

Meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet

TO BE HELD ON

Tuesday, 26 June, 2007 at 7.00pm

A G E N D A

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CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DIRECTORATE

Council Meeting

26 June, 2007
Agenda and Timetable

Item	Subject	Time for Debate	Page Nos.
	<u>Part 1 - Statutory formalities/ Announcements (15 minutes)</u>	7.00pm – 7.15pm	
1.	Prayer		
2.	Apologies for absence		
3.	Minutes of last meeting held on 15 May 2007		1 - 25
4.	Official announcements		
5.	Declarations of interest		
6.	Any business remaining from last meeting		
	<u>Part 2 – Question Time (30 minutes or until 7.45pm, whichever is the longer)</u>	7.15pm – 7.45pm	
7.	Questions to the Leader and Cabinet		To be circulated separately
	<u>Part 3 — Members' Motions (60 minutes)</u>	7.45pm – 8.45pm	
8.	Motions in the order in which notice has been given.		
8.1	From Councillor Fiona Bulmer		
	<p>Council is extremely proud of Barnet's diverse and highly successful schools.</p> <p>Further, Council further notes that Barnet secondary schools have the best attendance record in London and that they are in the top ten local authorities in the country for performance at GCSE and the fourth best in the country at</p>		

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	<p>A-level. Council also notes the excellent performance of Barnet's primary schools in adding value for children between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 which is the third best in England, and for achieving the second best results in the country for Mathematics at Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Council believes these results are testament to the unstinting work of pupils, parents, teachers and Governors, who have worked with the Local Authority to maintain and drive up standards. Council therefore welcomes the forthcoming celebration of these achievements, across Barnet's schools, in the week of 2-6 July. Council thanks all those involved in providing education in the Borough and congratulates them on their achievements.</p> <p>Council calls on Cabinet to continue to work with parents and schools to help them improve their excellent examination results further and provide even more opportunities for young people in Barnet to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>Councillor Bulmer has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		
8.2	From Councillor Matthew Offord		
	<p>Council is proud of this administration's record on recycling, which has broken Government targets and has been set an ambitious 40% rate by 2010.</p>		

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	<p>Council believes this has been achieved through groundbreaking initiatives such as Compulsory Recycling and the ever-expanding Flats' Recycling Service.</p> <p>Council is pleased that the administration has pledged that, when the Recycling Contract is renewed, new materials, including plastic and cardboard will be collected, which, Council believes, will further boost our recycling rate.</p> <p>Council notes that nearly 40% of English and Welsh Councils have adopted a fortnightly collection scheme to increase recycling.</p> <p>However, Council further notes the extensive drawbacks associated with fortnightly rubbish collection, including confusion, missed collections, and increases in the level of odour, rats and vermin.</p> <p>Council believes these problems would cause unacceptable damage to the street environment in Barnet.</p> <p>Council further believes LBB can continue to increase recycling levels in the Borough without resorting to fortnightly collections.</p> <p>Accordingly, Council requests Cabinet works to reduce waste and increase recycling in Barnet, while maintaining a weekly waste collection service in order to minimise disruption and maximise convenience for our residents.</p> <p>Councillor Offord has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		

8.3	From Councillor Colin Rogers		
	<p>Council notes the number of people that have signed the petition submitted by the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood to this meeting, and acknowledges the strength of local feeling about maintaining a dedicated park-keeper at this unique and well-loved woodland park.</p> <p>Council deeply regrets that the Cabinet member for Environment, Cllr Matthew Offord, has refused a request to meet with the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood and listen to their concerns about the park.</p> <p>Council believes that this does not help find a solution to the problems residents who live around the perimeter of the park, and those that use it peaceably, have to contend with on a daily basis.</p> <p>Council notes residents' reports that the gates are regularly left open at night or locked late. This has resulted in an increase in incidents of anti-social behaviour including illegal bonfires and youths throwing fireworks at nearby houses.</p> <p>Council recognises that the removal of the dedicated park-keeper post means that management of Cherry Tree Wood is a shambles. Unless local residents or ward councillors intervene, damage is not remedied swiftly, day-to-day problems are not reported or dealt with and there appears to be no regular liaison from the parks service with the local police team, or local residents or the Friends of Cherry Tree Wood.</p>		

	<p>Council agrees that this situation is not acceptable, and therefore instructs General Functions Committee to consider re-instating the full-time, dedicated park-keeper post with immediate effect to ensure that the park is properly managed</p> <p>Council also calls on Cabinet to ensure the gate-locking company perform their contract properly, and lock the gates at Cherry Tree Wood and all other parks in the Borough on schedule where this is required.</p> <p>Councillor Rogers has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		
8.4	From Councillor Ansuya Sodha		
	<p>Council condemns the on-going neglect of the Welsh Harp by this administration.</p> <p>Council notes that since coming to power this Tory administration has scrapped park warden patrols and introduced by-laws that the Council have admitted are unenforceable, and that people openly and regularly flout – spoiling the park for decent law-abiding citizens and causing nuisance to local residents.</p> <p>Council notes the year-on-year campaign by the West Hendon councillors, supported by local residents, to get action against continuous vandalism and anti-social behaviour in this beautiful park.</p>		

	<p>Council is appalled that the administration has ignored repeated calls from the three local councillors to resolve this problem.</p> <p>Council believes that, as a site of outstanding natural beauty and scientific interest, the Welsh Harp deserves the same attention and resources that are given to premier parks elsewhere in the Borough.</p> <p>Council therefore calls on Cabinet to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce a dedicated and permanent team of park wardens to patrol the Welsh Harp, support the local safer-neighbourhood police team to enforce the by-laws, and provide a safe environment where families and local residents can enjoy themselves without fear of being intimidated and • honour the tripartite agreement between Barnet Council, Brent Council and British Waterways for the preservation of the Welsh Harp <p>Councillor Sodha has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		
8.5	From Councillor Lynne Hillan		
	<p>Council notes LBB is obliged, in common with all local authorities, to ringfence money collected in rent and charges into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This money is passed to the Government.</p>		

	<p>Council further notes the Government then calculates, for each Borough, the amount needed for repairs and maintenance, and “pays” back the Borough through the Housing Subsidy.</p> <p>Council understands that, as LBB collects more rent and charges than it is judged to need to spend on repairs and maintenance, this authority is a net contributor into the HRA system, of £9.3 million this year (2007-8), or £847.27 for every one of our tenants.</p> <p>Council regrets that Barnet tenants and leaseholders are in effect subsidising the maintenance and repair of housing stock elsewhere in London, and money is being diverted away from investment in their homes.</p> <p>Council notes that Barking and Dagenham Council, which is set to contribute £14 million this year, believes this subsidy to be an “unfair tax”, and is calling for the money to be paid back.</p> <p>Council agrees with Barking and Dagenham, and believes that the current rules are to the detriment of LBB, our ALMO Barnet Homes and our tenants, and must be altered. In the meantime, the money must be paid back, so that more investment can be made in Barnet’s housing stock.</p> <p>Council calls on Cabinet to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oppose these national funding rules, which continually divert money away from investment in Barnet’s social housing		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to change the National HRA Rules. • Write to the Treasury requesting this year's subsidy of £9.3 million be returned to LBB for investment by Barnet Homes. <p>Councillor Hillan has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		
8.6	From Councillor Susette Palmer		
	<p>In view of the RSPB report, 'Natural Thinking', which adds to the increasing body of opinion that exposure to natural surroundings can reduce violent, irritable and impulsive behaviour, Cabinet are asked to ensure that Barnet should lead the way by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring how many of our schools have at least one session per child per week in the open air and natural or park or allotment surroundings. 2. As positively as possible encouraging the rest to do so. This could be games, horticulture, or nature studies. It could even be a play-time period. In a Borough as green as this one few schools should be more than a short walk away from such a site. If necessary Cabinet could consider the ways in which a volunteer parents network could be established to accompany the walk for younger children and request the Cleaner Greener 		

	<p>Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a report on this survey and monitor the number of schools fulfilling the criteria.</p> <p>3. Positively promoting the benefits of allotments and encourage more residents of all ages to take up allotments.</p> <p>4. Providing well-kept and attractive open spaces and floral displays throughout the Borough.</p>		
8.7	From Councillor Alison Moore		
	<p><u>London's Living Wage</u></p> <p>Council notes the statements from Barnet's administration about people's ability to afford to live in London, including their stated aim to keep council services affordable.</p> <p>Council also notes that London's Living Wage represents the Greater London Authority's estimation of the minimum a person must earn to avoid falling below the poverty line and is calculated to reflect the higher costs of living in the capital compared to the rest of the UK.</p> <p>Council regrets, therefore, the statements by the Leader of the Council at previous council meetings that he is not willing to sign-up to London's Living Wage as proposed by the Mayor of London, or ensure that all council contractors pay their staff the Living Wage as a minimum, or encourage our partner organisations to do the same.</p>		

	<p>Council also regrets the recent action by the Cabinet Member for Community Safety to vote against the principle of paying fire service cleaning staff in London and Barnet a living wage, as well as his action on the London Assembly to vote against free bus travel for over 18,000 Barnet children.</p> <p>Council condemns the untrue and scaremongering comments made by the Cabinet Member for Community Safety that paying low-paid workers in the fire service the Living Wage could result in the closure of four fire stations.</p> <p>Council notes that the London Fire, Emergency and Planning Authority budget is currently in surplus, and that the Chair of LFEPA has confirmed that paying fire service cleaners the Living Wage would cost less than running one fire engine for a year.</p> <p>Council believes that the statements and actions by the Leader and Cllr Coleman are a shameful attempt to deny a decent standard of living to low-paid workers in Barnet and across London.</p> <p>Council asks Cabinet to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring forward a policy statement supporting London’s Living Wage for all Council staff as a matter of principle, whether directly employed by the Council or employed by a contractor providing services on behalf of the Council • Renew its efforts in securing its target of 50% affordable housing in all housing developments over 10 units 		
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	Councillor Moore has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.		
8.8	From Councillor Richard Weider		
	<p>Council welcomes the fact that the area of Barnet in the past has welcomed refugees; including those escaping the Holocaust.</p> <p>Council notes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the Borough’s Holocaust Memorial Service every year, we call on ourselves to ensure that similar genocides happen ‘Never Again.’ • just over a decade ago, the world pledged to never let another atrocity like the Rwandan Genocide happen again. • for the past four years a genocide has been occurring in Darfur and the Sudan, with minimal international intervention to limit the atrocities against innocent civilians which has caused an estimated 400,000 people to have been killed from the combined mortality of violence, malnutrition and disease, since February 2003. • Barnet is home to nearly 300 asylum seekers and 41 unaccompanied asylum seeking children, according to Home Office figures, who have sought refuge in our Country and our Borough away from the danger and torment of situations such as Darfur. 		

	<p>Council believes that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious borough, and home to refugees, Barnet Council should be leading the way in campaigning against the ethnic-cleansing and genocide that is taking place in the Sudan and Darfur. • that the British Government must do more at the international level to stop the Darfur genocide, in particular to ensure the protection of the 2.5 million internally displaced persons at risk from militia attack in Darfur. • it is important to ensure that the general public are properly informed about the genocide so that they can speak out against crimes against humanity and genocide and use their voice to pressure the government for effective policies to bring peace, security and the protection of fundamental human rights. <p>Council therefore calls on the Leader to write to the Borough's MPs and MEPs calling on them to raise at national and international level support of protection for vulnerable civilians in Darfur.</p> <p>Council further calls for the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to encourage schools to teach about the Darfur genocide as part of the Holocaust curriculum.</p> <p>Councillor Weider has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		
	Break	8.45pm – 9.00pm	

	Part 4 – Policy Development (60 minutes)	9.00pm – 10.00pm	
9.1	Administration Policy Item (30 minutes) The Future of the Connexions Service		26
9.2	Opposition Policy Item (30 minutes) Tackling Congestion Hotspots on Barnet Roads		27
	Part 5 – Statutory Council Business (40 minutes)	10.00pm – 10:40pm	
10.	Reports from Cabinet 18 June 2007 – Draft 2006/07 Best Value Performance Plan <i>Cabinet is being asked to make recommendations to Council on this item – assuming that this is agreed, the report will follow</i>		
11.	Reports from Overview and Scrutiny committees		
12.	Reports from Other Committees		
12.1	Report of the Standards Committee 13 June 2007 – Revised Local Government Code of Conduct for Members		28-59
13.	Reports of Officers		
13.1	Democratic Services Manager 1. Amendment to the Constitution 2. Filming at Council and Committee meetings		60-64
13.2	Monitoring Officer		
13.3	Director of Corporate Governance Fees and Charges for Gambling Premises Licences		To follow
	Part 6 Accountability (20 minutes)	10.40pm – 11.00pm	

14.	Comments on the work of the Cabinet (10 minutes) –		
14.1	From Councillor Richard Weider Comment on the Work of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, specifically on improvements to Stonegrove Park.		
15.	Questions to representatives on outside bodies (10 minutes)		None

Janet Rawlings, Democratic Services Manager
Town Hall,
The Burroughs,
Hendon, NW4 4BG