

Non Executive Business Item – 3.5: Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

Friern Barnet Library

Amendment in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton

Delete after “go to a full trial” and replace with:

Council believes that the Conservatives’ Library Strategy is now in tatters following the announcement that LB Barnet is withdrawing its proposal to develop a Landmark Library at the artsdepot as a replacement Library for Friern Barnet Library.

Council notes that the decision to close Friern Barnet Library was only taken on the basis that the Library services there would be transferred to the Landmark Library at the artsdepot.

Council also notes the potential adverse impacts of closing Friern Barnet Library on all the community, and those specifically listed in the Library Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment including:

- impact on current library users who are older, have mobility challenges or a disability, travel with children, or prefer to walk to a local branch.
- impact on those with disabilities who, under the new model of service provision, cannot access public or private transport to reach a library site and are also not eligible for the home library service.
- impact on the proportion of Black and Minority Ethnic groups and those with disabilities or mental health conditions who are currently using Friern Barnet library.

Council further notes that the Library Strategy Equalities Impact Assessment said

“The development of the Landmark Library model as part of the proposed library strategy aims to mitigate a range of the impacts noted above.”

Council believes that now that the Landmark Library at artsdepot has been abandoned, LB Barnet should re-open Friern Barnet Library.

Council asks Cabinet to mediate with the Library campaigners to achieve a permanently re-opened council run Friern Barnet Library as soon as possible.

Substantive Business Item to read:

Council notes the extraordinary events that have unfolded since the Conservative administration closed Friern Barnet Library in April under the One Barnet programme. These events include:

- Over 4,300 residents signing a “re-open Friern Barnet Library” petition.
- The failure of the administration to open a Landmark Library at the artsdepot that was supposed to be a replacement Library for Friern Barnet residents.

- The occupation of the Library by campaigners who have re-built the book stock from donations from the public and are opening the Library to the community.
- The Library campaigners making it known to the Council that they want a Library in Friern Barnet.
- The moves by LB Barnet to evict the Library campaigners who are occupying Friern Barnet Library, and the Judge's view that it was in the public interest for the matter to go to a full trial.

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Under Standing Order Part 4, Section 1, 31.5: if my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting I ask that it be voted on at the meeting.