



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on 12 December 2022 at 9:30am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor M Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Grahl, Knight, Nerva, Krupa Sheth and Tatler.

Also Present (in remote online attendance): Councillor Donnelly-Jackson.

1. Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

There were no apologies for absence received.

It was noted that whilst Councillor Donnelly-Jackson was in remote attendance Councillor Nerva was attending as a formal substitute in order to participate in any formal decisions that required a vote during the meeting.

2. Declarations of interests

There were no formal declarations made during the meeting.

3. Deputations (if any)

There were no deputations received.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 17 November 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

5. Matters arising (if any)

There were no matters arising.

6. Stopping Up Order – Ujima House

Councillor Krupa Sheth introduced a report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services seeking approval for authorisation to make a Stopping Up Order for certain areas of public highway that consisted of footway located in front of Ujima House (No. 388 High Road, Wembley) under Section 247 and 253 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990).

Nicolaas Potgieter, Team Leader, Healthy Streets and Parking advised the Committee that the Stopping Up Order was necessary to facilitate the redevelopment of the site that would provide 54 new homes at 100% affordable

housing as part of the regeneration of the eastern end of Wembley High Road that formed part of the Wembley Housing Zone.

Members noted that the draft Stopping Up Order had been advertised in accordance with the necessary statutory requirements under Section 247 TCPA 1990 that included consulting with statutory consultees. Of the statutory consultees, two (Atkins Global and Virgin Media) had raised initial objections on the basis they had apparatus in the proposed area, however they had subsequently withdrawn their objections as further investigation concluded that their apparatus would not be affected. Members were therefore being asked to approve the making of the Stopping Up Order in order to progress development of the site.

The Committee noted the importance of the proposed development as part of the Council's programme to deliver more affordable housing and in recognition of this extended their thanks to officers for their support.

Having noted the outcome of the consultation undertaken, Members welcomed the scheme and therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note that the draft Stopping Up Order had been advertised in accordance with the requirements of Section 247 and 253 TCPA 1990 and that in response to the consultations, Virgin Media and Atkins Global (for Vodafone) had made objections that were subsequently withdrawn.
- (2) To approve the Stopping Up Order and agree that the notices of making should be advertised.

7. Stopping Up Order –Neville Road

Councillor Krupa Sheth introduced a report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services seeking approval for authorisation to make a Stopping Up Order for public highway that included areas of both carriageway and footway within the South Kilburn Estate to enable the phased development to an area near Neville House, on Neville Road, in Denmark Road and near Carlton House, Canterbury Terrace as part of the larger scale redevelopment in the South Kilburn Estate Regeneration Area, which again had been designed to increase the supply of affordable housing across the borough.

Members noted that the draft Stopping Up Order had been advertised in accordance with the necessary statutory requirements under Section 247 TCPA 1990 that included consulting with statutory consultees. Of the statutory consultees, two (Openreach BT and Virgin Media) had raised initial objections on the basis they had apparatus in the proposed area, however they had subsequently withdrawn their objections as diversions of their apparatus had been secured. Members were therefore being asked to approve the making of the Stopping Up Order in order to progress development of the site.

The Committee noted the importance of the proposed development in supporting the next stage in the South Kilburn Infrastructure and re-development programme and in recognition of this extended their thanks to officers for their support.

Having noted the outcome of the consultation undertaken, Members welcomed the scheme and therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note that the draft Stopping Up Order had been advertised in accordance with the requirements of Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990) and that in response to the consultation, Openreach BT and Virgin Media objected on the basis that they may have apparatus in the proposed area;
- (2) To note that the South Kilburn Estate Regeneration team had communicated with OpenreachBT and Virgin Media and resolved both objections.
- (3) To approve the Stopping Up Order and agree that the notices of making should be advertised.

8. Council Tax Base Calculation 23-24

Ravinder Jassar, Deputy Director of Finance introduced the report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources setting out the Council Tax base for 2023/24 in order to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory role under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).

Members noted that calculation of the Tax Base was based on a formula involving two elements:

- a. the number of taxable properties shown as “Band D equivalents”; and
- b. the expected collection rate for the year;

In presenting the report, the Committee were advised that the calculation for the number of taxable properties had included an estimate for the number of new housing developments anticipated across the borough. Members noted the position would, however, continue to be monitored so that if during 2022/23, the rate of new properties coming on stream slowed, a further adjustment could be made in relation to the rate of growth for 2024/25 in order to ensure the collection fund remained in balance.

In terms of the expected Council Tax collection rate, members were advised that over the years the collection rate had been adjusted to take in to account economic factors that had affected actual collection in-year and in the longer term. For 2021/22 the rate was lowered to account for the impact of COVID-19 on household’s ability to pay and the postponement of normal debt recovery actions, it was also deemed prudent to further reduce the long term collection rate in 2022/23 to 97% to reflect the economic climate. The Committee heard that over the last 5 financial years, the long term collection rate had steadily declined and that the reduced target of 97.5% set during the Covid-19 pandemic had not been met. It was anticipated that the additional pressures of the cost of living crisis would create further challenges on household’s ability to pay their Council Tax and would limit the level of normal debt recovery action that could be undertaken. Therefore it was deemed appropriate to keep the long term collection rate at the same level as 2022/23 and for 2023/24 an overall eventual collection level of 97.0% was considered reasonable.

Members recognised and supported the prudent nature of the assumptions being made and as a result, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) That the Band D equivalent number of properties was calculated, as shown, in accordance with the Government regulations.
- (2) That the collection rate for Council Tax for 2023/24 was set at 97%.
- (3) That subject to (1) and (2) above, a Council Tax Base for 2023/24 of 101,187 Band D equivalent properties (after collection rate allowance deduction) be approved.

9. Statutory Officer Dismissal Procedures

Councillor Mili Patel introduced the report from the Head of Paid Service seeking approval from the Committee to make changes to the Council's Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for the new roles of the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer following amendments issued by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Chief Executives to the Conditions of Service Handbook.

The Handbook had recently been further amended and as such changes were proposed to the council's procedures to reflect changes made in respect of:

- Providing for informal preliminary enquiries when a complaint is received;
- Clarifying when a matter may be reported to this committee;
- Providing for an agreed termination of an employee's employment.

The Committee noted the standard updates to the Handbook and as a result it was **RESOLVED** to approve the revised Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedures for the roles of the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer as laid out in Appendix 1 of the report.

10. Appointments to Sub-Committees/Outside Bodies

There were no appointments to be considered in relation to any of the General Purposes Sub Committees.

11. Exclusion of Press and Public

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

12. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 9:41am.

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair