



## LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 10 July 2023 at 6.00 pm

### PRESENT:

**The Worshipful the Mayor**  
Councillor Orleen Hylton

**The Deputy Mayor**  
Councillor Tariq Dar MBE

### COUNCILLORS:

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| Aden             | Afzal            |
| Agha             | Ahmadi Moghaddam |
| Ahmed            | Akram            |
| Bajwa            | Begum            |
| Benea            | M Butt           |
| S Butt           | Chan             |
| Chappell         | Chohan           |
| Choudry          | Conneely         |
| Crabb            | Dixon            |
| Donnelly-Jackson | Ethapemi         |
| Farah            | Fraser           |
| Gbajumo          | Georgiou         |
| Grahl            | Hack             |
| Hirani           | Johnson          |
| Kabir            | Kansagra         |
| Kelcher          | Kennelly         |
| Knight           | Long             |
| Lorber           | Mahmood          |
| Matin            | Maurice          |
| Miller           | Mistry           |
| Mitchell         | Moeen            |
| Molloy           | Nerva            |
| Patel            | M Patel          |
| Rajan-Seelan     | 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 Collymore and Rubin.

## 3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the of the Annual Council meeting held on Wednesday 17 May 2023 be approved as a correct record.

## 4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Lorber declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 15.2 (Liberal Democrats motion (Protecting, Preserving and Promoting Parks and Open Spaces in Brent) as a Director and Trustee of Barham Community Library given the reference to Barham Park within the motion.

There were no other declarations of interest made at the meeting.

## 5. **Mayor's Announcements (including any petitions received)**

The Mayor made the following announcements:

### (i) Kings News Years Honours List 2023

The Mayor began her announcements by congratulating everyone connected with Brent who had received an honour in the King's 2023 Birthday Honours list. Members were advised that this included Bob Blackman MP who had received a CBE for his outstanding contribution and dedication to public service and who had served as Deputy Leader of Brent Council between 2006 and 2010 and Leader of Brent Council between 1991 and 1996.

### (ii) Pride Flag Raising

The Mayor advised that she had been pleased to attend (along with many other councillors, staff and residents) an LGBTQ+ Flag raising event on the 6th June, arranged to mark Pride month.

### (iii) 75 Anniversary of Windrush

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank all those involved in arranging a recent event held at the Civic Centre to honour 75 years of HMT Empire Windrush's arrival in the UK. Highlighting how wonderful it had been to see so many people attending and enjoying the event, the Mayor felt it important to recognise the significant opportunity this had provided to thank all those from that generation who made such sacrifices and contributed towards the rebuilding of post war Britain.

### (iv) Reopening of Harlesden Library

In terms of other engagements, the Mayor advised members it had also been her pleasure to attend and celebrate the official reopening of Harlesden Library. Referring to the success of the Council in attracting grant funding from Arts Council England towards the refurbishment of the library in the hub of Harlesden, she was pleased to report that the opening event had been well attended and enjoyed by all who were there.

(v) Srebrenica Memorial Event

The Mayor advised she had also been honoured to attend the recent Srebrenica Memorial Event, which had marked 28 years since the genocide at Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(vi) Barham Primary School

Congratulating the school on their achievement, the Mayor advised she had also been pleased to attend an event at Barham Primary School in order to celebrate them having achieved international recognition by being shortlisted for an award in the 'Community Collaboration' category, as one of the Top 10 schools in the prestigious World's Best School Prize. Referring to the special ceremony she commended all those involved including the pupils for their performances.

(vii) Celebrating 75 years of the NHS

The Mayor informed members she was delighted to be able to report that Jenny Lanyero, Team Manager of the Brent Health Inequalities Team, had recently been invited to attend a reception at No.10 Downing Street to celebrate 75 years of the NHS. The reception had been attended by more than 100 NHS staff from across the country working at various levels and across a range of diverse services. The Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had briefly attended along with Steve Barclay, as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care who when speaking had taken the time to recognise the history of the NHS and the importance of future plans to sustain it.

Feeding back, the Mayor advised of the honour expressed by Jenny Lanyero at having been invited to attend the reception in order to represent Central and North West London NHS Trust, Brent, nursing and BAME staff.

(viii) Community Cohesion

The Mayor then moved on to advise that one of the things she was most proud about in representing Brent was the level of diversity across the borough and way in which different communities lived side by side in peace and harmony.

Highlighting the peaceful relationships that existed between the boroughs diverse, multicultural communities she felt it was, however, important to remain vigilant and mindful of the need to maintain this cohesion and with that in mind to recognise the distress caused to many residents by the recent incident in Stockholm involving the burning of a copy of the Qur'an. In seeking to condemn such acts, the Mayor highlighted how keen she was to support the ongoing efforts being made across the borough to work together in faith for all communities and also thanked Councillor

Moeen for her work in seeking to highlight the specific issue raised in advance of the meeting.

(ix) Passing of Sir Ben Helfgott

The Mayor advised that it was with sadness she had to inform members of the death of Sir Ben Helfgott who recently passed away aged 93. In paying tribute, members were advised that Sir Ben was a longstanding resident of Brent and member of Wembley United Synagogue. He was knighted in 2018 in recognition of his long service to Holocaust Education and was one of the last remaining holocaust survivors, having been imprisoned in both Buchanwald and Theresienstadt concentration camps.

In recognition of his legacy and longstanding connection to the borough the Mayor advised that she had agreed to allow Councillors Maurice and Nerva to pay further personal tribute in commemoration of Sir Ben.

In paying tribute, Councillor Maurice began by providing a brief outline of Sir Ben's life, his survival of the holocaust and success he had gone on to achieve having been relocated to Britain with his sister as an orphan following the Second World War. In addition to a successful sporting and business career he advised how Sir Ben had also been involved in establishing and serving on a number of organisations set up to support fellow holocaust survivors leading to the recognition of his unequalled and unparalleled legacy as a holocaust educator.

Adding to the tributes already paid, Councillor Nerva was then invited to speak and outlined the valued and welcome contribution Sir Ben had made as a resident of Brent not only in supporting holocaust memorial events but also in seeking to challenge hatred and racial intolerance. These efforts had formed a key part of the work being undertaken to create the conditions necessary to ensure all communities could live in peace, harmony and mutual respect across the borough with his legacy therefore one of hope and understanding.

Having thanked both councillors for their kind tributes the Mayor ended by expressing the Council's sincere condolences to Sir Ben's family and inviting all members to join her in observing a moments silence in memory and honour of Sir Ben Helfgott.

*All present at the meeting then stood to join the Mayor in observing a moments silence.*

(x) Petitions

As a final announcement, 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 and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs (if any)**

The Mayor referred members to the list of changes circulated in relation to appointments to Council Committees, Sub Committees and other bodies.

Having considered the changes outlined it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the following change in appointments to Outside Bodies:
  - (a) London Council's Greater London Employment Forum – Councillor Muhammed Butt to replace Councillor Mili Patel as the Council's full representative with Councillor Mili Patel to replace Councillor Muhammed Butt as Deputy.
- (2) To confirm the appointment of Stephen Ross to fill the vacant position as an Independent Co-Opted Member on the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee for a four-year term of office expiring at the Annual Council meeting in May 2027 (subject to confirmation of the ongoing appointment at the Annual Council meeting each year).

## 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 Diane Richard to Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action) regarding the introduction of additional signage, traffic calming measures and enforcement of the vehicle weight restriction on Wrotesley Road, NW10.

Question 2 from Fitzroy Lee to Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities and Culture) concerning the renaming of Gladstone Park and Leopold Primary School under the Mayor of London's Diversity in the Public Realm initiative.

Question 3 from Noreen Scott to Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities and Culture) regarding the use of Gladstone Park to host a Windrush 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration event given previous concerns raised in relation to the naming of the Park.

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 the meeting in order to ask any supplementary question and whilst Diane Richard had been unable to attend, she was pleased to be able to welcome Fitzroy Lee and Noreen Scott to the meeting in order to ask a supplementary question.

The following supplementary questions were asked of the relevant Cabinet Member(s).

### **Question 2 Supplementary Question from Fitzroy Lee to Councillor Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities and Culture.**

In noting the written response to his original question Fitzroy Lee sought further clarification on the extent of community engagement undertaken in relation to the renaming of Gladstone Park and Leopold School given what he felt had been the lack of reference to this within the original response.

In taking the opportunity to thank Fitzroy Lee for his question and attendance at the meeting, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson by way of further explanation confirmed that a series of drop in consultations had been conducted between December 2021 and January 2022. These had led to the creation of the artwork in Gladstone Park that acknowledged the Gladstone family's role in the slave trade and celebrated the considerable contribution and influence of African heritage to the cultural landscape of Brent. Whilst recognising that the consultation process had taken place during the pandemic the efforts made by the Council to work with local community groups in order to promote the consultation events were highlighted, which it was pointed out had been open for all to attend.

### **Question 3 Supplementary Question from Noreen Scott to Councillor Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities and Culture.**

In highlighting her disappointment at the response provided and use of Gladstone Park to host a Windrush 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration event Noreen Scott sought clarification on the basis of the decision to use the park for the event as opposed to Roundwood Park, which it was felt would have been more appropriate and inclusive as a venue.

In thanking Noreen Scott for the question, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson apologised if it was felt the original response had not provided the clarification being sought. In reiterating the Council's duty to mark Windrush Day, further detail was provided on the decision to host the event in Gladstone Park, which it was pointed out had followed on from installation of the land art and Heritage Trail installed in the park curated by a local artist designed to highlight untold histories, and to recognise and celebrate the hugely valued contribution made to Brent by Black African Heritage residents and to further the conversation that the art exhibition and accompanying heritage trail had generated in relation to the history of the park. Whilst recognising the concerns expressed, Councillor Donnelly-Jackson felt it was important to reflect that the event had been warmly received, with many Windrush elders in attendance.

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 questions submitted by Brent Youth Parliament.

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

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

Question 1 from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth regarding the improvement of employment services and the accessibility of financial education for young people.

Question 2 from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools concerning the availability of financial aid to support students with the cost of college and higher education courses.

Question 3 from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care, regarding the range of access to mental health support for young people.

The Mayor thanked Brent Youth Parliament for their questions, with members noting the written responses provided. Members were advised that a representative of Brent Youth Parliament had been invited to attend the meeting with Ayan Abdi present to ask supplementary questions on 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 the Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth.**

Having thanked the Cabinet Member for the written response provided, further details were sought on how it was felt the Flourishing Futures project would specifically be able to support young people in the borough. In highlighting the project's focus on research and data, details were sought on the potential benefits and what the Council was expecting to achieve as a result of the research.

In thanking Brent Youth Parliament for their question, Councillor Tatler advised that it was anticipated the data and research would help develop the support available for young people in terms of enhancing the training and skills on offer and improving employment opportunities with a more detailed response available, if required, after the meeting in terms of the full benefits that the project would bring.

**Question 3 Supplementary Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care.**

In referring to the written response, in which it was stated that the Council would co-produce and co-design a local approach to mental health services in response to feedback from young people, further details were sought on the co-design process and how Brent Youth Parliament could be involved.

In thanking Brent Youth Parliament for their question and before providing a response, Councillor Nerva outlined the operational responsibility for development of the process outlined which was being led through the Brent Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). In seeking to co-produce and design the local approach and service outlined it was explained that focus would not only be on waiting lists but also on the way in which children's mental health and wellbeing services were integrated and co-ordinated across partners to improve access and provide a more person-centred and needs-led approach to delivering mental health support for young people. As part of this work, Councillor Nerva advised he would be willing to facilitate a meeting to consider how best Brent Youth Parliament could be involved

and engaged in the process in order to ensure the offer was able to respond to what young people had identified was needed.

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 work being undertaken across each Cabinet portfolio alongside the efforts being made to manage the Council's finances as efficiently as possible within the current economic climate and in order to provide ongoing support and services to residents within the borough. As part of the update the Leader took the opportunity to outline the work also being undertaken to support young people and other members of the local community into employment as well as to extend business opportunities, with reference to the recent topping out ceremony for SEGRO V-Park Grand Union development and upcoming Brent Jobs Fair. 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 November 2022, as tabled at the meeting.

The Mayor thanked the Leader for the report and it was **RESOLVED** 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 four 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 provided:

- 11.1 Councillor Choudry thanked Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action, for the written response in relation to his question regarding the enforcement and prevention of blue



badge thefts across Brent. As a supplementary question further details were sought on how residents should report any concerns regarding blue badge theft, fraud or misuse.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth advised that residents should report any concerns to either the Healthy Streets and Parking Team or Community Safety Team would then be able to liaise (as necessary) with the police.

- 11.2 Councillor Kennelly thanked Councillor Knight, as Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security for the written response in relation to his question concerning the partnership work being undertaken with Housing Associations to address cases of damp and mould. In recognising the Council did not have powers to take enforcement action in cases involving Housing Associations, which were matters that fell under the Regulator for Social Housing and Housing Ombudsman, concern was expressed that the multi-layered system of agencies involved could potentially lead to unclear outcomes for residents. As an example, he highlighted issues raised about conditions in a housing block located within his ward, which were now under investigation following contact with the Chief Executive of the relevant Housing Association. As a supplementary question Councillor Kennelly sought details on the support available through the Council to assist in raising concerns about the standard and condition of properties managed through Housing Associations.

In responding, Councillor Knight, as Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security, outlined the type of support available in seeking to hold Housing Associations to account as part of the process in seeking to maintain and improve living standards for residents in the borough. As part of this approach, regular meetings were held with the largest Housing Associations where issues could be raised, as appropriate, with assurance also having been sought on how they were seeking to improve their management of damp and mould. Whilst reminding members of the Council's lack of specific enforcement powers Councillor Knight ended by stating that the Council would continue to work with the Housing Associations to ensure that concerns and issues being raised in relation to the standard and condition of the properties they managed were addressed as quickly as possible.

- 11.3 Councillor Chan firstly thanked Councillors Farah, as Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection, and Councillor Nerva, as Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care for the written response to his question regarding actions that the Council could take to address both gambling as a public health issue and the associated anti-social behaviour, in addition to the steps that the council could take to prevent the increase of adult gaming centres. Highlighting his concern at the impact adult gaming centres had on local communities and in targeting some of the most vulnerable in society, along with the legislative restrictions imposed on local authorities in being able to oppose, them Councillor Chan, as a supplementary question, sought further details on any public health approach which could assist in mitigating against the detriments of gambling and on other changes required to provide the necessary powers to tackle the concerns identified.

In response, Councillor Nerva felt it was important to recognise that the Council had no additional public health powers which would allow action on adult gaming centres, with the current licensing regulations only providing limited powers and the Gambling Act not applying the prevention of public nuisance or anti-social behaviour (ASB) or consideration of public health harm as specific licensing objectives. This was further complicated by issues and concerns relating to the increase in online gambling. Having recognised the anti-social behaviour and public health issues associated with gambling and adult gaming centres, Councillor Nerva outlined the efforts being made through the Local Government Association to lobby for a change in legislation in order to provide the necessary powers for local authorities to address the blight being caused by gambling locally on which advised he would be pleased to work with Councillor Chan, other councillors and residents.

- 11.4 Councillor Georgiou began by expressing disappointment at the written response provided by Councillor Knight, as Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security which he felt had not addressed the rationale behind the approach taken to the implementation of proposals arising from the review of the housing estate caretaking service and associated impact on service charges and costs. In referencing the discrepancy between the recommended decrease in cleaning hours made following the service review, when compared to the level implemented, and associated impact on service charges alongside the error in calculation of cleaning hours apportioned to Council owned blocks Councillor Georgiou (as a supplementary question) sought further detail on what was being done to rectify the overspend in cleaning hours identified including the associated impact on the fixed charge for the service. In view of the concerns raised, he also called for the matter to be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee for further review.

In response, Councillor Knight felt it important to outline that the recommendations made as a result of the service review had been followed. At the same time, however, it was recognised that residents were experiencing financial pressures due to the cost-of-living crisis and that service charges therefore needed to remain affordable and offer value for money. Given the changes required to improve the standard and level of performance offered by the caretaking service once it had been insourced, which had included payment of the London Living Wage, it was acknowledged that spend had been increased although it was pointed out that the current cleaning charge per property was still less than many other social housing providers across the borough. Members were advised that the error identified in relation to the calculation of the cleaning hours apportioned to Council owned blocks had also now been resolved with the costs absorbed by the Council.

Having thanked members for their written questions and Cabinet Members for the responses provided to the supplementary questions the Mayor 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 provided, as set out below:

- (i) Councillor Kansagra, regarding the current approach towards the payment of carers allowances under the Members Allowance Scheme.

In response, Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, felt it important to recognise the nature and extent of allowances already provided for members in undertaking their duties and need to work within the level of provision already available. It was pointed out that any further consideration of the issue would need to be undertaken on a cross party basis through the Constitutional Working Group.

- (ii) Councillor Lorber, expressing concern, given the recent decision of the Planning Committee on an application relating to a site located along the north-west corner of Barham Park, at the Council's commitment towards the Neighbourhood Planning process and seeking assurance about the application of policies adopted as a result through the planning process.

In response, Councillor Tatler, as Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth, advised that queries relating to the basis of decisions taken on specific planning applications would be matters that fell within the remit of either the Planning Committee or officers in exercising their delegation decision making powers. In terms of the wider issues highlighted, members were advised that the Council remained committed to the Neighbourhood Planning process as evidenced through the work being undertaken to support the development and review of Neighbourhood Plans in other areas of the borough with an assurance provided that the Council would continue to ensure planning policy was developed and applied to reflect the needs of the borough.

- (iii) Councillor Kennelly highlighting concern at the recent vandalism of a commemoration tree planted by the Association of Jewish Refugees in Preston ward and action being taken to protect and prevent any further damage in future.

In responding, Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, supported Councillor Kennelly in highlighting the importance of the Council not tolerating any forms of hatred or discrimination. In highlighting the specific action taken to address the vandalism members were advised that the Council was also exploring the possibility of enhancing CCTV coverage in the area to protect the site with Councillor Krupa Sheth pleased to note that the tree had sustained no long term damage.

- (iv) Councillor Mistry seeking assurance in relation to the Council's policy on the collection of rent from vulnerable residents living within Supported Accommodation.

In response, Councillor Nerva, as Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care, advised that whilst not aware of the specific case referred to, he would be willing to investigate further with officers if further details were provided outside of the meeting.

- (v) Councillor Kelcher regarding the Council's commitment to continue supporting the improvement and development of parks and open spaces, including those located across Harlesden and Kensal Green ward such as Bramshill Road Park.

In response Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, felt it important to highlight the Council's continued commitment and investment towards maintaining and improving parks and open spaces not only within Harlesden and Kensal Green but across the borough as a whole. In terms of the improvements at Bramshill Road she confirmed that she would be happy to visit the park in order to celebrate completion of the improvement works and would continue to promote the work being undertaken elsewhere across the borough as a means of ensuring parks and open spaces were as accessible as possible and could be enjoyed by all residents.

- (vi) Councillor Long, relating to accessibility of the details and information being provided on the Landlord Selective Licensing Scheme.

Councillor Knight, as Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security, reassured Councillor Long on the robustness and accessibility of the database being used to support the extension of the Landlord Selective Licensing Scheme. Should any issues be experienced, however, once the scheme had gone live members were asked to ensure these were highlighted for further investigation.

- (vii) Councillor Jayanti Patel, regarding the measures being taken to tackle and enforce against illegal footway parking along Kingsbury Road and around Kingsbury Circle.

In response, Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, advised that officers were aware of the issue and working to address the concerns raised, which included the use of CCTV to support enforcement action already being undertaken. Councillor Krupa Sheth advised she would also be willing to visit the area with local ward councillors to discuss and consider what additional action it may be possible to take ensure that the issues were effectively being dealt with.

- (viii) Councillor Georgiou regarding the appropriateness of Shared Ownership being classified as a genuinely Affordable Housing option in the development of housing schemes across Brent and rationale behind the approach to the disposal of 23 of these type of properties in Alperton due to be considered by Cabinet on 17 July 2023.

In response, Councillor Knight, as Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security, explained that the Cabinet report referred to was not seeking to dispose of the properties but rather repurpose them. Recognising the individual circumstances of the specific scheme along with a shift in appetite and demand for these type of tenures, it was felt this demonstrated the flexibility and responsiveness in the Council's approach towards the delivery of affordable housing across the borough.

At this stage in the proceedings, the Mayor advised that the time available for the open question session had expired. The Mayor therefore thanked all members for their contributions and advised that the meeting 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 Conneely was then invited to introduce the update report on the work being undertaken by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, with the following issues highlighted:

- The broad ranging and dynamic nature of the Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2023-24
- Key issues identified for review as part of the Committee's work programme had included monitoring ongoing delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and tracking the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Budget Task Group to ensure the proposals being developed moving forward continued to meet the needs of Brent's residents; Brent's Community Engagement and consultation Framework to ensure the way in which the Council consulted and engaged with local residents reflected the requirements being identified; progress in delivery of Brent's Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030 with updates to also be provided on the work being taken to tackle violence against women and girls as part of the Safer Brent Partnership Community Safety Strategy.
- As a final update, members were advised of the Committee's ongoing concern in relation to the operation of Thames Water as a key public service provider both in terms of their recent financial challenges and also the transparency and level of local service being provided to customers. With a representative having attended a recent meeting, it was confirmed that the Committee would continue to keep a watching brief in order to challenge local performance with the Chair supportive of any eventual move towards renationalisation of the service as a key public utility, given the performance concerns identified.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Conneely for her update and then invited Councillor Ketan Sheth as chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to introduce the update report on the work being undertaken by that Committee. The following issues were highlighted as part of the update:

- The broad ranging nature of the Committee's work programme for 2023-24 with the Committee having already held its first meeting of the new Municipal Year to coincide with celebrations to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NHS.
- Key issues considered at the initial Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee had been focussed around the delivery of health services to local residents including a review of the work being undertaken by the Council and

local health partners to address health inequalities across the borough through the Brent Health Matters programme. Whilst noting the positive and collaborative nature of work being undertaken locally, the Committee had also recognised the significant challenges still to be addressed in seeking to tackle the inequalities identified and would therefore be maintaining a watching brief on progress. As a further area of focus the Committee had also considered the key challenges relating to funding, recruitment and retention of staff in the health and social care sector. Given the negative impact of current pay rates and funding on recruitment and retention and the associated impact on local healthcare provision the Committee had agreed to accelerate the work being undertaken on this issue during the year.

- Concerns were also highlighted in relation to the funding settlement which had been provided to support Mental Health Service provision across Brent when compared to the level of need identified, which Councillor Ketan Sheth, as Chair of the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) advised he intended to raise at the next JHOSC meeting with the Chief Executive of the North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB). In terms of other areas of focus he advised that the JHOSC would also be seeking to raise concerns regarding the Government's recent decision to postpone funding for the new build and refurbishment works at hospitals across North West London, including St Mary's, Hammersmith, Charing Cross and the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre as well as seeking updates on the plans to standardise adult and children's ophthalmology services and develop musculoskeletal services across North West London which he would continue to keep members updated on.

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 Chairs. The Mayor reminded members of the need to ensure that questions raised were focused on the updates provided or the work being undertaken by the relevant Committee. The following questions were raised and responses provided:

- (i) Councillor Kansagra seeking clarification on the outcome of the review undertaken by the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on the performance of Thames Water across the borough and Committee's position regarding renationalisation of the utility service.

In response, Councillor Conneely advised that the Committee's review of Thames Water had initially been focussed around the management of flooding and flood risks across the borough along with the communication process involving local residents and the Council. In view of concerns highlighted during the review regarding the lessons which had been learnt by Thames Water, the Committee had been keen to retain focus on the development of Thames Waters Business Plan and London Level Strategy. As an outcome of the review one of the recommendations identified had included the need to consider the potential future public ownership of key public utilities including the water infrastructure.

- (ii) Councillor Kabir to the Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee regarding proposals for any planned new build hospital provision within the borough.

In response, Councillor Ketan Sheth advised that neither he or the Committee were currently aware or had been informed of any specific new build proposals for hospital provision across Brent.

As no further questions were raised the Mayor thanked members for their contribution before moving on to the next item.

### 13. **Annual Report from the Chairs' of the Audit & Standards Advisory and Audit & Standards Committees**

The Mayor invited Councillor Chan, as Vice-Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee to introduce the first joint annual report from both Committees, updating members on the work undertaken during the 2022-23 Municipal Year.

Prior to introducing the report Councillor Chan welcomed David Ewart to the meeting in his role as Independent Chair of the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and in terms of issues highlighted 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 as well as members standards of conduct. This had included, as a key area of focus the measures introduced by the Council to mitigate against the impact of the current economic uncertainty and cost-of-living crisis being experienced in relation to the delivery of Council services and support for residents as well as the ongoing delivery of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

Members were advised that the approach adopted towards the work undertaken had also included consideration of the Council's risk management structure and strategic risk management process with an increasing focus not only on the effectiveness of governance processes relating to the first but also "second line" of defence in terms of the monitoring and reporting of information and data. Highlighting the extensive nature of the work undertaken across both Committees, members were also advised of the joint work being developed with scrutiny given the overlap of responsibilities in relation to the oversight of the Council's two subsidiary companies i4B and First Wave Housing Ltd and how this could be structured and managed.

In concluding, Councillor Chan thanked David Ewart for his support over the year and advised that both Committees 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** to note the Joint Annual Report provided by the Chairs' of the Audit & Standards and Audit & Standards Advisory Committees outlining the work undertaken by both Committee's during 2022-23.

#### 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 Casey Review of the Metropolitan Police.

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 Dixon to introduce the motion. As context for the debate, Councillor Dixon began by referencing the Sarah Everard case and expressing concern that the subsequent review undertaken by Baroness Casey had been driven through the concerns highlighted by women and other groups rather than an internal desire for change within the Metropolitan Police. Whilst it was felt that the Metropolitan Police could change and rebuild trust, Councillor Dixon highlighted that for many communities this would involve a long and complex process given the loss in faith of policing by consent and need for the Metropolitan Police to open itself up to scrutiny as a result of the damning findings in the Casey Review, which had shown a persistent and endemic culture of racism, misogyny, homophobia and violence against women. In pointing to the findings of institutionalised racism, lack of leadership and professional incompetence detailed in the Macpherson Report which had followed the death of Stephen Lawrence, Councillor Dixon stated that the findings of the Casey Review were again shocking with a critical need for fundamental change identified in order to rectify the elitism within the Police, the abuses of frontline officers, and the misogyny and racism embedded in the force. In commending and valuing the model of local neighbourhood policing as an essential way forward, Councillor Dixon praised the work of the local Safer Neighbourhood Teams which she was keen to see properly resourced. Highlighting the increasing democratic deficit between the Metropolitan Police and communities they served, Councillor Dixon hoped all members would support the motion in seeking to add their voice and back the call for the recommendations within the Casey Review to be implemented as soon as possible. including the provision of more powers to the Commissioner to tackle the issues identified, addressing issues in terms of recruitment and police numbers and the establishment of new teams to deal with rape and domestic abuse with the disbanding of teams where it was clear deep rooted issues had taken hold. In highlighting the need for action, it was felt the measures identified were essential in seeking to address the lost of trust in the Metropolitan Police as well as in ensuring the safety of victims.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Dixon for introducing the motion and then opened up the debate for contributions from other members.

In supporting the motion, Councillor Johnson stressed that a city as diverse as London required a police service that reflected the communities it served, with everyone needing to feel fairly treated irrespective of their characteristics. In highlighting the major mishandling of key inquiries relating to the Stephen Lawrence investigation, the tragic case of Sarah Everard and the recent behaviour of the Metropolitan Police at Charing Cross Police Station Councillor Johnson was concerned it appeared the Metropolitan Police had not learned from previous



mistakes, which in turn had led to an erosion of trust that would be difficult to regain. In supporting the call for an overhaul of the Metropolitan Police in order to take firm action against racism, misogyny and homophobia, Councillor Johnson endorsed the motion.

Whilst welcoming the Casey Review and supporting the motion, Councillor Kansagra, as Leader of the Conservative Group, felt there was a need to not only focus on the actions of the Metropolitan Police as a whole service but also on the individual behaviours of those individuals found to be at fault. Referring to the approach taken within other public services such as healthcare where the focus was on individuals rather than the institution as a whole in cases of wrongdoing or abuse, Councillor Kansagra felt it was reasonable for the same approach to be applied with the police as it was believed that a small number of malicious officers did not mean the institution as a whole was bad. Whilst supporting the need for reform Councillor Kansagra felt there was also a need to recognise the level of good officers also serving within the force.

In expressing the Liberal Democrats Group support for the Casey Review and its recommendations, Councillor Georgiou, Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group, outlined how he felt the Metropolitan Police had failed Londoners, particularly women, ethnic minorities and the LGBTQ+ community, with widespread misogyny, racism and homophobia demonstrating little had changed since the Macpherson Report in 1999 and which had resulted in a decrease in trust that needed to be restored. In highlighting the need for strong leadership to bring the necessary reforms, Councillor Georgiou also took the opportunity to express concerns over the performance of the Mayor of London since taking office and underfunding of the police (particularly in relation to the development of community policing) as a result of government austerity, which he felt had also contributed to the loss of trust between local communities and the Metropolitan police. In concluding, Councillor Georgiou advised that the Liberal Democrat Group would be supporting the motion believing that implementation of the recommendations within the Casey Review would be the first step needed to bring necessary reform.

Councillor Ahmadi Moghaddam, also speaking in support of the motion, felt that the challenge being provided through the Casey Review was a sign of progress and called for the continuation of pressure to end the institutional racism, sexism and abuse of power in policing. In expressing support for a more local led approach to policing as a means of rebuilding trust and addressing the causes of crime, concerns were raised at the impact of the Governments approach in terms of legislation such as the Public Order Bill which it was felt would introduce further restrictions on freedom and divide society impacting on trust and the potential abuse of power by the Metropolitan Police in the way they would be expected to enforce the provisions. As a result, he ended by not only highlighting his support for the Casey Review but also in seeking to stand against the Public Order Bill.

In further support of the motion, Councillor Afzal felt that the need to undertake the Casey Review had in itself showed a failure on behalf of the Metropolitan Police, which he pointed out had been already been found to be institutionally racist. In opposing the words of the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Afzal highlighted multiple cases demonstrating institutional racism in the Metropolitan Police which he felt it was important not to regard as isolated incidents. In his view the recruitment of additional police officers was not the main issue to be addressed

and of more importance was the need to address the systemic issue of institutionalised racism within both the Metropolitan Police force and society in general. On this basis he hoped all members would support the motion.

Councillor Mistry, whilst expressing her support for the motion and recognising the numerous failings of the Metropolitan Police, also felt it important to reflect on the role of the Mayor of London in overseeing the service provided as Police and Crime Commissioner and working in partnership to ensure the recommendations and change identified as required within the Casey Review were fully delivered. Whilst supporting the need to ensure officers found to have abused their power were removed from office and where necessary prosecuted, Councillor Mistry in concluding also felt it important to recognise that not all police officers were bad as evidenced through the work being undertaken locally through the Safer Neighbourhood Teams across the borough.

In also expressing his support for the motion and addressing previous comments made by Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor Miller highlighted the difficulty in being able to distinguish between cases of wrong doing within institutions as a whole and the individuals who worked within them pointing out, as an example, the action often taken by regulators in medical and healthcare settings to implement system changes in response to individual cases of misconduct. In responding to criticism of the Mayor of London, Councillor Miller also felt it was important to recognise the strong leadership and action demonstrated by the Mayor in removing the former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police from office, despite resistance by the Home Secretary at the time and felt the difference in approach between political parties would become even clearer in the run up to the next London Mayoral election.

Councillor Smith, also in responding to the earlier contribution made by Councillor Kansagra, took the opportunity to highlight her own personal observations of racism experienced at the hands of the Police and to emphasise the importance both historically and within the current social climate of everyone being treated fairly and with respect. In highlighting her support for the motion, Councillor Smith felt that it represented a distorted view to believe that the problems experienced in the Metropolitan Police as an institution were only the fault of a small number of officers.

As a final contribution, Councillor Grahl also speaking in support of the motion thanked Councillor Dixon for bringing the matter forward for consideration and encouraged all members to read the final report from the Casey Review in full. In highlighting longstanding issues with the Metropolitan Police she also took the opportunity to refer to a national inspection of child protection arrangements by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services undertaken in 2016 where inadequate police practices had been identified in a significant proportion of child protection cases. It was felt this demonstrated that the concerns identified were not just focussed on a small number of individual officers but across the Metropolitan Police as an institution. In response to criticism of the Mayor of London Councillor Grahl also supported the view that the stance taken in removing the previous Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police had demonstrated strong leadership and a desire to ensure change was implemented across the service.

As there were no further contributions, the Mayor then invited Councillor Farah, as Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection, to summarise and close the debate.

Councillor Farah began by thanking Councillor Dixon for raising such an important subject for debate recognising the findings of the Casey Review as damning for the Metropolitan Police as an institution. Whilst highlighting his concern that the service had been found to be embroiled in so many systemic failures and mistrust he felt this should not have come as a surprise given the views being expressed by many communities across Brent and London as a whole with the trauma caused as a result of these failures taking time to heal. It was, however, felt that the Casey Review provided an opportunity to deliver the change required at both a cultural and operational level with the work of the neighbourhood police officers in Brent in seeking to make the borough a safer place also recognised. As specific examples of work being led locally by the Council, Councillor Farah outlined the support being provided for organisations involved in tackling violence against women and girls; in seeking to enable the safe operation of the night time economy and support vulnerable women, and the approach towards investing in the rehabilitation of offenders whilst also providing support for the victims of crime. To conclude the debate, Councillor Farah stated that as Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection he was committed to ensuring Brent remained a safe place for all communities and to working with the Police to ensure full implementation of the recommendations from the Casey Review as a means of enhancing local accountability and in seeking to adopt a culture that moving forward would enable trust to be rebuilt in the police.

Having concluded discussions, the motion moved as the basis for the Non-Cabinet Member debate was then put to the vote by the Mayor and unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** to approve the following motion as the outcome of the non-cabinet member debate:

**“Casey Review – Metropolitan Police**

This Council notes:

- The damning findings of the March 2023 Casey Review, which showed a persistent and endemic culture of racism, misogyny, homophobia and violence against women within London’s Metropolitan Police force.
- The recent BBC investigation that found that the Metropolitan Police seriously mishandled key inquiries related to a major suspect in the murder of Stephen Lawrence.
- That whilst the Casey Review and the recent revelations about the Stephen Lawrence investigation are shocking, it will not be surprising to many in our communities across Brent who have been failed by the Metropolitan Police. Rather, these findings have further exposed an institution that has been known for systemic failures since before the murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993.

- The persistent failure of leadership at all levels of the Metropolitan Police to act decisively and remove dangerous officers from their posts, despite multiple reports showing their propensity for serious harm prior to the violence and destruction they subsequently caused to dozens of lives.
- That the murder of Sarah Everard by Wayne Couzens, the dehumanising treatment of Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman, the Stephen Port murders, and the 48 rape offenses committed by David Carrick might have been prevented if swift and effective action had been taken at the time.

This Council also notes:

- That crime disproportionately impacts members of the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, those on the lowest incomes and members of the LGBTQ+ community, and that tackling crime across the borough means it is integral that these communities have trust and faith in the police that serve them.
- Black people are nine times more likely to be stopped and searched by police than white people, official figures for England and Wales show.
- As highlighted by Baroness Casey, it is not enough for the Metropolitan Police to “reflect” on what needs to change, but that it needs a complete overhaul in order to take firm and decisive action against racism, misogyny and homophobia.
- The work of the Independent Scrutiny and Oversight Board, which has highlighted the reluctance of the Metropolitan Police so far to make any significant change.
- Whilst this council recognises the heroic work done by many police officers, including our own neighbourhood officers here in Brent, there is clearly unfinished business in the police force if there is to be an end to the culture that enabled these horrifying injustices to take place.

This Council further notes:

- Brent Council's efforts to address Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) through the following initiatives:
  - The establishment of a VAWG Scrutiny Task Group in 2020 which provided a set of recommendations on how best to utilise Council resources to help combat VAWG. These recommendations are currently being implemented and its progress regularly reviewed to ensure this issue remains a high priority for the Council.
  - Increased resources to VAWG organisations across the borough, as well as increased MARAC service provision to meet the demands from the knock-on effect of the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - Workshops conducted with local businesses across Brent to ensure that training is provided to the night-time economy (local pubs, bars,

restaurants, etc.) around supporting vulnerable women and safeguarding is offered more widely to local businesses.

- A series of public awareness campaigns demonstrating solidarity against VAWG.
- The Council's investment in approaches to address perpetrators, provide trauma support to victims of crime; and investment in early intervention and prevention of community violence and harm – it is local government across London that has the approaches and best practice that is of value to the Metropolitan Police in its transformation.
- The positive introduction of LGBT+ Community Liaison Officers (CLO) for the North West Borough Command Unit (covering Brent, Barnet and Harrow boroughs) to improve relationships and trust between the LGBTQ+ Community and the Police.
- The Cabinet Member for Community Safety meets with the Metropolitan Police Commander for North West BCU (covering Brent, Harrow and Barnet) once a month to discuss urgent police matters affecting Brent residents and to ensure the interests of our communities in Brent are taken into account by the local police.

This Council therefore resolves:

- (1) That the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities & Public Protection should write to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police to confirm Brent Council's support of the Casey Review, requesting that the Metropolitan Police make concrete efforts to rebuild the trust lost by adopting and implementing without delay, all 16 recommendations of the Casey Review.

This includes:

- Adopting a new, independent, multidisciplinary team of police officers and staff who will reform how the Metropolitan Police deals with misconduct cases, with a particular focus on how it handles sexual misconduct, domestic abuse and discrimination.
- Overhauling the recruitment and vetting system to ensure that new recruits are not drawn to the job for the wrong reasons; and revoking special qualifications where officers' standards fall short of public expectations.
- Providing the Police Commissioner new powers that ensure that they can take strong and decisive action when the sanctions and consequences for misconduct are inadequate.
- A dedicated Women's Protection Service with specialist units who focus on rape and serious and sexual offences and the creation of a children's strategy to focus resources on safeguarding and child protection.

- (2) To call upon the Metropolitan Police to build an improved borough-based approach that will rebuild trust in policing across communities by investing in frontline policing - including safer communities and public protection - and ensuring victims of crimes such as domestic violence and sexual assault have appropriate, compassionate, and effective support and resources.
- (3) To call upon the Metropolitan Police to commit to an overhaul of stop and search powers and accountability for the use of force in our communities.
- (4) To call upon the Metropolitan Police to further their partnership working with London local government as part of boosting local accountability and scrutiny of police powers, including working closely with those communities most impacted by police activity and communities and individuals subject to the disproportionality highlighted in the Casey report.”

15. **Changes to Terms of Reference (ToR) for the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Appointment to Committee**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt, as Leader of the Council, to introduce a report from the Corporate Director of Governance outlining a number of changes to the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (“NWL JHOSC”).

In introducing the report, it was noted that the amendments had been developed and agreed by the NWL JHOSC and were primarily designed to reflect changes in the North West London Health sector landscape with the introduction of the Integrated Care Systems (ICS) as well as clarify the current status where participation in the JHOSC would not preclude any scrutiny or right of response by individual boroughs.

As no other members indicated they wished to speak on the report and Councillor Muhammed Butt 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** to:

- (1) Agree the updated Terms of Reference for the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC) a detailed within Appendix A of the report.
- (2) replace the current Terms of Reference for the NWL JHOSC included within Part 4 of Brent’s Constitution with the updated version approved under (1) above.

16. **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) – Don't Punish Brent's Drivers**

The Mayor invited Councillor Kansagra to move the first motion which had been submitted on behalf of the Conservative Group. Prior to addressing the motion, Councillor Kansagra felt there was a need to seek further advice on an amendment submitted in advance of the meeting by the Labour Group, which he was concerned had been designed to negate the basis of the original motion submitted for debate. The concerns highlighted by Councillor Kansagra regarding the amendment were also shared by the Liberal Democrats Group who supported the view that the proposed amendment would have the effect of negating the spirit and basis of the original motion. In responding to the concerns highlighted the Corporate Director of Governance advised that the amendment had been subject to detailed review and on balance was felt to have retained a sufficient element of the original motion to avoid entirely nullifying it. On this basis the amendment had been cleared to proceed for consideration.

In expressing concern at the negative effect of the amendment and precedent it was felt this approach would set moving forward, the Conservative Group advised the Mayor they were no longer minded to move the motion and would instead be seeking to withdraw it from consideration at the meeting.

With the Labour Group initially indicating they were minded to continue with the debate in order to consider the amendment they had submitted, the Mayor agreed to a brief adjournment of the meeting to enable the respective Groups to seek further constitutional advice from the Corporate Director of Governance. Having reconvened, following a brief withdrawal of all members of the Conservative Group from the meeting, it was **RESOLVED** having been put to a vote, in accordance with Standing Order 42(I), to approve withdrawal of the Motion submitted by the Conservative Group from consideration at the meeting.

### **16.2 2<sup>nd</sup> Motion (Liberal Democrats Group) – Protecting, preserving and promoting Parks and Open Spaces in Brent**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Georgiou to move the second motion which had been submitted on behalf of the Liberal Democrats Group. As context for the motion Councillor Georgiou began by highlighting what he felt was the importance in seeking to protect and value all Brent's parks and open spaces as vital assets to the local community. This included the need, given approval of the recent planning application relating to a site located along the north-west corner of Barham Park, to protect parks and open spaces from the potential of development especially where this was not felt to meet local need. In valuing the green and open spaces available across the borough, Councillor Georgiou felt the pandemic and increasing levels of development that only provided limited access to green space, had further highlighted their importance given the mental and physical health benefits from the access provided to green and open spaces for so many residents as well as in relation to addressing the climate emergency.

On this basis, it was felt the recent decision to allow the building of houses located along the north-west corner of Barham Park not only went against the Council's

long established Core Strategy of protecting Brent parks and open spaces and local Neighbourhood planning but had also created an unwelcome precedent which it felt put other parks and open spaces in Brent at risk. Referring to the level of local support for an online petition set up following the recent planning decision calling on the Council to protect parks and open spaces from future development and rejecting the amendment to the motion submitted by the Labour Group, Councillor Georgiou ended in moving the motion by calling on members to recognise the strength of local feeling and prioritise the preservation and promotion of the boroughs parks and open spaces as valuable assets across the borough.

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 thanking all residents who had signed the petition referred to by Councillor Georgiou and the value placed on Brents parks and green spaces. In seeking to reassure local residents of the Council's commitment to protecting and enhancing the boroughs parks she felt it important to emphasis not only the significant level of investment already provided but also the ongoing use of the Community Infrastructure Levy and planning process to secure a number of new parks and open public spaces including areas such as Wembley Park, South Kilburn and Grand Union in Alperton. In highlighting what she regarded as the progressive nature of the Council's planning policies in seeking to balance the need for housebuilding with the wider demand for infrastructure like parks and wider sustainability objectives, Councillor Tatler also took the opportunity to remind members of the recently adopted planning guidance on Sustainable Environment and Development; Residential Amenity Space, with Brent one of the first local authorities to have adopted such a policy.

As a result, she advised that the amendment sought to recognise the work already being undertaken by Council, in conjunction with the GLA and the London Plan, to safeguard parks and open spaces. This included Local Plan policies in Growth Areas identifying specific local park provision, a series of play areas and open spaces within new developments and the requirement for developments to provide an urban greening factor, bio-diversity gain, replacement tree canopy cover and space for water and habitats that would not have existed before. In seeking to query what was felt to be a misleading stance taken by the Liberal Democrats Group, Councillor Tatler highlighted their groups limited engagement in the process undertaken to support the development of planning policy and also their involvement in the original decision to seek to dispose of the Barham Park site referred to within the motion, taken by the Executive in December 2009, where it had been confirmed that the only use of the site would be for a small residential development that would not lead to a loss of green space.

In concluding, Councillor Tatler took the opportunity to assure residents how seriously the current Administration took its responsibility to protect the boroughs parks and green spaces alongside the need to balance the demand for housing against promoting more sustainable development. As a result, she advised the Labour Group would be seeking to oppose the original motion in favour of the amendment move, which was as follows:

To add the wording underlined and delete the wording indicated:



## “Protecting, preserving and promoting Parks and Open Spaces in Brent

### **This Council notes:**

Our borough is home to many wonderful green, open spaces and parks that are enjoyed by residents of all ages and backgrounds. From smaller parks like Mount Pleasant Open Space in Alperton, King Edward VII in Wembley, to historical parks like Barham Park and Gladstone Park, larger country parks in Fryent, and thriving open spaces in the Welsh Harp and Northwick Park, to name but a few.

These vital spaces must be protected, particularly if they are threatened by development that does not meet local need.

In recent years we have become even more aware of how important green spaces are for local people. During the Covid-19 pandemic and periods of lockdown, they became a sanctuary for so many who were able to spend time in them, benefiting both mental and physical health.

~~With ever increasing building works~~ the promise of much needed homes in Brent, ~~particularly of tall tower blocks,~~ it is crucial that new residents are able to access open spaces in the areas they move to. ~~Sadly, most Brent Council continues to work with partners to bring forward~~ new developments do not to ensure they incorporate adequate large green space, rather most include only small pocket parks that are not sufficient and often not well which is maintained by Housing Associations/ Managing Companies. In Wembley Park, for example, a new seven acre Union Park will feature a bandstand, children’s play areas, sport zones and urban meadow. It replaces a former 1,000 space care and coach park and is one of the first new large public parks in London for decades and is Wembley’s first new mayor park in 150 years.

Achieving Climate Emergency targets relies heavily on safeguarding open spaces ~~in our borough,~~ protecting mature trees and important habitats for local wildlife. Without doing so, we risk missing these targets in or borough.

The decision by the Planning Committee to allow the building of houses located along the north-west corner of Barham Park ~~goes against~~ is in accordance with Brent Council’s long established Core Strategy of protecting Brent parks and open spaces from unwelcome development. The disposal of the properties at 776 and 778 Harrow Road was first taken by the Executive in December 2009. The decision made by the Planning Committee was on the basis of officer recommendation and discussion at the meeting, including the consideration of the ~~also undermines the whole point of local people getting involved in developing Local Neighbourhood Plans. The Planning Committee overrode the Sudbury Town Neighbourhood Plan policy BP1 which specifically designated Barham Park~~ decision does not result in the loss of any local ~~as a green space where development or from the redevelopment of the buildings and does not impact upon the ability to experience the area of the original historic landscape park intended for community uses should be refused.~~

The Barham Park decision does not result in the loss of any local green space and therefore re-affirms ~~creates an unwelcome~~ the existing precedent putting other

~~parcs and open spaces in Brent at risk. Following that decision hundreds of local people have signed a petition on the Brent Council website, calling for of maintaining the protection of parks and open spaces from development, which indicates in keeping with the strength of feeling from local residents on this important issue.~~

**Therefore, this Council believes:**

1. That all of Brent's parks and open spaces should be valued and celebrated as vital assets in our community.
2. Parks and open spaces must all be protected from the potential of development, particularly of development that does not meet local need or that is clearly not for genuine community use.
3. The value of parks and open spaces cannot be understated; even more so as increasing numbers of local people have little to no access to their own gardens or green space.
4. The Cabinet should reassure all residents that within its responsibilities it will always prioritise the preservation of our parks and open spaces and promote these assets.

**This Council resolves:**

- (1) To confirm its longstanding strategic position that it will recognise the value of open spaces and parks in the borough and seek to protect them.
- (2) To call on the Cabinet to ensure within its responsibilities there will be no new buildings and no expansion of buildings in parks other than for legitimate community use.
- (3) To ~~seek to strengthen~~ reaffirm its Planning Policies on protecting public parks and open spaces ~~by confirming the principle that "real harm" would be caused if permission was granted for the building of houses or other buildings within Brent Parks and Open Spaces which were not intended for direct community uses.~~
- (3) To incorporate in all Planning reports the potential environmental impact applications will have on our area, and how they might impact Climate Emergency targets, utilising our newly approved Sustainable Environment & Development Supplementary Planning Document.
- (4) To work with partners across the city, from the Corporation of London, other Local Authorities and City Hall to protect, preserve and promote vital green, open spaces in London.
- ~~(5) In view of the public concern about intensification of building in Barham Park contrary to the Neighbourhood Plan policy and restrictions imposed in past disposal documents, to call on the Council and Cabinet to support the Barham Park Trust in considering a Judicial Review into the recent decision of the~~

~~Brent Planning Committee to approve an application for 4 houses located along the north-west corner of Barham Park.”~~

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 in relation to both the original motion and amendment.

In seeking to clarify the position relating to the decision taken by the Executive in 2009 on disposal of the properties located along the north-west corner of Barham Park (as referred to by Councillor Tatler in moving the amendment) Councillor Lorber as Chair of Executive at the time, explained the background and context to the decision made. The opportunity was also taken, in supporting the original motion, to highlight the strength of local opposition to the planning decision and support for preserving the boroughs parks and open spaces and to clarify that the final decision on disposal of the site had been taken by the Labour Administration in 2010.

Councillor Hirani also speaking in support of the original motion, highlighted what the Conservative Group felt was the important need to protect and preserve parks and open spaces across the borough. Highlighting the strength of opposition to the recent planning application and decision relating to the properties located along the north-west corner of Barham Park concern was expressed at the way in which it was felt the decision had undermined the Local Neighbourhood Planning process with specific reference to the Sudbury Town Neighbourhood Plan policy BP1 and the precedent set as a result, particularly given the importance of the boroughs parks and open spaces, including Woodstock Park, in terms of tackling wider sustainability, bio-diversity and air quality issues. Recognising the strength of local views Councillor Hirani ended by highlighting what she felt was the importance in the Barham Park Trust seeking to maintain the necessary protection and preserve the original basis on which the park had been provided for the benefit of local people.

As there were no further contributions, the Mayor then invited Councillor Georgiou (as mover of the original motion) followed by Councillor Tatler (as mover of the amendment) to exercise their right of reply.

In exercising his right of reply, Councillor Georgiou took the opportunity to remind members that the original aim of the motion had been to secure the necessary commitment towards maintaining and safeguarding Brent's parks and open spaces particularly in cases where they may be threatened by development that did not meet local need. Given the unwelcome precedent which it was felt the recent decision to allow the building of houses located along the north-west corner of Barham Park set in relation to not only the Council's Core Strategy of protecting Brent parks and open spaces but also local Neighbourhood planning policy and strength of public feeling identified in support of the petition to protect Brents parks and open spaces he hoped all members would join him in supporting the original motion in seeking to prioritise the preservation and promotion of the boroughs parks and open spaces.

Councillor Tatler in closing the debate and exercising her right of reply again repeated her early assurance regarding the Council's ongoing commitment to safeguarding and investing in the boroughs parks and open spaces. Highlighting

the value of parks and open spaces along with further plans for future investment and the creation of new open spaces and their importance in terms of air quality and wider environmental and public health impacts she hoped all members would support the amendment moved, which had been designed to reflect the work being undertaken to protect and enhance the boroughs parks and open spaces which she reminded members included no loss of green space in Barham Park.

Having thanked councillors for their contributions, the Mayor then moved to the vote on the motion starting with the amendment moved by the Labour Group. The amendment, as set out above, was then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

The Mayor then moved on to put the substantive motion, as amended and set out below, to a vote which was declared **CARRIED**.

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

**“Protecting, preserving and promoting Parks and Open Spaces in Brent”**

This Council notes:

Our borough is home to many wonderful green, open spaces and parks that are enjoyed by residents of all ages and backgrounds. From smaller parks like Mount Pleasant Open Space in Alperton, King Edward VII in Wembley, to historical parks like Barham Park and Gladstone Park, larger country parks in Fryent, and thriving open spaces in the Welsh Harp and Northwick Park, to name but a few.

These vital spaces must be protected, particularly if they are threatened by development that does not meet local need.

In recent years we have become even more aware of how important green spaces are for local people. During the Covid-19 pandemic and periods of lockdown, they became a sanctuary for so many who were able to spend time in them, benefiting both mental and physical health.

With the promise of much needed homes in Brent it is crucial that new residents are able to access open spaces in the areas they move to. Brent Council continues to work with partners to bring forward new developments to ensure they incorporate adequate large green space which is maintained by Housing Associations/ Managing Companies. In Wembley Park, for example, a new seven-acre Union Park will feature a bandstand, children’s play areas, sport zones and urban meadow. It replaces a former 1,000 space care and coach park and is one of the first new large public parks in London for decades and is Wembley’s first new mayor park in 150 years.

Achieving Climate Emergency targets relies heavily on safeguarding open spaces, protecting mature trees and important habitats for local wildlife. Without doing so, we risk missing these targets in our borough.

The decision by the Planning Committee to allow the building of houses located along the north-west corner of Barham Park is in accordance with Brent Council’s long established Core Strategy of protecting Brent parks and open spaces from unwelcome development. The disposal of the properties at 776 and 778 Harrow

Road was first taken by the Executive in December 2009. The decision made by the Planning Committee was on the basis of officer recommendation and discussion at the meeting, including the consideration of the Local Neighbourhood Plan. The Planning Committee decision does not result in the loss of any local green space from the redevelopment of the buildings and does not impact upon the ability to experience the area of the original historic landscape park.

The Barham Park decision does not result in the loss of any local green space and therefore re-affirms the existing precedent of maintaining the protection of parks and open spaces from development in keeping with the strength of feeling from local residents on this important issue.

Therefore, this Council believes:

1. That all of Brent's parks and open spaces should be valued and celebrated as vital assets in our community.
2. Parks and open spaces must all be protected from the potential of development, particularly of development that does not meet local need or that is clearly not for genuine community use.
3. The value of parks and open spaces cannot be understated; even more so as increasing numbers of local people have little to no access to their own gardens or green space.
4. The Cabinet should reassure all residents that within its responsibilities it will always prioritise the preservation of our parks and open spaces and promote these assets.

This Council resolves:

- (1) To confirm its longstanding strategic position that it will recognise the value of open spaces and parks in the borough and seek to protect them.
- (2) To call on the Cabinet to ensure within its responsibilities there will be no new buildings and no expansion of buildings in parks other than for legitimate community use.
- (3) To reaffirm its Planning Policies on protecting public parks and open spaces
- (4) To incorporate in all Planning reports the potential environmental impact applications will have on our area, and how they might impact Climate Emergency targets, utilising our newly approved Sustainable Environment & Development Supplementary Planning Document.
- (5) To work with partners across the city, from the Corporation of London, other Local Authorities and City Hall to protect, preserve and promote vital green, open spaces in London."

### **16.3 3<sup>rd</sup> Motion (Labour Group) – Celebrating 75 years of the NHS in Brent**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Kabir to move the first motion submitted by the Labour Group. In moving the motion, Councillor Kabir highlighted the celebrations undertaken to mark the 75th anniversary of the NHS, which she regarded as one of the nations and Labour's proudest achievements. Referring to the creation of the National Health Service by Nye Bevin in 1948 as the first universal health system of its kind, she felt that despite the critics and attempts to undermine the founding principles, it still stood strong as a service provided free at the point of access and on the basis of need rather than the ability to pay. In commending the range of pioneering treatments developed by the NHS which had subsequently been rolled out to other health services across the world, Councillor Kabir also paid personal tribute for the service and standard of care received.

In seeking to celebrate the achievements of the NHS, tribute was also paid to the diversity of the NHS workforce which, in also celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Windrush anniversary, it was felt represented another of its great strengths. Whilst seeking to celebrate these achievements Councillor Kabir advised that the motion was also designed to highlight concerns regarding the Conservative Governments approach towards the NHS, which it was felt had not matched the current reality in terms of investment required to balance the demands of an aging population or in relation to social care, infrastructure and staffing levels and pay. As a result, the motion, in recognising the need for further investment in the NHS and stable political leadership, was seeking to support the approach within the Plan developed by the Labour Party, including proposals to increase the number of medical school places and district nurses whilst also training more new health visitors and creating more nursing and midwifery clinical placements alongside a long term plan for the NHS. In commending the motion to members, Councillor Kabir ended by highlighting the way in which it was felt Labour's Plan for the NHS would not only continue to safeguard and preserve the NHS but also provide the necessary level of investment required to ensure that it would be possible to celebrate its next 75 years.

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

Following Councillor Kabir's opening statement, Councillor Moeen, in supporting the motion, expressed pride that it had been the Labour Party who had established the NHS in 1948. However, whilst recognising the hard work of all NHS staff the need for further investment was identified with Councillor Moeen ending by supporting the call to improve the pay, working conditions and recruitment of NHS staff.

Councillor Kelcher also spoke in support of the motion highlighting a need, in terms of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the NHS, for support by a government that believed in the service and would provide sufficient investment, as opposed to the stance taken by the current Conservative Government. As an example, Councillor Kelcher highlighted the approach taken by the last Labour Government towards tackling NHS waiting lists with the public rating of the NHS during that time at an historical high. In celebrating its history, Councillor Kelcher felt the NHS continued to have a bright future as long as it was properly supported and safeguarded which he felt a Labour Government would be best placed to achieve.

In response to the debate, Councillor Lorber felt it was important to recognise that in his view the process of NHS privatisation had started under the previous Labour Governments led by Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, including the large scale

engagement of management consultants. This process had continued under successive governments since then with Councillor Lorber pointing out the principles guiding the formation of the NHS actually reflected what were regarded to be radical liberal ideals originally proposed by the likes of John Maynard Keynes and William Beveridge, and not only the Labour Party.

Councillor Mistry, also responding to the debate felt members should also be aware that whilst the NHS had been formally established by Nye Bevan in 1948 the idea had first been proposed by Winston Churchill whose Conservative Government had commissioned the Beveridge Report. Since its establishment, the size of the NHS had massively expanded both in terms of workforce and budget with Councillor Mistry highlighting the significant levels of investment provided by the current Conservative Government which she pointed out had resulted in the provision of an additional 41,000 more nurses and 5,100 more doctors compared to 2019. In paying tribute to NHS staff and seeking to celebrate its anniversary, Councillor Mistry felt it important to outline how the Conservative government were already taking action to protect the NHS, such as expanding the size of the workforce, increasing funding, and undertaking system reform alongside measures being taken to improve access to primary care including provision for GP appointments and expanding community pharmacies.

As a further contribution in support of the motion, Councillor Hack reminded members of the difficulty those experiencing poverty had, prior to the establishment of the NHS, in gaining access to healthcare. In commending the approach outlined within the motion, Councillor Hack felt that the Conservative Party had demonstrated a tolerance of the NHS rather than actually supporting the philosophy of universal healthcare that underpinned the service. In building on the previous point, he reiterated that the Labour Party should be proud of its stance as a party that was seeking to preserve and safeguard the NHS. In concluding, Councillor Hack felt it was important to recognise the impact created as a result of the political choices relating to austerity across all public services including the NHS, and ended with reference to Nye Bevan in stating that the NHS would only last if there were people who believed in it and were willing to preserve it.

Councillor Johnson, also speaking in supporting of the motion, commended the role played by citizens from around the world in making such a positive contribution as a key part of the NHS workforce. Whilst praising the service provide by the NHS, Councillor Johnson felt that it had unfortunately been failed by the current Conservative government in terms of under investment which had also impacted on increasing levels of health inequalities within the system, and staff leaving. In supporting the call for more investment Councillor Johnson felt this was essential to ensure the NHS was able to continue providing an equal service for all.

In expressing further support for the motion and responding to the contributions made by members of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups during the debate, Councillor Ahmadi Moghaddam queried the stance taken towards the NHS by both the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Parties whilst in power, which he felt had encouraged the privatisation of services. In contrast, he was keen to ensure that any activity designed to make profit from the NHS was avoided to preserve and protect its status as a much-valued public service and asset.

Councillor Matin in contributing towards the debate and in support of the motion took the opportunity to highlight her personal experience of the NHS. In commending the service provided, Councillor Matin highlighted the importance in ensuring the required level of investment was provided and also that staff deserved a salary that reflected the important nature of service they provided. The opportunity was also taken to comment on previous statements made in relation to NHS privatisation which she felt also need to reflect the approach adopted by the Labour Government under Tony Blair.

As a final contribution, given the time available, Councillor Nerva, as Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care, ended by wishing the NHS a happy birthday and highlighting the revolutionary nature of the concept behind the NHS at the time of its formation in providing free healthcare at the point of access. Whilst acknowledging that the establishment of the NHS by a labour Government had built on the Beveridge Report, Councillor Nerva also highlighted the opposition to its formation expressed at the time by the Conservative Party. Moving on to focus on the state of the NHS today, Councillor Nerva felt it had been undervalued and underfunded by the current Conservative Government with significant problems also now being experienced in relation to, staffing, recruitment and retention which he argued had been exacerbated by Brexit and concern also expressed at the widening level of health inequalities being experienced as a result of the cost of living crisis, child poverty, and inadequate housing. In commending the motion to all members, Councillor Nerva ended by highlighting what he felt were the key issues needing to be addressed in terms of ongoing health provision, as set out in the motion, which included tackling health inequalities, prevention, and maintaining equal access to health services for all across the NHS.

Highlighting the limited time remaining, the Mayor then invited Councillor Kabir to exercise her right of reply. In responding and closing the debate, Councillor Kabir whilst keen to recognise the achievements of the NHS felt that more was required in terms of investment and support and therefore hoped all members would join her in supporting the motion as a means of uniting behind a shared vision and in seeking to support delivery of the necessary change in approach by Government required to preserve and safeguard the NHS.

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:

**“Celebrating 75 years of the NHS in Brent**

This council notes:

- 5 July 2023 marked 75 years of the National Health Service - it is the beating heart of Britain and the Labour Party’s proudest achievement.
- Treating over a million people a day in England, the NHS touches all our lives. It is also the biggest employer in Europe and the world’s largest employer of highly skilled professionals, with over 1.3m members of staff from over 200 different nationalities.



- When it was founded by Nye Bevan in 1948, the NHS was the first universal health system to be available to all, founded on the simple principle of care based on people's need, not their ability to pay.
- Today, nine in 10 people agree that healthcare should be free of charge, more than four in five agree that care should be available to everyone, and that the NHS makes them most proud to be British.
- The NHS has delivered huge medical advances, including the world's first liver, heart and lung transplant in 1987, pioneering new treatments, such as bionic eyes and, in more recent times, the world's first rapid whole genome sequencing service for seriously ill babies and children.
- This year also marks another very important 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary – the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush in Britain with more than 800 passengers from the Caribbean, ready to embark on their new lives. The Windrush Generation helped to build the National Health Services and we stand on the shoulders of their legacy.
- More recently the NHS and social care organisations have also benefitted from EU and other overseas staff.
- Throughout Covid-19, doctors, nurses, health and social care workers and NHS staff put their lives at risk to protect us all.

This council further notes:

- Our NHS colleagues are integral to the work of Brent Council.
- Since its creation, NHS spending has increased by an average of 3.7 per cent per year in real terms. But from 2010/11 to 2018/19, NHS funding growth slowed to 1.4 per cent per year. Spiralling inflation has reduced the value of the NHS budget, with NHS Confederation analysis showing that the NHS is facing real terms cut in funding of between £4 billion and £9.4 billion.
- Over the last ten years, the foundations of the NHS have been eroded through outsourcing to private companies and insufficient investment in both staff and infrastructure. Pay for health practitioners is now less than it was in 2010, 40 per cent of doctors in the NHS are looking to leave the NHS for work abroad; and of Boris Johnson's promised 40 new hospitals, less than a quarter are yet to gain planning permission.
- There are currently more patients waiting for treatment than ever in the history of the NHS. Furthermore, every month, tens of thousands of patients are spending entire days waiting in A&E with hospitals overwhelmed with patients who are fit to leave or wouldn't need to be there in the first place if they could access healthcare earlier.
- Ahead of the NHS's 75th birthday, a report by the NHS Assembly has set out the growing consensus that the NHS should now focus on three key areas for long term development: better preventing ill health, personalising care and delivering more co-ordinated care closer to home.

- The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) communities highlighted the deep health inequalities faced by so many of our residents, as well as the inequalities faced by BAME staff in the NHS, which the NHS also needs to urgently address.

This Council believes:

- The infrastructure of the NHS at both the community and national level requires wholesale renewal to meet the demands of an ageing population.
- Brent Council has a strong track record of working with the NHS for the benefit of all our residents, to ensure a borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy. In partnership with the NHS we have:
  - Launched 8 Family Wellbeing Centers, bringing together health, nursing, and parental support for children.
  - Held Prostate Cancer Awareness events in Stonebridge and Harlesden.
  - Won the Nursing Times Award for the Public Health Nursing category and been shortlisted for the unique initiative of the oral health mobile bus, which looked to improve education for parents across Brent about healthy eating and dental health.
- Despite these achievements, there is so much more that could be done to improve the NHS in Brent – and that only with a Labour Government will the necessary change be delivered.
- That the time is now, to seize the historic moment of the NHS's 75th anniversary to unite behind a shared vision of its next and best era.

This Council resolves to:

- (1) Request the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Adult Social Care write to the Shadow Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, outlining support for the Labour Party plan for the biggest expansions of doctor and health practitioner numbers in the history of the NHS, committing to:
  - Doubling the number of medical school places to 15,000 a year
  - Doubling the number of district nurses qualifying each year
  - Training 5,000 new health visitors a year
  - Creating 10,000 more nursing and midwifery clinical placements each year
  - A long-term workforce plan for the NHS, with independent workforce projections, new career paths into the NHS, and new types of health and care professionals.
  - Supporting the expansion by reintroducing the 45p additional rate of income tax paid by those earning more than £150,000 a year.
- (2) Work with the North West London Integrated Care System to promote measures that maximise opportunities at a local level to improve life for local residents by:

- Promoting prevention and reducing the number of people with long term conditions.
- Promoting the best deployment of resources to address identified need.
- Work with other statutory partners but also co-produce solutions with our communities and Voluntary Sector that will improve the lives of our most deprived communities in Brent.
- Working with our diverse communities to ensure equality of experience in accessing health care services”

#### **16.4 4<sup>th</sup> Motion (Labour Group) – Keeping Brent on the move: renewing our roads and pavements**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Benea to move the second and final motion submitted by the Labour Group who began by outlining that despite the Conservative Group’s opposition to the expansion of the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) it had been the current Conservative government who had placed a condition on Transport for London (TfL) to expand the ULEZ in order to receive financial support following the Covid-19 pandemic. In highlighting that London had the only major European transport network that was not financially subsidised, Councillor Benea advised that this inequity had formed the basis of the motion. Moving on to focus on the investment required in highway infrastructure, Councillor Benea pointed out that London Councils had estimated the required level of investment to address the backlog in maintenance and repairs totalled £1.6 billion, with the lack of funding being provided through Government impacting on every council in the capital. In highlighting the need for a safe, accessible, sustainable and inclusive transport network the need to continue expanding and improving public transport and sustainable travel modes was also outlined as a key issue, with initiatives such as the Mayor of London’s super-loop bus service praised. At the same time the need to maintain investment in London’s highway infrastructure was also recognised. Whilst commending the provision of additional capital investment by the Council to support the programme of work required, concern was expressed at what was felt to be the managed decline of highway investment by the Conservative Government in London and impact which the provision of additional investment by the Council itself was having on the provision of other vital services that protected vulnerable residents, with Councillor Benea reiterating that the Council should not be subject to such a binary choice. In commending the motion to all members, Councillor Benea ended by calling for greater investment in transport infrastructure praising the stance taken by the Council when compared to that of the current Government had overseen the curtailment of many key transport infrastructure pledges including Northern Powerhouse Rail and HS2.

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

In thanking Councillor Benea for introducing the motion, Councillor Krupa Sheth, as Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, felt it important to start by highlighting that Transport for London (TfL) required £475 million from central government to meet its 2024-25 capital delivery programme, a programme that was integral to both Brent and London and that without a long term funding settlement further degradation of the capital’s transport and highways infrastructure could be expected. In highlighting the lack of funding being provided for TfL

through central government and reminding members of the impact the pandemic had on TfL's income, Councillor Krupa Sheth outlined how the financial challenges being experienced by TfL also impacted on Brent locally. In contrasting the funding position for local authorities in London, when compared to those outside of the Capital, Councillor Krupa Sheth highlighted the difference in levels of funding being made available by the Government and impact this was having in terms of the boroughs highway maintenance programme with the position being further impacted through increased costs driven by inflation. Whilst outlining and commending the additional investment provided by the Council in the borough's transport network, including £20 million spent across the lifetime of the previous administration and £15 million committed to the highway budget by the current administration, it was pointed out this remained insufficient to cover all roads and pavements across the borough including the work required to mitigate against the impact of climate change. As a result, Councillor Krupa Sheth hoped all members would support the motion in seeking to ensure that TfL was properly funded and London was treated in the same way as the rest of England when funding the maintenance of roads, pavements, and infrastructure.

As a final contribution, recognising the limited time available, Councillor Lorber also spoke taking the opportunity to remind members of the proposals put forward, but not approved, by the Liberal Democrat Group as part of the budget setting process to increase the level of investment in the boroughs highways infrastructure to address the backlog in repairs from £15m to £20m. Referring to the potential availability of funding through the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy and New House Bonus, it was pointed out that decisions on the priority for use of these sources of funding remained at the discretion of the Council with Councillor Lorber highlighting key areas of concern raised by local residents continued to be focussed around potholes, broken pavements and roads and litter.

Given the remaining time available and as no other members had indicated they wished to speak on the motion and Councillor Benea had confirmed she did not need to exercise any right of reply, the Mayor having thanked members for their contributions, then put the motion to a vote which was declared **CARRIED**.

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

**“Keeping Brent on the move: renewing our roads and pavements”**

This council notes:

- Providing a transport network which supports economic development and works to improve safety, accessibility and inclusivity is fundamental to keeping our borough on the move in the coming years.
- Whether you walk, drive, cycle or take a bus or taxi; maintaining Brent's roads, pavements and infrastructure is vital part in creating a safe place to call home.
- In Brent, in the last Administration our teams repaired or maintained over 128 Kilometres of roads and pavements, enough to get you from the Civic Centre to Dover.

- In this year alone, as part of Brent's "winter resilience" programme of injecting patching of potholes, we have undertaken 2,568 repairs across the borough.
- In London more broadly, as the effects of austerity have compounded, so too has the effect on our public realm. London Councils have stated that our infrastructure is in "managed decline" thanks to years of real terms budget cuts, exacerbated by high inflation. For example, over 80 bridges in London are currently substandard and subject to restrictions owing to a backlog in repairs.
- With the effects of climate change increasing the severity of storms and flooding, our roads, pavements and drainage systems will be overwhelmed more frequently and require greater investment than ever before.
- In the last London Councils "State of the City" report a total backlog for maintenance repairs across all forms of infrastructure in the capital is said to be c. £1.6bn. In Brent, repairing every effected part of our pavements was estimated at the time to be over £60m.
- Brent Council has recently launched a new "Fix my Street" tool which will make it quicker for residents to report roads and pavements in need of repair. At time of submitting this motion 36k reports have been submitted, with 5k fixed in just the last month alone.

This council further notes:

- That the situation has deteriorated further when, in 2018, the government withdrew highway maintenance funding to Transport for London (TfL). This funding had been ring-fenced to resurfacing TfL's Red Routes and the 32 boroughs' principal roads (with Brent Council formerly receiving approximately £900k annually).
- If Brent Council was not in London, adjusted for inflation, we could have expected to receive up to £7 million of funding for our roads from TfL during the intervening period.
- As a result of the significantly reduced funding for our principal road network, the overall condition of these routes has suffered. To address the decline Brent Council has allocated £4m for a Principal Roads programme with £1m of the investment being spent in 2022/23 and a further £2m programmed for 2023/24.
- That unlike the whole of the rest of England, the government provides no funding for the maintenance of highways and pavements in London.
- By way of comparison, the government has committed over £2.7 billion of local highways maintenance outside of London between 2022 and 2025.
- Recent announcements of funding worth £200m from Active Travel England are also unavailable to London boroughs.

- The government has since announced a £380m cut (by more than 50% of its current budget) to the active travel budget in the current spending review, which the Labour Party has estimated could cost more than £2bn in the long term through the impact on public health and wider economy.
- This follows a long line of broken promises from this government on infrastructure, from the Northern Powerhouse Rail to HS2 – now all curtailed.

This Council resolves to:

- (1) Request that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, write to the Secretary of State for Transport demanding that London is treated in the same way as the rest of England when funding the maintenance of our roads, pavements, and infrastructure.
- (2) Request that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, bring forward a report to Cabinet, setting out Brent Council's future capital investment into our roads, pavements, and improvements in our public realm – as part of our manifesto commitment to invest £15 million into a programme of repairs and renewal.”

#### 17. **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 on Monday 18 September 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.33 pm

COUNCILLOR ORLEEN HYLTON  
Mayor