



HILLINGDON  
LONDON



# Council

## To all Members of the Council

**Date:** THURSDAY, 26  
SEPTEMBER 2024

**Time:** 7.30 PM

**Venue:** COUNCIL CHAMBER -  
CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH  
STREET, UXBRIDGE UB8  
1UW

**Meeting  
Details:** The public and press are welcome  
to attend and observe the meeting.

For safety and accessibility, security measures will be conducted, including searches of individuals and their belongings. Attendees must also provide satisfactory proof of identity upon arrival. Refusal to comply with these requirements will result in non-admittance.

This meeting may be broadcast on the Council's YouTube channel. You can also view this agenda online at [www.hillingdon.gov.uk](http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk)

**Published:** Wednesday, 18 September  
2024

**Contact:** Lloyd White, Head of  
Democratic Services

**Email:** [democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk)

Putting our residents first

Lloyd White  
Head of Democratic Services  
London Borough of Hillingdon,  
Phase II, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

# Useful information for residents and visitors

## *Watching & recording this meeting*

You can watch this meeting on the Council's YouTube channel, live or archived.

Residents and the media are also welcome to attend in person, and if they wish, report on the public part of the meeting. Any individual or organisation may record or film proceedings as long as it does not disrupt proceedings.

Watch a **LIVE** broadcast of this meeting on the Council's YouTube Channel: *Hillingdon London*

Those attending should be aware that the Council will film and record proceedings for both official record and resident digital engagement in democracy.



It is recommended to give advance notice of filming to ensure any particular requirements can be met. The Council will provide seating areas for residents/public, high speed WiFi access to all attending and an area for the media to report. When present in the room, silent mode should be enabled for all mobile devices.

## *Travel and parking*

Bus routes 427, U1, U3, U4 and U7 all stop at the Civic Centre. Uxbridge underground station, with the Piccadilly and Metropolitan lines, is a short walk away. Limited parking is available at the Civic Centre. For details on availability and how to book a parking space, please contact Democratic Services.

Please enter via main reception and visit the security desk to sign-in and collect a visitors pass. You will then be directed to the Chamber.



## *Accessibility*

For accessibility options regarding this agenda please contact Democratic Services. For those hard of hearing an Induction Loop System is available for use.

## *Emergency procedures*

If there is a FIRE, you will hear a continuous alarm. Please follow the signs to the nearest FIRE EXIT and assemble on the Civic Centre forecourt. Lifts must not be used unless instructed by a Fire Marshal or Security Officer. In the event of a SECURITY INCIDENT, follow instructions issued via the tannoy, a Fire Marshal or a Security Officer. Those unable to evacuate using the stairs, should make their way to the signed refuge locations.

# Agenda

## **Prayers**

To be said by Rabbi Aaron Goldstein.

- 1** Apologies for Absence
- 2** Minutes 1 - 12  
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2024
- 3** Declarations of Interest  
To note any declarations of interest in any matter before the Council
- 4** Mayor's Announcements
- 5** Report of the Head of Democratic Services 13 - 22
- 6** Members' Questions 23 - 24  
To take questions submitted by Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11
- 7** Motions 25 - 26  
To consider Motions submitted by Members in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12

This page is intentionally left blank



## Minutes

### COUNCIL

11 July 2024

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

Councillor Colleen Sullivan (Mayor)  
Councillor Philip Corthorne MCIPD (Deputy Mayor)

	<p><b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Councillors: Naser Abby</td> <td>Ian Edwards</td> <td>Stuart Mathers</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana</td> <td>Scott Farley</td> <td>Douglas Mills</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kaushik Banerjee</td> <td>Janet Gardner</td> <td>Richard Mills</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Labina Basit</td> <td>Elizabeth Garelick</td> <td>Peter Money</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kishan Bhatt</td> <td>Martin Goddard</td> <td>June Nelson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jonathan Bianco</td> <td>Ekta Gohil</td> <td>Barry Nelson-West</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wayne Bridges</td> <td>Becky Haggart</td> <td>Susan O'Brien</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tony Burles</td> <td>Henry Higgins</td> <td>Jane Palmer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Keith Burrows</td> <td>Mohammed Islam</td> <td>Sital Punja</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roy Chamdal</td> <td>Rita Judge</td> <td>John Riley</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Farhad Choubedar</td> <td>Kamal Preet Kaur</td> <td>Raju Sansarpuri</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Peter Curling</td> <td>Eddie Lavery</td> <td>Jagjit Singh</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Darran Davies</td> <td>Heena Makwana</td> <td>Peter Smallwood</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nick Denys</td> <td>Gursharan Mand</td> <td>Jan Sweeting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jas Dhot</td> <td>Kelly Martin</td> <td>Steve Tuckwell</td> </tr> </table>	Councillors: Naser Abby	Ian Edwards	Stuart Mathers	Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana	Scott Farley	Douglas Mills	Kaushik Banerjee	Janet Gardner	Richard Mills	Labina Basit	Elizabeth Garelick	Peter Money	Kishan Bhatt	Martin Goddard	June Nelson	Jonathan Bianco	Ekta Gohil	Barry Nelson-West	Wayne Bridges	Becky Haggart	Susan O'Brien	Tony Burles	Henry Higgins	Jane Palmer	Keith Burrows	Mohammed Islam	Sital Punja	Roy Chamdal	Rita Judge	John Riley	Farhad Choubedar	Kamal Preet Kaur	Raju Sansarpuri	Peter Curling	Eddie Lavery	Jagjit Singh	Darran Davies	Heena Makwana	Peter Smallwood	Nick Denys	Gursharan Mand	Jan Sweeting	Jas Dhot	Kelly Martin	Steve Tuckwell
Councillors: Naser Abby	Ian Edwards	Stuart Mathers																																												
Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana	Scott Farley	Douglas Mills																																												
Kaushik Banerjee	Janet Gardner	Richard Mills																																												
Labina Basit	Elizabeth Garelick	Peter Money																																												
Kishan Bhatt	Martin Goddard	June Nelson																																												
Jonathan Bianco	Ekta Gohil	Barry Nelson-West																																												
Wayne Bridges	Becky Haggart	Susan O'Brien																																												
Tony Burles	Henry Higgins	Jane Palmer																																												
Keith Burrows	Mohammed Islam	Sital Punja																																												
Roy Chamdal	Rita Judge	John Riley																																												
Farhad Choubedar	Kamal Preet Kaur	Raju Sansarpuri																																												
Peter Curling	Eddie Lavery	Jagjit Singh																																												
Darran Davies	Heena Makwana	Peter Smallwood																																												
Nick Denys	Gursharan Mand	Jan Sweeting																																												
Jas Dhot	Kelly Martin	Steve Tuckwell																																												
	<p><b>OFFICERS PRESENT:</b> Tony Zaman, Dan Kennedy, Sandra Taylor, Glen Egan, Lloyd White, Mark Braddock, Morgan Einoon, Alice Pringault and Nikki O'Halloran</p>																																													
	<p><b>ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE</b></p> <p>Those present observed a one minute's silence in memory of former Councillors Paul Harmsworth, Phoday Jarjussey and Anthony Way.</p>																																													
<p>12.</p>	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Bennett, Reeta Chamdal, Garg, Gill, Lakhmana and Lewis.</p>																																													
<p>13.</p>	<p><b>MINUTES</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 22 February 2024 and 9 May 2024 be agreed as correct records.</b></p>																																													
<p>14.</p>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest in any matters coming before the Council.</p>																																													
<p>15.</p>	<p><b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The Mayor advised that she had attended a range of events across the Borough since</p>																																													

the last Council meeting and had welcomed various groups into the Parlour. She had laid a wreath at St Paul's Cathedral and one at the Battle of Britain Bunker on D-Day and attended a memorial to recognise the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EMI bombing at the end of World War II. The Mayor had also hosted the Armed Forces Flag Raising event on the Civic Centre forecourt.

The Mayor's Picnic in the Park had taken place at Barra Hall Park on Saturday 29 June 2024 and had been very well attended. The weather had been good and the stalls and entertainment had prompted many happy faces. The Mayor thanked those Councillors who had supported the event, including Councillor Haggar who had provided a team to do face painting and Councillor Bianco. She also thanked the officers who had been involved in organising the event and the stewards for their hard work.

16. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** (*Agenda Item 5*)

**5.1 QUESTION FROM MARK MORGAN OF KESWICK GARDENS, RUISLIP, ON BEHALF OF THE RUISLIP WOODS TRUST, TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES - COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

*"At the Full Council Meeting on the 30th November 2023 in response to our question about the recruitment for the new Woodland Officer (the previous one was retiring in December 2023) we were told and recorded in the minutes it states "the recruitment process was currently underway". As at 27th June 2024 no replacement has been appointed so please would the Cabinet Member advise when we can expect a new Woodland Officer to be in post and whether this will be a full time position?"*

Councillor Lavery advised that other officers in the Green Spaces Team had been covering the work that would usually have been undertaken by the part time Woodland Officer and that, as the post was currently under review, he was unable to provide an answer to the question.

**5.2 QUESTION FROM ANAND PUNJA OF ELMBRIDGE AVENUE, RUISLIP, ON BEHALF OF THE RUISLIP WOODS TRUST TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES - COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

*"According to the National Nature Reserve Management Standards (set by Natural England), there is a statutory duty to have a management plan that must be kept up to date and be reviewed every 5 years. The current plan expired 3 years ago (2021) and therefore the Council is not complying with its statutory duty so please would the Cabinet Member disclose the plans to update, consult and publish it and within what timescales can we expect this to be completed?"*

Councillor Lavery advised that a management plan had been created for Ruislip Woods in 1982 with a vision for the site. The current five year review of the plan had been delayed by Covid so work had subsequently been pushed back. He noted that the document was now in the final stages of drafting so would be published shortly.

**5.3 QUESTION FROM ROBERT WAS OF EDGAR ROAD, YIEWSLEY TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES - COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

*"Could the council please explain how it monitors the health and safety of unlicensed HMO's and how the planning process ensures that our basic infrastructure is not affected by the change of use of houses, particularly in this area."*

Councillor Lavery advised that there was currently no accurate estimate of the number of HMOs in the Borough and that the Council was, in part, reliant on intelligence from the community. Taking action in relation to these properties could prove difficult if the tenants did not want to talk to the Council, as evidence was needed before action could be taken.

The Cabinet Member described the criteria for HMO and noted that a small HMO (for 3-5 unrelated people) did not require planning permission (and an exemption had been put in place for these around Brunel University). A large HMO (for 6+ unrelated people) did require planning permission and the Council would take enforcement action against these if they received evidence of a breach. As such, it was important that residents contact the Council if they were able to provide intelligence in relation to breaches.

**5.4 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY NICKY CROWTHER OF WINNOCK ROAD, WEST DRAYTON TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT – COUNCILLOR BIANCO:**

*“ULEZ vandals continue to act with impunity in Hillingdon. They destroy traffic and pedestrian lights, and gleefully post footage online. Their actions are shocking and degrading. The results endanger pedestrians. At three sites in Hillingdon these have included schoolchildren, near Vyners High School, Whitehall Primary and Park Academy. It is time to work together to stop the vandalism.”*

*“Would the Council please consider the formation of a cross-party coalition of councillors, of the Cabinet, the MP and the police? This could be a group or a sub-committee, but it would be regardless of one's position on the ULEZ scheme itself. It would send the message loud and clear to stop, and help the police bring the perpetrators to justice. It is to support the rule of law in our peaceful borough.”*

*“Please join together to stop the vandalism.”*

Councillor Bianco advised that he shared residents' concerns about the damage caused by those who were opposed to ULEZ and that he did not condone their actions. He noted that all traffic signals were owned, operated and maintained by Transport for London (TfL). As such, the Council would continue to work with TfL and the police to support any investigations undertaken in relation to the vandalism to mitigate the impact. The Council's CCTV network was positioned close to some of the targeted areas and had been shared with the police as evidence. However, the cameras did not cover everything.

The Cabinet Member advised that there was already a relevant forum in place to deal with such issues. The Safer Hillingdon Partnership was a multiagency group that was chaired by Councillor Lavery.

**5.5 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY NICOLA DATE OF BREAKSPEAR ROAD, RUISLIP TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES - COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

*“Please could I have a full explanation why the car pound that was built last year costing £49k is still not operational. I have been told by planning that it is not a planning issue.”*

*“The revenue generated from the car pound was meant to help pay towards Marshall’s and a tow truck to operate at Ruislip Lido during the summer months. Currently, Hillingdon residents are paying the bill from their council tax.”*

Councillor Lavery advised that it had been anticipated that the pound would be used to relocate cars from the Lido but that this had not yet become operational. Civil Enforcement officers were present at the Lido every day and a tow truck was being used to relocate vehicles to Green Lane in Northwood. He noted that any receipts would have been used to offset parking enforcement in the area.

17. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES** (Agenda Item 6)

Following the parliamentary elections that had taken place on 4 July 2024, Councillor Edwards congratulated Danny Beales MP on winning the Uxbridge and South Ruislip seat and expressed his sympathy to Councillor Tuckwell. The Leader of the Council advised that he had requested a review of the election count procedures and that a report would be considered at the Council meeting on 26 September 2024.

**i) URGENT IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the motion as set out on the Order of Business and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the urgent decisions taken since the Council meeting in February 2024, as detailed in the report, be noted.**

**ii) MOUNT VERNON CANCER CENTRE JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (MVCC JHOSC) MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the motion as set out on the Order of Business and it was:

**RESOLVED: That Council join the MVCC JHOSC, that the Chair of the Health and Social Care Select Committee be appointed as the London Borough of Hillingdon representative to the MVCC JHOSC, and the Head of Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chief Whip of the relevant party, be given delegated authority to appoint further Members and / or substitute Members to the Committee should they be requested by the JHOSC.**

**iii) PAVEMENT LICENSING**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the motion as set out on the Order of Business and it was:

**RESOLVED: That Chapter 8 (Licensing Decisions) of the Council’s Constitution be amended to provide delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Place to grant, refuse, revoke, consider an internal appeal and enforce all matters relating to pavement licenses.**

**iv) CORPORATE RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE SELECT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE - COMPLAINTS**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the motion as set out on



the Order of Business and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference of the Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Select Committee be updated to reflect its role as the “Member Responsible for Complaints”.**

**v) LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2024**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the motion as set out on the Order of Business and it was:

**RESOLVED: That the revised draft Local Development Scheme be adopted.**

**vi) PROCUREMENT AND COMMISSIONING**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded, the motion as set out on the Order of Business and it was:

**RESOLVED: That:**

- a) the changes to the Procurement Standing Orders (Chapter 18 of the Council Constitution) as set out in the body of the report, be approved.**
- b) the Cabinet Scheme of Delegations (Chapter 5) and Responsibilities and Delegations to Officers (Chapter 12) be updated to vary capital release approval to align with the changes to procurement changes, as set out in the report.**

**18. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** (*Agenda Item 7*)

**7.1 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BRIDGES TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE – COUNCILLOR GODDARD:**

*“Could the Cabinet Member for Finance please explain the role which the Counter Fraud Team is playing in respect of Social Housing in the Borough?”*

Councillor Goddard advised that housing fraud had been one of the largest areas of fraud exposure dealt with by the Council. This type of fraud deprived deserving and needy families of a place to live. As such, there had been increased investment in the Counter Fraud Team so that action could be taken to deter and identify fraudulent activity in housing (application, tenancy and homelessness). The team had been spectacularly successful.

In 2022/23, the team had achieved housing savings equating to £5.6m, recovered 84 Council properties and closed 24 emergency B&B accommodations. In 2023/24, the team had made £6.1m in savings, recovered 103 properties and closed 42 emergency accommodations. In 2024/25 to date, the team had already made £2.2m in savings, recovered 30 properties and closed 7 emergency accommodations. This investment had generated a valuable return for residents. The Cabinet Member applauded the outstanding achievements of the Counter Fraud Team and noted that he was currently evaluating options to increase this investment further.

There was no supplementary question.

**7.3 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SWEETING TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT – COUNCILLOR BIANCO:**

*“The West Drayton Station Approach is still closed to buses due to the road surface collapsing over the sunken sewer, although local councillors and residents have been lobbying both the Council and Network Rail Infrastructure Limited for years for this repair to be undertaken. On the 18th January this year it was reported to this Chamber that the work had a potential completion date of July 2024. However, this date has now slipped, and I have been advised that we now have an aspiration for the repair from Network Rail set at December 2024 with the word “HOPE” used to describe this completion date.*

*“Given past assurances by Network Rail over this issue which have been repeatedly broken, what is the Council doing to turn “HOPE” into reality, seeing that it is now 25 months, (11th June 2022), since buses have been able to drop off and pick up residents and travellers alike from trains from the line named after our late Queen?”*

Councillor Bianco advised that this was a subject that caused joint frustration amongst all Members. The Council had been pressing Network Rail for a resolution for many months but the organisation had not stuck to the timetable. A meeting had been held on site with senior directors to establish a realistic and firm timetable for moving forward. This meeting had been attended by the Leader of the Council as well as Network Rail and the local MP. Assurances had been given that the repairs to the sewer would start in August 2024, surface water drainage works would be undertaken in October, the road resurfaced in November and access to Station Approach opened in December 2024.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Sweeting noted that this problem dated back to January 2020. As the Council had not previously submitted a complaint to the Ombudsman, she asked whether the Council would now be prepared to make a formal complaint to ensure that this newly promised timescale did not slip and cause more hardship.

Councillor Bianco advised that he was unable to give that assurance but noted that the Council had gotten its message across that this needed to be addressed. If the work did not start as agreed, the Council would address this.

**7.2 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DENYS TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE – COUNCILLOR GODDARD:**

*“Could the Cabinet Member for Finance please provide an update of the position of external audits on the Council’s published financial statements for the financial years ended 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024?”*

Councillor Goddard advised that it was mandatory for financial statements to be subject to independent audit. However, seven or eight of the largest accounting firms in England and Wales had been struggling with their workload of public sector audits with around 69% from 2022/23 not yet having been audited, 40% from 2021/22 and around 17% from 2020/21 not having yet received an opinion, 6% from 2019/20 and 2% from 2018/19. These audit companies had cited the increasing complexity of public sector accounts as a reason for the delay but it was suggested that the companies had been under resourced for the work.

It had been proposed that a crude fix be applied whereby the 2022/23 audits be abandoned and that the focus be on 2023/24 but it was unclear whether or not this fix would be implemented. Unlike many other local authorities, Hillingdon had received full clean audit opinions up to and including 2021/22. Although ready for audit, the draft financial statements for 2022/23 had not yet been audited and there was no realistic expectation that this would take place.

The Council's value for money statement and pension fund had been subjected to full audit scope procedures and the 2023/24 draft financial statements had been published and it had been agreed with the auditors that these would be completed and signed off by 30 November 2024. It would be important to ensure that the Council did not suffer reputational damage as a result of what was clearly a national issue rather than a local one. As such, Councillor Goddard had been in close discussion with the auditors to ensure a smooth transition through the publication of the finalised 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial statements.

There was no supplementary question.

#### **7.7 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR CURLING TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR EDWARDS:**

*“Over the past few months there has been an increase in criminal damage to traffic signals which have caused serious accidents and congestion. This vandalism poses a number of hazards to members of the public, such as obstacles for the vision impaired, elderly and disabled to navigate, sawn metal and exposed cables in the traffic signal columns, as well as heightened risks of accidents and personal injury to both drivers and pedestrians.*

*“Will the Leader of the Council join me in condemning the criminal activities of damaging and sawing down traffic signals, or does he agree with this criminal activity?”*

Councillor Edwards advised that, having given 31 years of his life to uphold the law, it would not surprise anyone that he would not condone criminal activity. He condemned the action that had been taken and urged anyone with information on the identity of the perpetrators to come forward so that they could be brought to justice.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Curling asked whether Councillor Edwards also condemned the social media and political rhetoric which could be seen to add approval to the criminal and hazardous behaviour.

Councillor Edwards noted that the actions taken to damage traffic signals had resulted in Council property being damaged and posed a risk to the public. There had been extensive damage caused but this had not been caused by social media. Transport for London had refused to provide the Council with information about the extent of the damage caused and the police had not been able to provide information on numbers as these incidents had not been flagged in a way that could identify them. However, Councillor Edwards had been able to establish that, six months ago, there had been around 1,000 more incidents of cameras being damaged or stolen than in the preceding six months.

It was noted that, in April 2024, the number of unpaid fixed penalty notices in relation to ULEZ had stood at 810k. Civic disobedience was often driven by a sense of social injustice. ULEZ was seen as an unjust tax which targeted those households and

business on low and modest incomes. It had forced thousands of households to spend their savings or go into debt and take action such as cancelling their holidays. This sense of injustice had been compounded by the speed at which the Mayor of London had introduced the ULEZ scheme in outer London. Up until February 2024, more than £250k had been paid by Hillingdon residents in fixed penalty notice charges.

Councillor Edwards suggested that the criminal behaviour should be condemned but that the sense of social injustice sat with the Mayor of London and politicians, not with social media platforms.

**7.4 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR GOHIL TO THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR PROPERTY, HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT – COUNCILLOR BIANCO:**

*“Please can the Cabinet member provide an update on the current state of construction of the new Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre in West Drayton?”*

Councillor Bianco advised that the building contractor for the leisure centre had gone into administration in 2023 and the decision had been taken to secure the site and undertake work to ensure that the building was weathertight. Possible solutions had been reviewed and risks assessed and it had been decided that the Council would continue to undertake the client management works itself. The building was now weathertight and the scaffolding had been taken down. Most of the windows had been fitted, the roof had been completed and the pool structure was in place. The fit out and mechanical works had now started and it was anticipated that the new leisure centre would be opened in the summer of 2025.

There was no supplementary question.

**7.5 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR REETA CHAMDAL TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE – COUNCILLOR PALMER:**

*“Could the Cabinet member confirm the benefits to the Council of the decision by our NHS colleagues to rent part of the Civic Centre?”*

The Mayor read out Councillor Reeta Chamdal’s question in her absence.

Councillor Palmer advised that adult social care and Hillingdon Health and Care Partners (HHCP) continued to work closely together and that working together in the Civic Centre would enable even greater collaboration and demonstrate the strength of partnership working. The combined priorities of HHCP and the Council would mean a single base of operation for services.

It was noted that the partnership had already resulted in an excellent hospital discharge service and Hillingdon was highly thought of across North West London. Colocation would enable this integration to go even further whilst continuing to make efficient use of the services. Councillor Palmer thanked partners and officers for making this possible.

There was no supplementary question.

**7.6 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MAKWANA TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - COUNCILLOR O'BRIEN:**

*“Can the Cabinet member please update Council on the progress of the Specialist Resource Provision and Assessment Centre at Ruislip Gardens Primary School?”*

Councillor O'Brien advised that the Council wanted to ensure that children in the Borough had high quality access to education near to their homes. The school expansion programme had been delivering places for children with special educational needs (SEN). To this end, the Ruislip Gardens Primary School specialist resource provision (SRP) and assessment centre had recently been opened and would be fully subscribed from September 2024. Officers were in the process of allocating places for the assessment centre from referrals - this had been a completely new type of provision in Hillingdon.

Consideration needed to be given to how spaces were used or how they could be repurposed to ensure that the Council could meet the demand for specialist provision. At Ruislip Gardens Primary School, classrooms had been newly reappointed, there were sensory rooms, accessible toilets, storage facilities and a kitchen. These facilities had provided 32 additional schools places for children with SEN. The school's new bespoke SRP enabled 16 primary school aged children with autism to access personalised support whilst being part of the mainstream school.

The assessment centre offered 16 full time places and 32 part time places for children aged 3 to 5 who had severe development delays and other complex needs. These children would have the option of remaining at the centre until they transitioned to primary school.

There was no supplementary question.

19. **MOTIONS** (*Agenda Item 8*)

**8.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR EDWARDS:**

Councillor Edwards moved, and Councillor Bianco seconded the following motion:

*That Hillingdon Council welcomes the chance to continue its work with Government and we commit to use our position and influence to secure the following seven key aims that reflect the priorities of both the Council and its residents:*

- 1. The full funding by Government of the support provided by the Council to asylum seekers that present in this borough as a consequence of it being a major port of entry as it is clearly unfair that Hillingdon's residents should shoulder the cost of this national responsibility.*
- 2. Grant funding is provided to fully meet the increasing cost to the Council of providing care support to both adults and children.*
- 3. The ring fence on the dedicated support grant is maintained until the deficit can be eliminated by way of an agreed action plan.*
- 4. The ability of the Council to veto regional transport initiatives that either limit the freedom of motorists to use their local road network or that impose a charge on road use.*
- 5. Oppose the reclassification of our green belt land and retain the existing Localism powers to over-ride planning policies that would be detrimental*

*to character street scene of our neighbourhoods.*

- 6. Amend national aviation policy to remove the threat of a third runway at Heathrow thereby releasing land for much needed housing and freeing existing communities from planning blight.*
- 7. Retain the cap on council tax increase that can only be exceeded by means of approval from a residents' referendum.*

Those speaking in support of the motion welcomed the new Prime Minister's declaration that he would give local authorities more power. The administration had previously had good routes into central Government and it was hoped that the new MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip would work with the Council to put residents first. The motion set out the Council's priorities in working with Government to achieve success. It was anticipated that the opposition would support the full cost recovery for asylum seekers as this should be a national responsibility and the administration was open to working with Labour MPs to progress this. The Dedicated Schools Grant deficit had resulted from underfunding and system problems and lobbying would also need to be undertaken to get this ringfenced.

Hillingdon Hospital had been described as a 'Dad's Army' site by Wes Streeting MP. It was hoped that he would honour his commitment to get a new hospital on the site as it was not fit for purpose. Decant and enabling works in preparation for the new hospital had already started on the site and staff had worked hard to keep Hillingdon Hospital towards the top of the list for redevelopment. It was hoped that the new MP would work as hard as the old one to ensure that Hillingdon Hospital was rebuilt.

The motion was not intended to be political and that the issues included therein affected all residents in the Borough. The administration was keen to work with the new Government in the same way as it had with the last one but concern was expressed that they might not be so keen to work with Hillingdon.

Those speaking against the motion stated that the Labour Group had always put people before the party whereas the administration had prioritised working with the Conservative Government for the last 14 years. The Labour Group had put forward a motion some time ago asking the administration to lobby the former Government for additional funding but they had refused to do so. The current Prime Minister had not yet been in position for a week and the administration was already expecting more from him in relation to the issues raised in the motion than they had from the previous Conservative Prime Ministers. This motion detailed a list of things that the Conservatives had failed to deliver and were issues that had arisen from the financial incompetence of the previous Government.

With regard to Heathrow Airport expansion, it was noted that one of the former Conservative MPs for Uxbridge and South Ruislip had said that they would lay down in front of the bulldozer but was then out of the country when a vote was taken in the House of Commons. Although the motion was asking the Labour Government to do what the Conservative Government would not do, more needed to be done to negotiate with Heathrow as residents in the Heathrow Villages were now in a position where they were unable to sell their properties.

The Leader of the Council had previously stated that the administration would not lobby Government which was why the opposition would not be supporting this motion.

The motion was put to the vote and it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Hillingdon Council welcomes the chance to continue its work with Government and we commit to use our position and influence to secure the following seven key aims that reflect the priorities of both the Council and its residents:

- 1. The full funding by Government of the support provided by the Council to asylum seekers that present in this borough as a consequence of it being a major port of entry as it is clearly unfair that Hillingdon's residents should shoulder the cost of this national responsibility.**
- 2. Grant funding is provided to fully meet the increasing cost to the Council of providing care support to both adults and children.**
- 3. The ring fence on the dedicated support grant is maintained until the deficit can be eliminated by way of an agreed action plan.**
- 4. The ability of the Council to veto regional transport initiatives that either limit the freedom of motorists to use their local road network or that impose a charge on road use.**
- 5. Oppose the reclassification of our green belt land and retain the existing Localism powers to over-ride planning policies that would be detrimental to character street scene of our neighbourhoods.**
- 6. Amend national aviation policy to remove the threat of a third runway at Heathrow thereby releasing land for much needed housing and freeing existing communities from planning blight.**
- 7. Retain the cap on council tax increase that can only be exceeded by means of approval from a residents' referendum.**

## **8.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR PUNJA**

Councillor Punja moved, and Councillor Abby seconded, the following motion:

*That this Council recognises the problems caused by unlicensed HMOs in the borough, from anti-social behaviour to poor housing conditions.*

*This Council is committed to ensuring good quality housing in the borough and resolves to extend licensing obligations to all properties with 3 bedrooms housing multiple unrelated occupants.*

Those speaking in favour of the motion stated that it had been drafted in response to poor housing conditions in HMOs. In 2015, there had been 153 mandatory licenced HMOs in the Borough. This had increased to 650 in 2021 when the licensing scheme had lapsed and was at 729 in 2023.

Councillor Lavery moved, and Councillor Edwards seconded, the following amendment:

To delete the second paragraph and replace with:  
*"This Council is committed to ensuring good quality housing in the Borough and resolves that a report be sent to Cabinet considering the sufficiency of evidence required under Part 2 Housing Act 2004 to extend licensing obligations to all properties with 3 bedrooms housing multiple unrelated occupants and to commence consultation on the implementation of this additional licensing obligation where it is justified."*

Those speaking in support of the amendment noted that a significant proportion of HMOs were being improperly managed and that a coordinated approach was needed.

Licensing was all about the internal state of the property and did not look at the impact on the neighbourhood. An Article 4 direction was already in place in the Borough which removed permitted development rights. Officers had been asked if it would be possible to extend this but this would require a twelve month notice period and approval from the Secretary of State. It was suggested that Heathrow Villages would benefit from an Article 4 direction as properties there were being sold to cash buying investment companies. Residents in the area were now unable to get mortgages or remortgages on properties because of the threat posed by Heathrow expansion.

It would be important to gain accurate information on where the HMOs were so that this could be used as evidence. An accurate list did not yet exist.

There had been reports of an increase in the number of people living in dangerous or overcrowded properties as well as the number of hidden bedsits. It was estimated that around 367k smaller bedsits housed around a million people. Working together would show residents that the Council was committed to doing more to support people in private rented accommodation. It would be important to have the same standards in the north and south of the Borough.

The amendment was put to the vote and unanimously agreed. The substantive motion was then put to the vote and it was:

**RESOLVED: That this Council recognises the problems caused by unlicensed HMOs in the Borough, from anti-social behaviour to poor housing conditions.**

**This Council is committed to ensuring good quality housing in the borough and resolves that a report be sent to Cabinet considering the sufficiency of evidence required under Part 2 Housing Act 2004 to extend licensing obligations to all properties with 3 bedrooms housing multiple unrelated occupants and to commence consultation on the implementation of this additional licensing obligation where it is justified.**

The meeting, which commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.13 pm.

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 [democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk). Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.



## REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

*Reporting Officer: Head of Democratic Services*

### i) URGENT IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Urgency decisions detailed below be noted.

#### Information

1. The Constitution allows a Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision to be implemented before the expiry of the 5-day scrutiny call-in period, provided the decision is deemed urgent and agreement is given from the Chairman of the relevant Select Committee that the matter is urgent and to waive the scrutiny call-in period. All such decisions are to be reported for information only to the next full Council meeting.
2. Since last reported to Council, the following decisions have been made using urgency procedures:

Date of Decision	Nature of Decision	Reason for Urgency	Decision-Maker
27 June 2024	Acquisition of Residential Development Site in Uxbridge	Due to the fact that this site development opportunity supported the Council in meeting its statutory responsibilities and to mitigate the impact on the Council's budget.	Cabinet
27 June 2024	Acquisition of Residential Accommodation in Hayes	Due to the imperative need to secure affordable housing. This opportunity supported the Council in meeting its statutory responsibilities and to mitigate the impact on the Council's budget.	Cabinet
25 July 2024	Provision and support of Internet Security / Proxy Service	Due to unanticipated changes in time-frames, so the Council could make the necessary contractual payment without incurring substantial additional financial cost.	Cabinet

Background Papers: Decision Notices

### ii) APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY OFFICERS

#### Background

1. The Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer, along with the Head of Paid Service combine to form the Council's Statutory Officer functions. These roles are key to ensuring lawfulness, fairness, probity and general good governance that supports the Council in achieving its aims. It is important that they work effectively together yet maintain appropriate independence

and that the roles are undertaken by adequately skilled and experienced staff supported by appropriate resources.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: That:**

- a) **Mr Richard Ennis be appointed to the statutory role of Section 151 and Chief Financial Officer of the Council.**
- b) **subject to the agreement of the Council to a) above, the Constitution, Financial Regulations and the Officer Scheme of Delegations be amended, and Mr Ennis be empowered to undertake all of the statutory functions of a Section 151 Officer and Corporate Director of Finance as set out in the Constitution on an interim basis until such time as a formal appointment to the position of Corporate Director of Finance is made.**
- c) **Mr Lloyd White be appointed as interim Monitoring Officer of the Council upon departure of the current Monitoring Officer.**

**Information**

**2. Section 151 Officer:**

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a S151 Officer, also known as a Chief Financial Officer (CFO), whose roles and responsibilities are defined in the Constitution.

3. As such, the CFO must lead on a local authority's financial functions and ensure they are fit for purpose. The CFO must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced. In accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the CFO must be a member of one of the following bodies in order to qualify as a responsible officer:
  - (a) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales,
  - (b) the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland,
  - (c) the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants,
  - (d) the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy,
  - (e) the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland,
  - (f) the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, and
  - (g) any other body of accountants established in the United Kingdom and for the time being approved by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this section.
4. The S151 Officer is normally a role given to the Corporate Director of Finance. However, it should be noted that there is no requirement for the Statutory S151 office holder to be an employee of the Council.
5. Like many other local authorities, the financial challenges facing the Council are significant and in view of this, the Chief Executive noted that the timescales to go out to recruitment for a permanent Chief Financial Officer role would have put the Council at risk of not having a CFO in place for a considerable period of time whilst there was the need for an experienced

S151 Officer to be appointed to lead the Council through the budget process for 2025/26.

6. In light of this a contract has been awarded to Mr Richard Ennis to undertake the role of Corporate Director of Finance, on an interim basis
7. Mr Ennis is qualified for this role by virtue of having held many very senior roles including having been a S151 Officer in 3 London boroughs and is a Chartered Management Accountant in line with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
8. In order to ensure continuity in the role, the Council has included a 3 month notice requirement in the agreement with Mr Ennis. The initial contract is for 6 months with a review after 3 months.
9. On a temporary basis, the role of S151 Officer, has been undertaken by the Deputy S151 officer and Council is now asked to formally appoint Mr Ennis as the Interim S151 Officer until such time as a formal appointment to the position of Corporate Director of Finance is made.
10. In addition, Council is asked to formally grant to Mr Ennis authority to exercise the delegated powers of the Corporate Director of Finance as set out in the Constitution, on an interim basis until such time as a formal appointment to the position of Corporate Director of Finance is made.
11. This proposed appointment is being brought forward to provide appropriate expertise and resilience to the Council in its financial Management.

### **Monitoring Officer**

12. The appointment of a Monitoring Officer is a statutory requirement under Section 5, Local Government & Housing Act 1989. The Monitoring Officer's role and responsibilities are also defined within the Council's Constitution. These include ensuring lawfulness and fairness of decision making, receiving reports, conducting investigations, ensuring access to information, advising whether executive decisions are within the budget and policy framework and maintaining the Constitution.
13. In light of the impending departure from the authority of the current Borough Solicitor and existing Monitoring Officer, Glen Egan, it is vital to ensure interim arrangements are maintained to meet statutory requirements, whilst options for permanent recruitment are explored. Mr Egan's last day of service is 10 November 2024 and it is recommended that the current Deputy Monitoring Officer, Lloyd White, be appointed to the role of Monitoring Officer on an interim basis.
14. Mr White is the Council's Head of Democratic Service and has been the Deputy Monitoring Officer since 2008.

### **Financial Implications**

15. The cost of these appointments will be contained within existing budgets.

## Legal Implications

16. The appointment of a Monitoring Officer and a Section 151 Officer are statutory requirements whose appointments are reserved to Full Council.
17. With regard to the section 151 Officer, in 2010 the High Court confirmed in the case of *Pinfold North Limited v Humberside Fire Authority* that there is no legal requirement for the section 151 officer to be an employee of the Council. There is, therefore, no legal impediment to the Council appointing Mr Ennis as the S151 officer or indeed to delegating him powers under the Council's Constitution.
18. However, the Council will wish to ensure that its interests are protected in this statutory appointment with regard to the terms of appointment including an appropriate notice period.

Background papers: none

### iii) ELECTORAL COUNT ARRANGEMENTS

#### Background

1. The Head of Democratic Services is the Council's Returning Officer (RO) and Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and responsible for the conduct of electoral registration and electoral events within the Borough.
2. Although an employee of the Council, RO's are not answerable to their local authorities in respect of their electoral duties. This helps to ensure the independence of the RO from the local authority at elections. Instead RO's are directly accountable to the courts system as independent, statutory office holders. Similarly, EROs and the electoral register are not considered to fall within the scope of the Freedom of Information Act for that reason.
3. It is not unreasonable, however, for the Council to assure itself that the key processes involved in an election are lawful and equitable so that all potential parties and candidates who wish to participate in the electoral process can have complete confidence in that process and, ultimately, the results it produces.
4. Following the experiences gained at the recent Parliamentary election count, Council is asked to consider the following recommendations for the local elections count scheduled for May 2026 and beyond.

Note: The GLA elections are run in conjunction with the London Borough of Ealing and the election count takes place in Ealing.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS: That:

- a) **the Head of Democratic Services, in his role as Returning Officer, be requested to carry out a review of electoral count arrangements to ensure that all parties, candidates, counting agents and observers attending the count can be assured of a process that is transparent, efficient and consistent.**

- b) the count for the local elections in May 2026 take place during the day on Friday 8 May rather than immediately after polling closes on Thursday 7 May.**

## **Information**

### **General Election, 4 July 2024**

5. Three Parliamentary constituencies fall with the London Borough of Hillingdon:
  - Uxbridge and South Ruislip
  - Hayes and Harlington
  - Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner
6. For the recent Parliamentary election on 4 July, all three counts were conducted overnight in one location (the Brunel University Sports Centre) by a team of approx' 150 count assistants supported by a team of count supervisors, the RO and the Electoral Services team.
7. The basic process of counting the votes is as follows:
  - Each individual ballot box is opened, and the number of ballot papers counted to verify that it tallies with the Ballot Paper Account completed by individual Presiding Officers.
  - Once verification is completed, the votes are divided up into individual parties and / or candidates, by the counting assistants
  - The number of votes cast for each candidate are then counted, principally into batches of 50, by the counting assistants.
  - The batches are passed to a supervisor who recounts the 50 and then passes to a senior supervisor who carries out a further check of the count and the votes themselves to make sure they are all for the same candidate.
  - Once checked these are then placed in a central area and added to the rest of the, previously checked, votes for that candidate (usually in batches of 500 for a General Election – fewer for a local election count).
8. This process, or a variation of it, is used at election counts across the country and has been utilised successfully many times before in Hillingdon. It was carried out successfully at the recent General Election count with one exception.
9. During the count of votes for the Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency, an error occurred where a batch of 500 votes was placed amongst the wrong candidate's completed votes.
10. This error led, initially, to the incorrect, *informal* result being given to the candidates and agents (but not announced formally).
11. As the informal result was very close, the correct procedure for a recount was utilised and, during the re-count the error was discovered. This is, of course, one of the purposes of a re-count.
12. This then had the effect of reversing the informal result and a further 'batch check' by candidates and agents was requested and granted. This was followed

by the RO authorising a complete second recount of the votes for the candidates in provisional first and second place.

13. This confirmed the correct result which was then accepted by all parties and formally announced.

## **Options**

14. **Do Nothing** – not recommended. Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that the mistake referred to above was in any way deliberate and this was clearly a case of a simple human error, nonetheless, with the system of checks in place, it should not have occurred. It caused both distress to the two main candidates and an unnecessary level of stress and tension to the staff working at the count.
15. Therefore, it is important to critically review the processes and ensure they are as effective as they can be.
16. **Remove the ‘human error’ element** - It is impossible to eliminate completely, human error from a process which is entirely manual and carried out by staff who are working through the night. Current legislation does not allow for electronic counting of votes or (in the case of a Parliamentary election) for a delay in the counting of votes which must, by law, commence within 4 hours of the close of poll.
17. **Reasons for recommendations** - For local elections (scheduled for May 2026 in Hillingdon), there is more flexibility in the timing of the count and it is recommended that, following the receipt of ballot boxes from polling stations on the evening of polling day, that these be stored securely and the count then take place the following day, commencing at (say) 10am, to allow staff to arrive at the count fresh and able to carry out their duties efficiently and accurately. This should have a significant beneficial effect on the count process overall.
18. In addition, the Head of Democratic Services, in his role as Returning Officer, will carry out a review of the detailed count arrangements in relation to the type of count being undertaken (local / Parliamentary etc.), to ensure that all parties, candidates, counting agents and observers attending the count can be assured of a process that is transparent, efficient and consistent.
19. This will include measures to ensure that, when a result is particularly close and likely to result in a re-count request, a further level of scrutiny will be applied to the tallied votes. In such case this process would be carried out by members of the senior count team who have not been involved in the original count for that contest. Implementing this additional scrutiny should aid in identifying, obvious errors like the one described above, at an early stage.
20. This process will be implemented at all future counts and will not, of course, remove the right of candidates and agents to request a re-count.

## **Transparency and Consistency.**

21. Whilst, naturally, candidates, agents, counting agents and observers cannot be directly involved in the counting of the votes, one of the main areas of feedback

received from those attending the count on 4/5 July was the need to ensure that each separate count is carried out in such a way that those observing can:

- understand the process,
- easily identify at which stage in the process the count is and
- easily identify which candidate votes are being allocated to.

22. In addition to putting place measures to achieve the aims set out above, each count must be carried out following the same procedures so that there is a complete consistency of approach.

23. To this end, the Head of Democratic Services will include in his review of count processes, measures to ensure that all candidates, agents and staff at each election count are given a clear briefing to better understand and appreciate how the count results are arrived at – thus ensuring the most important aim of any election count – that of complete confidence in the results.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The cost of running an election will not be affected by the review of count arrangements.

### **Legal Implications**

The legal implications are contained within the report.

Background papers: none

#### **iv) MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2024/25**

1. At the Council meeting in February 2024 Members approved the annual re-adoption of its Allowances Scheme and, in doing so gave due regard to the recommendations made by the report of the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London. The full report can be viewed here: <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/who-we-are/about-us/financial-information/leadership-and-expenses/remuneration-councillors-london>
2. One of the clear recommendations of the Independent Panel is for Councils to award Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs), on top of the Basic Allowance payable to all Members, to those Members undertaking roles where there are significant differences in the time requirement and levels of responsibility from those generally expected of a Councillor.
3. With that in mind Council is asked to give consideration to:
  - a) an increase in the level of SRA paid to the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee and
  - b) an additional SRA to be paid to the Chair of the Pensions Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS: That w.e.f 26 September 2024:**

- a) **the SRA paid to the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee be increased to £8,000pa for the remainder of 2024/25**

- b) an SRA of £8,000pa be paid to the Member carrying out the role of Chair of the Pensions Committee**

**NB: both SRAs to remain at his level until reviewed with all other allowances in February 2025.**

### **Information**

4. The Scheme of Allowances currently includes a SRA payment to the Independent Chair of the Audit Committee of £3,180.83pa. There is no SRA for the Chair of the Pensions Committee.
5. The current Independent Chair of the Audit Committee is due to step down from this role imminently and Council is currently undertaking a recruitment process for his replacement.
6. It would be appropriate at this time to review the level of the SRA paid to the Independent Chair to assist in attracting a good quality of candidate for this vital role. Members are asked to give consideration to increasing the amount of this SRA for 2024/25.
7. At the same time, it is suggested that an additional SRA be introduced for the role of Chair of the Pensions Committee which requires a broadly similar level of commitment and responsibility from the Member in this position.

### **Recommendations**

8. The Independent Panel emphasises the need to set allowances at a level to ensure that:
  - a. people from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of skills are encouraged to serve as local councillors; and
  - b. those who participate in and contribute to the democratic process should not suffer unreasonable financial disadvantage.
9. Within these broad considerations there can be no doubt that financial compensation or a system of allowances plays a crucial part in making it financially possible for local people to put themselves forward to take on the onerous responsibilities involved in being a councillor – or in the case of the Audit Committee, to volunteer to be the Independent Chair.
10. For SRA's the Independent Panel recommends a banding system based on a percentage of the Leader's Allowance and the significance of the role being undertaken.
11. Previously in Hillingdon the Chair of the Audit Committee had been placed in Band 1 (the smallest SRA). However, in recent years the importance of the position, the expertise and the time commitment required has increased significantly such that it would now be appropriate to place the position in Band 2 of the SRAs which includes Chairs of Scrutiny (Select) Committees.
12. The role of Chair of the Pensions Committee would also fall into this band.



13. The level of Band 2 SRA is currently recommended by the Independent Panel to be set at a minimum of £19,065pa. However, in Hillingdon the role of Independent Chair of the Audit Committee is not a full-time position, and it is therefore recommended, that a reasonable increase in this SRA would be to £8,000pa, at this stage. This would then be reviewed with all other allowances at the February 2025 Council meeting.
14. Similarly for the Chair of the Pensions Committee the level of commitment would suggest a similar level of SRA.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

15. Provision has been made in the 2024/25 budget for Members' Allowances, although it is important to note this is based upon current posts being held by Members. Those who occupy more than one post only receive one SRA, normally the higher. The proposed increase will be met from within existing budgets.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

16. The current Scheme was made in accordance with the 2003 Regulations and Council may choose to amend it at any time.

Background Papers: Report of the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London, January 2024

### **v) AMENDMENT TO CABINET PORTFOLIOS**

1. Chapter 5 of the Council Constitution sets out the rules surrounding Executive decision making in the authority and includes the provision for the Leader to appoint and dismiss Cabinet Members and to amend their portfolios on a temporary or permanent basis.
2. The Leader has notified the Head of Democratic Services of an amendment to Cabinet portfolios to the effect that the responsibility for Fleet and Passenger Services has transferred from the Cabinet Member for Property, Highways and Transport to the Cabinet Member for Finance.
3. Such changes are to be reported to Members for information and, therefore, Council is asked to note this change in portfolios.

### **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

4. None.

Background Papers: None

This page is intentionally left blank

## QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

### **6.1 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR BURLES TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES - COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

Regarding access to the new Uxbridge Library, the main ramp to reception and the ramp to the Middlesex suite are long and steep, so it is likely that manual wheelchair users will try to use the shorter ramp leading to the lift.

We have been informed that the internal dimensions of the lift to the library do not meet the minimum requirement for wheelchairs. Can the Cabinet Member please assure us the all-wheelchair users will be able to use the lift and the library?

### **6.2 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MAKWANA TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES - COUNCILLOR LAVERY:**

What action has the Council taken to safeguard residents from the harm caused by the recent incidents of traffic light destruction?

### **6.3 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MARTIN TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR EDWARDS:**

It has taken Danny Beales, MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip, less than 3 months to break his election pledge, "*to put money into the pockets of local people.*"

With his support, the Government has cut the winter fuel allowance to pensioners, whilst agreeing inflation busting pay rises for their union friends. Many of our older residents must now be fearful of the coming winter.

What steps might the Council take to mitigate the harm that has been widely predicted will be caused by this callous and ill-considered change?

### **6.4 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR SWEETING TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - COUNCILLOR O'BRIEN:**

Could the Cabinet member provide an update on the recent Hillingdon Ofsted and Care Quality Commission Area SEND inspection of 29th April to 3rd May 2024, and the subsequent report which stated that, "*overall, children, young people and their families have varied experience,*" and that, "*the local area's approach to quality assuring ECH plans, and annual reviews is not robust.*"?

This page is intentionally left blank

## MOTIONS

### 7.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR FARLEY

That this Council asks the Cabinet Member for Residents Services to fix the current gap in co-ordination between Waste Services and Green Spaces so that litter is removed before grass cutting is scheduled.

### 7.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR PUNJA

That this Council notes that the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report condemned unscrupulous manufacturers, a cost-cutting council and reckless deregulations for the disaster in Britain's worst residential fire since World War II killing 72 people.

For the benefit of public safety, this Council acknowledges that there are a number of residential buildings within the borough that are still subject to fire safety remediation from unsafe cladding to wooden balconies and other flammable materials, and instructs officers to provide the Corporate Resources and Infrastructure Select Committee with an up to date list of all these buildings, reporting and monitoring on their remediation progress until such time that all residential buildings in the borough meet the required fire safety standards.

This page is intentionally left blank