

LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING - 25 FEBRUARY 2016

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 25 February 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Councillors present:

Greening	A Perry	Kay
Burgess	R Perry	Nicholls
Caluori	Poole	O'Halloran
Chowdhury	Smith	Parker
Convery	Spall	Picknell
Debono	Watts	Poyser
Doolan	Webbe	Russell
Fletcher	Court	Shaikh
Gallagher	Diner	Turan
Hamitouche	Donovan	Ward
Ismail	Erdogan	Ward
Khan	Gantly	Wayne
Klute	Gill	Williamson
Murray	Heather	
O'Sullivan	Jeapes	

The Mayor (Councillor Richard Greening) in the Chair

88 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting on 3 December 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and the Mayor be authorised to sign them.

89 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

90 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed the attendees to the meeting and advised that this was the most important in the Council year and because of the importance of the decisions being made, the rules around questions would be changed, to allow the meeting to focus on the budget.

(i) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrews, Comer-Schwartz, Hull, Kaseki and Ngongo.

(ii) Order of business

The order of business was not changed.

(iii) Declarations of discussion items

None.

(iv) Mayor's Announcements

Following a bad fall in December, the Mayor had been in hospital for some time and he thanked all the staff at the Royal London Hospital who looked after him with great care and expertise and thanked everyone for all the good wishes he had received.

Following the tragic deaths of Alan Cartwright, Stefan Appleton and Vaso Kakko, the three young men who died as a result of knife Crime in the borough last year, the Mayor welcomed the announcement that we will be hosting a Crime and Safety Summit on the morning of Saturday 5 March in the Assembly Hall. The Mayor advised that residents, community groups and young people are invited to attend to consider what the community can do to help prevent these crimes. The special guest speaker will be Junior Smart, an ex-gang member and drug dealer who has turned his life around and is the founder of the SOS Gangs Project. The Mayor urged everyone present to attend.

The Mayor congratulated Darey Cletus and Diana Lucia Gomez Paniagua on their election as Young Mayor and Young Deputy Mayor and looked forward to working with them.

Finally, the Mayor thanked everyone who supported the charity dinner on 11 February to celebrate Chinese New Year. The figures have not been finalised yet, but the Mayor estimated that at least £2,000 had been raised for Music First.

91 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Watts thanked the Mayor and advised that following the Local Government Finance Settlement announced in December, which promised further cuts to the council's budget by central government of £17M per year until 2020, by which time 70% of the council's funding will have been lost, he had called upon to government give some help to the most deprived areas of the country. He had therefore been relieved when the government announced some additional funding for the councils that had been hardest hit by the cuts, only to find out that the councils receiving the funding were the big counties; Surrey, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, where David Cameron's constituency is, all of which had proportionally much smaller cuts than Islington, whilst councils with high levels of deprivation, like Liverpool, Manchester and Islington got nothing.

Councillor Watts also said that the new Housing Bill was going to be one of the most damaging bits of legislation ever introduced. It includes, 'Pay to Stay' forcing families to pay near-to or full market rent, it proposes an end to secure tenancies and it forces the council to sell family homes. Councillor Watts advised that Councillor Murray had done a great deal of work and led the opposition to this Bill and we are working with other boroughs to show the damaging effect of council house sales. Councillor Watts advised that we've led marches, worked with the unions, given evidence and appeared in the media. We are calling a public meeting between 6.30 – 8pm on Tuesday 8 March. It is primarily for tenants, but everyone is welcome. Councillor Watts also invited everyone to join the rally against the Bill on 13 March advising that we will fight to protect tenants from the worst excesses of the government.

Councillor Watts advised that the government have succeeded in removing 600,000 people off the electoral register through the new individual electoral registration system, but thanks to the hard work of the Electoral Services team here only 1,600 people in Islington have been lost off the register, a much smaller percentage than the national average or that of neighbouring boroughs. Councillor Watts thanked the team for ensuring that people in the borough retained their democratic rights.

92 PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

PETITIONS:

Councillor Poole presented a petition on behalf of the residents of Compton Avenue and Hydes Place requesting that Compton Avenue become access only and for speed restrictions to be installed to prevent it being used as a rat run.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Councillor Alice Perry moved a motion under Rule 22(k) of the Constitution to suspend Rule 19.2 (l) and for the rest of Rule 19.2 be suspended in so far as is necessary to restrict questions to those asked in advance of the meeting.

Councillor O'Halloran seconded.

The motion was put to vote and CARRIED.

Question (a) from Kiat Phua to Councillor Claudia Webbe, Executive Member for Environment and Transport:

Many parents are alarmed by the traffic accident outside Archway Children's Centre, Vorley Road on 28 Jan 2016. A speeding car spun 360 degrees and hit barriers outside the nursery entrance as it headed out to Junction Road. I understand the one-way traffic system on Vorley Road will be reversed from 2016/17. Could the Council make Vorley Road safer by banning left turns from Junction Road as part of the traffic reversal; and look into separating Vorley Road from MacDonald Road as part of the longer-term plan for more affordable housing in the area?

Reply:

I was shocked to hear about the accident that took place outside the Children's Centre on Vorley Road. The council takes the safety of all road users seriously. Speeding is unacceptable and will be controlled. We will arrange for speed surveys to be undertaken on Vorley Road to assess vehicle speeds.

The transformation of the Archway Gyratory will of course see the bus stands currently located opposite the Children's Centre on Vorley Road moved to on-street locations, which will allow the Council to deliver new much needed affordable homes for local people right here in the heart of the Archway town centre.

The relocation of the bus stands and the significant reduction in the number of buses on Vorley Road should help I think to improve safety on Vorley Road, in particular directly outside the Children's Centre where buses currently pull out of the bus stand.

Whilst banning the left turn is not in the initial road scheme, I am certainly open to the idea of doing so, but after we've understood how the traffic actually behaves. There are some

difficulties that would be created if we did ban the left turn, in particular for Bredgar Road, where Hargrave Park School is located. I therefore want to make sure that banning the left turn, which is entirely within the powers of the Council, would be fully justified, before consulting on a proposal to introduce such a change. We don't have a crystal ball so we will monitor traffic flows closely with TfL and review how the scheme is working up to and including 6 months. It's at that point when we will look at whether to ban the left turn from Junction Road.

I hope that ultimately the changes to traffic and public space and the removal of the bus stand from Vorley Road will indeed lead to a safer and better environment on Vorley Road for communities and children

Supplementary question:

I am really not convinced by your response. There is already a high level of pollution and modelling has already been done. We are really concerned about this. I saw your comments to Kiat about traffic flow, but we know young children are susceptible to lung damage. We are right on the pavement, which itself is very narrow and buses will pass almost in front of the building. There will be a huge increase in the number of cars and in pollution. Something like 1,200 families use the centre. We would really like to know why you are not interceding on our behalf with TfL? We don't understand why it has not been considered more closely. We've provided lots of information and no-one seems to be picking it up.

Reply:

Thank you for your supplementary question. Very early on in the consultation, which closed in January, we made very strong and clear representations about the gyratory and banned right turn and we made the representation publically. We said that banning the right turn would lead to increased levels of traffic on Vorley Road and asked TfL to consider the children's centre, but that consultation has closed and the decision has been made. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity and at the same time as arguing for a scheme to go ahead to improve the area, we have been arguing the case for residents and children. We are concerned about safety, that's why we made the strong representations we did and it was not just me, your local councillors also made representations and the representations are ongoing. We have indicated that we are minded to consider banning the left turn, but we don't have a crystal ball and need to look at it once the scheme is in place. We will monitor it and bring about changes as necessary; that's our commitment.

Question (b) from Claudine Fry to Councillor Claudia Webbe, Executive Member for Environment and Transport:

What are you doing to ensure that the 600+ families who regularly use the highly-regarded Archway Children's Centre are not exposed to high levels of pollution and danger as a result of the gyratory changes which will reroute heavy traffic along the narrow street the centre is located on?

Reply:

Thank you for your question about air quality. The council is committed to improving air quality in the borough. We recognise that air pollution is a major cause of serious and long-term health issues and the council has a very clear policy and approach to reduce pollution. This is not just a challenge for Archway, as the whole borough has been declared as an area where air quality needs to be improved, such are the level of concentrations.

The reality of how we do that is by reducing the number of older diesel buses that travel through Islington. Diesel buses and coaches are responsible for 40 per cent of the nitrogen dioxide emissions in the borough. Whilst the council has made its own fleet of vehicles one of the greenest in the country, TfL has been slow in taking old diesel buses off the roads and replacing them with cleaner hybrid vehicles. That's why I've been campaigning for the current Mayor to make all the buses operating from the Holloway bus garage hybrid by this year. Sadly, the current Mayor has managed to progress only one quarter of the target required. It will be down to the next Mayor of London, Labour's Sadiq Khan, to deliver the change that we need.

In terms of the planned changes for Archway, and more specifically Vorley Road on which the Archway Children's Centre is located, the new changes to the gyratory will take a significant number of buses off Vorley Road. Removing the bus stand from directly opposite the Archway Children's Centre should also help in reducing pollution. This will also help in reducing the risk of accidents, with fewer buses pulling out of the stand and into Vorley Road directly outside the Children's Centre. In addition, TfL has agreed that buses will switch off their engines when parked at the relocated bus stands, meaning pollution drops further, and we will monitor this to ensure that this happens.

We will monitor the impacts of the highway changes and we are working with the local community to monitor local air quality by putting air quality monitoring measures in place. These measurements will be repeated after the introduction of the highway changes. We should also remember that the council's 20mph speed limit policy will ensure that vehicles travel at a reduced speed; making roads in the local area safer for all, and helping also to reduce emissions.

We should also take note of the council's other policies to improve air quality, such as the diesel surcharge on resident parking permits; the 'car-free' planning policy for new developments and making sure new developments are air quality neutral or better; and the anti-engine-idling policy and enforcement. I can assure you that this council does take tackling air quality seriously and we are working to reduce pollution. We know there is more to be done and are working hard to reduce emissions.

Supplementary question:

I'm one of the hundreds of parents who use the Archway Centre and I find your answer totally unsatisfactory. These changes will turn a quiet road into a major highway. It's simply re-routing the gyratory through a small road that is not suitable; it contains a children's centre and a housing estate. We don't need to wait for tests. You can see the levels of traffic and know what will be going up Vorley Road. What will you do to address pollution levels that are already illegal and will only get higher?

Reply:

I've outlined what the Council is doing. We can't simply just address Vorley Road; air pollution is a problem for the whole of Islington. We are taking it seriously; we don't believe that a clean diesel has been made yet, we don't believe that Euro6 is good enough. We've taken very serious action to address air pollution in terms of our policies. With regard to Vorley Road I think that your point is about the banned right turn. Air pollution is a London and Islington wide problem and what we are doing is coming up with a series of measures. We haven't just started; we've taken air pollution seriously for a long time. We responded to the consultation and made strong arguments against the banned right turn. Our response is on record. It's not true to say that all traffic will end up on Vorley Road. We need to monitor what actually happens to traffic and work with the community to manage it. We want to work with you and will continue to do so.

93 AMENDMENT TO THE ALLOCATION OF EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

Councillor Perry moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Poyser seconded.

The recommendations were put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

That the change in Executive functions detailed in Point 3.1 of this report be noted.

94 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2016-17

Councillor Watts moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Burgess seconded.

Councillor Russell moved two amendments.

Councillors Caluori, Chowdhury, Murray, Heather, Fletcher, Jeapes and Doolan contributed to the debate.

Councillors Watts and Russell exercised their right to reply.

The first amendment was put the vote. Voting was recorded as follows:

For: Councillor Russell.

Against: Councillors Burgess, Caluori, Chowdhury, Convery, Court, Debono, Diner, Donovan, Doolan, Erdogan, Fletcher, Gallagher, Gantly, Gill, Greening, Hamitouche, Heather, Ismail, Jeapes, Kay, Khan, Klute, Murray, Nicholls, O'Halloran, O'Sullivan, Parker, Alice Perry, Rupert Perry, Picknell, Poole, Poyser, Shaikh, Smith, Spall, Turan, Diarmaid Ward, Nick Ward, Watts, Wayne, Webbe and Williamson.

The amendment was **LOST**.

The second amendment was put the vote. Voting was recorded as follows:

For: Councillor Russell.

Against: Councillors Burgess, Caluori, Chowdhury, Convery, Court, Debono, Diner, Donovan, Doolan, Erdogan, Fletcher, Gallagher, Gantly, Gill, Greening, Hamitouche, Heather, Ismail, Jeapes, Kay, Khan, Klute, Murray, Nicholls, O'Halloran, O'Sullivan, Parker, Alice Perry, Rupert Perry, Picknell, Poole, Poyser, Shaikh, Smith, Spall, Turan, Diarmaid Ward, Nick Ward, Watts, Wayne, Webbe and Williamson.

The amendment was **LOST**.

The recommendations in the report were put to the vote. Voting was recorded as follows:

For: Councillors Burgess, Caluori, Chowdhury, Convery, Court, Debono, Diner, Donovan, Doolan, Erdogan, Fletcher, Gallagher, Gantly, Gill, Greening, Hamitouche, Heather, Ismail,

Jeapes, Kay, Khan, Klute, Murray, Nicholls, O'Halloran, O'Sullivan, Parker, Alice Perry, Rupert Perry, Picknell, Poole, Poyser, Shaikh, Smith, Spall, Turan, Diarmaid Ward, Nick Ward, Watts, Wayne, Webbe and Williamson.

Abstained: Councillor Russell.

The recommendations were **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED:

The General Fund Budget 2016-17 and MTFS (Section 3 of the report)

- 1.1 That the 2016-17 net Council cash limits as set out in Table 1 (Paragraph 3.1.4 of the report) and the MTFS at Appendix A of the report, which includes the revenue savings in Appendix B of the report and revenue growth of £0.5m for investment in keeping the borough's young people safe, be agreed.
- 1.2 That the report of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 21st January 2016 in reviewing the 'Budget Proposals 2016-17' be noted.
- 1.3 That the requirement to report on the number of maintained schools that have completed the Schools Value Financial Standard (SVFS) by 31st March to the Department for Education by 31st May each year (Paragraph 3.2.13 of the report) be noted.
- 1.4 That the fees and charges policy and the schedule of 2016-17 fees and charges be agreed, and that the delegated authority for the Corporate Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Children and Families, to agree new childcare charges following consultation in the summer term be noted. (Paragraphs 3.2.14-17 and Appendices C1 and C2 of the report).
- 1.5 That the Council's policy on the level of General Fund balances and the estimated use of the Council's earmarked reserves be agreed (Paragraphs 3.2.19-21 and Table 3 of the report).

The HRA Budget and MTFS (Section 4 of the report)

- 1.6 That the balanced HRA 2016-17 budget within the HRA MTFS at Appendix D1 of the report and the 2016-17 HRA savings at Appendix D2 of the report be agreed.
- 1.7 That the 2016-17 HRA rents and other fees and charges be noted. (Tables 5-8 and Appendix D3 of the report) be agreed

The Capital Programme 2016-17 to 2018-19 (Section 5 of the report)

- 1.8 That the 2016-17 capital programme be agreed and the provisional programme for 2017-18 to 2018-19 be noted. (Paragraph 5.1, Table 9 and Appendix E1 of the report).
- 1.9 That the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources applies capital resources to fund the capital programme in the most cost-effective way be agreed. (Paragraph 5.2 of the report).
- 1.10 That the schedule of planned Traffic and Transportation schemes in 2016-17 be noted and the related decision-making responsibilities for these schemes be agreed. (Paragraph 5.3 and Appendix E2 of the report).

Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (Section 6 of the report)

- 1.11 That the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2016-17 (including external debt and treasury management Prudential Indicators), as considered by Audit Committee on 28th January 2016, be agreed. (Section 6 and Appendix F1 of the report).

- 1.12 That the additional capital Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy be agreed. (Section 6 and Appendix F2 of the report).

Council Tax 2016-17, including Statutory Calculations (Section 7 of the report)

- 1.13 That the calculations required for the determination of the 2016-17 council tax requirement and the level of council tax as detailed in Section 7 of the report and summarised below, be agreed.
- 1) The 2016-17 council tax requirement of £76,874,061.54. (Paragraph 7.5 of the report)
 - 2) The relevant (average) amount of Islington Band D council tax of £1,020.37, a 3.99% increase compared to 2015-16, and to determine that this is not 'excessive'. (Paragraphs 7.6 and 7.7 of the report)
 - 3) The basic amount of Islington Band D council tax for dwellings to which no special item relates (i.e. outside of the Lloyd Square Garden area) of £1,020.15 and total Band D council tax (including the GLA precept) of £1,296.15. (Paragraphs 7.8 and 7.12 of the report)
 - 4) The amount of 2016-17 council tax (excluding the GLA precept) for each valuation band over each of the Council's areas. (Paragraph 7.10 of the report)
 - 5) The total amount of 2016-17 council tax (including the GLA precept) for each valuation band over each of the Council's areas. (Paragraph 7.12 of the report)

Matters to Consider in Setting the Budget (Section 8 of the report)

- 1.14 That the Section 151 Officer's and the Monitoring Officer's comments in their determination of the revenue and capital budgets for 2016-17 and the basis for the level of council tax, including the Section 151 Officer's report in relation to his responsibilities under Section 25 (2) of the Local Government Act 2003 be noted.
- 1.15 That the Resident Impact Assessment (RIA) on the 2016-17 budget be noted. (Appendix G of the report).
- 1.16 That the Pay Policy Statement for 2016-17 be agreed. (Appendix H of the report).

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

MAYOR