

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Date: Tuesday, 13 December 2022

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

Attendees (in person): Councillors

M Midha (Mayor) M Ahmed, J Anand, P Anand, J Ball, J Blacker, G Busuttil, J Gallant, K Sahota, C Anderson, T Sidhu, B Rai, R Dheer, B Mahfouz, L Brett, A Young, P Driscoll, V Alexander, Y Gordon, H Haili, M Hamidi, B Hashani, C Hersch, A Jammu, S Jassal, Y Johnson, H Kaur Dheer, A Kelly, I Kingston, P Knewstubb, S Kohli, S Kumar, K Dhindsa, T Mahmood, G Malcolm, S Manro, J Martin, P Mason, F Mohamed, K Mohan, K K Nagpal, 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:

S Ahmed, D Crawford, M Iqbal, S Khan, G Murtaza and H Tailor (Deputy Mayor)

1 Apologies for Absence and Attendance

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alexander, D Crawford, Khan, S Ahmed, Iqbal, Murtaza and Tailor.

Councillors Summers, D Martin, Bains, Kim Nagpal and Nijhar were in attendance virtually.

2 Dispensations

There were no dispensations required.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Busuttil declared that he was a housing association tenant but that he did not consider this a pecuniary interest and would therefore participate in the Opposition Group motion for debate.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 November 2022

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2022 are approved as a correct record of proceedings.

5 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor updated Council on important civic events and occasions. Council noted that:

- Councillor Sahota was congratulated on the naming of her baby boy who had been born in October.
- The Mayor had attended many Christmas events, and had enjoyed helping to decorate the Christmas tree in Southall.
- The Mayor was holding a fundraising dinner at Royal Nawaab in January and asked Councillors to consider attending.
- It was noted that it had been Guru Nanak's birthday in November and the Mayor hoped everyone would have a happy Christmas.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

9 Questions from Members of the Council

Councillor Tighe asked Councillor Costigan:

Can the portfolio holder outline how the draft Local Plan, out for consultation right now, will help to meet our manifesto commitments/Council Plan commitments?

Councillor Costigan responded:

The mission of Ealing's new administration is simple: we want to ensure every family has a decent living income and can afford a genuinely affordable home. That everyone can live a long, happy and healthy life, in communities full of pride and identity. Where every child can reach their potential and achieve their dreams. This is why our Council Plan has three cross-cutting core themes: 'tackling the climate crisis', 'fighting inequality', and 'creating good jobs and growth'.

Our draft Local Plan, currently out to consultation with residents and stakeholders, is just one mechanism to realising these bold ambitious but our core values are reinforced throughout the document. It provides a platform enabling a new conversation with our communities on how our towns, neighbourhoods, and their local economies grow and evolve. It is also a key tool in addressing the many challenges we face as a borough, as well as unlocking its many opportunities/ Consequently, it must be underpinned by a strong set of values, underpinned by those in the Council Plan, that are well understood and relevant to the everyday lives of our residents, businesses and those who visit the borough to study, work or socialise.

Practically, the Spatial Strategy of the draft new Local Plan (outlined in Chapter 3 of the document) demonstrates how the nine Priorities of the Council Plan are integrated within the four strategic policies.

Ultimately the Local Plan will help inform and shape decisions taken by the council, developers, landowners and others about new homes, infrastructure, tackling climate change, creating good jobs and how we address health and inequalities in the Ealing. The Local Plan, like our Council Plan, belongs to everyone, and will help shape Ealing for the better over the next 15 years.

Councillor Ball asked Councillor Costigan:

Can the portfolio holder please outline proposals for the pedestrianisation of Bond Street, High Street and/or Springbridge Road and advise what consultation and feasibility work has taken place on them so far?

Councillor Costigan responded:

There are no plans to pedestrianize Bond Street, High Street or Springbridge Road.

I am aware of an article appearing in a couple of local media outlets which discusses a recent meeting of the Local Development Plan Advisory Committee and a report on the Local Plan's Transport Topic Paper.

Unfortunately, this article does not fully capture what is contained in the transport topic paper, nor does it capture the subsequent discussion that was had at the meeting. Cllr Ball was actually present at this meeting, and he will recall this.

The transport topic paper contains the title "Pedestrianisation of High Streets" as a heading for potential transport interventions. Cllr Ball will also recall that this was one potential transport intervention discussed out of many options, including "traffic calming, reducing the number of lanes and widening pavements, timed restrictions, restrictions on

general traffic (bus and taxi only) or full pedestrianisation". These were unfortunately also not included in the media report.

The idea comes from an old bid that we submitted in the previous Council term to Transport for London for a Liveable Neighbourhood for Ealing Town Centre, which contained a previous objective to significantly improve pedestrian facilities, flexible space and improving links to the green spaces from the town centre. However, due to COVID, the Liveable Neighbourhood fund was, and remains suspended and there have been no new rounds of funding from TfL.

As outlined in our recently published Travel in Ealing Charter that was developed following extensive consultation with local people, we're committed to being open, transparent, and inclusive in how we engage with local people, including on transport and active travel projects.

We're determined to ensure that the decision-making processes for future transport proposals enable participation by as many people as possible from all ages, backgrounds and circumstances.

This is because we also know that schemes will be all the better with local input. When they command the support of residents, when everyone has had the opportunity to shape and influence decisions, and we've all made the necessary compromises we need to make to live in sustainable and cohesive communities.

Councillor Gallant asked Councillor Costigan:

Given the rising cost of energy due to the war in Ukraine, will the Council not follow the example of numerous other local authorities and augment the monthly grant payments to Ealing families that continue to host Ukrainians on the Homes for Ukraine scheme?

Councillor Costigan responded:

Here in Ealing we have a long and proud history of supporting refugees. To date, we have welcomed over 400 guests under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and given hosts £297,000 in 'thank you' payments.

As you will well be aware, Cllr Gallant, the support offered to Ukrainian families under the Governments 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme was mise.

Under the so-called 'phased approach' we saw the website crash within a matter of minutes; Ukrainian families bogged down with 50-page applications in a sea of bureaucracy; a scheme that offered no plan B for refugees if their accommodation arrangements fell apart; and a scheme that gave no security or certainty for the future after those first six months.

So, I must say I find it rich, Madam Mayor, that this evening Cllr Gallant would ask such a question that implies that Ealing Labour does not support Ukrainian refugees adequately when his own party have failed to support them, their hosts, and families across the country in the Tory made cost-of-living crisis.

To directly support hosts for Ukrainians, we are increasing the financial support we provide to hosts so that they can continue to keep their guests, in safe accommodation, and help them in the face of the cost-of-living and energy crisis pressures.

If a host has one refugee, they will receive an additional £50 extra per month, on top of their £350 monthly 'thank you' payment. If they have 2 refugees, they will get an extra £150 per month. And for every additional person hosted, an extra £100 will be given to the host.

As home to the second-largest Ukrainian population in London, we are more than willing to play our part and offer more than just words of encouragement. These payments will be delivered to host households in the next month, and are part of our commitment to support refugees, our kind residents who home them and people everywhere that everyone is welcome here in Ealing.

Councillor Kingston asked Councillor Donnelly:

Can the portfolio holder outline what the Government's Autumn Statement means for Londoners and for local Government?

Councillor Donnelly responded:

Unfortunately, and yet unsurprisingly, the Government's autumn statement will make things worse for many Londoners, and it has certainly not made things better for local Government.

Whilst the allocations for individual boroughs won't be known until the provisional local government settlement that is expected next week, the autumn statement confirmed that Council budgets would be maintained in line with the budgets set out at the Spending Review in 2022. This means a real terms cuts in funding for Councils with inflation running at 11.1%.

The subtext of this is clear – the Government expects Councils to make efficiencies to manage inflationary pressures.

After twelve years of Tory rule, having our budgets slashed is becoming the norm. However, the autumn statement could have been a real opportunity for the Government to work in partnership with local councils to tackle the serious challenges that we face as a city.

For instance, the Government provided more, welcome funding to the NHS. However, this was not matched with more funding for public health budgets in Councils. Considering that the years have taught us that Councils are key in public health and inequality can both exacerbate existing health challenges, it seems like a real oversight – or punishment – to not provide Councils with the resource that we would need to support the NHS.

Furthermore, whilst the Government did announce additional funding for social care, this falls significantly short of pressures facing our services. Instead, the Government expect us to meet these pressures by relying on council tax and the social care precept. I don't know why the penny hasn't yet dropped for the Government – Council Tax increases imposed on Councils should not be the solution to social care funding. What we need is a sustainable, guaranteed funding level for the future, and Council Tax rises do not provide this.

Local Councils, as the last few years have proved, are the fabric of this country. And in Ealing, like with Councils across London, we are going to continue to do all we can to deliver for our residents, who need our services more than ever. London faces enormous challenges, and Councils are key to this. It is deeply disappointing that the Government chooses to punish us instead of working together in what is one of the toughest climates in living memory.

Councillor Malcolm asked Councillor Costigan:

Thank you, Cllr Malcolm, for your question. It's great that instead of using this opportunity to ask about what Ealing Council is doing on flooding management, you instead want to ask about what an entirely different borough is doing.

However, I'd like to be clear that, at Ealing Council, we're committed to tackling the climate crisis and becoming more resilient to flooding risk. In direct response to Councillor Malcolm's question, Ealing will be engaging with Richmond Council with regards to the flooding sensors trial.

But, as I'm sure that Councillor Malcolm will appreciate, it is more important than ever that we are delivering value for money for residents and businesses. So we will be waiting for any outcomes and recommendations from the trial study so that make an informed decision with regards to implementing an appropriate solution to flooding that works for our borough.

The Liberal Democrats will also be pleased to know that we also already have several facilities in place to identify high risk flooding and prevent it.

We know that as the climate crisis worsens, it is more important than

ever that we get this right – which is why there is already significant resource in Ealing Council allocated to making sure we mitigate the risk of flooding.

Firstly, our officers are continuously working to identify high-risk flooding locations, using a combination of our flood studies and our own knowledge of historical flooding sites.

We have also delivered a number of sustainable drainage schemes in areas such as North Acton Square, Greenford Gurnell Greenway, Hanwell Station and Acton Mainline Station, and we're programming delivery of more sustainable drainage schemes in Deans Gardens SuDS, Baron's Pond, Belvue SuDS Project, Glade Lane, etc. in the coming months.

In addition, we have undertaken a gully trial to provide a risk-based approach to monitoring and maintaining our gullies. The objective of the trial is to develop a more targeted approach to gully cleansing that delivers appropriate and sustainable service levels as well as build a forward plan and annual program of maintenance and replacement based on hierarchy and risk.

We also work in partnership with our highway maintenance contractors to inspect high risk flood sites, as well as coordinating and working collaboratively with other high risk management authorities such as Thames Water.

In the future, we're also looking to work together with the management of the Metropolitan Business Park in Greenford to see if we can deploy flood sensors there. These would be connected radar-based depth sensors, which would help us better understand where there is sewer capacity being exceeded and a risk of flooding.

In 2019, we declared a Climate Emergency as this is one of the biggest issues affecting our borough and beyond. Tackling flooding as it becomes more and more frequent is part of our strategy to mitigate the worst effects of climate change and ensure that we have a more sustainable, fairer borough.

Councillor Gordon asked Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal:

Can the portfolio holder update members on the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection on Ealing's Children's Services?

Councillor Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal responded:

In October, we received a two-day focussed visit from Ofsted, which looked at our 'front door' arrangements, which is the point where local authorities, alongside other agencies, consider and respond to referrals relating to children who may be in need or at risk of harm.

I am pleased to update you that the council's hard work, perseverance, and dedication have not gone unnoticed!

We have been credited for an improved service, that provides good quality, a clear focus, timely responses to referrals and a well-developed response to support the most vulnerable families and young people.

Our comprehensive early help offer was singled out, for providing children and families with access to a range of targeted and accessible services. Alongside, including and tailoring our approach based on the unique identity and cultural needs of the children and families, which can be too often side-lined.

The levels of interventions we provide were deemed appropriate and 'well-embedded in practice', so much so that when immediate risks to children are identified the response is swift and effective.

The support offered to children with health conditions or impairments was recognised as detailed and thorough, as we include both their needs, with the impact of their relationships with their immediate family, as part of our wrap-around support.

Our schools were also in praise of our service, stating that the service has helped them to build stronger relationships with parents and it has enabled them to work together to support their children. Which is fantastic!

I am delighted that the hard work, dedication, and vital service that we provide in supporting our most vulnerable young people and their families during sensitive and challenging times has been recognised by Ofsted.

This Labour council works tirelessly to offer wrap-around support to those who need it. Our service, as the inspector said, has improved significantly, but we are not taking our foot off the pedal madam mayor, not until every young person in Ealing has the chance to reach their full potential. We will continue to work with them, for them.

Councillor Hashani asked Councillor Mahfouz:

Can the portfolio holder give an update on the commitment to provide 10,000 new jobs?

Councillor Mahfouz responded:

As you know, we set ourselves an ambitious target to secure and deliver 10,000 good new jobs to people in Ealing. We were very clear in our commitment, that we wanted to support local businesses,

address the obstacles for residents in securing good work and support people into jobs that provided a decent living income. And I am so proud of the work we have already achieved just a few months in.

To date we have delivered 6 jobs fairs, engaging over 1,200 residents this year. We have provided 55 apprenticeships, as well as expanding our youth offer to support people in to employment, education, or training. We have launched Southall Manor House, the Creative Enterprise Zone in Park Royal and the Forge which all support businesses and residents alike through recruitment, upskilling and wrap-around support. We have delivered over 1,5000 new qualifications and training programmes for people wanting to upskill. We have launched new learning zones at our community hubs in Northolt and Southall and are delivering our Digital Inclusion project to 240 unemployed residents to help them into work.

And as of September, over 1,100 new jobs have already been delivered!

That is over a thousand residents, who have been supported, listened to, and had their lives changed by a Labour council that cares.

To give you an example, we have a care leaver in Ealing, who studied at Birmingham University. They wanted to find a placement or internship that would support their career in finance, but faced with barrier after barrier, he was supported by one of our youth advisers. They got them a job in Pret, and as they looked for a placement, they helped them develop their CV, forwarded them a range of opportunities, and got them an interview with the Crown Estate!

Their interview, following dedicated support, preparation, and practice from the youth advisor, was a resounding success and the care leaver received a contract with the Crown Estate and will go on to achieve amazing things.

Stories like this are why Ealing Labour was elected for a fourth historical term with its largest mandate. Stories like this show the importance of working with residents. Stories like this show how much Ealing Labour cares and how dedicated we truly are in supporting our residents.

10 Opposition Group Motion for Debate

Councillor Ball moved, and Councillor Busuttil seconded, the Opposition motion for debate.

Councillors L Wall, Manro, Stafford, Brett, Driscoll, Gallant, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Rice, J Anand, Johnson and Donnelly responded to the motion.

Councillor L Wall moved, and Councillor Manro seconded, and amendment to the motion.

A vote was taken and the amendment was carried.

A vote was taken on the substantive motion and it was

RESOLVED: That

Ealing Council notes:

- Many Ealing residents live in rented properties or properties managed by Housing Associations.
- As the Government continues to fail to fund social housebuilding, Housing Associations have grown in number and their stock has vastly increased.
- Councillors are aware of issues in private rented properties as well as within buildings managed by Housing Associations and that the four years during which a Conservative Government imposed a 1% social rent cut on Housing Associations have inevitably taken their toll.
- Nationally, tenant engagement and involvement has been withdrawn by Government. This means that communication between tenants and Housing Associations can be poor, resulting in long periods of time passing before issues are identified and resolved.
- The Homes Act (2018) does not give local authorities enough resource to take adequate enforcement action against social housing providers who are not fulfilling obligations to their tenants and leaseholders, tenants and shared owners can often feel their concerns are ignored.
- Building repairs identified in individual homes and communal areas should be identified and resolved in a timely manner but, similarly to local authorities, social housing providers have been hit with 16% annual inflation in repairs and maintenance costs meaning that these repairs can take unacceptably long to rectify.

Ealing Council believes that:

- The Government must legislate to ensure that Housing Associations are properly resourced to deliver for their tenants, some of whom are vulnerable and have specific housing and care needs.
- That Housing Associations have both a legal and moral duty to ensure that their tenants' needs are met and all issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- While we recognise that there are many social landlords who could do better when it comes to repairs and maintenance, social landlords do not operate in a vacuum and have been impacted by years of under-funding, Brexit, the impact of COVID-19 as well the failure of the Government to build new socially let homes.
- As a direct result of the coalition Government's closure of the Tenant Services Authority in 2012 and National Tenant Voice in 2010, it can be difficult for some tenants to make and escalate complaints when

issues persist and are left unresolved as it is hard to know who is responsible for different issues that arise.

- The Government must do more to address the crisis in social housebuilding and the funding crisis for local authorities which is impacting social housing.
- There is a greater systemic issue of unfit housing in the private rented sector, which Ealing Council is working to rectify through campaigning for the powers we need to extend our landlord licensing scheme across 100% of the borough, to ensure we put an end to rogue slum landlords taking advantage of tenants (Council Plan 2022)

Ealing Council resolves to:

1. Campaign to strengthen proposals in the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill so that residents who are currently experiencing issues with their Housing Association have greater protection.
2. Continue to signpost residents to their specific Housing Association officer who would be best placed to help resolve ongoing issues in their homes or communal spaces in their building.
3. Continue our planned roundtables with all registered Housing Associations which have stock in Ealing in order for a frank and open conversation to take place between Councillors, officers and representatives from Housing Associations about how we can work collaboratively to maximise the delivery of much needed safe, sustainable and genuinely affordable homes in the borough and maintain existing stock to high standards.
4. Campaign for greater enforcement and regulatory powers so Councils can work constructively with Housing Associations which have significant issues and take action when needed, particularly those which do not address building defects within their existing stock.
5. Ensure that our community safety continues to work with Housing Associations to protect their tenants from anti-social behaviour.
6. Continue to support local people in holding their Housing Association to account by seeking to democratise the relationship between tenant and Housing Association through campaigning to reinstate organisations like the Tenants Services Authority and National Tenants Voice that were taken away by the coalition government, as well as continuing to ask housing associations to offer lifetime tenancies for their tenants. This will allow residents and their families to benefit from security of tenure as, for example, tenants will not occupy in unsuitable accommodation to retain their security of tenure (Tenancy Strategy 2021).

Councillor Blacker proposed, and Councillor Mason seconded, the majority group motion for debate.

Councillors Steed, Raza, Mohammed, Conti, Rai, Wesson, Malcolm, Mahfouz, Baaklini, Gallant, Shaw and Stafford responded to the motion.

RESOLVED: That

This Council recognises that Accident and Emergency Departments across the country are facing huge pressures. We are proud to have saved the A&E department at Ealing Hospital from closure.

A decade of Tory Mismanagement and broken promises about no more top-down NHS reorganisations led former Culture Secretary, Nadine Dorries, to admit that the health service was found “wanting and inadequate” when the pandemic struck. As a result, this Council notes that recent figures from the NHS reveal that 7,953 people had to wait more than four hours for emergency care at A&Es in Northwest London University Healthcare Trust including at Ealing Hospital.

Shockingly, 372 people locally had to wait more than 12 hours to be admitted to accident and emergency. Just 73% of patients admitted to A&E in North West London were seen within 4 hours – the NHS says that 95% of patients should be admitted, transferred, or discharged in that time.

There are now also 6.73 million people on the NHS waiting list in England as of June 2022. This is the highest ever recorded. At the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, following a decade of Tory mismanagement there were 4.4 million people on the NHS waiting list in England, then a record high. Nationally, the standard of 92% of people seen within 18 weeks of a referral has not been met since 2016. Now, 1 in every 9 people in England are on the NHS waiting list.

Our hard-working local NHS staff are making preparations for winter and are expanding home settlement capacity, making space for 32 additional beds at hospital sites across Ealing and increasing staffing across medical, nursing, therapies, diagnostic and support services. However, thanks to the effects of inflation, the NHS is already facing a £7billion shortfall in its budget this year. The Autumn Statement doesn't even cover half of the deficit and offers no respite for a chronically overstretched health and care service. It is clear that the Government must work to tackle the underlying challenges they created.

This Council notes that one in four people experiences a mental health problem in any given year and strongly believe that mental health should be taken as seriously as physical health.

This Council resolves that the NHS remains understaffed and overstretched as a result of years of Tory Government. Everybody is having to pay more but is getting less. The Government is raising taxes on working people in the

middle of a cost-of-living crisis, yet patients are waiting ever-longer for hospital care. You cannot trust the Tories with the NHS. The longer there is a Conservative Government the longer patients will have to wait.

12 **Motions not for Debate**

Motion not for Debate 1 – Local Electricity Bill

RESOLVED: That

Ealing Council recognises the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy.

Ealing Council further recognises:

- That the very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so.
- That making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would enable and empower new local businesses, or Councils, to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local customers.
- That revenues received by new local renewable electricity providers could be used to help improve the local economy, local services and facilities and to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions.

Ealing Council resolves that it signed up to support the Local Electricity Bill in 2021, supported by over 300 MPs which, if made law, would establish a Right to Local Supply which would promote local renewable electricity supply companies and co-operatives by making the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate to the size of the supply operation.

Ealing Council further resolves to:

- Continue to work with the three local MP's, all of whom have already expressed their support for the Bill.
- Use our local influence to encourage other neighbouring councils to support the Bill who have not yet done so.

Motion not for debate 2: Biodiversity and Schools

RESOLVED: That

Ealing Council notes that:

- There are several initiatives existing in Ealing designed to encourage children to learn more about nature and biodiversity.
- For example, Ealing Council supports a network of forest schools and recently put on a number of Biodiversity workshops.

- Ealing Council are also rolling out a Green Schools Network, recently launched, that is a free programme designed to help schools become greener and carbon neutral.
- As well as this, the existing Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Campaign for School Gardening offers incentives for schools to involve children in gardening.
- A new scheme involving the RHS, the Natural History Museum and the Department for Education called the National Education Nature Park will encourage children to learn about biodiversity and nature in schools.
- There will also be a new climate action award scheme for schools which are particularly creative in teaching their pupils about biodiversity from the same bodies.

Ealing Council therefore resolves continue working with schools to encourage learning about biodiversity and nature, and also resolves to encourage all local schools to sign up to the Green Schools network and to apply for the RHS support and funding.

13 Treasury Management Mid-Year Update 2022/23

RESOLVED: That Council

1. Noted the Treasury Management activities and performance against targets for the period to 30 September 2022.
2. Noted the Council's investment balance of £ 591.989m as at 30 September 2022 of which £516.000m was invested in Debt Management Office (DMO).

14 Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies

RESOLVED: That Councillors Blacker (Chair), Mason, Kamaljit Kaur Nagpal, Raza, Wall and Steed be appointed to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

15 Urgent Key Decisions Exempted from Call-in

There were no urgent key decisions exempted from call-in since the last Council meeting.

Meeting commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting finished: 9.32 pm

Signed:

Dated: Wednesday, 8 March 2023

M Midha (Mayor)