

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Council**

**Date:** Tuesday, 13 June 2023

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

### **Attendees (in person): Councillors**

H Tailor (Mayor) M Ahmed, S Ahmed, J Anand, P Anand, J Ball, J Blacker, G Busuttil, J Gallant, K Sahota, C Anderson, B Rai, R Dheer, B Mahfouz, C Summers, L Brett, D Crawford, A Young, P Driscoll, V Alexander, Y Gordon, H Haili, M Hamidi, B Hashani, C Hersch, M Iqbal, A Jammu, S Jassal, H Kaur Dheer, A Kelly, S Khan, I Kingston, P Knewstub, S Kohli, S Kumar, K Dhindsa, T Mahmood, G Malcolm, S Manro, D Martin, J Martin, P Mason, M Midha, 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 (Deputy Mayor), G Shaw, G Stafford, A Steed, K Crawford, C Tighe, L Wall, R Wall, B Wesson, S Donnelly and A Zissimos

### **1 Apologies for Absence and Attendance**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Costigan, Johnson, Sidhu and Jassal.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Sahota and Kim Nagpal.

Councillor Bains was in attendance virtually.

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Shaw, Rice, Mahmood and Zissimos declared that they were members of the Victoria Hall Trust and therefore would not be speaking or voting on the motion relating to the Victoria Hall at the meeting.

### **3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 May 2023**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023 are agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

### **4 Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor made the following announcements:

- Alderman Brian Callaghan had passed away. Brian was a Labour Alderman between 1974 and 1978.

- Armed Forces Week was approaching. The Mayor would be holding a reception for staff members who were serving reservists or veterans, as well as holding the Council's Armed Forces Day event on Saturday 24 June.
- Members and residents were wished a happy pride month. The Mayor was proud that the LGBTQIA+ flag was flying above the Town Hall and confirmed he would be attending the London Pride March with the Council's LGBTQ+ Staff Equality Group.
- Windrush day was due to take place on 22 June. It was 75 years since the HMT Windrush docked at Tilbury Docks in Essex, and passengers from the Caribbean disembarked to start a new life in the UK. The Mayor would be attending an event in Soane's Kitchen in Ealing to mark the occasion.
- Members and residents were wished a happy Eid Al Adha and Tisha B'Av, for those that were observing these festivals.

## **5 Petitions from Members of the Public**

There were no petitions from members of the public.

## **6 Petitions from Members of the Council**

Councillor Conti presented a petition relating to the proposed removal of Metropolitan Open Land status from MOL 20 (Barclays Sports Grounds, St Augustine's School and grounds, Ealing Reservoir, Fox Wood, Hanger Hill Park and Chatsworth Wood) and MOL 22 (Twyford Abbey).

## **7 Questions from Members of the Public**

Sian Philips asked Councillor Mahfouz:

How can families placed in out of borough "temporary " accommodation be denied a local connection and access to services (eas, and Ealing legal advice, green homes initiative and insulation, hardship payments etc) after paying you Council tax for 6 years?

Councillor Mahfouz responded:

It is very difficult to advise on this in a general sense and the individual circumstances of each case would govern what access to services individuals and families are eligible for. I am happy to meet with Sian outside of this meeting and discuss her circumstances in order to review any advice given to her and ensure it is correct.

## 8 Questions from Members of the Council

Councillor Tighe asked Councillor Brett:

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the council's delivery plan on increasing the number of living wage employers in Ealing and a progress update on how we are delivering the real living wage?

Councillor Brett responded:

I am proud to announce that as of June 2023, there are at least 55 Accredited Living Wage employers situated in Ealing.

Our economic growth team have done an amazing job so far of working with teams across the council, from procurement to arts and culture, making important inroads to promote and encourage living wage accreditation.

The work that has been done so far by the team of officers at the council has been outstanding. We are continually communicating, engaging and networking with local businesses and find ourselves well on our way to hitting the ambitious target of 200 Living Wage employers in the next 3 years.

That work with local businesses and stakeholders has been essential in our journey so far and a big thank you has to go out to

- University of West London (UWL)
- West London College (WLC) Hub
- Ealing's three Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)
- the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation
- the Creative Enterprise Zone business networks
- and every single business, organisation, and individual who has promoted or paid the living wage.

The council has made sure to lead from the front, as of July 2022, new council procurement policy was introduced, requiring all people employed on new Ealing contracts to be paid the real living wage.

I'd like to thank Cllr Martin for his role in chairing the High Streets Task Force, which has helped deliver business support programmes with the aim of supporting businesses to pay the living wage.

The council has successfully accessed UK Shared Prosperity Funding, helping to support Small and Medium sized businesses in a wide variety of sectors, from manufacturing and construction to hospitality and media, as they continue their economic recovery.

We've been enhancing the council's inward investment programme 'Good for Ealing' with the goal of incentivising larger employers in the

borough to act as exemplars and encourage their supply network of local SMEs and micro businesses to also become accredited living wage employers.

I was pleased to welcome many of them to the council just last week to celebrate our progress and continue conversations about the year to come. We also launched the council's new 'Ealing Living Wage Incentives Package' to encourage more businesses in the borough to become accredited employers. It was so great to meet local business leaders on the day and hear first-hand about the benefits their employees and businesses have felt by paying the living wage. When we pledged to deliver 10,000 jobs, we didn't pledge to just deliver any old jobs for our residents, but good and well-paid jobs so that every resident in Ealing has the opportunity for a decent living income.

Councillor Zissimos asked Councillor Mason:

Please could the portfolio holder outline what the outstanding stages for the completion of Ealing Broadway Cross Rail Station works and when they will be complete including any road enhancement features giving details that include how access is going to be made for those with mobility issues?

Councillor Mason responded:

The council's ability to carry out the planned works has been impeded by delays to the Crossrail programme. Before the delays we were on track to have the works at large finished by December last year, but we are now anticipating that this will be done by the end of this month.

The works include improvements to the condition of the grassed area in Haven Green and the removal of the electrical substation in this area. We have already started repairing and weather sealing the façade wall on the edge of the station forecourt. And we are carefully considering where we should put new cycle stands on and around the station forecourt so that they are in the best possible place for users. These are a few of the things that residents can look forward to seeing in the coming months.

Accessibility for those with mobility challenges and disabilities has been at the forefront of our minds from the beginning of the design phases right through implementation. The station will have step free access and widened footpaths from the public highway to the station forecourt. And the pedestrian crossing outside the station forecourt has also been widened to give people more space when entering the station when it is particularly busy. To help wheelchair users we have built bus bays as well as two new step-free drop off bays in front of the station forecourt so that access to the station is not restricted.

Councillor Kumar asked Councillor Mason:

Will the portfolio holder describe the measures that are being taken to prevent users from carelessly leaving rented bikes on public pavements, thereby causing dangerous obstructions for pedestrians and wheelchair users?

Councillor Mason responded:

I know and appreciate the inconvenience that it causes when people park their rented bikes inappropriately, but I would like to note that the majority of people are sensible and considerate when using this still relatively new mode of transport.

There are very few national laws that regulate how dockless cycle hire companies operate. However, Ealing Council has proactively negotiated agreements with Dott, Lime and TIER, who run e-bike services in the borough. The Council has non-contractual agreements in place with these operators that mean that bicycles must be parked in agreed parking locations which are identified by a 'P' symbol in the operators' mobile apps. These locations have been selected by council officers as areas where there is sufficient space for bicycles to be parked without causing an obstruction.

As part of our agreement with these operators, if a bike is parked in a place that causes danger or an obstruction and is not in an agreed zone, they move the bike within two hours of being notified of the issue. If the bike is not causing danger or an obstruction then the bicycle operators have 12 hours to move it after receiving that notification.

This means that any rented bike that is left on public pavements and causes an obstruction for pedestrians and wheelchair users will be moved within 2 hours, although in practise this is often quicker.

If residents or visitors to the borough come across a bike that is causing an obstruction they can report it directly to Dott, Lime or TIER by using their respective apps or simply by using the council's website.

We are currently reviewing parking principles and provision for e-bikes and e-scooters to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians, as well as convenient for those wishing to start or end a ride. We are also working on our Streets Design Guide, including guidance regarding on-street parking, to improve access and usability of all of our streets for everyone.

Councillor Hamidi asked Councillor Knewstubb:

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the council's plans to mark the 75th anniversary of the HMT Empire Windrush, and to

celebrate the contribution of the Windrush generation and their descendants to this country?

Councillor Knewstub responded:

I couldn't agree more that it is important that we mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush in London.

While it was by no means the first ship to bring migrants from the West Indies to Britain, the Windrush has become symbolic of a generation of Caribbean and Commonwealth citizens answering a call for help, leaving their homes and families to contribute their skills, labour, and talents to help rebuild a Britain ravaged by war.

On the 22nd June, up and down the UK, people will gather to celebrate the significant contributions of the Windrush generation and their descendants to British society, and to remember the injustices that they faced, and still face.

Ealing is no exception. There will be a variety of events and activities taking place across the borough, including education, arts, entertainment, music, fashion, poetry, film and many more. Communities will come together to share their experiences, knowledge and understanding of this important moment in British history.

We've got a range of events planned:

- An evening of celebration on the day itself – 22nd June - at Pitzhanger Manor & Gallery from 6-9pm. The event will include the announcement of the winners of a local Windrush-themed school poetry competition, performances by the Southall's Freedom Worship centre, and West Ealing's Urban Fox steel band.
- The Windrush Day flag will be flown at Ealing, Greenford and Southall Town Halls.
- Paul Crooks is running a presentation and Q&A session for staff, organised by the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Staff Equality Group.
- The Leader will be hosting a tea for Windrush Pioneers and others in the Town Hall.
- We are also currently working on plans to host an end-of-season cricket match in the borough.

I would like to wholeheartedly thank Cllr Anderson, Cabinet Aide for Windrush75, for his work on putting all of this together, and to the officer team for their support.

Councillor Malcolm asked Councillor Manro:

Given the large volume of residents and groups who have sent in their

views on the Local Plan consultation, and the controversy of removing the protected status of Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt land, will the portfolio holder agree now to dropping those elements of the Local Plan?

Councillor Manro responded:

The local plan team are working hard on synthesising the almost 13,000 representations that we received via the draft local plan consultation, and I look forward to being able to brief Council on the results in the coming months.

It's great that so many people in Ealing took the time to make a representation to the local plan team, and they did so on a wide variety of issues. We have made sure that public engagement has been at the heart of the local plan process, and I'm delighted to see how successful it's been.

Despite this, every time I answer a question about the local plan, I am overwhelmed by an intense feeling of déjà vu, like the members opposite have us on a merry go round of local plan complaints.

The opposition seem to continue to operate under the illusion that a productive use of their time in this chamber is to let cats loose amongst the pigeons and scaremonger about the local plan and its intentions.

They want residents in Ealing to believe that the only intention we have, when redesignating land in this borough, is to tarmac over it all and destroy all the nature that the borough holds dear. In fact, protection and enhancement of our high-quality green space is one of this administration's guiding principles when it comes to placemaking. Our commitment to open 10 new parks over the course of our term in office sits at the heart of this.

I have explained the logic behind the proposed changes to members opposite what feels like a thousand times and to be quite honest I'm at a point where I'm not sure they want to understand.

Allow me to explain it again Cllr Malcom. The reason that we are proposing the redesignation of certain plots of Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt in the borough, is simply to ensure that they have the correct designations. Therefore, we are closing the loopholes which are currently open to exploitation by speculative investors and developers.

All the Metropolitan Open Land sites which are earmarked for redesignation fit the definition of either Public Open Space or Community Open Space much more closely than they fit the Metropolitan Open Land definition. This incorrect designation leaves the sites more open to development than redesignation.

Ensuring that sites are assigned the correct designation affords them effective and robust protections against future development, protections which would stand up to scrutiny and testing better than the current situation.

Ealing has a wealth of well-used and well-loved green spaces which, for example, are a valuable resource that those without private gardens can take advantage of when they wish to be closer to nature. We are even less likely to take that for granted in the post-pandemic context than we were before COVID.

A revised draft of the local plan will be prepared in due course and will be subject to a further round of public and stakeholder consultation. I look forward to continuing to protect green and open spaces in Ealing for our residents to enjoy for years to come.

Councillor Summers asked Councillor Mahfouz:

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the council's provision of supported accommodation for some of our most vulnerable residents in the last year?

Councillor Mahfouz responded:

The council has been working tirelessly over the last year to support our most vulnerable residents with their housing needs. Having recently taken on this portfolio, I am so impressed at all the hard work that our officers have put in over the last 12 months to help ensure that residents who need our help, receive it.

We continue our outstanding work on homelessness prevention, with our early intervention methods helping over 1,600 people, preventing them from becoming homeless and in many cases, finding them a new place to call home.

Our work with partners has also been essential for supporting Ealing residents who are experiencing homelessness. Working with St Mungo's, the council has helped provide 120 beds for those who were street homeless in the borough, helping provide our most vulnerable residents with an opportunity to rebuild their lives. The council is currently accommodating 28 rough sleepers as of June 2023, and is working hard to ensure those people can have a fresh start in life.

As we will hear later this evening, the council is also committed to ensuring that the borough of Ealing is a place where those fleeing war and persecution can find safety and security. Over the last year the council has helped to provide accommodation for

- 464 guests within the Homes for Ukraine Programme.
- 80 through the Afghan Resettlement Scheme with 14 additional refugees arriving just this month.



- 62 people within the UK resettlement scheme, the majority of whom originate from Syria.

That's over 600 people to whom Ealing has provided safe refuge to from conflicts across the globe.

I am proud of all the amazing work the council has done over the last year to help provide for our most vulnerable residents and look forward to continuing all of our hard work over the coming years.

Councillor Mohamed asked Councillor J Anand:

Can the portfolio holder provide an update on the Council's progress on tackling Male Violence Against Women and Girls?

Councillor J Anand responded:

We have all seen the toll that misogyny and male violence against women and girls has on our residents and our communities. Across the UK far too many women and girls feel unsafe going about their daily lives.

Almost a quarter of women in the UK report having been a victim of sexual assault, over seventy percent of women have experienced some form of sexual harassment, and once every three days a woman in the UK will be murdered by a man.

In February of this year, the council published a new Male Violence Against Women and Girls strategy. This strategy was co-created through the council's Safer Ealing for Women listening exercise in which over 3,000 women and girls from Ealing took part, through a mixture of in person focus groups and online collaboration, along with input from partners from across the Safer Ealing Partnership.

This strategy focuses on four key priorities that will enable us to tackle the scourge of MVAWG. We will provide better education to prevent toxic behaviours in men and young boys, we will ensure that anyone in our borough who suffers from domestic violence can access high quality support, work with communities to create a culture where everyone knows what they can do to challenge MVAWG and we will work with key partners, including the Met Police, to ensure that perpetrators are held to account.

We have worked with Women and Girls across the borough to populate an interactive map to identify areas where they do not feel safe, with over 2,000 being dropped during the 'Safer Ealing for Women Exercise'. This shows us the scale of the problem in our borough, and the challenge on our hands to make things better.

For several years Ealing has sought to be a leader on gender

inequality and MVAWG -related issues, whether this be leading the UK to introduce the first safe zone around the Mattock Lane abortion clinic or our work taking forward the Safer Ealing for Women approach in open and transparent and community led way.

Moving forward and as I take on this new portfolio and all of its opportunities and challenges, I can reassure Members we will continue to look to lead in this space and make Ealing a truly equitable and safe place for women and girls.

## **9 Opposition Group Motion for Debate**

Councillor Ball moved and Councillor Malcolm seconded the opposition motion for debate.

Councillor Manro rose to state that the debate on this motion was premature as there was ongoing legal action, yet to be concluded, regarding the proposed development of the Town Hall and that the Council was still under contract with the developer to carry out the redevelopment. Therefore it would be inappropriate to hold this debate and for Council to give a view on this issue. Following the speech it was moved, seconded and

**RESOLVED:** That the Council move to the next item of business.

## **10 Majority Group Motion for Debate**

Councillor Knewstub moved, and Councillor Mason seconded, the Majority Group Motion for Debate.

Councillor Conti moved and Councillor Gallant seconded an amendment to the motion.

Councillors Hashani, Manro, Mahfouz, Busuttil, Baaklini, J Anand, Alexander, Anderson, Raza, Steed, Brett, Young, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Rice, Haili, Stafford and Knewstub responded to the motion.

Councillor Knewstub summed up the motion and Councillor Conti summed up the amendment.

A vote was taken and the amendment FELL.

Three members requested a recorded vote be held on the motion.

**RESOLVED:** That Ealing Council

a. notes that:

(i) Ealing has a proud history of embracing individuals seeking safety

within our Borough

(ii) there are significant problems with the UK asylum system that affect people in Ealing, including a record backlog of cases awaiting a decision, a de facto ban on working, and enforced poverty and homelessness;

(iii) the Nationality and Borders Act does not address these issues, and has instead created a two-tier system, punishing people seeking safety based on the journeys they make;

(iv) under these laws, people seeking safety will be criminalised and threatened with removal to Rwanda;

(v) people will be warehoused in large accommodation centres, segregated from communities and denied support;

(vi) many recognised refugees will receive a temporary and precarious status;

(vii) over 400 charities and faith groups have signed a national pledge to 'Fight the 'Anti-Refugee Laws'

b. believes that:

(i) everyone's claim for asylum should be treated equally and fairly;

(ii) these are fundamentally 'anti-refugee' laws that undermine internationally recognised rights for people fleeing war and persecution to seek safety;

(iii) these measures will create ever-longer delays in the asylum process, lead to greater poverty and homelessness in Ealing and will undermine people's ability to rebuild their lives;

(iv) people seeking safety should be housed as our neighbours and as a part of our communities;

(v) the UK needs an asylum system that empowers people seeking safety to rebuild their lives and enables communities to welcome them;

This council resolves to:

(i) defend the right to seek safety from war and persecution in the UK and sign the national 'Fight the Anti-Refugee Laws' pledge;

(ii) call on the UK Government to withdraw the UK-Rwanda agreement, repeal the Nationality and Borders Act, and work with Local Authorities and communities to build a refugee protection system that treats all people with dignity and compassion;

(iii) Support Refugee Action's 'lift the ban' campaign

(iv) work with local organisations and people with lived experience of the asylum system to identify ways to mitigate the effects of these measures in Ealing

(v) Join the network of cities and towns which promote the inclusion and welfare of people who are fleeing violence and persecution and become a recognised Borough of Sanctuary

Voting:

For: Councillors

Shaw, Mason, J Anand, Mahfouz, Manro, Donnelly, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Blacker, Brett, Knewstub, R Wall, Kingston, Haili, Kelly, D Martin, Padda, Rice, M Ahmed, Mahmood, Gordon, Khan, Kohli, Kim Nagpal, Driscoll, P Anand, Mohan, Dheer, Kaur Dheer, Jammu, Iqbal, Murtaza, J Martin, K Crawford, Dhindsa, Rai, Anderson, Hashani, L Wall, Summers, Alexander, Hamidi, Mohamed, Quansah, Sahota, D Crawford, Raza, Midha, Nijhar, Baaklini, Wesson, Tighe, Ball, Hersch, Zissimos, Malcolm, Steed, Busuttil, Tailor, Sharma.

Against: Councillors

Gallant, Kumar, Conti, Young, Stafford.

Abstentions: None

## 11 **Motions not for Debate**

An amendment to the motion not for debate was moved, seconded and agreed.

**RESOLVED:** That Ealing Council notes that several London local authorities including Harrow, Barnet, Bexley and Tower Hamlets all have Freedom of Information disclosure logs.

Ealing Council reiterates its commitment to being 'Open Transparent and inclusive', and will continue to explore options to better allow residents to access information about their council, including potentially introducing its own Freedom of Information disclosure log.

## 12 **Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies**

**RESOLVED:** That the following appointments to Committees and Other Bodies be agreed:

1. Councillor Tarept Sidhu to replace Councillor Zissimos on

Scrutiny Panel 3

2. Councillor Zissimos to replace Councillor Tarept Sidhu on Scrutiny Panel 2
3. Councillor Hashani to replace Councillor Haili on Education Joint Committee
4. Councillor Khan to replace Councillor Bains on SACRE
5. Councillor Kingston to replace Councillor Bains on Scrutiny Panel 3
6. Councillor Dhindsa to replace Councillor Bains on Health and Adult Services Standing Scrutiny Panel
7. Councillor Kingston to replace Councillor Wesson on Audit Committee
8. Councillor Baaklini to replace Councillor Dhindsa on Scrutiny Panel 3
9. Councillor Young to replace Councillor Kumar on Mortlake Crematorium Board
10. Councillor Young to replace Councillor Kumar on South West Middlesex Crematorium Board
11. Cllr Charan Sharma to be appointed to the South West Middlesex Crematorium Board

Meeting commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting finished: 9.22 pm

Signed:

Dated: Tuesday, 11 July 2023

H Tailor (Mayor)