



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET

**Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 28 July 2025 at
10.00 am**

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

Also present: Andrew Hudson (Chair i4b Holdings and First Wave Housing Ltd)

1. Introduction & Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources), Kim Wright (Chief Executive) and Minesh Patel (Corporate Director Finance & Resources) with Ravinder Jassar (Deputy Director Corporate & Financial Planning) attending as his representative.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made during the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 16 June 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising (if any)

None identified.

5. Petitions (if any)

There were no petitions presented at the meeting.

6. Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)

There were no items referred from either the Community Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

7. Change in order of Business

Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Chair) advised that as he had accepted requests to speak in relation to Agenda Item 12 (Outcome of Formal Consultation on Amalgamation of Malorees Infant School (Community) and Malorees Junior School (Foundation)) he intended to change the order of the agenda, with that item to be considered as the next item of business.

The minutes therefore reflect the order in which items were considered at the meeting.

8. Outcome of Formal Consultation on Amalgamation of Malorees Infant School (Community) and Malorees Junior School (Foundation)

Prior to considering the report, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) welcomed Angus Hislop (Vice Chair of Malorees School Federation) to the meeting who he advised had requested to speak in support of the proposals to amalgamate Malorees Infant and Junior Schools. In addressing Cabinet, Mr Hislop advised he was also Chair of the Federations Finance, Personnel, Property and Staffing Committee. Outlining the Federations support for the proposed amalgamation he advised this was shared by the whole School Board with the Federation, following its formation in 2017, having identified a clear vision to achieve amalgamation, which had been delayed as a result of the process in seeking to manage the financial deficit within their budgets. During this time, however, both schools had sought to achieve as much as possible in seeking to combine and deliver the benefits associated in being able to work more closely together with them now effectively operating as one and the key benefit identified moving forward, in terms of formalising the process of amalgamation, being the ability to access the DfE School Building Programme in order to deliver a rebuild of the school.

Whilst recognising the potential financial impact on the school budget arising from the amalgamation, the Governing Body remained confident this could be offset against the reduction in maintenance costs associated with the existing facilities linked to the new build programme and ability the new facilities would have in attracting additional pupils. Whilst outlining what were felt to be the substantial benefits associated with the proposed amalgamation the risks identified were also acknowledged, particularly in terms of any significant delay in the new build programme progressing. Having considered and assessed the risk identified, however, the Board had felt this remained manageable and that the unique opportunity for refurbishment of the school was worth pursuing given the wider benefits for both current and future pupils and educational provision on the site.

In response, Councillor Grahl (as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools) thanked Mr Hislop for his support. She also advised Cabinet of two further written representations received from local parents Aidan Reilly and Venera Itibaeva expressing concern, given the outcome of the consultation process, at the potential impact of the proposals in relation to the financial risks identified and uncertainty around the school rebuild programme. As a result, assurance had been sought that any funding gaps identified in relation to the school budget would not impact on staff or lead to reductions in educational provision, which Councillor Grahl advised had been noted and would be taken into account as part of any final decision made.

Councillor Grahl was then invited to formally introduced the report from the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Community Development, which provided a summary of the formal consultation undertaken between 6 May 2025 and 10 June 2025 on the proposal to amalgamate Malorees Infant School and Malorees Junior School as one primary school for children aged between 3 – 11,

including provision for nursery aged children and, as a result, to formally recommend an amalgamation of the two schools.

In presenting the report, Councillor Grahl began by acknowledging the high regard in which both Malorees Infant and Junior Schools were held by the school community and wider local community in Brondesbury Park, reflecting the value and trust in the schools, their staff and the education they provided. By way of context, she explained that the two schools were already federated, and the school leadership now wanted to fully amalgamate with a proposal that had children at its heart. The Council wanted the schools to have autonomy to actively contribute to decisions with the proposed amalgamation, she highlighted, having been led by the aspirations of the Governing Body.

In detailing the process that had taken place in terms of the recommendation now being considered to formally amalgamate both schools, the opportunity was taken to thank officers for the work undertaken in responding to the comments made and engaging with parents and residents as part of the consultation process. Whilst recognising concerns had been expressed in response to the consultation, assurance was provided in relation to the key issues raised relating to the retention of any transferred land on the site for educational use and that the amalgamation would not involve any proposed redundancies or changes in the terms and conditions of Malorees staff. The opportunity was also taken to outline what was felt to be the considerable advantages to the school community, including the prospect of accessing DfE capital investment to carry out long overdue infrastructure investment, that would essentially lead to the rebuilding of both schools recognising how valuable an opportunity this represented not only for the school and its current as well as future pupils, but also as a key element of the Council's core values in terms of supporting every child and young person to access local, high quality education in the borough.

Following on, Nigel Chapman (Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Community Development) also took the opportunity to reiterate the assurance provided in relation to the retention of land on the site for educational use and of the discussions with staff and trade unions that the amalgamation would not involve any proposed redundancies or changes in the terms and conditions of Malorees staff, although the need was identified to ensure the school (moving forward) continued to deliver effective budget management. In relation to access to the DfE rebuild programme, members were advised this was currently subject to an option appraisal process which it was confirmed included a full rebuild of the whole site as an option the Council and school Governing Body continued to strongly advocate and support. Highlighting his experience of working with the DfE on a number of school projects, he confirmed that this had been positive and felt confident that the timeframe being set out would be achievable.

In considering the report, members took the opportunity to thank Councillor Grahl and the officers involved for their work in support of development of the proposed amalgamation recognising the sensitivity in which the process had been handled, particularly in relation to the treatment of staff at both schools, with support also expressed for the benefits identified in relation to the potential capital investment in relation to the school build programme and long term benefit for those currently attending the school and future pupils in terms of the teaching and learning

environment. The importance in keeping the wider school community updated on progress was also highlighted in taking the proposals forward.

In summing up, the opportunity was taken to thank the Governing Body along with all those who had engaged in the consultation process for their participation and support. Having considered the representations received, contents of the report, outcome of the consultation and assurances provided at the meeting regarding the proposed arrangements for amalgamation, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the amalgamation of Malorees Infant School and Malorees Junior School, to be achieved through the:
 - (a) The Closure of Malorees Junior School;
 - (b) Expansion of the age range of Malorees Infant School to admit children aged between 3 – 11;
 - (c) Change of the name of Malorees Infant School to 'Malorees Primary School'.
- (2) To commit to retaining the Junior School land that would transfer to the Local Authority for the educational use of Malorees Primary School.

9. **Financial Outturn 2024/25**

In Councillor Mili Patel's (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) absence, Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources presenting the outturn for income and expenditure for 2024-25 and other key financial data.

In introducing the report, Cabinet was reminded of the profound nature of the financial challenges experienced by the Council during 2024-25, as reflected within the report, alongside the efforts made to navigate the pressures being experienced with determination, resilience and a commitment to improving the lives of residents across the borough. In recognising the complexity of the issues faced, which it was pointed out had been shaped by national economic pressures, rising demand for services and the continuing impact of the cost-of-living crisis, the opportunity was taken to thank all those involved for their efforts and dedication in being able to deliver a balance General Fund outturn, which it was felt reflected the prudent and robust approach towards financial planning adopted by the Council.

In terms of spend on the Capital Programme, members were advised this had totalled £238.9m with the investment designed to support the continued provision of vital regeneration projects, housing developments and improvements in the borough's public realm. Members were advised that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) had also closed in surplus with reference also made to the £3.3m worth of in-year savings delivered by Community, Health and Wellbeing while still maintaining essential services. Whilst noting that the General Fund had, as a result, achieved break even as a whole the challenging nature of pressures faced had been reflected in the fact that the Council had experienced a £15.5m overspend across services, driven primarily by the escalating costs of homelessness. In response, a number of spending controls had been introduced during 2024-25, which had saved

£8.6m whilst also reducing reliance on reserves. These had included a hold on vacancies, renegotiation of contracts and necessary but tough decisions to protect frontline services. With reserves only available for use once, members were advised that the focus moving forward now remained on building a sustainable and resilient financial foundation with the report representing a financial reflection of Brent's core values in seeking to prioritise the most vulnerable, invest in local communities and uphold the Council's commitment to fairness and equity based on a process of innovation and in seeking to lobby for a fair allocation of resources reflecting need across the borough.

In considering the outturn position, Members acknowledged the significant level of financial challenge faced by the Council with the report highlighting the scale and depth of the pressures identified including those relating (as previously identified) to increased demand in relation to homelessness, which was recognised as a national and regional issue resulting from increased demand for housing as well as pressure on the supply of temporary accommodation. In seeking to alleviate the pressures identified, the opportunity was taken to highlight and recognise the lead being taken by the Council in delivery of affordable social and council homes across the borough and support expressed for the efforts being made to also better regulate the private rented sector as well as lobby for implementation of the Renters Rights Bill and to utilise additional funding recently announced by the Government in relation to the affordable housing package.

The opportunity was also taken to highlight the efforts being made, in seeking to manage the overspend identified within Children and Young People, to reduce the reliance on agency staff (despite the ongoing national challenges in relation to recruitment and retention) and deliver the new Children's Residential Care Home as a means of addressing ongoing pressures in terms of placement budgets.

In recognising the efforts made to continue managing and mitigating against the financial challenges identified Cabinet thanked all those involved for their efforts and as a result **RESOLVED** to note the overall financial outturn position for 2024-25, as detailed in the report.

10. **Medium Term Financial Outlook**

In Councillor Mili Patel's absence (as Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources which set out the overall financial position facing the Council and highlighted the significant risks, issues and uncertainties with regard to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The report also set out the proposed budget setting strategy for 2026-27, which included the proposed consultation with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders.

In presenting the report, Councillor Muhammed Butt highlighted the challenging financial environment in which the Council was operating as a result of the cost-of-living crisis and legacy of increasing inflation impacting not only on household budgets but also service demand and on the Council's overall financial resilience. In recognising the reality of these ongoing pressures, the report had identified a resulting budget gap of £30m as needing to be addressed over the next three year period, which members were advised would require difficult choices, innovation as

well as discipline to be able to deliver supported through the Embrace Change programme in seeking to transform how the Council delivered services, supported residents and managed resources to meet the challenges identified.

As part of the planning process, Members noted the potential for significant ongoing spending pressures in relation to demand-led services with specific reference to the 7% increase in number of adult social care service users and associated increase in weekly costs as well as the increase in number of children in residential care, with the cost of a single high needs placement noted as exceeding £500,000 annually. In terms of housing, the Council was also continuing to address the pressures created through rising demand, declining supply and escalating costs, with the average private rent in London having risen by 8.4% in the last year, and the number of households in temporary accommodation continuing to grow.

In seeking to move forward, Councillor Muhammed Butt felt it was important to recognise the focus and action outlined within the Medium-Term Financial Plan to assist in mitigating against the challenges identified. This had included the Housing Needs and Support budget being increased by £14m, alongside investment in additional housing supply through i4B and the Local Authority Housing Fund, while implementing a new model of resident support, underpinned by £1 million of recurring funding. Despite these measures, however, it was pointed out that the Council would not be able to meet the challenges identified alone and whilst welcoming the government's commitment to a multi-year funding settlement and announcements in the Fair Funding Review, members stressed their ongoing support in relation to the need for fundamental reform of the local government funding regime to provide a more sustainable basis for the ongoing provision and delivery of services.

In considering the report, concern was expressed at the substantial nature of the ongoing financial challenges outlined during presentation of the report given the impact on the Council's budget and potential need to deliver additional savings. Highlighting the need to continue focussing on the way in which support was being provided for residents moving forward, members were also aware of the need to ensure this continued to be targeted effectively on those most in need along with the need to continue lobbying for a fairer funding mechanism not only for local residents but for local government as a whole.

Officers were thanked for their work in preparing the report and it was **RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

- (1) Note the contents of the report and the potential financial impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- (2) Note the summary of the Spending Review and Local Government Funding reform consultations, as set out in section five of the report.
- (3) Agree the budget setting process for 2026/27, including the approach to consultation and scrutiny, as set out in section seven of the report.
- (4) Note and agree the proposed 2024/25 capital budget carry forwards and capital virements for 2025/26 as set out in section eight of the report.

- (5) Note the financial position with regards to the Housing Revenue Account, as set out in section nine of this report; and
- (6) Note the financial position with regards to Schools and the Dedicated Schools Grant, as set out in section ten of the report.

11. **Quarter 1 Financial Forecast 2025/26**

In Councillor Mili Patel's (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) absence, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) moved on to introduce a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources which set out the financial forecast for the General Fund revenue budget, the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme as at Quarter 1 2025-26.

In introducing the report, the Leader highlighted that despite the considerable efforts to maintain financial control, the operating environment and wider economic and social context faced by the Council remained challenging. Whilst forecasting a breakeven position at Q1 against the £431.4m General Fund revenue budget it was pointed out this was not without significant risk, given the ongoing pressures faced, which remained particularly acute in relation to homelessness. Whilst highlighting that the number of homelessness application had reduced during the previous year it was pointed out that demand remained high with the cost of temporary accommodation also continuing to increase.

Given the challenges identified, members were reminded of the measures introduced in response to protect services for residents. These included increasing the Housing Needs and Support budget by £14m, with support also continuing to be provided for the Council's wholly owned housing company i4B in seeking to deliver affordable homes (including 15 new acquisitions planned for 2025-26) alongside the introduction of a new model of resident support, backed by £1m in recurring funding, designed to assist households in building long-term resilience. In addition, £8.9m worth of agreed savings were also in the process of being delivered with 91% currently on track whilst, it was pointed out, the Council also continued to invest in its people and infrastructure working across departments to implement the Embrace Change programme, developed to transform how the Council was able to support residents and manage its finances.

Whilst supportive of the efforts being made, members also recognised the ongoing risks and challenges given the ongoing increase in the cost of social care packages and pressures in children's placements, particularly in residential and secure settings with collection rates for debt and Council Tax and Business Rates (whilst improving) still falling short of pre-pandemic levels.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted the challenges identified in seeking to manage demand and address the pressures identified, with members committed to continue the positive work with Corporate Directors to ensure the monitoring and management of budgets in each service area and to take the difficult decisions required in order to safeguard the council's reputation for financial sustainability.

Having noted the information provided Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note the overall financial position and the actions being taken to manage the issues arising, as detailed within the report.
- (2) Note the savings delivery tracker in Appendix A of the report.
- (3) Note the prudential indicators for treasury management in Appendix B of the report.
- (4) Approve the virements set out in section 9.18 of the report.
- (5) Note the debt written off as set out in section 9.22 of the report.
- (6) Approve an uplift to the Capital Programme Budget of £851k following the successful grant award of UK Shared Prosperity Funding as set out in section 12.2 of the report.

12. **Authority to Award Contract for Temporary Recruitment Services (Managed Service Provider)**

Once again in Councillor Mili Patel's (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) absence, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources seeking approval (based on an overview of the procurement process undertaken) to the proposed award of a contract for a Managed Service Provider (MSP) to supply temporary agency staff. reliable and good quality agency staff workforce in order to provide the necessary cover (where required) to ensure the continued delivery of key frontline services across the borough, which the proposed contract award for the MPS had been designed to enable.

Alongside the provision of a Managed Service Provider, members were also advised and welcomed the ongoing efforts being made to reduce the dependency and spend on agency workers, given the significant costs associated with their use, which it was noted had resulted in a reduction in spend during 2024-25 of more than £7m and also supported the continued efforts and wider benefits associated in seeking to sustain a healthy, dedicated workforce for the people of Brent.

Having noted the information contained within the exempt appendix of the report, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the award of the contract for a Managed Service for Temporary Agency Staff Services to Reed Specialist Recruitment Ltd for five years in the sum of three years plus an optional two-year extension.

13. **Membership of the i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd Boards**

Councillor Donnelly-Jackson (Cabinet Member for Housing) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Finance & Resources seeking approval to various appointments to the Board of Directors of the Council's wholly owned housing companies i4B Holdings Ltd and First Wave Housing Ltd.

In presenting the report, Cabinet were reminded of the important role played by both companies in seeking to support the Council in tackling the current housing crisis as one of the most urgent and significant challenges faced across the

borough, with support expressed at the bold and innovative contribution they played in seeking to provide safe, secure, and affordable homes for residents across Brent.

In commending the work of both companies, the specific role played by i4B in enabling the Council to directly invest in housing for local people, acquiring homes, bringing properties back into use, and providing quality, well-managed housing for families who otherwise be in temporary accommodation or at risk of homelessness was recognised as an example of local leadership in being able to utilise the levers of local government not only to outsource responsibility but also to take ownership of the housing challenge and deliver change.

In terms of the expansion of both Boards, members were advised this would involve and increase from five to seven members, reflecting the growth and increasing complexity of the companies, and the seriousness in which they and the Council approached good governance, accountability, and oversight. In welcoming the proposed appointments of Sadie East, Serita Kwofie, and Nicole Jarrett-Francis (as senior officers from across the council whose local knowledge and commitment to public service it was felt would provide invaluable expertise) members were also keen to recognise the way in which they would be supported by the proposed appointment of Waqar Ahmed and Mannie Ketley (following a rigorous external selection process) as independent voices designed to ensure provision of the necessary mix of experience, challenge, and strategic vision.

At the same time, the opportunity was also taken to formally thank Peter Gadsdon, Melanie Smith, and Akintoye Durowoju as outgoing Directors for their contributions to both Boards, recognising the way they had helped shape i4B and First Wave into well-respected and effective organisations with a growing impact.

In considering the report Cabinet also welcomed and noted the comments made by Andrew Hudson (as Chair of the i4b & First Wave Housing Boards) thanking the outgoing Board members for their valued contributions and commitment during their term of office and in support of the proposed appointment of the new Directors & non-executive Directors outlined in the report, given the combination of experience and expertise it was felt they would continue to provide in the ongoing management of both Boards.

In support of the proposed appointments, members were keen to recognise the positive impact of both companies and, whilst ensuring that the necessary level of accountability and oversight was maintained, also welcomed the refreshed and expanded membership on both Boards as a means of ensuring a continued focus in seeking to raise standards, drive innovation, and deliver on the Council's commitment to putting residents first.

Having noted the recruitment process undertaken, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Approve the appointment of Waqar Ahmed and Mannie Ketley as non-executive, independent Directors of i4B and FWH for a period of three years from 1 September 2025.
- (2) Approve the appointment of Sadie East and Serita Kwofie as senior council officer Directors of i4B and FWH for a period of three years from 4 August

2025 and Nicole Jarrett-Francis as a senior council officer Director of i4B and FWH for a period of three years from 1 October 2025.

- (3) Note that Peter Gadsdon had stepped down as a Director of i4B and FWH as of 31 March 2025 following his retirement from the council, that Melanie Smith would step down as a Director on 30 September 2025 when she retired from the council, and that Akintoye Doruwoju would step down as a Director from 1 September 2025, following the end of his term of appointment.
- (4) Note the increase in number of Directors of i4B and FWH from five to seven to reflect the growth of the companies.

14. **Affordable Housing Supply Update (July 2025)**

Councillor Benea (Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Neighbourhood & Regeneration providing an overview of progress made against the delivery of the Council's affordable housing delivery targets.

In introducing the report, Cabinet was reminded of the Council's continued commitment to delivering 5,000 genuinely affordable homes in Brent by 2028, including 1,700 directly delivered by the Council recognising the impact the provision of safe, secure and affordable housing had in supporting residents across the borough. In terms of progress, members were advised that despite unprecedented financial pressures, it had still been possible to deliver (over the past five years) 4,052 affordable homes across the borough of which 758 were council-led, with over a further 1,000 already on site and set to be completed by March 2028, meaning the Council remained on track to exceed both its borough-wide and council delivery targets.

In commending the progress achieved, this was also felt to reflect the dedicated planning and investment involved in projects such as the South Kilburn transformation (where it was pointed out 2,400 new homes, community and health facilities, and a school were being delivered) alongside plans such as those being developed to unlock the Edgware Road scheme, which would provide 120 homes for temporary accommodation alongside new commercial space.

Whilst proud of the progress being made, members also recognised the significant challenges that remained with particular reference to ongoing pressure in relation to viability and officers therefore exploring new approaches to unlock sites on which progress had been delayed, whilst also awaiting further details on the Government's recently announced £39bn affordable housing package on which the Council would continue to lobby to ensure Brent secured a fair share of the available funding in order to address the increasing levels of demand.

In considering the report, members commended the progress being made in seeking to increase the supply of affordable housing across the borough despite the significant economic, market and financial challenges identified with all those involved across the Council thanked for their efforts given the positive impact created as a result.

Having noted the exempt information contained in the appendix to the report and breakdown of schemes being delivered directly by the Council (as set out in section 3.2.3 and Table 2 of the report), Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note the update on the schemes currently on site and expected delivery dates.
- (2) Acknowledge the current viability challenges on the council's plans for self-delivering of new-build social rent schemes and that officers were exploring alternative approaches for addressing Brent's housing needs.
- (3) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property to enter into a Deed of Variation for the GLA Affordable Housing Programme 21-26 including any delegated authority that may be required for future variations to enable further affordable homes to be provided.
- (4) Agree to proceed with the onsite delivery of the Edgware Road scheme to deliver 120 new-build homes for use as temporary accommodation with ground floor commercial space.
- (5) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Property to agree the necessary pre-tender considerations, use of the commercial space including consideration of tax status and subsequent contract awards.

15. **Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy Funding for Public Realm Infrastructure**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Regeneration seeking approval to the use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) funding to support investment in public realm infrastructure designed to support growth and development, with a focus on Highways, Parks and CCTV to ensure the necessary support was provide to reflect the ongoing level of new developments across the borough.

In presenting the report to Cabinet, members noted that the proposals included £14m of what was regarded as transformative SCIL investment in Brent's public realm designed to enhance a range of spaces and infrastructure such as footways, parks, CCTV and street lighting in direct response to issues identified by local residents as being priorities to ensure their local neighbourhoods remained clean, safe and welcoming places where they could feel proud to live.

In highlighting the borough wide nature of the programme of investment, members were advised of the way it had been focussed to deliver what were felt to be real and tangible improvements across each Brent Connects area, supporting better-maintained roads and pavements, tree planting, rejuvenated playgrounds, and a modernised CCTV network that would help to tackle antisocial behaviour and build

community confidence in a way that would ensure Brent's public realm continued to evolve in a way that was fair, inclusive, and driven by genuine community need.

In support of the approach outlined within the report, Cabinet welcomed the proposed use of SCIL funding to support investment in the public realm, recognising the impact of the previous Government's programme of austerity in terms of the funding available to invest in areas such as public realm. In recognising the sustained pressure and demand for investment given the significant population growth and demographic changes over recent years, members also commended the move towards an integrated and strategic programme of activity to deliver the improvements and changes being sought across public realm services including the focus on CCTV, which were informed by community priorities whilst also recognising the cumulative impacts of development across the borough.

Members also commended the success achieved in terms of the generation and collection of CIL receipts, which was recognised as a further benefit of the efforts being made to deliver the ambitious programme of regeneration across Brent with the approach set out in the report also felt to reflect the beginning of a more dynamic, targeted and responsive approach towards the use of SCIL.

In acknowledging the extent of the proposed investment, which it was noted would include upgrades to roads and pavements (which a focus on growth and intensification areas); replacement and improvement of street lighting; removal of tree stumps to allow for new planting and a safer more walkable borough; the upgrading of play equipment and repairs to footpaths in parks as well as the enhancement and expansion of CCTV digital infrastructure, members were also keen to recognise the way in which the process would support local communities as well as the delivery of key infrastructure and ensure that growth being delivered worked for all sections of the community in order to deliver a clean, green and safe borough.

As a result, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the recommended allocation of up to £14,533,000 of SCIL funding to support much needed infrastructure improvement in relation to highways, parks, and CCTV, as outlined in the report.

16. **Authority to invite tenders in respect of appointing Charging Point Operator(s) to supply, install, operate and maintain electric vehicle charge points**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Public Realm & Enforcement) introduced a report from the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Regeneration providing an update on proposals to expand electric vehicle charging provision in Brent through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding programme and seeking approval, as part of a six London Borough partnership, to invite tenders in respect of appointing Charge Point Operator(s) to supply, install, operate and maintain additional electric vehicle charging points in Brent.

In presenting the report, Cabinet was advised that the proposals outlined in the report were designed to deliver nearly 2,000 new charge points on a borough wide basis as part of a wider programme of work being undertaken to address air quality, congestion, climate change, and transport inequality across the borough. In recognising that road transport accounted for over a fifth of Brent's carbon

emissions, members were reminded that supporting the switch to zero-emission vehicles had been identified as a key focus within the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy supporting the goal to halve petrol and diesel journeys by 2030.

In partnership with a number of other boroughs across London, the funding awarded through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure programme was recognised as providing a significant opportunity to further expand the electric vehicle charge point network with the procurement process enabling the appointment of expert operators to supply, install, and maintain a new modern electric vehicle network across Brent. In terms of the investment provided, members were advised this would also support the work being undertaken to support the development of cleaner, greener and healthier communities across Brent and in ensuring no area was left behind in the Electric Vehicle (EV) transition, with the strategy also focussed around prioritising public access, equity, and long-term resilience, ensuring Brent's charging network could meet the needs of all residents.

In considering the report, members welcomed the approach outlined and contribution it was felt the investment would provide in relation to the Council's existing long-term transport strategy and EV infrastructure plans and in maintaining Brent's commitment to building a cleaner, greener future, especially when compared to the stance being taken by some other local authorities nationally (following the recent local government elections) in seeking to no longer pursue initiatives aimed at tackling climate change. In contrast, support was expressed for the approach adopted by the Council in seeking to continue focussing on measures to tackle climate change and improve air quality given the wider environmental and public health benefits, with the investment identified within the report seen as not only supporting progress towards the Council's net zero target but also more active and sustainable travel choices in terms of facilitating the switch to zero/low emission vehicles and wider EV incentive measures.

In recognising the wider benefits identified for residents and the local environment Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Approve the commencement of the tender process in respect of appointing the Charging Point Operator (s) to supply, install, operate and maintain electric vehicle charge points in Brent in accordance with the new Procurement Legislation.
- (2) Approve the pre-tender considerations pursuant to Standing Order 89 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, as detailed within the report.
- (3) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement, to award a fifteen-year contract(s).
- (4) Approve entering into the Partnership 6 Inter-Authority agreement.

17. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

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

18. **Any other urgent business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 10.58 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair