

## COUNCIL

17 January 2013

Meeting held at Council Chamber - Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



Councillor Michael Markham (Mayor)

	<p><b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b></p> <p>Councillors: Lynne Allen Janet Duncan Carol Melvin Bruce Baker Beulah East Douglas Mills Tim Barker Neil Fyfe Richard Mills Richard Barnes Janet Gardner John Morgan David Benson Sid Garg June Nelson Jonathan Bianco Roshan Ghei Susan O'Brien Sukhpal Brar Dominic Gilham Mary O'Connor Wayne Bridges Raymond Graham David Payne Mike Bull Paul Harmsworth Ray Puddifoot Keith Burrows John Hensley Andrew Retter Paul Buttivant Henry Higgins John Riley George Cooper Patricia Jackson Avtar Sandhu Judith Cooper Judy Kelly Robin Sansarpuri Philip Corthorne Peter Kemp Scott Seaman-Digby Brian Crowe Mo Khursheed David Simmonds Peter Curling Eddie Lavery Brian Stead Catherine Dann Richard Lewis Michael White Jazz Dhillon John Major David Yarrow</p>
	<p><b>OFFICERS PRESENT:</b> Fran Beasley, Jean Palmer, Linda Sanders, Raj Alagh, Lloyd White, Mark Braddock, Morgan Einon, Trevor Langworth, Paul Whaymand and Steven Maiden</p>
37.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kauffman), Councillors Allam, Barrett, Bliss, Jarjussey, Jenkins, Lakhmana, MacDonald and Routledge.</p>
38.	<p><b>MINUTES</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the meetings held on 8 November and 4 December 2012 be agreed as correct records.</p>
39.	<p><b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>On behalf of the Council, the Mayor congratulated the Leader on his recent appointment to MBE.</p>
40.	<p><b>REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b> (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p>

Councillor Puddifoot moved the recommendations as set out on the Order of Business. The motion was seconded by Councillor Simmonds and it was:

**RESOLVED: That:**

- a) the urgency decisions detailed in the report be noted;
- b) part 4, Schedule C, 1.6 of the Constitution be amended to read as follows:

**1.6 Quorum**

The Quorum for a meeting of the Cabinet, or a committee of it, shall be one quarter of the total number of Members of the Cabinet, or 3, whichever is the larger;

- c) Councillor Gilham be appointed Council Champion for Information Technology; and
- d) the timetable for meetings for 2013/14 in Appendix A be approved and the Head of Democratic Services in consultation with the Chief Whip of the Majority Party be authorised to make any amendments that may be required.

41. **COUNCIL TAX BASE 2013/2014** (*Agenda Item 6*)

Councillor Bianco moved the recommendations as set out on the Order of Business. The motion was seconded by Councillor Puddifoot and it was:

**RESOLVED: That:**

- a) the report of the Director of Finance for the calculation of the Council Tax Base and the Business Rates Forecast be approved;
- b) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 the amount calculated by the London Borough of Hillingdon as its Council Tax Base for 2013/14 shall be 87,446; and
- c) the Director of Finance be authorised to submit the 2013/14 NNDR1 return to the Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) in line with the business rates forecast contained within the report.

42. **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Councillor Bianco moved, and Councillor Puddifoot seconded, the recommendations as set out in the Order of Business.

Councillor Harmsworth moved, and Councillor Curling seconded, the following amendment:

“to add:

“d) This Council seeks support from London Councils in lobbying the Government to revert back to the original scheme for 2014/15”

The Leader advised that he would be unable to commit to supporting this amendment without first gauging the level of support from other leaders of London Councils.

	<p>Following debate (Councillors Harmsworth and Puddifoot), Councillor Harmsworth withdrew the amendment with the agreement of the meeting.</p> <p>The original motion was put to the vote and it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the adoption of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme proposed by Cabinet, be approved initially for a two year period from 1 April 2013 and, as part of the scheme, the continuation of the pensioner discount scheme under the revised Section 13a of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be approved;</li> <li>b) the rules for the operation of the London Borough of Hillingdon Council Tax Reduction Scheme be adopted; and</li> <li>c) the new Scheme of Council Tax Discounts, which replaced some of the abolished Council Tax exemptions, be approved.</li> </ul>
43.	<p><b>STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY REVIEW</b> (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Bianco moved, and Councillor Corthorne seconded, the recommendations as set out in the Order of Business. Following debate (Councillor Allen), it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the revised Statement of Gambling Policy Review be adopted for immediate implementation until January 2016.</b></p>
44.	<p><b>MEMBERS' QUESTIONS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p><b>9.5 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR GARDNER TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR PUDDIFOOT</b></p> <p>“Can the Leader assure this Council that we will continue to meet the needs of our residents by providing translation and interpretation services as and when necessary? This service is essential considering the dramatic changes to benefits that will be occurring within the next months.”</p> <p>The Leader of the Council was pleased to be able to say that the Council would continue to meet the needs of residents by providing translation and interpretation services. He advised that, when the Council received a request for such services from residents, it was determined how best to meet their needs by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ providing documents in the format or language requested;</li> <li>▪ offering residents use of a telephone interpreter to discuss the document or explain about the services in the language requested; or</li> <li>▪ meeting residents with an interpreter to interpret into the language requested.</li> </ul> <p>The Leader emphasised that, if a resident requested any of the Council's publications in large type, braille or on audio tape they were able to call the Council for more information.</p> <p>The Leader regarded the Council’s approach as being proportionate and reasonable and that the answer was not to translate all information routinely but to meet the needs of residents as and when required.</p> <p>Councillor Gardner, by way of a supplementary question, asked whether the Leader of the Council was aware of the Department for Communities and Local</p>

Government's document, "50 Ways To Save: Examples of sensible savings in local government" which suggested only publishing documents in English.

The Leader confirmed that this document had not informed the Council's policy on translation and interpretation services.

#### **9.4 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DUNCAN TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLOR PUDDIFOOT**

"As Central Government reduces funding for Council Tax, while housing and welfare benefits are set to decrease, can the Leader tell us what plans are being made to support the poorest and most vulnerable residents in the most deprived parts of the Borough?"

The Leader of the Council advised that Council Tax was set by local authorities and not Central Government. Central Government had increased Hillingdon's Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) allowance from £335K to £1.2m for 2013/14 in order to help those most affected by the local housing allowance reforms and the overall Benefit cap. The Council would seek to ensure that this increased funding was applied in full. He also advised that housing and welfare benefits would not be cut and were only set to decrease in real terms.

The Leader of the Council noted that the Council was putting in place a Local Welfare Fund of just over £700k per annum to support those in most need which was to replace elements of the Social Fund and Crisis Loans. Access to these funds would be coordinated across services and the Council would be working with the Citizen's Advice Bureau to engage with those residents in most need.

The Leader of the Council noted that the previous Labour Government had wanted to increase borrowing irresponsibly to continue to meet the rising costs of such things as housing and welfare benefits. Had Labour policies been followed, the country's deficit would have increased significantly. He also noted that the previous Labour administration of the Council had failed to deliver any improvement to some of the Borough's poorest areas, such as Hayes, when in office.

The Leader of the Council stated that by far the best way to lift residents out of poverty was through education, which was an area in which local authorities could make a significant impact. He advised that the current administration was providing residents with access to such education through the Schools Estates Programme and the building of a new school at Lake Farm.

Councillor Duncan, by way of a supplementary question, asked the Leader of the Council whether information on benefits would be provided in different languages.

The Leader of the Council confirmed that there was information on the website about housing and welfare benefits but that it would not be possible to translate this into different languages online. However, he advised that translations would be provided on request.

#### **9.1 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR CURLING TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH & HOUSING – COUNCILLOR CORTHORNE**

"Is the Cabinet Member considering any measures to tackle rogue landlords, and thus

ensure that tenants of private landlords are also recognised as ‘Hillingdon’s residents’ and therefore put first by this Council?”

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Housing advised that the Council undertook a lot of work through its Private Sector Housing Team and Planning Enforcement Team to tackle the living conditions for those people who lived in the private rented sector within the Borough. Officers dealt with complaints regarding single family accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The Council strived to get poor conditions improved by working with landlords and taking legal action only where necessary.

The Council worked proactively with local landlords to promote good practice within the Borough and Councillor Corthorne highlighted some of the strengths of the Council’s approach for information.

Despite this good work, Councillor Corthorne acknowledged that there was always the need to do more and seek out those landlords who were not prepared to provide safe and reasonably priced accommodation. Councillor Corthorne highlighted the Mayor of London’s publication of the London Rental Standard which promoted high standards and empowered residents.

Councillor Corthorne concluded by noting that the number of units of private rented accommodation in the Borough had doubled over the last 10 years to some 10,000. Increasingly Hillingdon residents were relying on this type of accommodation and the Council was determined to ensure that the houses provided were safe as well as provided at a reasonable cost.

Councillor Curling, by way of a supplementary question, asked whether the Council was considering a landlord registration scheme.

Councillor Corthorne advised that the Council was seeking to accredit HMOs but that it was not currently considering a landlord registration scheme.

## **9.2 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DHILLON TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND RECYCLING – COUNCILLOR BURROWS**

“Could the Cabinet Member please give Council an update on how the task force set up to tackle ‘beds in sheds’ has been performing?”

Councillor Burrows advised that the task force set up to tackle beds in sheds had made good progress in obtaining intelligence on the issue throughout the Borough. The Beds in Sheds Team had discovered that over 40% of known beds and sheds cases involved properties with existing HMO or related private sector housing enforcement issues meaning that a high proportion of beds and sheds cases involved rogue landlords.

Councillor Burrows advised that the project team had prepared a list of priority cases, with the highest priority being those where there was either a combination of planning enforcement and private sector housing irregularities or where the case involved a ‘rogue’ landlord with an interest in several such properties. Officers then sought joint prosecutions under planning and housing legislation to secure high fines and full recovery of costs and then publicised the resultant prosecutions as a deterrent to others.

Councillor Burrows noted that the project team met regularly to review its priority cases. There were currently 67 priority cases identified of which:

- 6 had buildings currently being adapted or demolished to ensure compliance,
- 7 involved prosecutions through the courts,
- 5 would progress to prosecution if planning appeals were unsuccessful,
- 1 case required a search warrant through the courts,
- 20 involved planning enforcement notices that had been recently served or were due to be served, and
- 28 involved evidence being collected for possible further action.

The team was working closely with Council Tax officers, UK Border Control, HM Revenue and Customs, and would consider Proceeds of Crime Legislation if appropriate as part of a prosecution.

Councillor Burrows noted that the Council had publicised the work of the Beds in Sheds Team through a number of press releases highlighting a number of court success stories. These had been widely covered in local and trade publications including the Uxbridge Gazette, Hillingdon Times and a National Journal. The Council had also had positive coverage in the Evening standard.

Councillor Burrows stated that he was delighted that the Department of Communities and Local Government was impressed by the Council's work. Officers were also aware that local property agents had started to tell potential clients that it was not sensible to build or rent out illegal beds and sheds in Hillingdon in light of the work undertaken by the Beds and Sheds Team. This approach was therefore likely to reduce the future number of new beds in sheds cases arising.

Councillor Burrows thanked the Beds in Sheds Team for their hard work.

Councillor Dhillon, by way of a supplementary question, asked whether the team had problems with enforcement due to the notice that had to be given prior to inspection.

Councillor Burrows advised that the team did have problems due to having to provide notice but that this was a legal requirement which could not be avoided.

#### **9.7 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MAJOR TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH & HOUSING – COUNCILLOR CORTHORNE**

“The recent health consultation ‘Shaping a Healthy Future’ seems to rely heavily on the integration of health and social care services for the delivery of the ‘out of hospital’ strategies. Is the Council prepared to invest in the social care elements of this in the form of a full endorsement and provision of budget allocations setting out how social services and health could deliver the necessary integrated services?”

Councillor Corthorne advised that delivering integrated health and social care services for residents was a key priority for the Council. The Council worked closely with health partners across the Borough to ensure that people were able to maintain their independence at home with the maximum choice and control over the way in which support was provided to them.

Councillor Corthorne stated that care needed to be provided for the right people, in the right place and at the right time. The Council was working to avoid unnecessary

admissions to hospital by providing better community-based services. Where people did need a period of hospital care because of acute health needs, then the Council aimed to ensure that hospital discharge arrangements were effective and timely, and that rehabilitation was offered for people to recover and regain independent living skills wherever possible.

An example was provided of the joint approach through the Integrated Care Pilot, where GPs, social workers, hospital consultations, community nursing and other specialists attended multi-disciplinary case conferences to discuss frail older people and others with long-term conditions such as diabetes that had complex needs and were at risk of emergency hospital admission or care. Since the programme started in August 2012, around 100 people had benefited from integrated care planning. An NHS innovation fund of £600k had been made available to develop new schemes to help reduce unnecessary hospital admissions and support improved joint working for the benefit of patients and residents.

Councillor Corthorne noted that the Government had announced a number of NHS budget transfers for Adult Social Care which would be part of formal agreements. Enhancing integrated health and social care approaches for residents would be integral to these plans.

Councillor Corthorne stated that the Council was committed to working together with all parts of the NHS in Hillingdon to make the best use of the joint resources available to both health and social care to meet increasing needs and expectations. The Health and Wellbeing Board for Hillingdon, chaired by the Leader of the Council, had an overview of how resources were being deployed and enabled strategic choices to be made.

Councillor Corthorne advised that the Council's social care budget would continue to be reviewed annually as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Forecast to ensure that the budget met the needs of residents in line with eligibility thresholds for adult social care, ensuring efficiency and value for money, through personal budgets giving people choice about how their care and support needs were met.

Councillor Major, by way of a supplementary question, asked whether the Cabinet Member agreed with him that none of the planned hospital closures should take place until out-of-hospital provision was fully in place.

Councillor Corthorne advised that such decisions were for the NHS to make rather than the Local Authority.

#### **9.8 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR JARJUSSEY TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH & HOUSING – COUNCILLOR CORTHORNE**

The Mayor asked the following question on Councillor Jarjussey's behalf:

“Could the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Housing provide an update on any new developments at the Hayes Walk-In Centre, as well as on the expected expansion of services following the acquisition of the old Post Office by NHS Hillingdon?”

Councillor Corthorne noted that, following consultation about the future of Hayes Town Walk-In Centre, a series of recommendations were made including the Walk-In

Centre being retained as an out-of-hours service. These recommendations were agreed and supported, amongst others, by the Council's External Services Committee.

He confirmed that the GP services from that site were unaffected by the consultation. However, the acquisition of the old post office site meant that the GP practices which were currently located on the first floor of the building could be relocated to the ground floor making access for the public better. This freed up space on the first floor for future developments to support the out-of-hospital strategy.

NHS Hillingdon staff were meeting the practices and community services to confirm plans to reorganise and maximise use of the space. The Council continued to work closely with NHS Hillingdon to ensure residents received the best possible healthcare.

There was no supplementary question.

### **9.6 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BLISS TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND RECYCLING - COUNCILLOR BURROWS**

The Mayor asked the following question on Councillor Bliss's behalf:

"In April 2010 a feasibility study was undertaken to look at placing a raised table in Yeading Gardens at the junction with Yeading Lane after a number of accidents had occurred. However, despite almost 3 years passing, the residents are still waiting for this work to be done. This had supposedly been agreed by Councillor Burrows on 31 October 2011 and was just waiting for formal approval of the funding. Could the Cabinet Member tell me when this raised table will finally be installed?"

Councillor Burrows stated that traffic calming schemes were sometimes controversial and it was always necessary for the Council to ensure:

- that they were justified;
- that they were supported by a majority of residents;
- that they were affordable; and
- that there were suitable funding could be identified.

The assessment process needed to be carried out properly and it this could take some time. In the case of the junction of Yeading Gardens, Councillor Burrows confirmed that the above criteria had been met to his satisfaction and he had agreed to support the scheme through the Council's road safety programme. As the scheme involved a raised table, it was in the process of being taken through the formal traffic order notices which the Council was legally obliged to follow through in cases like this.

Councillor Burrows noted that the public notice was on the site and had already been advertised in the local newspaper. The work itself had been programmed by the Council's term contractor for February.

There was no supplementary question.

### **9.3 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR ALLEN TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND RECYCLING - COUNCILLOR BURROWS**

"Central Avenue and surrounding roads suffer due to the lack of proper drainage



having to rely on gullies to take away excess rain which they cannot do. This year we have experienced more flooding than is the usual case and we are told that more rain is forecast for the foreseeable future. At present we are supposed to receive a once a year cleansing of all these gullies to alleviate this problem, though this seldom takes place. Often it is left to residents or Councillors to request action. Could the Cabinet Member with responsibilities for environment issues, please inform Council if there are any plans to put in place a gulley cleansing programme fit for purpose in areas that have no adequate drainage?"

Councillor Burrows stated that flooding had been a national issue which had affected many regions more than it had Hillingdon. He confirmed that the gullies in Central Avenue near the junction with the Uxbridge Road and those in Central Avenue near the swimming pool were connected into the Thames Water Surface Water Main. However, the rest of the gullies in this road, like those in many of the surrounding roads, were connected to soakaways.

The Highways Section had in place a comprehensive gulley cleansing programme which saw the Borough's over 30,000 gullies cleaned on a yearly basis. Councillor Burrows noted that this included those in Central Avenue and the surrounding roads. Central Avenue itself had been cleaned just prior to the Christmas period. It was noted that most complaints that were received by the Council about blocked gullies were resolved by officers on the same day as being reported.

Councillor Burrows stated that the recent wet weather, which had been the second wettest period on record, had seen existing drainage systems having to cope with excessive amounts of water. This, coupled with the recent high rise in the water table throughout the Borough, had prevented many of the soakaways from emptying. Once the water table was full, water backed up in much of the drainage system pipe work and into the gullies themselves. Officers would continue to monitor the situation across the Borough.

Councillor Allen, by way of a supplementary question, asked whether the plans to implement a proper drainage system by Botwell Green Sports and Leisure Centre had been followed through, as had been previously agreed by the Central and South Planning Committee. She also asked for a copy of the Borough's gullies cleaning programme.

Councillor Burrows advised that he would investigate whether the drainage system had been implemented and inform Councillor Allen when he knew more. He also advised that he would be able to provide Councillor Allen with the Borough's gullies cleaning programme.

45. **MOTIONS** (*Agenda Item 10*)

**10.1 Motion from Councillor East**

Councillor East moved the following motion:

"This Council abhors the fact that around 360,000 children in London continue to fall into a 'working poverty trap' because their parents are paid less than required to fund the basic costs of living in London and therefore commits to working with the Living Wage Foundation and Citizens UK to become a fully accredited London Living Wage Employer.

In doing so the Council calls upon the Leader of the Council to:

- a) implement a review of Hillingdon Council's procurement, contract and best value policies to ensure that, as far as possible within UK and EU law, the London Living Wage, at the level set by the GLA's Living Wage Unit, is the minimum paid by Hillingdon Council and by its contractors; seek commitments from Hillingdon's partners in the Local Strategic Partnership to pay no less than the London Living Wage.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Allen. Following debate (Councillors Simmonds, Allen, Puddifoot and Harmsworth), and on being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

## **10.2 Motion from Councillor Allen**

Councillor Allen moved the following motion:

“As most Members are aware through day to day contact with residents, many are suffering from real hardship often struggling to put food on the table. Close families and friends, neighbours, charitable organisations, religious groups of all denominations are all doing their best to help those in need even though, in many cases, their own funds are limited.

It is not just the homeless that are going without a proper meal, it is whole families. The fact that many children are going to bed hungry and going to school on an empty stomach, should be of concern to us all.

Food Banks set up across the Borough offer a lifeline to those in greatest need but it is often the case that for many that need this help, they do not know how to gain access. For the above reason, the Council will:

- a) use its vast network of business and partnership to seek support by way of donations to food banks.
- b) ensure that information on access arrangements to the banks are advertised throughout the Borough.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Nelson.

Councillor D. Mills moved the following amendment to the motion:

“To delete all after ”many are” in 1<sup>st</sup> para and add:

*“feeling the effects of the current economic downturn.*

*Council notes that one area where assistance is provided is by working closely with all of Hillingdon's voluntary sector. Accordingly, the Council will continue to support the established Hillingdon food bank as we have done since 2011. Such assistance will include continuing to work with them on their long term sustainability and improved co-operation across the voluntary sector about accessing food banks.”*

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Yarrow. Following debate (Councillors Curling, D. Mills, Yarrow and Allen), and on being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That, as most Members are aware through day to day contact with residents many are feeling the effects of the current economic downturn.</p> <p><b>Council notes that one area where assistance is provided is by working closely with all of Hillingdon's voluntary sector. Accordingly, the Council will continue to support the established Hillingdon food bank as we have done since 2011. Such assistance will include continuing to work with them on their long term sustainability and improved co-operation across the voluntary sector about accessing food banks.</b></p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.49 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Lloyd White, Head of Democratic Services on 01895 556743. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.