

**Council: 4 November 2008**

**Opposition Policy Item (9.2):** Councillor Alison Moore

**Amendment:** Cllr. Robert Rams

**Future Shape of the Council**

*Delete all after 'Council' (line 1), and insert:*

....believes that it is vital LBB strives to deliver excellent services to the people of Barnet as effectively and efficiently as possible, particularly in light of the economic downturn, and sustained poor Grant Settlements from the Labour Government that seem (in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review), to continue.

Therefore, Council is proud of the Future Shape of the Council Project, which is investigating how Barnet's way of working can be reformed to adapt to changing times and changing needs of our customers.

Council notes that there are meetings with the Unions every week, and believes that dialogue with members of staff on this matter has been exemplary, with an open forum for discussion.

Accordingly Council asks Cabinet to ensure progress on the future Shape of the Council is delivered with the utmost transparency, continuing to seek input from staff and interested parties, and co-operating with any pre-decision scrutiny working group that is set-up as part of that service review process.

*Substantive Policy Item to read:*

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**Council, Tuesday 4 November, 2008**

**Opposition Policy Item – Amendment** in the name of Cllr Barry Rawlings to policy item in the name of Cllr Alison Moore

### **Future Shape of the Council**

Council notes the Future Shape of the Council project and the potential impact it could have on local people, council services and staff - particularly in the light of the current uncertainty of the £27.4 million in Icelandic banks and falling interest rates.

Council is concerned that the rationale for the project seems to be more about shrinking the organisation rather than designing quality services for the future, and that final proposals may be to outsource many local services, which may present additional risks to both the council and local people given the current economic situation.

Council is also concerned that any strategic partnership with a private sector organisation may result in the loss of democratic control of local service delivery despite the council retaining legal, political and public accountability.

Council believes that the process so far of the Future Shape of the Council project appears to be top down, has not been open or transparent, and is concerned that initial proposals will be presented for decision in December as a fait a compli.

Council asks Cabinet to suspend any further decisions on the Future Shape of the Council until the All Party Working Group has concluded its review of the current process.

Council further asks that, subject to the outcome of the All Party Working Group review, Cabinet commences a proper and transparent service review process that involves staff and trade unions as equal partners in designing quality public services for the future, treats in-house service delivery on a level-playing field with other models, and fully co-operates with any pre-decision scrutiny working group that is set-up as part of that service review process