

Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET
held at Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BQ, on 27 February 2024

PRESENT:-

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Nagus Narenthira)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Tony Vourou)

Councillors:

Richard Barnes	Jennifer Grocock	Alison Moore
Zahra Beg	Rohit Grover	Ammar Naqvi
Rishikesh Chakraborty	Kamal Gurung	Alex Prager
Anne Clarke	Lachhya Gurung	Simon Radford
Pauline Coakley Webb	Ross Houston	Barry Rawlings
Dean Cohen	Anne Hutton	Tim Roberts
Philip Cohen	Giulia Innocenti	Ella Rose
Joshua Conway	Andreas Ioannidis	Gill Sargeant
Sara Conway	Laithe Jajeh	Alan Schneiderman
Geof Cooke	Humayune Khalick	Mark Shooter
Alison Cornelius	Paul Lemon	Caroline Stock
Richard Cornelius	David Longstaff	Daniel Thomas
Edith David	Kath McGuirk	Lucy Wakeley
Val Duschinsky	Nick Mearing-Smith	Sarah Wardle
Paul Edwards	Michael Mire	Emma Whysall
Claire Farrier	Arjun Mittra	Nigel Young
Eva Greenspan	Giulia Monasterio	Peter Zinkin

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Ernest Ambe	Councillor Matthew Perlberg
Councillor Andrea Bilbow OBE	Councillor Danny Rich
Councillor Shuey Gordon	Councillor Elliot Simberg
Councillor Marianne Haylett	Councillor Woodcock-Velleman
Councillor Linda Lusingu	Councillor Zakia Zubairi

1. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Worshipful the Mayor expressed her warmest congratulations to Eitan Okrent from Finchley and all those who participated in the challenge who raised over £8,000 for Lives Over Knives charity. Eitan organised the first Tubeathon where 125 teenagers walked the tube map in teams on Sunday 25th February.

The Worshipful the Mayor also sent her congratulations to Gerald Shamash who lives in Barnet on becoming a life peer.

The Worshipful the Mayor noted that the boroughs flagship youth music group, London Youth Concert Band, took part in a joint concert with Coldstream Guards and expressed her congratulations to them on this achievement.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Danny Rich, Zakia Zubairi, Ernest Ambe, Andrea Bilbow, Marianne Haylett, Liron Woodcock-Velleman, Matthew Perlberg, Elliot Simberg, Shuey Gordon and Linda Lusingu.

3. ELECT A MEMBER TO PRESIDE IF THE MAYOR IS ABSENT

The Worshipful the Mayor was present.

4. WORDS FROM YOUNG PEOPLE IN BARNET

The Worshipful the Mayor invited Dario Katani, Ava Johnson-Burgess, Akay Ozcan and Sophia Parghalava, candidates for the Youth Parliament and Youth Ambassador elections to say a few words.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Monitoring Officer declared the following statement:

‘As this is the budget setting meeting, I wish to remind Members of some requirements under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides that any Member who has undischarged arrears of at least two months in respect of their Council Tax liability is precluded from participating in a vote on the setting of the Council Tax at Full Council when that matter is considered.

If any Member believes themselves to be in that position, they must disclose the fact that this section applies to them and shall not vote on any question with respect to the matter and should leave the chamber. Members should note that it is a criminal offence if they fail to disclose and remain in the meeting and vote on the budget.’

Councillor Mitra declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 10.1 – ‘Business Planning 2024-2030’ by virtue of his family being tenants of Barnet Homes.

Councillor Whysall declared a pecuniary interest in Item 10.1 – ‘Business Planning 2024-2030’ by virtue of having provided advice to trade unions. She would leave the chamber for the duration of the debate.

Councillor Zinkin declared a pecuniary interest in Item 10.1 – ‘Business Planning 2024-2030’ by virtue of being a Director of London Energy. Councillor Zinkin reported he had been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer and would therefore remain and vote on the item.

6. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Council noted a correction to the minutes that Councillor Narenthira was incorrectly listed as Deputy Mayor on the division list within item 18. Subject to that correction **it was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting on 30 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.**

7. **ANY BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING**

None.

8. **RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION**

The Deputy Mayor moved the following resolution:

‘That we the Members of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet, hereby express to The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Nagus Narenthira, our appreciation of the excellent service she has rendered to the London Borough of Barnet as its Mayor during the period May 2023 to May 2024, and for the friendly and conscientious way in which she has performed the duties of that office.

We offer her our sincere gratitude for the concern that she has shown at all times in promoting the welfare of the Borough and its residents, particularly for her willingness to support the many organisations and individuals who called on her time and services during her Mayoralty.

We congratulate her on the success of her appeals for her charities Homeless Action in Barnet, Young Lives vs Cancer, and The BYT Project.’

This was duly agreed, with the foregoing resolution to be engrossed over the Common Seal of the corporation and presented to the Worshipful Mayor at the Annual Meeting.

9. **THE MAYORALTY FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024-2025**

The Worshipful the Mayor called for nominations for election of Mayor of the London Borough of Barnet for the Municipal Year 2024/25. It was noted that there was one nomination for the Mayor Designate.

Councillor Lemon, duly seconded by Councillor Monasterio moved that Councillor Tony Vourou be proposed for the appointment of the Mayor of the London Borough of Barnet at the Annual meeting of the Council of the 21 May 2024.

On the nomination being put to the vote, the votes were recorded as follows:

For: 52
Against: 0
Abstain: 1
Absent: 10
Total: 63

RESOLVED that Councillor Tony Vourou be nominated as the Mayor designate for the municipal year 2024/25.

The Mayor designate Councillor Tony Vourou thanked those present for his nomination and nominated Councillor Rich as the Deputy Mayor designate for the municipal year 2024/25.

RESOLVED that Council note Councillor Danny Rich as Deputy Mayor Designate for the municipal year 2024/25.

10. REPORTS FROM EXECUTIVE & COUNCIL COMMITTEES

10.1 REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE - BUSINESS PLANNING 2024-2030

Having declared a pecuniary interest, Councillor Whysall left the Chamber.

Councillor Jajeh left the Council Chamber.

The Worshipful the Mayor moved suspension of the Council Procedure Rules under Article 1, section 1.8 to allow the initial speeches on the Budget to be up to the following lengths:

10 minutes for the Leader, 8 minutes for the Leader of the Opposition and 5 minutes for the right to reply.

Councillor Rawlings, Chair of Cabinet moved the reception and adoption of the recommendations in the report. Councillor Thomas moved the Conservative Group alternative budget. Debate ensued.

Councillor Mire left the Council Chamber.

The Head of Governance informed Council that the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and Council Procedure Rule 18.4.1 requires that voting decisions relating to the budget and Council Tax be recorded.

On the Conservative Group amendment being put to the vote, the votes were recorded as follows:

Councillor			For	Against	Not Voting	Absent
1	Ernest	AMBE				X
2	Richard	BARNES		X		
3	Zahra	BEG		X		
4	Andrea	BILBOW				X
5	Rishikesh	CHAKRABORTY		x		
6	Anne	CLARKE		X		
7	Pauline	COAKLEY WEBB		X		
8	Dean	COHEN	X			
9	Philip	COHEN		X		
10	Joshua	CONWAY	X			
11	Sara	CONWAY		X		
12	Geof	COOKE		X		
13	Alison	CORNELIUS	X			

14	Richard	CORNELIUS	X			
15	Edith	DAVID		X		
16	Val	DUSCHINSKY	X			
17	Paul	EDWARDS		X		
18	Claire	FARRIER		X		
19	Shuey	GORDON				X
20	Eva	GREENSPAN	X			
21	Jennifer	GROCOCK	X			
22	Rohit	GROVER	X			
23	Kamal	GURUNG		X		
24	Lachhya	GURUNG	X			
25	Marianne	HAYLETT				X
26	Ross	HOUSTON		X		
27	Anne	HUTTON		X		
28	Giulia	INNOCENTI		X		
29	Andreas	IOANNIDIS		X		
30	Laithe	JAJEH				X
31	Humayune	KHALICK		X		
32	Paul	LEMON		X		
33	David	LONGSTAFF	X			
34	Linda	LUSINGU				X
35	Kath	MCGUIRK		X		
36	Nick	MEARING-SMITH	X			
37	Michael	MIRE				X
38	Arjun	MITTRA		X		
39	Giulia	MONASTERIO		X		
40	Alison	MOORE		X		
41	Ammar	NAQVI		X		
42	Matthew	PERLBERG				X
43	Alex	PRAGER	X			
44	Simon	RADFORD		X		
45	Barry	RAWLINGS		X		
46	Danny	RICH				X
47	Tim	ROBERTS		X		
48	Ella	ROSE		X		
49	Gill	SARGEANT		X		
50	Alan	SCHNEIDERMAN		X		
51	Mark	SHOOTER	X			
52	Elliot	SIMBERG				X
53	Caroline	STOCK	X			
54	Daniel	THOMAS	X			
55	Liron	VELLEMAN- WOODCOCK				X
56	Lucy	WAKELEY	X			
57	Sarah	WARDLE	X			
58	Emma	WHYSALL				X
59	Nigel	YOUNG		X		
60	Peter	ZINKIN	X			
61	Zakia	ZUBAIRI				X

62	Deputy Mayor Tony	VOUROU		X		
63	Mayor Nagus	NARENTHIRA		X		
Total						

RESOLVED that the Conservative Group amendment in the name of Councillor Thomas is therefore LOST.

On the Labour Group proposal being put to the vote the votes were recorded as follows:

Councillor			For	Against	Not Voting	Absent
1	Ernest	AMBE				X
2	Richard	BARNES	X			
3	Zahra	BEG	X			
4	Andrea	BILBOW				X
5	Rishikesh	CHAKRABORTY	X			
6	Anne	CLARKE	X			
7	Pauline	COAKLEY WEBB	X			
8	Dean	COHEN		X		
9	Philip	COHEN	X			
10	Joshua	CONWAY		X		
11	Sara	CONWAY	X			
12	Geof	COOKE	X			
13	Alison	CORNELIUS		X		
14	Richard	CORNELIUS		X		
15	Edith	DAVID	X			
16	Val	DUSCHINSKY		X		
17	Paul	EDWARDS	X			
18	Claire	FARRIER	X			
19	Shuey	GORDON				X
20	Eva	GREENSPAN		X		
21	Jennifer	GROCOCK		X		
22	Rohit	GROVER		X		
23	Kamal	GURUNG	X			
24	Lachhya	GURUNG		X		
25	Marianne	HAYLETT				X
26	Ross	HOUSTON	X			
27	Anne	HUTTON	X			
28	Giulia	INNOCENTI	X			
29	Andreas	IOANNIDIS	X			
30	Laithe	JAJEH				X
31	Humayune	KHALICK	X			
32	Paul	LEMON	X			
33	David	LONGSTAFF		X		
34	Linda	LUSINGU				X
35	Kath	MCGUIRK	X			

36	Nick	MEARING-SMITH		X		
37	Michael	MIRE				X
38	Arjun	MITTRA	X			
39	Giulia	MONASTERIO	X			
40	Alison	MOORE	X			
41	Ammar	NAQVI	X			
42	Matthew	PERLBERG				X
43	Alex	PRAGER		X		
44	Simon	RADFORD	X			
45	Barry	RAWLINGS	X			
46	Danny	RICH				X
47	Tim	ROBERTS	X			
48	Ella	ROSE	X			
49	Gill	SARGEANT	X			
50	Alan	SCHNEIDERMAN	X			
51	Mark	SHOOTER		X		
52	Elliot	SIMBERG				X
53	Caroline	STOCK		X		
54	Daniel	THOMAS		X		
55	Liron	VELLEMAN- WOODCOCK				X
56	Lucy	WAKELEY		X		
57	Sarah	WARDLE		X		
58	Emma	WHYSALL				X
59	Nigel	YOUNG	X			
60	Peter	ZINKIN		X		
61	Zakia	ZUBAIRI				X
62	Deputy Mayor Tony	VOUROU	X			
63	Mayor Nagus	NARENTHIRA	X			
Total						

RESOLVED that Council:

In respect of the Budget and Council Tax for 2024/25 and the MTFs 2024-30 taking into account the equality impact assessment and consultation findings:

- 1. Approve the MTFs, attached as Appendix A, and the detailed revenue budgets in Appendix C, including the proposed savings and funding for pressures in 2024/25;**
- 2. Approve that the budget 2024/25 is prepared on the basis of a 2.98% increase for the general element of Council Tax in 2024/25 as discussed in paragraph 3.16 to 3.20;**
- 3. Approve that the budget for 2024/25 is prepared on the basis of an increase of 2% for the Social Care Precept, to help fund social care as detailed in paragraph 3.16 to 3.20;**

4. Approve the resolutions relating to Council Tax contained within Appendix B;
5. Approve the application of the Council Tax Premiums (under Section 11C of the Local Government Finance Act 1992) with effect 1st of April 2025 (as set out in paragraph 3.23).
6. Agree not to amend the Barnet Council Tax Support Scheme as set out in paragraph 3.25.
7. Approve, on the advice of the Chief Finance Officer, that it determines that the council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2024/25 as set out in Council Tax resolution Appendix B, 2(iv) is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, set out in the Referendums relating to Council Tax increases (Principles)(England) Report 2024/25;
8. Approve that in accordance with Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 the Chief Executive be instructed to place a notice in the local press of the amounts set under recommendation 7 above within a period of 21 days following the Council's decision; and
9. Consider the issues that have emerged from the consultation discussed in Appendix G when making their decisions. That Council make the decisions outlined in this report being mindful of the consultation responses and equalities impact assessments including the cumulative equalities impact assessments; and
10. Note and have due regard to the opinion of the Chief Finance Officer as set out in section 5 of this report.

In respect of Capital Strategy and the proposed capital programme:

11. Approve the Capital Strategy as set out in Appendix I1; and
12. Approve the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix I2 and set out in Section 7;

In respect of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS):

13. Approve the TMSS for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix J.
14. Note, when approving the TMSS, that to allow the council to better manage interest rate risk around the proposed third party loan relating to the regeneration of Brent Cross, the upper limit for principal sums invested for longer than 365 days (as set out under Section 4.4 of the council's TMSS) is increased from £25m to £50m.

In respect of Housing Revenue Account (HRA):

15. Approve the HRA Business Plan (at Appendix K).

In respect of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG):

16. Note the Gross Schools Budget of £458.615m for 2024/25 as agreed by Cabinet in January 2024.

In respect of the Annual Review of Rents and Service Charges and Temporary Accommodation Rents for 2024/25:

17. Note the changes to rent for social rented homes, affordable rented homes, and temporary accommodation rents as well as changes to service charges as agreed by Cabinet in January 2024.

Councillor Whysall re-entered the Council Chamber.

10.2 REPORT OF THE EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE - PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/25

Councillors Naqvi and Ioannidis left the Council Chamber.

The Worshipful the Mayor introduced the report. Councillor Whysall moved the reception and adoption of the recommendations in the report. Debate ensued.

On the recommendations on the report being put to the vote, the votes were as follows:

For: 49
Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 14
Total: 63

RESOLVED that Council:

That Council approve the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 as outlined in Appendix A.

Councillor Naqvi and Councillor Ioannidis re-entered the Council Chamber.

11. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

11.1 REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER - CONSTITUTION REVIEW

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report, outlining the amendments to parts of the Constitution for Council's agreement.

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the votes on the amendments to the Constitution section 6 p394 of the pack in relation to the planning committees were recorded as follows: were recorded as follows:

For: 32
Against: 18
Abstain: 1
Absent: 12
Total: 63

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the votes on the remaining amendments as set out in the report were recorded as follows:

For: 51
Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 12
Total: 63

RESOLVED that Council:

- 1. The Council approve the Constitution amendments as set out in Appendices A to D.**
- 2. Council agree that the changes relating to Planning Committees (the merger of Planning Committees A and B and the increase in the objection threshold from 5 to 10) be implemented effective from Annual Council (21 May 2024).**
- 3. Council agreed an amendment to the item relating to Members DBS checks to insert the words “(except for substitutes on the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel)” after “All Members and Substitute Members of...”.**
- 4. Council authorises the Head of Governance to implement these revisions and publish a revised Constitution.**
- 5. Council agree to the following appointments to the additional seats on the Employment Sub Committee:**
 - Councillor Beg**
 - Councillor Monasterio**
 - Councillor Prager**
 - Councillor Naqvi (substitute)**

11.2 REPORT OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNANCE - MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2024/25

The Head of Governance introduced the report, outlining the Members Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 for Council’s agreement.

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the votes were recorded as follows:

For: 51
Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 12
Total: 63

RESOLVED that Council:

- 1. Having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London as attached as Appendix A.**
- 2. Approve the Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/25 attached as Appendix B with effect from 1 April 2024.**
- 3. Note that following approval the Scheme, a notice will be advertised pursuant to Regulation 16 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).**

11.3 REPORT OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNANCE - ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The Head of Governance introduced the report, outlining the various administrative matters for Council's agreement.

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the votes were recorded as follows:

For: 31
Against: 0
Abstain: 18
Absent: 12
Total: 63

RESOLVED that Council:

- 1. Approve the appointment to Outside Bodies in Appendix A with additional late nominations not published for:**
 - Valentine Poole – nomination is Councillor Zahra Beg for the Labour Group**
 - Friend in Need – nomination is Councillor Phil Cohen for the Labour Group**
- 2. Note the changes to the calendar of meetings 2024/25 as set out in Appendix B and to also note that Planning Committee B has changed from 27th March 2024 to 20th March 2024 at the discretion of the Chair.**
- 3. Note the correction to committee appointments as set out in Appendix C.**

11.4 REPORT OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNANCE - CALCULATION OF POLITICAL BALANCE (PROPORTIONALITY)

The Head of Governance introduced the report, outlining the calculation of political balance.

On the recommendations in the report being put to the vote, the votes were recorded as follows:

For: 51

Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Absent: 12
Total: 63

RESOLVED that Council:

- 1. Note the political balance of the Council is:**
 - > 40 Members of the Labour Group**
 - > 21 Members of the Conservative Group**
 - > 2 Independent Members**
- 2. Agree the allocation of seats as set out in the tables in Appendix A in order to comply with the political balance regulations requiring seats to be allocated proportionately to the political groups on Council.**

The meeting finished at 8.50pm