

Minutes

COUNCIL

4 July 2019

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



Councillor David Yarrow (Mayor)
Councillor Teji Barnes (Deputy Mayor)

	<p>MEMBERS PRESENT:</p> <p>Councillors: Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana Lynne Allen Simon Arnold Jonathan Bianco Mohinder Birah Lindsay Bliss Wayne Bridges Nicola Brightman Keith Burrows Roy Chamdal Alan Chapman Farhad Choubedar Judith Cooper Philip Corthorne Peter Curling Nick Denys Alan Deville Jazz Dhillon Jas Dhot Janet Duncan</p> <p>Ian Edwards Tony Eginton Scott Farley Duncan Flynn Neil Fyfe Janet Gardner Martin Goddard Raymond Graham Becky Haggart John Hensley Vanessa Hurhangee Allan Kauffman Kuldeep Lakhmana Eddie Lavery Richard Lewis Heena Makwana Michael Markham Stuart Mathers Carol Melvin Ali Milani</p> <p>Douglas Mills Richard Mills Peter Money John Morgan John Morse June Nelson Susan O'Brien John Oswell Jane Palmer Kerri Prince Ray Puddifoot MBE Devi Radia John Riley Paula Rodrigues Raju Sansarpuri David Simmonds CBE Jagjit Singh Brian Stead Jan Sweeting Steve Tuckwell</p>
	<p>OFFICERS PRESENT: Fran Beasley, Jean Palmer, Paul Whaymand, Tony Zaman, Raj Alagh, Lloyd White, Mark Braddock, Beth Rainey and Neil Fraser</p>
11.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillors Higgins, Jackson and Seaman-Digby.</p>
12.	<p>MINUTES (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 21 February and 09 May 2019 be approved as a correct record.</p>
13.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
14.	<p>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The Mayor announced the passing of ex-Councillor Graham Horn, who was an elected Member from 1978 to 2010. His passing was marked by a minute's silence.</p>

The Mayor announced that local organisations NishkamSWAT and the Northwood Hills Residents' Association had been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services. In addition, the Council's AXIS team had won the Municipal Journal Achievement Award for Innovation in Children's Services.

The finals of the Jack Petchey Speak Out Awards had recently been held at the Cambridge Theatre, where a Year 10 student at Bishop Ramsey School had achieved second place.

The Mayor confirmed that since 9 May 2019, the Mayoralty had conducted 139 visits.

15. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES** (*Agenda Item 5*)

i) Urgent Implementation of Decisions

Councillor Puddifoot moved, and Councillor Simmonds seconded, the recommendation as set out on the Order of Business.

RESOLVED: That the Urgency decisions detailed in the report be noted.

ii) Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Review of Electoral Arrangements

Councillor Puddifoot moved, and Councillor Simmonds seconded, the recommendation as set out on the Order of Business.

RESOLVED: That

- a) the warding arrangements as determined by the LGBCE be noted.**
- b) the Head of Democratic Services, in his role as Returning Officer for the Borough conduct the statutory review of Parliamentary Polling Places, including the new warding arrangements for 2022, with a view to submitting proposals to Council in November 2019.**

iii) Waiver of 6 Month Councillor Attendance Rule

Councillor Puddifoot moved, and Councillor Simmonds seconded, the recommendation as set out on the Order of Business.

RESOLVED: That, pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Jackson's non-attendance at meetings of the authority due to ill health be approved for a further period ending the day after the Council meeting in January 2020, i.e. 17 January 2020.

16. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS** (*Agenda Item 6*)

6.2 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR HURHANGEE TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR PUDDIFOOT:

At the last meeting, Council clarified the protocol relating to enquiries made by Members that did not specifically relate to their own Ward. Would the Leader of the Council please provide us with an update on how this is working?

Councillor Puddifoot confirmed that Councillors were responsible for representing the

residents of their Wards. The agreed protocol made provision for Councillors to request information or actions on matters outside of their Wards via a request to their Group Leader.

The number of Member's Enquiries (MEs) submitted had risen by 37% over the previous year, and Members were reminded that MEs were not to be used as a source of general information.

With regard to scrutiny, it was highlighted that Scrutiny Committees received a wide variety of information reports regularly, and when conducting an in-depth review, scrutiny committees received data from a variety of expert sources from both within and outside of the Council. If there was a requirement for further information relating to the review being undertaken, this should be requested through the Committee, rather than through individual requests from Members.

All confidential Cabinet and Cabinet Member reports were available to all Councillors irrespective of their position on a Committee, which exceeded the recommendations set out in national guidance. Following the recent issuing of new statutory scrutiny guidance, a report detailing the required changes to the Council's Constitution, if any, would be brought to the Council meeting in September 2019. However, it was highlighted that within the new guidance, the difference between a ME and a Committee Enquiry was made explicit.

Councillor Puddifoot concluded by stating that the new protocol governing MEs was not affecting Members' ability to fulfil their scrutiny roles, and that the Council would continue to use the statutory guidance issued by the Government to determine how Councillors were to carry out overview and scrutiny within the Council.

There was no supplementary question.

6.1 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DUNCAN TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR PUDDIFOOT:

Will the Leader of the Council tell us why, despite receiving advanced detailed information about the shoddy and dangerous build quality of Packet Boat House, Cowley, the Council went ahead and bought the building without adequate checks being carried out so that all residents have now had to be moved out while the building is partially gutted and rebuilt to safe standards?

Councillor Puddifoot summarised the actions taken by the Council in respect of Packet Boat House. The decision to purchase the site from Paradigm had been taken by Cabinet in November 2015, for an anticipated completion by 31 March 2016.

In February 2016, there had been a major on-site leak and Paradigm had informed the Council that they had received allegations about the quality of the buildings. At this time, independent surveyors were appointed to undertake a Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors survey of the building, which identified issues. Paradigm confirmed they were committed to actions to ensure that the building was brought up to the required standards.

In order to enable the Council to utilize £1.5 million of Right To Buy receipts, the contract for the purchase had to be exchanged by 31 March 2016. This was done, but with a delayed completion date of September 2016. In July 2016, Paradigm advised the Council that defect rectification was ahead of schedule. However, at a site visit in August, Council officers had expressed concerns relating to progress and quality.

Paradigm advised that they were having difficulty with a contractor but were confident of fulfilling the completion date of 31 September.

The Council confirmed an extended contract completion date of 30 November 2016. This was fulfilled, supported by the relevant Building Control documentation and certification. The independent surveyors engaged by the Council in 2015 as part of the due diligence investigations confirmed, prior to completion, that all critical matters had been satisfactorily addressed, and that there was no reason that the purchase should not be completed.

In December 2016, the Council had identified some minor issues while undertaking a fire risk assessment, which were dealt with in January 2017. A contractor subsequently identified that fire doors had not been installed in line with a manufacturer's recommendations, and so these were replaced.

The first tenants moved in during June 2017. In June 2018, routine repairs uncovered further fire stopping issues, and the necessary corrective work, as well as further investigative work, was agreed with the London Fire Brigade. The Council then set up a 24-hour Fire Warden Service while the investigation was carried out.

In November 2018, further fire stopping and quality issues were found, but Paradigm stated that they had no obligation to deal with these defects. As the safety of the residents was of paramount importance, the building was cleared in order to resolve all defects, with work to be completed by February 2020. During the decamp period, Council housing officers were providing an excellent service to all residents, with a view to ensuring that they would return to a safe property.

In conclusion, Councillor Puddifoot confirmed that Council officers had been aware of various issues with this building, and had taken appropriate action at the time, but had not been aware that that the build was of poor quality or was dangerous at the time of the exchange of contract in March 2016. Responsibility for the issues with the building rested with Paradigm and the building contractor, and the Council was currently pursuing Paradigm with regard to costs, in terms of loss to the residents and the rectification works.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Duncan asked that, once litigation proceedings had concluded, could Councillor Puddifoot provide a full account of actions taken in respect of Packet Boat House, to ensure Members and residents had a full understanding of the matter, and to ensure that the Council avoided a similar situation in the future?

Councillor Puddifoot agreed that, once litigation had been resolved, such details would be published and Members informed.

6.3 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR DENYS TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROPERTY AND BUSINESS SERVICES – COUNCILLOR BIANCO:

What is Hillingdon Council doing, across all areas, to tackle climate change and operate in an environmentally friendly way?

Councillor Bianco confirmed that Hillingdon had been taking action on these important matters for some time. This included the more than 200 open spaces throughout the Borough, a new Air Quality Action Plan, ensuring that new buildings met the latest standards to minimize energy consumption and energy loss, new schemes providing

electric charging points for cars and bicycle storage facilities to encourage people away from using combustion engine vehicles, the replacement of 23,700 street lamps with LED lights, new developments fitted with photovoltaic panels, new gas boilers in the Council's housing stock that met A+ energy efficiencies, and doors, windows, and general insulation had all been significantly improved.

There had been a significant reduction in the carbon emissions from Council buildings. The Council was testing using electric vehicles, and in green spaces electric grass cutting machines were being trialled. The Council's waste service had one of the highest recycling rates in London, whilst maintaining a comprehensive free to use service.

Councillor Bianco concluded that while achievements had been notable, more work would continue, to ensure that Hillingdon would remain eco-friendly for generations to come.

There was no supplementary question.

6.4 QUESTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR MORSE TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND RECYCLING – COUNCILLOR BURROWS:

On behalf of the Head Boy and teachers of Cranford Park Academy, can the Cabinet Member state how long will we wait for the Council to provide a food waste service for flats, schools and businesses?

Councillor Burrows read the Head Boy's letter to Members, and responded by confirming the general waste and recycling collections available to flats, schools and business within the Borough. Schools and businesses were not obliged to use Council services, and some chose to have their waste collected by privately owned companies.

Weekly food waste collections had been available to Hillingdon residents living in low-rise properties since October 2013. To date, approximately 40% of low-rise properties had ordered the necessary containers to utilise this service. All general waste collected by Hillingdon, including food waste which was not collected separately, was incinerated with energy recovery which prevented harmful methane gasses from being released into the atmosphere, and was therefore a more sustainable disposal method than landfill.

Crews which currently collected waste and recycling from flats, schools and businesses collected more than 1000 bins per crew per week, but demand for food waste collections from businesses and schools was much lower than that for general waste and recycling. The waste services team were currently reviewing the service offering for businesses and flats in order to increase recycling participation.

Installing food waste recycling units to purpose built flats was difficult to do retrospectively, as suitable communal space was often unavailable. If space was not available, suitable alternatives could be costly and difficult to manage in privately owned accommodation.

Communal food waste bins required regular cleansing. Other local authorities who had trialled communal food waste collections had noted a rise in complaints regarding cleanliness and health and safety when ownership of cleansing was not managed well. Options to resolve the complexities detailed above continued to be reviewed

alongside commercial viability and other service improvements.

Councillor Burrows concluded by stating that the school had now decided to open an account for their refuse collections, with the result that none of the school's waste would go to landfill. In addition, after the summer holidays the Head Boy and the school's eco team would be invited to a meeting with the Cabinet Member and officers to discuss the matter further.

By way of a supplementary, Councillor Morse asked whether the Council was capable at present of monitoring the amount of food waste that went to landfill from businesses and other food outlets across the Borough, and if not, could the Council consider introducing a waste collection service that could monitor this?

Councillor Burrows responded by highlighting that this could be difficult as the Council did not collect all waste across the Borough. As outlined previously, many chose to use private contractors. However, this would be investigated, and any available data would subsequently be shared with Councillor Morse.

17. **MOTIONS** (*Agenda Item 7*)

7.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR PRINCE

Councillor Prince moved, and Councillor Eginton seconded, the following motion:

“That this Council notes the recent changes to the Constitution passed at the Annual General Meeting, which were opposed by the Labour Group.

This Council further notes that there have been concerns made by Councillors about how these changes will affect the scrutiny role of being a Councillor.

Therefore, this Council instructs the Head of Democratic Services to approach the Local Government Association to carry out an independent review of Hillingdon Council's scrutiny procedures to look at whether they are fit for purpose to enable Councillors to carry out their roles effectively.”

Following debate (Councillors Curling, Morse, Puddifoot, Simmonds and Sweeting), the motion was put to a vote and lost.

7.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DHILLON

Councillor Dhillon moved, and Councillor Sansapuri seconded, the following motion:

“That this Council expresses alarm at the rise in Islamophobia in recent years across the UK. This includes incidents where Muslim men and women have been physically assaulted, Mosques have been set on fire and Muslim figures have faced disproportionate online abuse.

We therefore welcome the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' publication of an Islamophobia definition in November 2018 which defines Islamophobia thus:

“Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.”

This Council resolves to fully adopt the APPG definition and is of the opinion that,

whilst defending the principle of freedom of speech, those who have expressed such Islamophobic views have no place in public life in this Borough.”

Councillor Simmonds moved, and Councillor Corthorne seconded, the following amendment:

To delete all after first paragraph and insert:

"Council notes the robust equalities policies that Hillingdon has in place to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all of our residents.

Council asks Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the APPG on British Muslims and Islamophobia as part of its regular reviewing and updating of these policies."

The Motion then to read:

“That this Council expresses alarm at the rise in Islamophobia in recent years across the UK. This includes incidents where Muslim men and women have been physically assaulted, Mosques have been set on fire and Muslim figures have faced disproportionate online abuse.

Council notes the robust equalities policies that Hillingdon has in place to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all of our residents.

Council asks Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the APPG on British Muslims and Islamophobia as part of its regular reviewing and updating of these policies."

Following debate (Councillor Dhillon), the amended motion was put to a vote and carried.

The substantive motion was then put to a vote. The motion was carried and it was:

RESOLVED: That this Council expresses alarm at the rise in Islamophobia in recent years across the UK. This includes incidents where Muslim men and women have been physically assaulted, Mosques have been set on fire and Muslim figures have faced disproportionate online abuse.

Council notes the robust equalities policies that Hillingdon has in place to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all of our residents.

Council asks Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the APPG on British Muslims and Islamophobia as part of its regular reviewing and updating of these policies.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.34 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 01895 556743. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

