

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Date: Tuesday, 19 September 2023

Venue: The Atrium - Perceval House

Attendees (in person): Councillors

H Tailor (Mayor)M Ahmed, S Ahmed, J Anand, P Anand, J Ball, J Blacker, J Gallant, K Bains, C Anderson, B Rai, R Dheer, B Mahfouz, C Summers, L Brett, D Crawford, A Young, P Driscoll, 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, K Dhindsa, T Mahmood, G Malcolm, S Manro, D Martin, J Martin, P Mason, M Midha, K Mohan, G Murtaza, K K Nagpal, K Nagpal, I Nijhar, S Padda, F Conti, A Raza, M Rice, R Baaklini, G Shaw, D Costigan, G Stafford, A Steed, K Crawford, C Tighe, L Wall, B Wesson and S Donnelly

Apologies:

G Busuttil, K Sahota, T Sidhu, F Mohamed, G Quansah, C Sharma, R Wall and A Zissimos

1 Apologies for Absence and Attendance

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Wall, Sahota, Busuttil, Zissimos, Mohamed, Quansah and Sharma.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Stafford.

Councillor Alexander was in attendance virtually.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 11 July 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Special Meeting held on 11 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2023

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

5 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor first conveyed his condolences to the family of Stephen Bowman, an employee of the Council who had passed away the week before the meeting. He also conveyed his condolences to the family of Glen Barnham, a

former Councillor and Honorary Freeman of the Borough, who had passed away since the last meeting of the Council. Councillors Johnson, Ball and Gallant paid their respects to Glen and Council observed a minute's silence.

The Mayor updated Council on his activities since the last meeting, as well as events and commemorations that were due to take place after the meeting, including:

- The Queen had visited the Borough last month to attend a poetry event at Fielding Primary School and to open a new library.
- The Mayor had laid a wreath at the Polish War Memorial, and had attended an event at Horsenden Hill to commemorate the invasion of Poland in September 1939.
- There had been a number of faith and ethnic celebrations that had happened, including Janmashtami and Teeyan. The Mayor had attended local celebrations.
- Important festivals and events that were approaching included Diwali, visit my Mosque Day and the three main Remembrance Sunday services in Ealing, Greenford and Southall.
- The Mayor wished everyone who was racing good luck for the Ealing Half Marathon which was due to take place on the following Sunday.

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

Benjamin Allin asked the following question of Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate action:

Elthorne Park Road has passed the high-level filter on the council's traffic calming flowchart. A detailed localised study is therefore required. What will the study consist of, when will the study be concluded, and what criteria will be used to determine if the study shows traffic calming is required?

Councillor Costigan responded to explain that she had met with local residents to understand their concerns and seek solutions. The solution suggested by local residents was a new Low Traffic Neighbourhood, which had previously been trialled (LTN 21) and was not feasible. Instead the

Council has committed to launching a new concept – free-roaming urban neighbourhoods (FUN) and would be trialling this concept in the vicinity of Elthorne Park Road, in partnership with residents, in the coming weeks and months.

9 Questions from Members of the Council

Councillor Mahmood asked Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal:

Can the portfolio holder provide give a short verbal update on her visit to Ealing's Holiday and Activity Food Programme this summer?

Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal responded:

Last month I had the privilege of visiting our remarkable HAF programme. I was accompanied by my colleagues, Virendra Sharma MP, Cllr Mohinder Midha, and Phil Cosby, Principal & CEO of Alec Reed Academy.

We visited two HAF sessions hosted at Alec Reed Academy: one being run by ENG, an inclusive mainstream provider, and one by Sport Works, who specialise in provision for children with Special Educational Needs.

I had the opportunity to witness the exceptional work being done by our two providers, it was great to see the programme in action!

What struck me during the visit was the genuine enthusiasm and active participation of the children and young people involved. At both locations, I saw children engaged in a variety of physical games and activities. It was heartwarming to not only see their energy and enthusiasm as they bonded with their peers, but to feel the undeniable sense of community and inclusivity at both locations. These activities not only promote physical health, but also foster social connections and a sense of belonging, which are invaluable for our young residents.

The children participating also received a nutritious lunch, ensuring that they had access to healthy food. That's a particularly significant part of the HAF programme at the moment, as we know that more and more families are struggling with the huge inflationary increases in food prices at the moment.

Councillor Ball asked Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal:

Do you agree that the Government's response to the RAAC crisis has been woeful and that Rishi Sunak's decision in 2020 as chancellor to halve spending on school rebuilding was lamentable?

Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal responded:

Perhaps unusually for a question from Cllr Ball – I couldn't agree more.

The Prime Minister's decision to slash spending on school rebuilding is regrettable. This is a matter of utmost importance, and it is vital that we address it with the seriousness it deserves – something that the education secretary was clearly unable to bring herself to do. It is outrageous that government has consistently cut funding for school buildings, and then has the gall to turn around and blame schools and local authorities for this latest scandal. It is a crisis stemming from the stroke of a pen in a Whitehall department 10 years ago, and now children all over the country are sat under ceilings that are held up with wooden props.

What sort of a message does this send children and young people about how they are valued in society? About how seriously they should take their educations?

And this was preventable. It is political choices that have brought us here, political choices made by not only Rishi Sunak as Chancellor but which also have to be owned by the Lib Dems as it was the coalition government which reviewed the Labour government's 'Building Schools for the Future' programme.

Councillor Gallant asked Councillor Knewstub:

What is the likely capital cost of building a Lido in Ealing?

Councillor Knewstub responded:

Thank you, Cllr Gallant, for your question although yet again we seem to have found ourselves in the unfortunate and yet completely unsurprising position of a member of the Conservative group not having read this month's set of cabinet papers.

I am beginning to feel like a broken record at these meetings, as the Tories continue to demonstrate an inability to use their time in this arena to ask productive and useful questions.

As I made very clear last week at the cabinet meeting, which you were in fact in attendance for, the Lido project is currently still in its early stages. We are in the process of identifying appropriate sites and working towards undertaking feasibility reports.

The overall capital cost of the project will depend on a wide variety of factors, which is why it is important we do this initial work properly rather than just digging a hole in the ground, filling it with water, and calling it a job well done.

Unlike the Tories, we do not intend to cut any corners or hand out

contracts to friends of friends, with no real ability to deliver.

And, also unlike the Tories, we will make decisions about the future of this project with the best interests of council taxpayers in mind. If, after conducting detailed feasibility and business planning, the project isn't viable, we won't continue with it. Prudent and sensible use of public funds is hugely important to us, and will continue to be central to our decision-making across the council.

I am so excited about this project, and I know that people across the borough share that excitement. I look forward to continuing to update you all on the progress of the project as we move forward to deliver high quality outdoor and indoor leisure facilities to the people of the borough.

Councillor Kim Nagpal asked Councillor Donnelly:

Can the portfolio holder update us on the council's work to help residents get the pension credit that they are entitled to?

Councillor Donnelly responded:

Making sure that Ealing residents are financially supported is a key priority for the administration. We have many communities finding themselves facing the sharp end of the cost-of-living crisis, particularly those who have retired and who are managing on low incomes.

Ealing took part in the 'Pension Credit take-up' campaign, launched back in February by London Councils and the Mayor of London. It is estimated that across London that almost £250 million of pension credit goes unclaimed every year, money that can be worth thousands of pounds to eligible households. With everyone feeling the financial squeeze grow ever tighter, this is not money that we should be letting go to waste.

In our efforts to ensure that residents in our borough are getting their full entitlement we sent out over 1,100 letters, reached out to over 600 eligible households in the borough, and saw 174 households successfully claiming additional pension credit. The average value of the pension credit that was awarded to each household in Ealing was £3,930, which represents a huge boost in income for these older residents, at a time where they will most certainly benefit from the additional money.

The council also made cost-of-living payments totalling £156,000 pounds, yet again proving our commitment to helping some of our most vulnerable residents through this difficult period.

I'm extremely proud of all the hard work that has gone in to ensuring that those claiming their state pension in the borough are financially

supported, especially in a time of high inflation and economic instability. The council is currently awaiting confirmation of the second part of the campaign, and we look forward to taking part.

Councillor Malcolm asked Councillor Costigan:

What plans is the Council making to mark and celebrate the 50th anniversary of the very successful and much loved Brent River Park (BRP), noting that the new regional park proposal might be an ideal opportunity to expand the BRP boundary and better connect it with the other Nature Management Areas in the Borough to deliver commitments in the Biodiversity Action Plan and the Government's '30% for Nature by 2030' target?

Councillor Costigan responded:

I of course am a huge enjoyer of the Brent River Park and on the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of the park in July of 2025 the council would be delighted to collaborate with the Brent River and Canal society to plan a celebration of one of our boroughs most well-loved and valued green spaces.

I am also glad that you mentioned the council's plans for a new regional park. We want this regional park to be as influential for West London as the Olympic Park is for East London, with people travelling from across London and from other parts of the country to enjoy what our borough has to offer.

But we also want this new regional park to be more than just a day out for visitors. We hope that the Ealing regional park will cut right through the middle of the borough, stretching from north to south, will act as a green lung for London, helping in our mission to improve our climate resilience, as well as the quality of our air for future generations of Ealing residents.

We want to open up our green spaces to as many people in our borough as possible, with plans currently seeing Greenford, Southall and Hanwell town centres as well as 19 wards in the borough just a 20-minute walk away from the park.

And our proposals will even have the potential to expand past the borders of Ealing. There is no reason that this park cannot expand northwards into Brent or south into Hounslow, the possibilities for this park are truly endless and I look forward to turning this grand vision into an even grander reality.

Councillor Baaklini asked Councillor Knewstubb:

Can the portfolio holder update the council on work to improve access to exercise and leisure facilities across the borough?

Councillor Knewstub responded:

The council's leisure operator, Everyone Active, operates 15, sports, leisure, and golf facilities in our borough, all of them accessible for a wide range of people of different ages and abilities, allowing everyone in our borough to get active. We also, in collaboration with the borough of Hounslow, have the Gunnersbury Park Sports Hub that offers huge range of outdoor and indoor facilities for people in Ealing.

We've got a huge variety of programmes and projects across the borough, with the goal of engaging and encouraging residents to get active and take up exercise.

- Women's only gym facilities at Dormers Wells and Everyone Active in Acton.
- Adult and toddler activities in Northolt Leisure Centre.
- Junior gym programmes for young people.
- Activities programmes for older people, with the aim of encouraging social interaction and inclusion.
- The concessionary leisure pass, that offers up to 50% off for adults and 33% of for children on a variety of sports sessions and activities across the borough.
- The Let's Go Southall programme, which provides daily free exercise sessions for all, delivered by our residents.

And on top of all that, we offer a huge amount of outdoor gym equipment, table tennis tables, multi-use sports areas, skate and BMX facilities in the borough, free of charge for our residents to use. In fact, just last week I had the pleasure of opening a brand-new parkour facility in Lammas Park.

I also must say I hope that in our leisure offer there is a place for pickle ball which I would encourage anyone in the room tonight to give a try!

The outstanding sports and leisure offer that our borough has is something that I am extremely proud of, and with the plans for our new regional park, as well as the plans at Gurnell, and the emerging plans for a new lido in the borough, I know that the future of sports and leisure in Ealing is looking brighter than ever.

10 Council Plan Delivery Plan 2023-24

Councillor Mason moved and Councillor Costigan seconded the Council Plan Delivery Plan 2023-24.

Councillors Malcolm, Gallant, Haili, Anderson, Manro, Hersch, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Tighe, Summers, Conti, Blacker, J Anand, Steed, Rai, Brett, Young, Donnelly, Knewstub, Ball, Mahfouz and Jassal responded to the motion.

Councillor Mason summed up the motion.

A vote was taken and it was

RESOLVED: That the Council Plan Delivery Plan 2022-23 is agreed.

11 Treasury Management Outturn 2022/23

Councillor Donnelly moved and Councillor Shaw seconded the Treasury Management Outturn 2022/23.

RESOLVED: That

1. The treasury management activities and performance against targets for the period to 31 March 2023 are noted.
2. The Council's investment balance of £506.835 million as at 31 March 2023, of which £443,500m million invested with the Debt Management Office, is noted.
3. The Prudential Indicators outturn for 2022/23, which were maintained within the limits set by full Council in March 2022, are noted.

12 Urgent Key Decisions Exempted from Call-in

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

13 Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies

There were no appointments to Committees and other bodies.

Meeting commenced: 7.06 pm

Meeting finished: 9.32 pm

Signed:

Dated: Tuesday, 19 December 2023

H Tailor (Mayor)