

## Minutes

### PETITION HEARING - CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT

11 June 2025

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



	<p><b>Cabinet Member for Community &amp; Environment Present:</b> Councillor Eddie Lavery</p> <p><b>Councillors Present:</b> Councillor Naser Abby Councillor June Nelson Councillor Barry Nelson-West Councillor Sital Punja</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b> Anisha Teji, Democratic Services Karrie Whelan, Corporate Director of Place Sandra Taylor, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care Nicola Herbet, Head of Waste Services Steve Brown, Director of Environment</p>
5.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</b> <i>(Agenda Item 1)</i></p> <p>None.</p>
6.	<p><b>TO CONFIRM THAT THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN PUBLIC</b> <i>(Agenda Item 2)</i></p> <p>It was confirmed that all items would be heard in Part I.</p>
7.	<p><b>TO CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE OFFICERS ON THE FOLLOWING PETITION RECEIVED:</b> <i>(Agenda Item 3)</i></p>
8.	<p><b>PETITIONS IN RELATION TO THE RURAL ACTIVITIES GARDEN CENTRE</b> <i>(Agenda Item 4)</i></p> <p>The Cabinet Member considered two petitions in relation to the Rural Activities Garden Centre (RAGC).</p> <p>The Cabinet Member first considered the petition: <i>Stop the London Borough of Hillingdon's Closure of the Rural Activities Garden Centre on West Drayton Road, Uxbridge UB8 3JZ</i>, hosted on the Council website. The lead petitioner was in attendance and addressed the Cabinet Member. Concerns were raised regarding the closure of the RAGC, particularly given the lack of public consultation and the Council's failure to meet statutory and legal obligations. The RAGC's enriching environment, which included various facilities and opportunities for local schools and groups, was</p>

emphasised. It was submitted that the proposal to improve horticultural social care services at the Civic Centre was misleading as it would leave many people with additional needs without provision. The Council's portrayal of the RAGC as a commercial garden centre was challenged as it was noted the RAGC's remit was for it to be run as a social enterprise and not as commercial business. It was also noted there had been funding challenges since April 2010. Council withdrawal of funding from the RAGC's café and, at Council request, withdrawal of RAGC applied for grants was further highlighted. An 18-month grace period for the RAGC to create a social enterprise business plan was requested. The need for an independent public consultation was emphasised and an assessment of alternative options was urged.

The lead petitioner for the change.org petition: *Stop LBH closing Rural Activities Garden Centre - an irreplaceable social care resource* addressed the Cabinet Member, emphasising the RAGC's irreplaceable value as a social care resource. The RAGC's positive impact, particularly for users with learning disabilities and mental health issues was highlighted. The long-term commitment of volunteers and the community atmosphere at the RAGC was noted and its support work and collaboration with other organisations was emphasised. The Council's lack of consultation with impacted families was questioned. Petitioners called for the withdrawal of the closure plan without a proper public consultation.

The Cabinet Member thanked the petitioners for carefully stating their views and noted that this information would be made available at the Cabinet meeting.

**RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for Community & Environment met with petitioners and listened to their views.**

**Reasons for decision**

The Petition Hearing provided a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners about their concerns and suggestions.

**Alternative options considered / risk management:**

None at this stage.

The meeting, which commenced at 6.00 pm, closed at 6.18 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Anisha Teji on 01895 277655 or [ateji@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:ateji@hillingdon.gov.uk). Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.