

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Date: Tuesday, 25 April 2023

Venue: Council Chamber, Ealing Town Hall, New Broadway, Ealing W5 2BY

Attendees (in person): Councillors

M Midha (Mayor) M Ahmed, S Ahmed, J Anand, P Anand, J Ball, J Blacker, J Gallant, K Sahota, K Bains, C Anderson, T Sidhu, B Rai, R Dheer, B Mahfouz, C Summers, L Brett, A Young, P Driscoll, V Alexander, Y Gordon, H Haili, M Hamidi, B Hashani, C Hersch, M Iqbal, A Jammu, S Jassal, Y Johnson, H Kaur Dheer, A Kelly, S Khan, I Kingston, P Knewstub, S Kohli, S Kumar, G Malcolm, S Manro, D Martin, J Martin, P Mason, F Mohamed, K Mohan, G Murtaza, K K Nagpal, K Nagpal, I Nijhar, S Padda, G Quansah, F Conti, A Raza, M Rice, R Baaklini, C Sharma, G Shaw, D Costigan, G Stafford, A Steed, K Crawford, C Tighe, L Wall, R Wall, B Wesson, S Donnelly and A Zissimos

Apologies:

G Busuttil, D Crawford, K Dhindsa and H Tailor (Deputy Mayor)

Attendees (virtual): Councillors

T Mahmood

1 Apologies for Absence and Attendance

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Crawford, Dhindsa, Busuttil and Tailor.

Councillor Mahmood was in attendance virtually.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Majority Group Motion for Debate

Councillor Shaw moved, Councillor Ball seconded and it was

RESOLVED: That standing orders be suspended for the duration of this item to allow young people and staff from Children's Services to contribute to the debate on this motion.

Angela Healey and Gary Odle, from the Council's Leaving Care service introduced the motion. Shannon Beeden and Tina Selestinekulas, who were young people who had care experience, spoke to members on this item.

Councillors Mason, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Hersch, Alexander, K Crawford and Kumar responded to the debate.

RESOLVED: That

This Council recognises the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care headed by Josh McCallister published in May 2022 that called on the Government to “make care experience a protected characteristic” and “new legislation should be passed which broadens corporate parenting responsibilities across a wider set of public bodies and organisations.”

People with experience of care often face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives; often facing discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system.

As corporate parents, we have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who experience care provided by us as an authority and should be champions of the children in our care and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society.

This council therefore resolves:

- That it recognises that people with experience of care are a group who are likely to face discrimination.
- That it recognises that Councils have a duty to put the needs of disadvantaged people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration.
- That future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by the Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a protected characteristic.
- That this Council will treat experience of care as if it were a Protected Characteristic.
- To formally call upon all other bodies to treat experience of care as a protected characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation.
- For the council to continue proactively seeking out and listening to the voices of people with care experience when developing new policies based on their views.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 March 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor conveyed her condolences to the family of past Mayor Patricia Walker who passed away recently. The Council's political groups paid tribute to Patricia and a minute's silence was held in her memory.

Council noted that Vaisakhi, Easter, Passover and Eid had taken place since the last Council meeting and the Mayor stated that she hoped everyone who had observed these festivals had enjoyed them.

The Mayor reminded Council that the King's Coronation would be taking place and that she would be attending some of the events, including street parties, the coronation concert and a Civic Service.

6 Petitions from Members of the Public

There were no petitions from Members of the Public.

7 Petitions from Members of the Council

There were no petitions from Members of the Council.

8 Questions from Members of the Public

Alexandra Kiss asked the following question of Councillor Costigan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Action:

There are a number of roads in Northfields that have been facing traffic issues for decades now and previous measures have proven ineffective, but whilst Montague/Deans has been addressed and Swyncombe in neighbouring Hounslow has seen changes we are being ignored. This is despite the promise to TFL that we would be consulted. Elthorne Park Road and Leighton Road have a long history of being overwhelmed by traffic and it's not purely the volume of traffic but combine this with the hostile environment and it's a major barrier to active travel.

As a resident, we experience (and are forced to live with) the frustration and regular acts of aggression that drivers display whilst using our streets as a cut through. These streets are not designed for such heavy traffic and as a result we witness endless standoffs, the honking of horns and speeding which of course all come with the addition of noise, air pollution and most worryingly, the potential loss of life. The roads here particularly narrow so we have no shield from the pollution.

We regularly get large trucks speeding down Elthorne Park Road, and we've witnessed the width restriction damaged several times by reversing vans while the pavements by the junctions often have drivers reversing back and forth to let incoming traffic through, totally ignoring the safety of pedestrians. As a young parent, I'm constantly running the gauntlet of open aggression and danger when simply walking out of my front door with my child.

In the light of the council's commitment to active travel and clean air, the residents would like to know what the council plans to do to reduce rat running traffic on these roads.

Councillor Costigan responded:

The Council planned to invest at least £10 million in active travel measures for the Borough as the Council needed to encourage residents to choose more sustainable methods of travel. The Council was also signed up to the Mayor of London's ambition for zero road deaths.

The area in question was one which was particularly complicated with it being a key thoroughfare between major roads. As a result officers had already met with local residents to understand their concerns and talk through some of the possible solutions.

The Council had seen significant spending cuts from Transport for London, funding which would have been used to enact these measures. There were some major projects coming up in Southall and Northolt which would take up a large proportion of the Council's resources, including officer time, on making sure that a positive impact on air quality and active travel could be made in these areas.

However Leighton Road and Elthorne Park Road had not been forgotten and officers would be looking further at proposals for these areas soon.

While we wait for proposals to be brought forward, I have asked Officers to see whether it was possible to add additional 20mph signs along the road to remind drivers of the 20mph speed limit.

9 Questions from Members of the Council

Councillor Ball asked Councillor Mason the following urgent question:

Given the decision to cancel the Perceval House replacement scheme, will the leader please advise the total cost of this project including officer time and the effect of the scheme's cancellation on the Council's capital and revenue budgets?

Councillor Mason responded:

The administration had inherited plans for Perceval House which had been formulated in 2014. Much had changed since the plans were originally conceived including COVID, the war in Ukraine, inflation in double digits, and Brexit. There was a £25 million shortfall in the project. This had meant the risks to the scheme and viability of the scheme meant that it was not longer suitable. The new scheme would be drawn up responsive to community needs with residents at the heart of it. Full costs as requested could be provided at a later date, as it was difficult to disaggregate some of the costs at such short notice as the question was only submitted this morning. However the impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget was that £134 million of projected spend would be removed from the Capital programme. £730,000 of one off funding that was set aside for the decant to temporary accommodation would also be removed.

Councillor Jammu asked Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the Council's delivery of an additional 40 new places for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in our schools?

Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal responded:

The Council had not only met its target, but exceeded it by providing 50 new places in the borough this year, including specialist provision in reception. This meant the administration was ahead of its target for expanding provision in schools by 2024. This was a demonstration of how the administration was sticking to its key Council Plan pledge of ensuring that residents had access to a good school near to them.

Councillor Zissimos asked Councillor Manro:

Please could you provide a complete list of all disability charities that were consulted about their views in the drawing up of the Draft Local Plan, together with dates, channel of communication and how responses were given and recorded?

Councillor Manro responded:

The draft local plan consultation took place over 10 weeks from November 2022 and February 2023. We set out on a consultation journey with the intention of ensuring that engagement with the local plan was as wide ranging as possible. The consultation process was conducted with accessibility and inclusivity in mind, to allow anyone who wanted to make a comment on the plan to do so. The draft consultation was a success – most local plan consultations only receive a few hundred comments, our initial Shaping Ealing Consultation received over 10,000 responses and the draft local plan consultation received over 13,000 representations from over 6,000

individual residents or groups. We are committed to continue working with our local residents and community groups while the local plan continues to be developed.

Councillor Conti asked Councillor Costigan:

Savings for next year in the council budget papers seemed to suggest that there may be a reduction in street cleaning in some areas. Could the portfolio holder confirm that there will be NO reduction in street cleaning on any residential street in the borough next year?

Councillor Costigan responded:

We decided to take our Waste and Street Cleaning contracts back in house, and at that time we moved back operations as they were being carried out by our previous contractors to ensure we could move it as quickly as possible. Now that the service is back in house, we are now able to ensure it is a more responsive service and ensure that we can focus on some of the areas that need more attention and scale back cleaning in areas that don't need such frequent cleans. This is about delivering a better service, as well as ensuring value for money. Cleaning areas that don't need it, or need it less than other areas, is a waste of public funds. We are looking at where we can refocus resources for streets that need cleaning the most, and will take an intelligence based approach including listening to feedback from local Councillors. So Councillors can feed into this process. We are not rushing in to this and will review the project along the way to ensure we build on the excellent work Greener Ealing have been doing.

Councillor Quansah asked Councillor Raza:

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the progress that the council has made to meet the demands of the Race Equality commission?

Councillor Raza responded:

The Ealing Race Equality Commission completed its task last year of delivering a report to the Council which included recommendations on how to tackle racial inequality and racism in the Borough. The Council had agreed with all the recommendations and was working towards implementing all of the recommendations. For example there was a newly agreed four year action plan on race equality for schools which Council Schools and other Schools in the Borough had signed up to as part of the Ealing Grid for Learning. Refreshed Health Strategies also now took on board the recommendations. And the Housing Services was now taking a different approach to engaging with residents on the Council's housing estates. There were a number of other initiatives ongoing which had been allocated funding including the Community Champions Scheme and Civic Leadership Scheme. A lot of this work

was in its infancy so may take time to progress, as a more equal society doesn't take place overnight.

Councillor Gallant asked Councillor Costigan:

The current cost of living pressures are felt by everyone. Does the leader believe that taxing people who can't afford to upgrade their cars, by way of an extended Ultra Low Emission Zone, is the right thing to do at this time?

Councillor Costigan responded:

It is impossible to ignore that 160 people die per year in Ealing due to poor air quality. Something has to be done about this. Not everyone has the bravery to take unpopular decisions, even if they are the right thing to do. Vehicle emissions are something we can do something about. We are already investing £10 million in active travel, rolling out new bike hangars, have implemented 21 school streets. We need to do more and can't do this on our own to improve air quality. The new ULEZ is the way we can make a significant difference. The first 10 months of the central London ULEZ has shown that nitrogen oxide had reduced by 95% and deaths due to air pollution in Central London have reduced. The Mayor has offered one of the biggest scrappage scheme, which included allowing recipients to upgrade their cars or swap their car for something more sustainable like a travelcard.

10 Opposition Group Motion for Debate

Councillor Young moved, and Councillor Gallant seconded, the Opposition Group Motion for Debate.

Councillor Wesson moved and Councillor Tighe seconded an amendment to the motion.

Councillors Steed, Baaklini, Jassal, Stafford, Knewstub, Rice, Ball, Johnson, Kumar, Bains and Conti responded to the motion and amendment.

Councillor Young summed up the motion.

A recorded vote was requested on the amendment and voting was as follows:

For: Councillors Gallant, Kumar, Conti, Young, Stafford, Ball, Hersch, Zissimos, Malcolm and Steed.

Against: Councillors Shaw, Mason, Costigan, J Anand, Mahfouz, Manro, Donnelly, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, L Wall, Raza, Blacker, Gordon, Knewstub, R Wall, Kelly, Alexander, Summers, Rice, M Ahmed, Brett, Johnson, Khan, S Ahmed, Kohli, Sharma, Rai, P Anand, Kaur-Dheer, Dheer, Mohan, Jammu, Iqbal, Murtaza, Sidhu, J Martin, K Crawford, Hashani, Anderson, Haili, Jassal, Kingston, Hamidi, Quansah, Bains, Mohamed, Padda, Sahota, Kim Nagpal, D

Martin, Nijhar, Baaklini, Wesson and Tighe.

Abstentions:

None

The amendment was therefore carried.

A vote was taken on the motion and it was

RESOLVED: That

This Council notes plans to introduce Town Forums with devolved budgets by this Autumn.

Geographically-specific and formally constituted local Forums with devolved budgets are a proven, and effective, means of improving resident engagement. Like Ward Forums before them, Town Forums will require Ward Councillors to interact with their constituents and to respond to their concerns.

They will be key to helping those residents who find themselves digitally excluded. The gap between the end of Ward Forums and implementation of Town Forums has been unfortunate but has not been wasted, as plans towards launching Town Forums this year are advancing., Ealing's Labour Council will deliver better.

11 Standards Committee Annual Review 2022-23

Councillor Driscoll, the Chair of the Standards Committee, introduced the Standards Committee Annual Review 2022-23 and it was

RESOLVED: That Council

1. Noted the work and achievements of the committee and its independent people during the past year.
2. Thanks Ms Oumou Sall and Ms Karen Quayle for their hard work as independent standards people.

12 Motions not for Debate

Voter suppression by the Conservative Government

RESOLVED: That

Ealing Council notes the introduction of Voter Identification for elections from 4th May 2023, which will require voters to present an approved form of Photo ID at a polling station in order to vote. British people have just lost their unobstructed right to vote. This is nothing short of voter suppression by the

Conservative Government.

Ealing Council further notes that there is little evidence that voter fraud is a systematic issue in UK elections and about 7.5% of voters do not currently hold an acceptable form of ID.

Ealing Council notes the work already being undertaken by our Election Service team in observing and reviewing the impact of voter ID in elections due to take place in May.

Ealing Council is deeply concerned that the requirement to provide Photo ID will present a significant barrier for thousands of residents in Ealing to exercise their right to vote – and these barriers will disproportionately affect those from minority ethnic, low income, disabled, LGBT+, elderly and young voter groups.

This is why Ealing's Labour Council will act to protect the right to vote by:

- Producing an awareness campaign across traditional and social media to inform our residents of changes to legislation
- Encouraging postal vote registration to prevent people losing their right to vote
- Writing to all in-person electors informing them of changes to ID rules, and encouraging residents to register to vote by post
- Delivering a comprehensive outreach programme to young people, BME groups, charities, traveller communities, disability groups, and civil society organisations across the borough, including those who advocate for younger and older people, with a particular focus on those groups who are most at risk of disenfranchisement

Ealing Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Cabinet Office to express the Council's complete opposition about the damaging effect on democracy that mandatory Voter ID will have in UK elections and to demand that this section of the new legislation is repealed immediately.

NAO report on fraud and corruption

RESOLVED: That

Ealing Council notes the National Audit Office report 'Tackling fraud and corruption against government' which showed an increasing amount of fraud and corruption and that our government is failing to make the best use of tax payers' monies.

Ealing Council also notes that in 2020-21 there was up to £58.8 billion of fraud and error in government spending and income unrelated to the pandemic.

Ealing Council further also notes that the report stated that 'However, outside of tax and welfare, government still lacks robust assessments of where and what its fraud risks are.'

Ealing Council agrees that some of this lost money could have gone into helping local authorities like Ealing help vulnerable residents.

Motion on Warren Farm

RESOLVED: That

Ealing Council acknowledges the fact that the Warren Farm Nature Reserve petition has already gained over 20,000 signatures and thanks the residents who have constructively expressed their views in this and previous engagements as part of the open, transparent and inclusive consultation process run by the council. Warren Farm has some successfully self-rewilded areas which provide a habitat for 20 endangered species including the ground nesting Skylark and vulnerable plant and insect species facing extinction such as Copsie Bindweed. Other areas are hardstanding and contain dilapidated outbuildings formerly used for sports provision.

Ealing Council further notes the recent Cabinet report and discussion at Overview and Scrutiny Committee which sets out proposals for the future of Warren Farm Sports Ground, including the now signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and Imperial College to bring in the adjoining land into a proposed Nature Reserve.

Ealing Council believes that the future of the Warren Farm Sports Ground and adjoining land should enable the provision of both community sports, as well as the re-wilding of the majority of the land.

Ealing Council urges the Earl of Jersey to commit to allowing the managed re-wilding of his adjoining field and enable the council to include this land within its management plan and application for nature reserve status to Natural England.

13 Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2023

RESOLVED: That the Council's revised Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy is agreed.

14 Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies

RESOLVED: That Council notes the appointment of Cllr Callum Anderson as Backbench Aide for Windrush 75.

15 Urgent Key Decisions Exempted from Call-in

There were no urgent key decisions exempted from call-in.

Meeting commenced: 7.02 pm

Meeting finished: 9.41 pm

Signed:

Dated: Tuesday, 23 May 2023

M Midha (Mayor)