussed and targeted to support residents and areas most in need in a way that was also representative of the borough's demographics. The review on development of the Borough Plan had focussed around the strategic priorities, with the Committee keen to ensure these were designed to not only reflect the current financial pressures on the Council but were more specific and measurable in terms of outcomes being sought, including a more prominent focus on climate action, and measures in place as part of the ongoing consultation and engagement process to secure as wide and representative a range of views as possible.
- The Committee had also welcomed the engagement of the police in reviewing the effectiveness of ward Panels, with members keen to ensure that local ward councillors were better utilised as a means of increasing participation and engagement in the work of the Panels.
- As a final update, members were advised of the progress being made in relation to the Budget Scrutiny Task Group. It was noted that members as part of the review had already recognised the impact of the challenging financial environment in which the Council was operating given the long-term reduction in Government funding, level of savings already achieved, current economic challenges and increasing complexity of demand for Council services on development of the budget proposals supporting the need for a fairer funding settlement by central government.

The Mayor thanked Councillors Ketan Sheth and Conneely for presenting their updates and it was **RESOLVED** that the contents of both reports be noted.

Following the updates provided, the Mayor advised that the remainder of time available would be open for questions from non-cabinet members to the Scrutiny Chair in attendance. As no questions were raised the Mayor advised he would move straight on to the next item.

### 13. **Report from the Vice-Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee**

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

In terms of issues highlighted, Councillor Chan drew members' attention to the important role and work undertaken by the Committee in relation to monitoring and advising on various governance matters relating to audit activity, the Council's finance, accounting and regulatory framework and members standards of conduct. As one of their key responsibilities, members were advised that the Committee had agreed to authorise sign off of the Council's Annual Statement of Accounts 2021-22

having considered the External Auditors report, subject to the resolution of a national financial regulatory issue by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities relating to the accounting for infrastructure assets. The Committee were also continuing to monitor the performance management and accounts of the Council's two subsidiary companies i4B and First Wave Housing Ltd along with the approach towards emergency planning and monitoring of the Councillor Code of Conduct. The Committee had also taken an active interest in the measures introduced by the Council to mitigate against the impact of the current economic uncertainty and cost-of-living crisis being experienced both in relation to the delivery of Council services and support for residents. As part of their focus on this issue, members had been keen to continue monitoring development of the Financial Inclusion Dashboard being used as a business tool to assist in targeting support for local residents.

Councillor Chan advised the Committee were looking forward to continuing their work with members and other key stakeholders to ensure the necessary focus was maintained in relation to compliance and control of the Council's key governance arrangements.

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

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

In accordance with Standing Order 34, the Mayor advised that the next item on the agenda was the non-cabinet member debate, with the subject chosen for consideration being the Council's approach to the delivery of social council housing.

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

The Mayor then invited Councillor Georgiou to introduce the motion. As context for the debate, Councillor Georgiou highlighted what he regarded to be the fundamental right to housing, with concern expressed at the increasing pressure on Council Housing stock as a result of the current cost-of-living crisis and economic uncertainty. Given the pressures being experienced, the motion highlighted the priority to ensure action continued to support delivery of Council homes for social tenants in an effort to reduce the growing housing waiting list and the number of residents in temporary accommodation which, he pointed out, also reflected the approach recommended by the Council's Poverty Commission. Whilst reflecting on the progress made to date, concerns were expressed at the change of approach recently agreed by Cabinet in relation to delivery of the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP) impacting on the percentage of new stock to be delivered at Council and London Affordable Housing rent and potential to include elements of shared ownership, which it was felt would adversely effect the delivery of genuinely affordable housing supply for those most in need. With private developments also not felt to be supporting the type of housing provision needed across the borough, Councillor Georgiou advised that the motion was calling on the Council to focus its approach around the delivery of genuinely affordable social housing, excluding

shared ownership provision, and to hold developers to account to ensure the homes being delivered across the Borough were of the type and size needed to support local housing demand. He also took the opportunity in closing his comments to highlight his opposition to the amendment to the motion for debate, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting from the Labour Group.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Georgiou for introducing the motion and then drew member's attention to an amendment submitted by Councillor Tatler on behalf of the Labour Group, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

In moving the amendment Councillor Tatler began by supporting the need to recognise the importance of housing as a fundamental right in the delivery of life opportunities and social aspiration and concerns highlighted in relation to increased pressure on the supply and delivery of social housing as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and governments mismanagement of the economy. Whilst highlighting Brent's success as one of the leading boroughs in delivering social housing in London, she felt it important to also recognise the challenges and risks in relation to the programme as a result of the lack of government investment or leadership and current challenging economic conditions affecting the viability and delivery of many schemes and pressure to manage the Council's limited resources. As a result, members were advised that the amendment was seeking to reflect the reality of the current position and challenges identified with the rationale for the change in approach to delivery of the NCHP having been to ensure the Council was able to continue delivering the much needed supply of social housing, working alongside developers, within such a challenging social and economic climate. In concluding, Councillor Tatler once again highlighted Brent's strong record in delivery against its housing targets, especially when compared with other local authorities. She ended by urging all members to support the amendment and call to lobby the government in order to provide the necessary funding, stable leadership and to address how more affordable housing could be secured through land value capture and reforming viability assessments highlighting that pausing or doing nothing was not an option, with the amendment moved by the Labour Group as follows:

To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated:

"This Council notes:

The pressures on Council Housing stock are immense and in the absence of Government investment, will not ease in the coming months and years, rather they will grow even more. For example, in Brent there are currently 25,853 households on our housing waiting list, containing 53,644 individuals. Even at a record-breaking pace of building, without a renaissance in Government investment in the social housing sector, many of these families will regrettably wait many years for a home.

The Cost of Living Crisis, ~~coupled~~ compounded by a Government that has created a with the disastrous macroeconomic situation in the UK, means it is increasingly likely that has seen more local residents ~~will~~ turn to the council Council ~~to assume responsibility for their~~ for support with their housing needs, with a 33% increase in approaches in the last year. As an authority, we ~~need to be prepared for this~~ are

working around the clock to provide support to households effected by the Cost of Living Crisis, with a Resident Support Fund that has distributed £8.46 million to 4,045 households, aiding hundreds of families with Rent Arrears and Mortgage payments; and those in need of food and fuel support.

Whilst ~~We~~ are grateful ~~proud~~ that Brent has made progress in seeking to supply Council Homes, with a record of consistently being one of the leading boroughs in providing social homes in London. There is still more to do and we need to see greater, more urgent resolve from all political parties to deliver more Council Homes for ~~Social~~ our tenants. There have been 20 ministers for housing in the past 25 years and four housing secretaries in just over a year. We desperately need action from our new Minister, on waiting lists for council housing, supporting private tenants that are made homeless, aiding cladding victims that remain trapped in unsellable flats and homeowners living in fear of their next mortgage bill. Finally, without the abolition of Right to Buy London will continue to see more council homes sold and private-let with 54,000 and counting across the capital.

The latest report to Cabinet, entitled, '*Update on the supply of New Affordable Homes*', sets out where Brent is when it comes to the delivery of the *New Council Homes Programme* (NCHP), our programme to develop 1,000 new council homes by 2025. To date, the Council has developed and let 684 new homes to Brent households and there are 616 homes on site and on track to be completed before 2025. This programme has been made possible through a grant in excess of £100m from the Mayor of London, Labour's Sadiq Khan, and an investment of more than £200m of the council's own money.

Spiralling inflation, exacerbated by a botched mini-budget has not only impacted Brent residents, but has also put our council house building programme at risk. As such, ~~o~~On the 14<sup>th</sup> November, the Cabinet was asked to formalise a change of approach that would allow Brent Council to deliver much needed housing, within the challenging social and economic climate, ~~only~~ providing 50% of new stock at Council Rent and London Affordable Rent level in its own developments. While ~~This~~ This approach will deliver some Social Housing on Council owned land, ~~this will be at the expense of current Estate residents, reduction of amenity space, and will not achieve our overriding ambition to reduce the ever-growing housing waiting list in a meaningful way. Where appropriate, ~~C~~ council owned ~~L~~land will be ~~de-facto~~ used to build the next generation of council housing homes out of reach for most Brent residents and play our part in addressing the housing crisis.~~

There are also a growing number of local people in ~~our area~~ Brent and in our city, who have been life-long residents of Brent and who are now being priced out of the borough, because of a shortfall in the supply of housing, while demand continues to drive prices higher. ~~is too expensive.~~

There are no quick fixes to resolve the housing crisis and ~~d~~Developers, who that are granted consent for their private schemes by Brent's Planning Committee, are not only part of the larger answer, if we are to provide ~~ing~~ our area with the type of housing our community desperately needs.

This Council believes:



1. ~~There needs to be greater~~The Government needs to provide greater clarity on terminology around housing, particularly what constitutes being 'genuinely affordable housing'. The Government must explore how more affordable housing can be secured through Land Value Capture and reforming viability assessments.
2. Targets and policy around house building, must be focused on seeking to reduce the housing waiting list and reduce the number of local people currently in temporary accommodation and deliver family sized housing units, most keenly needed.
3. Shared Ownership schemes are not a '~~genuinely affordable~~' housing model ~~and are not something that should be promoted by~~top priority for Brent Council, but do form a valuable part of an overall housing mix, as they allow some people to get onto the housing ladder when they otherwise would not be able to afford a full deposit.
4. We should never make the perfect enemy of the good in housing policy whilst need to be holding developers accountable and ensuring that a greater proportion of new stock built in our borough is genuinely affordable for local people.

This Council resolves to:

1. ~~Guarantee that the banner term 'affordable housing' is not used in communications, and instead council communications only refer to~~ "genuinely Lobby the government to simplify its terminology on affordable housing in order to give greater clarity across council communications.
2. ~~Amend the~~Call on the Government to address Land Value Capture and viability assessments to enable Brent to secure at least our Local Plan to ~~ensure Affordable Housing is defined as being purely~~targets for Council Social Rents, London Affordable Rent, London Living Rent, ~~which would exclude Shared Ownership and Affordable Rent (below or equal to 80% of market value rent).~~
3. Continue to work with the GLA and DLUHC to secure the funding needed to ~~e~~Ensure all new developments taking place on existing estates within our borough must be seeking to provide as much more s Social h Housing and ~~not Shared Ownership or Market Sale units.~~as is financially viable.
4. ~~Increase the~~Continue to push Brent's Local Plan target of affordable units within private developments to match neighbouring Camden at 50% affordable housing, with a split of 7040% social low cost rent and 360% intermediate housing ~~others~~, in order to ensure we are building the homes our community really needs.
5. Play our part in addressing the housing crisis across London, by driving up the supply of housing in every ward in Brent."

The Mayor thanked Councillor Tatler for moving the amendment on behalf of the Labour Group and then opened the debate for contributions from other members.

Councillor Maurice, in supporting the original motion, detailed how the Planning Committee was often required to consider applications from developers that failed to fully meet requirements in relation to the provision of affordable housing and amenity space, which despite objections raised often ended up being approved on an overall assessment of planning policy and the requirements within the Local Plan. Concerns were also raised at the lack of family sized dwellings being provided by developers and abundance of one-bedroom properties many of which, he felt, ended up being purchased by overseas investors and would not therefore contribute towards addressing the pressure on supply of social housing or help families in the borough in housing need. As opposed to criticising the government, Councillor Maurice highlighted the lack of Brent-owned land identified for social housing development and supported the concerns highlighted in relation to the approach recently agreed by the Cabinet on the percentage of affordable housing to be delivered under the NCHP moving forward.

Councillor Johnson, in supporting the amended motion and welcoming the debate on the issue felt it was important to recognise (as had been detailed in a previous Affordable Housing Scrutiny Task Group report and outlined within the amendment) the impact of the Conservative Government's policies in relation to the current pressures on social housing, including the introduction of Right to Buy, lack of leadership, funding and failure to deliver on previous targets and promises. As a result, it had fallen on the Council themselves along with the current Mayor of London to provide the funding required to support the ongoing programme of delivery, with Councillor Johnson supporting the calls on the Government within the proposed amendment to properly fund and support the delivery of the required levels of affordable social housing recognising the reality of the current situation to be addressed.

Councillor Kelcher, also speaking in support of the proposed amendment, felt it was important to recognise and support the ambitious nature of targets set for the supply of affordable social housing by the Council and progress made in terms of Brent delivering one of the highest rates of new housing in London alongside the requirement to include and prioritise the provision of affordable housing within all developments. Whilst recognising that Shared Ownership schemes were not a priority option for the Council, they were felt to have a role in terms of the overall mix of housing tenure as a means of providing the first step towards home ownership for those unable to afford a full deposit or initial mortgage. Given the supply issues identified when compared to levels of demand and affordability Councillor Kelcher felt that the proposed amendment was based on a more realistic assessment of the current challenges reflecting there were no quick or easy fixes to resolve the housing crisis.

Councillor Lorber, speaking in support of the original motion, highlighted concerns regarding the Council's ability to deliver on major housing development schemes with specific reference to the delays and change in approach and tenure mix as part of the Wembley Housing Zone development at Cecil Road and Moreland Gardens. In seeking to ensure that the most appropriate type of housing was being provided in

order to meet recognised housing need he also queried the necessity for the level of student accommodation and smaller one or two bedroom properties being approved (especially as a means of ensuring the viability of private development schemes) within the borough, highlighting the more pressing demand identified for larger family sized dwellings and on this basis supported the original motion in challenging the Council's overall approach.

As there were no further contributions, the Mayor then drew discussions to a close and invited Councillor Knight, as the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security, to summarise and close the debate.

Councillor Knight began by thanking Councillor Georgiou for raising such an important subject for debate. Whilst proud of Brent's record and progress in relation to affordable social housing provision the need to continue delivering was recognised in order to address the current demand in relation to the Council's housing waiting list. In supporting the amendment moved to the original motion, Councillor Knight felt that no plausible solutions had been offered by members from either of the Opposition Groups during the debate, emphasising that the Council had a moral imperative to act on behalf of its residents. In recognising the impact of the current social, economic and political challenges in addressing the housing crisis the recent change to delivery of the NCHP agreed by Cabinet and amendments proposed to the motion were felt to reflect the current reality affecting scheme viability and funding as well as the governments limited actions, funding and ambitions. In contrast, Councillor Knight ended by highlighting the ongoing commitment of the Council to continue delivering in relation to its targets for new affordable social housing notwithstanding the challenges and difficult choices that would be required.

The Mayor thanked all members for their contributions and then moved on to put the amendment moved by the Labour Group to the vote prior to seeking approval of the final substantive motion as an outcome of the non-cabinet member debate.

On being put to the vote the amendment moved by the Labour Group (as set out above) was declared **CARRIED**:

As a result, the following substantive motion (as amended) was put to the vote and **AGREED** as the outcome of the non-cabinet member debate:

### **"Building the Homes our Community Needs**

#### **This Council notes:**

The pressures on Council Housing stock are immense and in the absence of Government investment, will not ease in the coming months and years, rather they will grow even more. For example, in Brent there are currently 25,853 households on our housing waiting list, containing 53,644 individuals. Even at a record-breaking pace of building, without a renaissance in Government investment in the social housing sector, many of these families will regrettably wait many years for a home.

The Cost-of-Living Crisis, compounded by a Government that has created a disastrous macroeconomic situation in the UK, has seen more local residents turn to

the council for support with their housing needs, with a 33% increase in approaches in the last year. As an authority, we are working around the clock to provide support to households effected by the Cost-of-Living Crisis, with a Resident Support Fund that has distributed £8.46 million to 4,045 households, aiding hundreds of families with Rent Arrears and Mortgage payments; and those in need of food and fuel support.

We are proud that Brent has made progress in seeking to supply Council Homes, with a record of consistently being one of the leading boroughs in providing social homes in London. There is still more to do and we need to see greater, more urgent resolve from all political parties to deliver more Council Homes for our tenants. There have been 20 ministers for housing in the past 25 years and four housing secretaries in just over a year. We desperately need action from our new Minister, on waiting lists for council housing, supporting private tenants that are made homeless, aiding cladding victims that remain trapped in unsellable flats and homeowners living in fear of their next mortgage bill. Finally, without the abolition of Right to Buy London will continue to see more council homes sold and private-let with 54,000 and counting across the capital.

The latest report to Cabinet, entitled, *'Update on the supply of New Affordable Homes'*, sets out where Brent is when it comes to the delivery of the *New Council Homes Programme* (NCHP), our programme to develop 1,000 new council homes by 2025. To date, the Council has developed and let 684 new homes to Brent households and there are 616 homes on site and on track to be completed before 2025. This programme has been made possible through a grant in excess of £100m from the Mayor of London, Labour's Sadiq Khan, and an investment of more than £200m of the council's own money.

Spiralling inflation, exacerbated by a botched mini-budget has not only impacted Brent residents, but has also put our council house building programme at risk. As such, on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, the Cabinet was asked to formalise a change of approach that would allow Brent Council to deliver much needed housing, within the challenging social and economic climate, providing 50% of new stock at Council Rent and London Affordable Rent level in its own developments. This approach will deliver Social Housing on Council owned land and will achieve our overriding ambition to reduce the ever-growing housing waiting list in a meaningful way. Where appropriate, council owned land will be used to build the next generation of council homes and play our part in addressing the housing crisis.

There are also a growing number of local people in Brent and in our city, who have been life-long residents of Brent and who are now being priced out of the borough, because of a shortfall in the supply of housing, while demand continues to drive prices higher.

There are no quick fixes to resolve the housing crisis and developers, that are granted consent for their private schemes, are only part of the larger answer, if we are to provide our area with the type of housing our community desperately needs.

**This Council believes:**

1. The Government needs to provide greater clarity on terminology around housing, particularly what constitutes being 'genuinely affordable housing'. The Government must explore how more affordable housing can be secured through Land Value Capture and reforming viability assessments.
2. Targets and policy around house building, must be focused on seeking to reduce the housing waiting list and reduce the number of local people currently in temporary accommodation and deliver family sized housing units, most keenly needed.
3. Shared Ownership schemes are not a top priority for Brent Council, but do form a valuable part of an overall housing mix, as they allow some people to get onto the housing ladder when they otherwise would not be able to afford a full deposit.
4. We should never make the perfect enemy of the good in housing policy whilst holding developers accountable and ensuring that a greater proportion of new stock built in our borough is genuinely affordable for local people.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Lobby the government to simplify its terminology on affordable housing in order to give greater clarity across council communications.
2. Call on the Government to address Land Value Capture and viability assessments to enable Brent to secure at least our Local Plan targets for Social Rents, London Affordable Rent, London Living Rent, and Affordable Rent.
3. Continue to work with the GLA and DLUHC to secure the funding needed to ensure all new developments must seek to provide as much social housing as is financially viable.
4. Continue to push Brent's Local Plan target of 50% affordable housing, with a split of 70% low cost rent and 30% intermediate housing, in order to ensure we are building the homes our community really needs.
5. Play our part in addressing the housing crisis across London, by driving up the supply of housing in every ward in Brent."

**15. Brent Licensing Cumulative Impact Assessment Review**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Farah, as Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Public Protection, to introduce a report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services detailing the outcome of a review of the Council's existing Cumulative Impact Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessment Zones.

In introducing the report Councillor Farah advised that the review had been undertaken in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 and Police and Crime Act 2017, with the Cumulative Impact Policy forming part of the Council's overall Licensing Policy and Statement of Principles. Members noted that the review had

also been subject to a public consultation process, the outcome of which had been detailed in Appendix B of the report.

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

Council therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the retention of the Cumulative Impact Assessment in the current 10 areas.
- (2) To approve the creation two new CIZs in Wembley Park and Cricklewood Broadway.
- (3) To approve the updates to Policy 9 and Appendix 6 of the Licensing Policy to reflect the agreed changes proposed in Appendix C of the report.
- (4) To note that the Policy including the Cumulative Impact Assessments will have to be reviewed within 2 years.

## 16. **Changes to the Constitution**

The Mayor invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council, to introduce a report from the Corporate Director of Governance outlining proposed changes to the Constitution. In introducing the report, it was noted that the changes had primarily been designed to reflect changes made to the Council's Planning Code of Practice arising from an Independent review of compliance undertaken by the Planning Advisory Service in June 2022. Members noted the outcome of the review, as detailed within Appendix A of the report, which had identified the Code as representing best practice.

The Mayor thanked the Leader for introducing the report and then opened the debate for contributions from other members.

Councillor Maurice, in highlighting comments raised regarding members role on the Planning Committee, felt it important to assure residents of the open and transparent way in which the Committee operated and the code of practice was applied.

Councillor Lorber also spoke to request minor additional changes he was keen to see included to assist in clarifying the Code of Practice, which included within section 2 (Principles of Planning & Decision Making) clarity around application of the Code to members and also reference to other councillors being included as part of the list Committee members should not allow themselves to be influenced by.

In response to the additional changes identified, the Chief Executive requested that these were submitted in writing in order to enable further consideration prior to them coming forward for approval as potential additional amendments to the Code.

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

Council therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the amendments to the Constitution as set out in Appendix A of the report relating to the Planning Code of Practice.
- (2) To authorise the Corporate Director, Governance to amend the Constitution accordingly, including making any necessary incidental or consequential changes.

## 17. **Motions**

Before moving on to consider the motions listed on the summons, the Mayor advised members that a total of 40 minutes had been set aside for the consideration of the four motions submitted for debate, based on an initial allocation of 10 minutes per motion. Should the time taken to consider the first motion be less than 10 minutes he advised that the remaining time available would be rolled forward for consideration of the remaining motions.

### **16.1 1<sup>st</sup> Motion (Conservative Group) – Measures to tackle flooding in Brent**

The Mayor invited Councillor Kansagra to move the first motion which had been submitted on behalf of the Conservative Group. Councillor Kansagra began by providing context on what he felt to be the severity of flooding issues in Brent and increase in frequency. Whilst acknowledging climate change and global warming as factors it was, however, felt that the increasing level of development on green and brownfield sites was also having a detrimental impact on the drainage of rainwater. In addition, the Council's policy of tarmacking footpaths was also felt to be making the position worse by increasing surface water run off as opposed allowing water to permeate into the ground naturally. Although it was recognised that the Council could not prevent global warming and climate change on their own, Councillor Kansagra felt that the suggested actions detailed within the motion would assist in mitigating the consequences of local flood events and protect resident's lives and properties, which he hoped all members would support.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Kansagra for moving the motion, then invited other members to speak with the following contributions received.

Councillor Lorber, speaking in support of the motion, felt that further consideration was required in relation to the use of asphalt for the repair and replacement of footways, given its effectiveness and impact in terms of surface water pooling and run off. Reflecting on specific issues in his own ward, he highlighted the issues caused by uneven footway surfaces and pooling of surface water, which he felt not only increased flood risks but also caused potential hazards for elderly and disabled residents. In concluding his comments, Councillor Lorber also took the opportunity to highlight concerns regarding the potential environmental impacts of what he felt

was overdevelopment being permitted in front and back gardens and other green spaces across Brent.

Councillor Krupa Sheth, in responding to the motion as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, started by welcoming the reference and acknowledgement within the motion to the impact of climate change. Highlighting the Council's commitment towards tackling the climate emergency she highlighted how environmental issues remained a key consideration within policy and new development proposals, with bio-diversity, flooding and drainage assessments routinely included as part of the planning considerations for new developments. In highlighting what she felt was the governments poor record on environmental issues she also felt it important to recognise that many new developments within the borough were actually designed to enhance bio-diversity and provide ecological drainage solutions with the use of asphalt on footways also designed to provide a permeable solution. In addition, Councillor Krupa Sheth advised members of the regular meetings held with representatives of the main water companies operating in the borough and programme of regular gully cleaning that was in place to ensure water could flow freely through the drainage system to reduce the risk of flooding. For these reasons she advised the Labour Group would not be supporting the motion, also taking the opportunity to highlight that the concerns relating to back garden developments fell under Permitted Development regulations, with members from all groups encouraged to continue lobbying government for the funding required to ensure a greener future for Brent.

As there were no further contributions, the Mayor then invited Councillor Kansagra (as mover of the original motion) to exercise his right of reply.

In summing up, Councillor Kansagra advised that the Conservative Group in submitting the motion did not agree with the view expressed by the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action that adequate measures were in place to mitigate against the increased flooding risk arising from climate change and the scale of developments across the borough. As such, he felt the most responsible course of action moving forward would be for members to vote in support of the motion and additional mitigations being sought to address the flood risks identified and protect residents across the borough.

The Mayor thanked members for their contributions and then moved on to put the motion, as set out below, to a vote which was declared **LOST** and not therefore approved.

#### **“Measures to tackle Flooding in Brent”**

In the past few years, flooding in Brent and other areas is getting more frequent and severe. Whilst this is partly due to climate change and global warming, it also reflects the massive level of regeneration, development and building on green and brown fields sites which is detrimental to the drainage of rainwater and it is felt future planning policy must reflect.

We are losing more green and open spaces which used to soak up the rain water. The Council's policy of tarmacking footpaths also does not allow water to permeate



in the ground. Just a little rain and we observe streams of water flowing on the roads and pavements.

We notice that flood water collects in low lying areas and does not recede for a few days after it rains which means that in the current situation more frequent and severe flooding will take place.

We appreciate that Brent alone cannot stop global warming and climate change and recognise that the borough has a Flood Risk management Strategy in place, however we can take further steps to mitigate the consequences and protect our residents' lives and property.

As a result this Council calls on Cabinet to:

- 1) Reverse the policy of tarmacking the footways and replace with paving slabs and bricks which allows more water to soak in the ground, especially in known flood risk areas;
- 2) Reverse the policy of large scale developments which are reducing the green open spaces and making Brent a concrete jungle;
- 3) Implement a regular gully cleaning and leaf collection program, especially in the flood prone areas;
- 4) Implement a regular program of inspecting all drains and gullies in areas identified as flood risk and repair as necessary and the Council's responsibility, including Brent's brooks and rivers;
- 5) Introduce a policy that makes it's illegal to concrete over the whole of a rear garden as this also impedes the draining of rainwater. We suggest a maximum of 20% of the rear garden can be paved or concreted over.

If Brent is serious about global warming and climate change and wants to protect its citizens now and for future, it's the least it can do."

## **16.2 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion (Liberal Democrats Group) – Holding Housing Associations to Account**

The Mayor invited Councillor Georgiou to move the second motion which had been submitted on behalf of the Liberal Democrats Group. Councillor Georgiou, in moving the motion, began by highlighting the high number of residents within Brent who lived in properties managed by Housing Associations as either tenants, leaseholders or shared owners, given the increasing levels of stock they managed. It was noted that Housing Associations had originally been set up as charitable non-profit making organisations that aimed to provide low cost housing options, however, in more recent times as they had become more profitable and increased their stock it was felt their ethos had shifted with many now appearing to be primarily driven by financial gain. Concern was expressed that this change did not appear to have been accompanied by any associated benefits for tenants with members having to deal with an increasing level of casework involving issues with properties managed by

Housing Associations. These reflected increased service charges, poor customer service and lengthy wait times for building repairs leading to financial hardship and comprising the health and safety of residents or difficulties for those with disabilities or other access or mobility issues. As a result, Councillor Georgiou advised the motion was seeking support to address the lack of communication and accountability demonstrated by Housing Associations in dealing with their tenants and to demand better and ensure the necessary support was available for residents experiencing issues with their Associations.

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

Councillor Knight, as Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security, expressed her full support for the actions being sought in response to the motion recognising the necessity in the Council supporting tenants in seeking to uphold their rights and receive the level of service they deserved in order to ensure that Housing Associations were held to account and accepted their responsibility in remedying issues effectively. Referring to the recent case in Rochdale involving the tragic death of Awabb Ishak which had been linked to the failure of a housing landlord to address concerns raised in relation to the level of damp and mould in the families accommodation, Councillor Knight reassured members of the measures being taken by Brent as a responsible landlord to contact tenants who had raised concerns involving damp or mould in their properties in order to ensure the necessary action and support was being provided and to act on any lessons that could be learned as a result of the tragedy. In terms of Housing Associations it was noted that the Council unfortunately had no specific powers to force them to act with the Housing Ombudsman serving as the main source of redress. In her capacity as Cabinet Member, however Councillor Knight advised that she did meet regularly with the five biggest Housing Associations operating in the borough and, in urging all members on a cross party basis to support the motion, advised she would be willing to take forward any issues raised by other councillors on behalf of their constituents in relation to concerns or difficulties with their Housing Associations in an effort to ensure residents in the borough were able to access a decent quality of safe and secure housing.

Councillor Kansagra also spoke in support of the motion, highlighting that it was particularly important to understand and support residents in seeking to hold their Housing Associations to account and to ensure they were provided with a good standard of service, given the level of increasing level of properties they owned and managed across Brent. In reflecting on the difficulties experienced by many of his own constituents when dealing with Housing Association he felt it was important to ensure the Council was doing all within the powers available to support residents in ensuring the Housing Associations were meeting their responsibilities and needs of their tenants. On this basis he advised the Conservative Group would also be supporting the motion.

Councillor Matin, also spoke in support of the motion, again reflecting on issues highlighted by her constituents in relation to the stress and anxiety being created as a result of the lack of communication by Housing Associations and safety concerns created by long periods of time passing before issues were identified and resolved.

Given the increasing level of property owned and managed by Housing Associations within the borough she was also keen to ensure support was provided for those residents in seeking to hold their Housing Associations to account particularly given the unresponsive nature of many providers, as evidenced by the level of associated casework within her ward.

Councillor Miller also speaking in support of the motion, took the opportunity to highlight what he felt were the advantages in democratically run publicly managed social housing given the level of accountability available in seeking to address issues. Referring members to a previous scrutiny review on the same subject he pointed out that a number of similar concerns had also been identified in relation to the service being provided by Housing Associations, which supported the actions identified within the motion.

As no further members had indicated they wished to speak the Mayor then invited Councillor Georgiou to exercise his right to reply.

In exercising his right of reply Councillor Georgiou expressed his gratitude for the cross party support expressed towards the motion with a unified response, he felt, providing a strong message to Housing Associations about the need for accountability and the legal and moral duty on them to ensure that their tenants' needs were being met and addressed in a timely manner.

Having thanked councillors for their contributions, the Mayor then put the motion to a vote which was unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

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

### **“Holding Housing Associations to Account**

#### **The Council notes:**

Many Brent residents live in properties managed by Housing Associations. They may be Housing Association tenants, leaseholders or shared owners.

The number of residents who will live in properties managed by Housing Associations will continue to grow in the coming years, as more large tower blocks and Housing Association managed units are approved and built in our borough.

Housing Associations were originally set up as charitable, non-profit making organisations, with the aim to provide low cost housing for people.

In recent times, as Housing Associations have grown in number and as their stock has vastly increased, their original focus seems to have been lost as they now seem to be driven by profit and the desire to continuously increase their stock.

As Elected Members we are often made aware of issues within buildings managed by Housing Associations, whether in individual properties or in communal areas.

The communication between tenants and Housing Associations is poor, resulting in long periods of time passing before issues are identified and resolved.

There is a distinct lack of accountability when it comes to Housing Associations, and leaseholders, tenants, shared owners, often feel their concerns are ignored.

Ever increasing Service Charges continue to cause financial misery to many in our borough.

Frequently, Service Charge bills are not explained in detail to residents, as should be the case and scrutinising huge increases in bills is often complicated, meaning many experience financial hardship without fully understanding where their money is going.

Building repairs identified in individual homes and communal areas often take unacceptably long to rectify, despite residents paying vast Service Charges and most Housing Associations having considerable amounts in reserves, to deal with building defects and similar issues.

Essential building repairs are not prioritised, comprising the health and safety of residents, or causing real obstacles for people with disabilities or impairments.

Housing Associations rarely review the work of their contractors, resulting in issues reoccurring for no reason. In the long run this costs tenants more.

**This Council believes:**

1. Housing Associations must be held accountable and deliver for their tenants, some of whom are vulnerable and have specific housing and care needs.
2. That Housing Associations have both a legal and moral duty to ensure that their tenants' needs are met and all issues are addressed in a timely manner.
3. There is often a distinct lack of communication between Housing Associations and their tenants, which fuels the frustration many feel.
4. It is difficult for tenants to make complaints when issues persist and are left unresolved as it is hard to know who within these bureaucratic organisations is responsible for different issues that arise.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Exert our influence to demand better for residents who are currently experiencing issues with their Housing Association
2. Collate a directory of useful contact information of all Housing Associations who have stock in our borough, in order for Elected Members and Officers to be able to better support residents who have ongoing problems with their Housing Association.

3. Help signpost residents to their specific Housing Association officer who would be best placed to help resolve ongoing issues in their homes or communal spaces in their building.
4. Organise a roundtable with all Housing Associations who have stock in Brent in order for a frank and open conversation to take place between Elected Members and representatives from Housing Associations about ongoing issues within their stock.
5. Review our relationship with Housing Associations who have significant issues, particularly those who do not address building defects within their existing stock.
6. Support local people in holding their Housing Association to account by seeking to democratise the relationship between tenant and Housing Association through setting up Resident Associations where in public meetings issues can be raised and actions determined.”

### **16.3 3<sup>rd</sup> Motion (Labour Group) – Our Home Our Vote**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Benea to move the first motion submitted by the Labour Group. In moving the motion, Councillor Benea advised members that the issues raised and actions being sought had been identified in response to the recent Elections Bill. Concerns were expressed that the Bill, once enabled, would introduce a number of measures impacting on electors and local authorities including mandatory photographic voter ID, overseas voting, and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens. Highlighting that the concerns identified were shared by election administrators, Councillor Benea outlined the disproportionate impact it was felt the new requirements would have as a result of the inconsistency around acceptable forms of ID. In addition, concerns were expressed regarding the change in approach relating to the eligibility of EU citizens who entered the UK from 2021 (not covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, or by any ‘bilateral treaty’ covering voting rights) no longer having voting and candidacy rights in local elections from 2022. It was felt this would create an unequal situation, particularly within Brent and across London, where some EU citizens would have the right to vote and others would not. Referring to the position in Scotland and Wales where residence-based voting rights had been introduced for all residents with lawful immigration status, Councillor Benea ended by highlighting the support being sought within the motion as part of the “Our Home Our Vote” campaign for residence-based voting rights across England and Northern Ireland and in lobbying for a change in approach regarding the introduction of Voter ID given the impact it was felt this would have on many minority groups in terms of voting eligibility and democratic participation.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Benea for moving the motion before inviting other members to speak on the motion, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Lorber, speaking in support of the motion, also outlined his concerns at the changes included within the Bill which he felt were discriminatory in nature. In highlighting his support for the measures outlined within the motion he felt strongly that if you lived, worked and contributed to society within the UK you should have the right to participate in the democratic process and vote at local elections.

Councillor Afzal, also speaking in support of the motion, felt that the proposals being introduced through the Bill demonstrated a lack of genuine appetite for democracy by the Government given the disproportionate impact on already marginalised groups, including young people, older people and non UK born residents and what he regarded as an approach seeking to exclude them from being able to vote in order to retain power. As an alternative, it was felt that government resources could be better used to tackle large scale tax evasion rather than the limited instances identified of voter fraud. In expressing his full support for the motion, Councillor Afzal was keen to endorse the case for residence-based voting rights feeling that those living within the UK should be entitled to have a say in how the country was run.

Councillor Kansagra, speaking in support of the measures within the Elections Bill highlighting his support for the introduction of Voter ID as a means of protecting the integrity and legitimacy of the electoral process. Given that research had identified a significant percentage of the population having a valid form of ID that could be used under the new requirements and the provision being made for those who did not to obtain a voter ID card, Councillor Kansagra advised that the Conservative Group, whilst not objecting to the efforts being made to further encourage voter registration and ensure all were aware of the changes, would be abstaining from voting on the overall motion.

Councillor Crabb, speaking in support of the motion, also highlighted concerns at the way he felt it had been designed to discriminate against certain minority groups and exclude them from being able to vote. Questioning the intention behind the Bill he urged all members to stand together in support of the motion.

As no further members had indicated they wished to speak, the Mayor then invited Councillor Benea to exercise her right of reply.

In responding, Councillor Benea reiterated that the issues the motion raised were not just with regard to Voter ID but also in support of residence-based voting rights enabling all residents with lawful status to have the right to vote in local elections in England and Northern Ireland and ended by thanking Councillor Saqib Butt for his support in presenting the motion, which she hoped all members would be willing to support.

Having once again thanked all members for their contributions, the Mayor then put the motion, to a vote which was declared **CARRIED**.

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

### **“Our Home Our Vote**

#### **The Council notes:**

- The Elections Bill has passed Royal Assent. The Bill when enabled will introduce a number of measures which will impact electors and local authorities including mandatory photographic voter ID, overseas voting, and voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens.

- Election officials say they have not had enough time to prepare for voter ID and are worried that thousands of people will be turned away from polling stations. Labour Party MPs have raised concerns regarding voter suppression, since six of the Government-accepted IDs are specifically targeted at older people, while almost none are aimed at younger people.
- In Brent, 169,000 residents were born abroad, and across London over 12% of residents are from the European Union.
- They live, work, study, make use of public services, and call London their home. Many of our foreign-born residents from EU and Commonwealth countries can vote in our local elections. However, approximately 377,000 Londoners that were born in non-EU and non-Commonwealth countries cannot vote in our elections.
- Scotland and Wales implemented residence-based voting rights where all residents with lawful immigration status have the right to vote in local and devolved national elections.
- A poll conducted by Number Cruncher showed that 63% of people agree that all residents with lawful status in the UK should have the right to vote in local elections in England and Northern Ireland.

**The Council welcomes:**

- That 37% of Londoners are born outside of the UK and that the voting and candidacy rights of EU citizens with pre-settled and settled status who entered the UK before 2021 will be maintained.
- That the London Assembly passed a motion in support of residence-based voting rights on the 11th of November 2021 and that various organisations in the democracy and immigration sector have signed a joint statement in support of the “Our Home Our Vote” campaign for residence-based voting rights.

**The Council expresses concern that:**

- EU citizens who enter the UK from 2021 and are not covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, or by ‘bilateral treaties’ covering voting rights, will not have voting and candidacy rights in local elections from 2022. This will create an unequal situation where some EU citizens will have the right to vote where others will not.
- Brent Council also expresses concerns that the democratic rights to vote in local or national elections will impact many minority groups once voter ID is implemented through the Election Act;
- We fear this complexity in voting eligibility will cause confusion and will reduce voter turnout in London elections, undermining the effectiveness of projects such as London Voter Registration Week working to improve voter registration.

**The Council will commit to:**

- Increasing its efforts to encourage eligible voters to register to vote in advance of future elections. For instance, but not limited to, including information about voter registration and eligibility in council tax letters, council social media communications and the Brent Magazine.
- Brent Council will work closely with organisations and charities operating across our borough to ensure that the information about local election voting rights reaches as many EU citizens as possible that call Brent home.
- Ask that the Leader of the Council write to Andrew Stephenson, Minister of State for Local Government, Faith and Communities requesting that the right to vote be extended to all residents in local elections in England and Northern Ireland.”

#### **16.4 4<sup>th</sup> Motion (Labour Group) – Backlog Britain: Waiting for Care**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Choudhry to move the second and final motion submitted by the Labour Group who began by highlighting the challenges and pressures on health and social care as a result of what he felt had been the mismanagement of public services and programme of austerity implemented during the previous 12 years of a Conservative Government. The extent of these pressures across many public services were now fully evident with particular concerns highlighted in relation to health and social care services as they approached a highly challenging winter season with potential strike action, long waiting lists and staff shortages. In recognising the efforts being made by staff within the NHS to manage the significant pressures and local outcomes being achieved through the Brent Health Matters programme to ensure that access to vital health care services in Brent were maintained, Councillor Choudhry urged all members to support the motion. In doing so he highlighted the importance of the actions being sought to reinforce the Brent Health Matters programme as a means of addressing the significant health inequalities across the borough and in supporting residents with the cost of living crisis and in being able to continue accessing vital health, wellbeing and social care provision.

Following the motion being formally moved the Mayor opened the motion up to debate, with the following contributions received.

Councillor Ketan Sheth, speaking in support of the motion as Chair of the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, felt it was important to recognise the full impact of the additional pressures on health and social care provision as a result of the cost of living crisis, especially over the upcoming winter period. Whilst welcoming the additional funding provided within the Chancellors Autumn Statement for Health and Social care, members were advised this would not be sufficient to remedy the pressures and backlogs identified as a result of previous underfunding and Government’s inaction to address the issues identified, especially in relation to social care. As a result, Councillor Ketan Sheth supported the calls for radical reform of the care system given the associated impact on wider health services, which included chronic staff shortages. In concluding, Councillor Ketan Sheth thanked all stakeholders for their support of the Brent Health Matters programme and highlighted the key role of the recently established Integrated Care Partnership



for North West London in seeking to ensure that the limited Government funding being provided was used to maximum impact locally, which he assured members the Scrutiny Committee and Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would continue to keep under review.

Councillor Mistry then spoke to outline her appreciation of the NHS in both a personal capacity and in recognition of the important and valued levels of health care being provided across the country, with particular reference as an example to the roll-out of the Covid 19 vaccination programme. Whilst recognising the extent of current pressures on the NHS and social care, Councillor Mistry felt it important to recognise the active measures being taken by the Conservative Government to improve matters. These included the recruitment of additional nurses and doctors as well as provision of significant additional funding for the coming winter to address the pressures identified including the issue of delayed hospital discharges and to improve community diagnostic measures and reduce waiting lists, working in partnership with the independent and private sector. As it was felt these had not been reflected she advised that the Conservative Group would be abstaining from voting on the motion.

Councillor Lorber, in expressing his support for the motion, felt there was also a need to recognise the significant impact of Brexit in terms of limiting the workforce available to support the health and care system, which had added to the pressures and challenges identified, particularly in the aftermath of the covid pandemic.

Councillor Hack, also speaking in support of the motion, felt it important to re-emphasise the fundamental right to free health care established within the UK which, despite the approach by the Government and pressures identified, he advised the Labour Administration in Brent remained committed to preserve.

Councillor Nerva responding in support of the motion, as Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care, commended the measures outlined within the motion and highlighted what he felt was the repeated failure by central government to adequately fund and support the NHS and Social Care in overcoming the challenges and pressures identified within the system despite continued assurances to the contrary. Whilst welcoming the additional funding provided to address the winter pressures identified and backlog in care, he felt it was important to note that that this had not taken account of inflation and in urging all members to support the motion also supported the previous concerns expressed regarding the impact of Brexit, particularly in relation to the ability to recruit and retain appropriate levels of staffing across the health and social care sector.

As a final contribution, given the time available, Councillor Moeen also spoke in support of the motion re-iterating concerns previously expressed about the Conservative Governments under resourcing of the health service despite being aware of the challenges faced particularly in the aftermath of Covid. It was felt this had been a significant reason for the increase in waiting lists for routine operations, access to GP and primary care along with delays in referrals and diagnostic targets repeatedly being missed. As a result, Councillor Moeen felt that significant investment was needed to support the recovery of the NHS and on this basis also urged all members to support the motion.

Given the limited time remaining, the Mayor then moved on to invite Councillor Choudhry to exercise his right of reply.

In responding and closing the debate, Councillor Choudhry thanked members for their support of the motion which he felt reinforced the ongoing commitment within Brent to support the NHS and provision of social care along with those key workers who delivered care across the system.

Having thanked all members for their contributions, the Mayor then put the motion, to a vote which was declared **CARRIED**.

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

### **“Backlog Britain: Waiting for Care**

#### **This Council notes:**

All across the United Kingdom the country is facing backlogs across public services. In the past few weeks, we have seen that these delays can have tragic consequences – with a bottleneck in processing asylum applications, leading to deplorable conditions at Manston in Kent.

However, right now across the health sector, with staff leaving the industry in their droves and nurses balloting for a strike for the first time ever; we are seeing even greater delays to accessing healthcare:

- There are some 6.7 million people waiting for routine hospital treatment the highest level since records began 15 years ago. Hospitals, meanwhile, are full of patients who cannot be discharged owing to a lack of care-home beds or community services to support them. This in turn means that nationally almost 700,000 people have waited more than 12 hours in A&E in the first seven months of 2022, with ambulances queuing outside hospital doors for hours.
- The NHS is the Labour Party’s proudest achievement – a gift from Nye Bevan to the country which has lasted 74 years. The NHS is a source of national pride, but this year it is facing another balancing act, with spiralling demands for care; while thousands of positions are vacant. As a result, there are now 1 in 9 people in England on hospital waiting lists, with people dying while waiting for care.
- The Health and Social Care Levy was put forward as a means to “fix” social care by providing sustainable funding to the sector. There have been no new announcements from government on what will replace the £13 billion it would have offered.
- Figures from the NHS reveal that last month 7,953 people had to wait more than four hours for emergency care at A&Es in London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust. In North West London, there are now 247,296 residents on the waiting list for care, up from 175,291 just a year ago and the highest number in London. There are 6,225 residents waiting over a year for routine operations.

- At the same time many NHS trusts are supporting their staff through the cost-of-living crisis by food banks on site, providing salary advances and free school uniforms to the children of NHS staff.
- The NHS Confederation has made an unprecedented intervention, highlighting in an open letter the link between fuel poverty and demand on NHS services, stating that Britain “is facing a humanitarian crisis. Many people could face the awful choice between skipping meals to heat their homes and having to live in cold, damp and very unpleasant conditions.”
- Further on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022 NHS Confederation stated that “If social care reforms are delayed by another year, this will only serve to exacerbate the bottlenecks across local services and harm patients “
- Around 1 in every 10 dentists in England quit last year, leaving 4 million people unable to access an NHS dentist with some parts of the country now described as ‘dentistry deserts’, because remaining NHS dentists aren’t taking on new patients. The British Dentistry Association, emergency teeth extractions are now the most common reason for children to go to hospital.
- Data from the NHS reveals that in the past year, 23,434 GP appointments in the North West London Integrated Care System were held over a month late, as patients struggle to see a GP when they need one.
- That there is a six to eight week wait to access the local Long Covid service based at Central Middlesex Hospital.
- Public satisfaction with GP services has fallen from 77 per cent in 2010, to just 38 per cent now, the lowest level since the survey began in 1983. A BBC Panorama investigation in June found that unqualified staff at Operose Health practices, the UK’s largest GP chain, are seeing patients without the required clinical supervision and support.

**This Council believes:**

- That Brent owes a huge debt of gratitude to health and social care staff that continue to tirelessly work for a health service that keeps us healthy and has saved lives across the pandemic. However, it also clear that successive governments over the last decade have presided over the deterioration of services, creating some of the backlogs we see today.
- Public services are a public right, but residents in Brent are facing huge delays for the most basic care. The NHS and universal public services need a new deal, if the social contract that bonds citizens and governments, can continue.
- We need a real plan to get waiting lists in hospitals, primary care and dentistry under control. At present there is a golden thread of delay, decay and dither leading back to the Conservatives. Previous governments have reduced waiting times in hospitals from 18 months to 18 weeks.

- That if Brent residents cannot afford to heat their homes and cannot afford nutritious food, we will face a new public health emergency; increasing the strain on our local hospital admissions further.
- Local government has shown that with the right funding, it has a part to play in promoting and protecting the health and well-being of the public, and supporting the NHS in alleviating the demand for services.
- In Brent we are proud to have our own Brent Health Matters programme which has:
  - Established a public health prevention team, recruited from our community with lived experiences of what makes Brent, Brent.
  - Worked hand in glove with our multi-faith groups to reach a wide range of stakeholders across Brent, to address entrenched health inequalities.
  - Been at the heart of a public health outreach campaign: coordinating diabetes screenings, organising pop-up Covid-19 vaccination sites; and working now with our community groups to increase vaccination uptake.

**This Council resolves:**

- As part of the campaign to ensure that healthcare for Brent residents is properly funded, working alongside patient voice groups, to press the case for equitable NHS funding across the new North West London Integrated Care System (ICS).
- To reinforce the Brent Health Matters programme, taking forward transformational projects to reverse the health inequalities the pandemic exposed. We will facilitate more outreach sessions across Brent's communities, such as our diabetes prevention events and our mobile dentistry sessions.
- To bolster our communications campaign across all channels, with a new multi-language information booklet setting out what support is available to residents struggling with the cost of living, energy and food poverty.
- To provide 'Warm Places' a network of spaces where Brent residents can come together to stay warm and receive additional support and advice to alleviate poverty – helping to ease pressures on the NHS.
- To support a national campaign as outlined by the NHS Confederation in support of the action that is so desperately required to address the dearth of adequate social care provision, including introducing a minimum wage for social care staff. Social care is about so much more than alleviating pressure on the NHS, but without action to address the lack of capacity in social care, the NHS will continue to experience huge delays in discharging medically fit patients from hospitals.
- Request that the Leader of the Council write to our local MPs requesting that the backlog in healthcare services and health inequalities in Brent is raised in

Parliament; and for those MPs to meet with interested councillors in facilitating discussions.”

**18. Urgent Business**

There were no urgent items of business raised at the meeting so the Mayor, in closing the meeting, thanked all members for their co-operation and support and advised that he looked forward to seeing everyone again in person at the next Full Council which would be the Budget Setting meeting on Thursday 23 February 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.17 pm

COUNCILLOR ABDI ADEN  
Mayor