

MINUTES OF MEETING Full Council HELD ON Monday, 1st March, 2021, 7.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Adam Jogee (Mayor), Eldridge Culverwell, Gina Adamou, Charles Adje, Peray Ahmet, Kaushika Amin, Dawn Barnes, Dhiren Basu, Patrick Berryman, John Bevan, Barbara Blake, Mark Blake, Zena Brabazon, Gideon Bull, Dana Carlin, Vincent Carroll, Luke Cawley-Harrison, Nick da Costa, Seema Chandwani, Sakina Chenot, James Chiriyankandath, Pippa Connor, Julie Davies, Mahir Demir, Paul Dennison, Isidoros Diakides, Josh Dixon, Erdal Dogan, Joseph Ejiofor, Scott Emery, Ruth Gordon, Makbule Gunes, Mike Hakata, Bob Hare, Kirsten Hearn, Emine Ibrahim, Sarah James, Peter Mitchell, Liz Morris, Khaled Moyeed, Lucia das Neves, Felicia Opoku, Julia Ogiehor, Tammy Palmer, Reg Rice, Viv Ross, Alessandra Rossetti, Yvonne Say, Anne Stennett, Daniel Stone, Elin Weston, Noah Tucker, Sarah Williams and Matt White

43. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Mayor referred to the notice of meetings, section of the agenda and Members noted this information.

44. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Peacock and Cllr Hinchcliffe.

45. TO ASK THE MAYOR TO CONSIDER THE ADMISSION OF ANY LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 100B OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

The Chief Executive outlined that there was one item of business, which could not be available earlier, and which will need to be dealt with at the meeting.

Item 13 - Budget amendments - Council standing order 15.8b allowed amendments to recommendation to be put forward by 10am on the day of the meeting.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests put forward.

47. TO ASK MEMBERS WHETHER THEY NEED TO MAKE A DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 106 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992 IN RELATION TO UNPAID COMMUNITY CHARGE OR COUNCIL TAX LIABILITY WHICH IS TWO MONTHS OR MORE OUTSTANDING

There were no declarations made in accordance with section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in relation to unpaid community charge or Council Tax Liability.

48. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020

RESOLVED

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 16 November 2020 as a correct record of the meeting.

49. TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS AS THE MAYOR MAY LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL

The Mayor had circulated information on the Mayoral engagements and activities, and was grateful to colleagues for their support in the vaccination effort and providing donations. This would support the volunteers and healthcare staff with refreshments at the 3 centres in the borough, Hornsey, Bounds Green and Lordship Lane. He urged colleagues that had not yet had an opportunity to respond, to put forward their donations.

The Mayor reported on the sad passing of former Councillor, Sally Billot. The Mayor had attended her funeral on the 23rd of February 2021.

The Mayor invited the Deputy Mayor, and Cllr Brabazon to pay tribute to Sally Billot.

The Deputy Mayor spoke of attending the funeral, and was grateful for the opportunity to be good friends with Sally Billot. The Deputy Mayor expressed that Sally had had an indelible impact on people. The Deputy Mayor advised that Sally Billot had had a significant impact on local community groups with her local knowledge, communication skills, and personality. She was influential in instigating his own local political career and they always had good conversations. The Deputy Mayor advised that he was in contact with the Park's service about appropriately commemorating Sally's hard work for her local community with the planting of a tree and naming of a bench in Finsbury Park.

Cllr Brabazon spoke of her friendship with Sally Billot, spanning over 30 years. She knew her personally and in her professional capacity. Sally had loved Finsbury Park but also had a local connection to Bruce Grove .Sally was part of a parent group that started holiday place schemes at Bruce Grove Primary school . This was a local initiative which led to a wider movement and help set up Haringey Community Play services, which became a nationally recognised and was a vital support service for 25 years, providing support to children and parents. Cllr Brabazon was grateful for Sally's support as she and local working mothers had led the way for this successful service. Now more than ever, the importance of play activities was being recognised.

Cllr Brabazon spoke of Sally's role as a community activist, her career working at Citizen's Advice Bureau in Camden Town and Community Law Centre where they had

met. Cllr Brabazon was working with children and families with learning disabilities, and Sally was keen to link up local groups with community services. Cllr Brabazon spoke about Sally's time on the Council where she was a Stroud Green Councillor and was on the Council's Executive.. Cllr Brabazon described Sally as strong minded with high standards and a strong advocate for community projects, representing the Council on the London borough Grants Committee and with the twinned town, Livry Gargan. Cllr Brabazon expressed that Sally was a good friend, hardworking and independent and would be sorely missed by all.

The Mayor invited Councillors to join him in a minute's silence for former Councillor, Sally Billot.

A one minute's silence was observed.

The Mayor reminded colleagues of his forthcoming quiz night, taking place on March 21st 2021 to raise funds for his three charities and invited colleagues who were not able to make this event to donate.

50. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive introduced the report which sought confirmation of the appointments to the role of Monitoring Officer, this was required under the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act which imposes a duty on the authority to designate one of their officers (to be known as the Monitoring Officer) as the officer responsible for performing the duties imposed under section 5 of the Act.

The Chief Whip moved that the report and its recommendations be agreed.

RESOLVED

That John Jones be appointed as Monitoring Officer on an interim basis until the appointment of the permanent Monitoring Officer.

That Fiona Alderman be appointed permanent Monitoring Officer with effect from 10 May 2021.[Clerks note - this date has been updated to the 17th of May].

51. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER AND HEAD OF LEGAL & GOVERNANCE SERVICES

The interim Monitoring Officer had no matters to report.

52. TO CONSIDER REQUESTS TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS AND/OR PETITIONS AND, IF APPROVED, TO RECEIVE THEM

Mr Burnham was invited to present and was not able to unmute his microphone and Mr Secker took forward the deputation on behalf of Haringey Defend Council Housing.

The deputation welcomed the shift of public policy away from unaffordable 'affordable' rents in social housing and strongly supported the proposed conversion of the 18 Haringey Council "Affordable Rent" tenancies back to Social Rent. However, the

deputation was concerned about the actual amount of rent that the socially rented properties would be charged. These homes would be let as Council homes but not at normal Council rents, but £51 per week above normal Haringey rents. The deputation highlighted that, crucially, the benefit cap would be breached, and this point seemed to always be disregarded by the Council when rent setting and this would have an impact on tenants needing to access benefits. The deputation questioned if the new homes rent, which were £51 per week above Council rents, would be applicable to the new homes on Broadwater Farm, Tottenham Hale and Love Lane. Clarification was sought on whether these homes would be on the higher rent levels as this had previously not been advised and rent payers were anxious about this.

The deputation expressed that, at present, Haringey was one of several London boroughs which brought properties for Temporary Accommodation purposes, and which also used Council homes set for demolition for Temporary Accommodation, and then lets these homes at Social Rents. The deputation noted that in savings proposal HO102, the budget proposed that these rents should henceforth be set at Local Housing Allowance rates: rents of £299pw compared to around £122pw at present (for two beds). The deputation opposed this proposal, which they felt would deepen the poverty trap facing tenants, and which conflicted with the Council's fairness and equality policies. The deputation asked Councillors to reconsider this particular saving's proposal.

The Chief Whips of the political groups and Independent member advised that they did not have any questions for the deputation.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Renewal responded to the deputation, outlining the following:

- Haringey's Council rents were set in line with the government's guidance on setting social rents called the rent standard).
- All new Council tenancies were let at formula rent levels and there was no divergence from that. This was calculated using a formula, which took into consideration local property values, local incomes and house size. For the avoidance of doubt, formula rents are social rents.
- The disparity between some of the Council's existing rents and the new rents was due to previous Government policy, which in 2015 moved away from the policy of rent convergence, designed to eliminate disparities in social rents, and introduced a 1% yearly reduction in rents over a 4-year period. This meant that many rents have not yet reached government formula rent levels.
- Since April 2020 the Government has confirmed that social housing rents may rise by a maximum of the consumer price index (CPI) measure of inflation plus 1% for five years from 2020. This means that no existing Council tenant's rent will rise by more than 1.5% in the new financial year, until they reach formula rent. The only exception would be if a Council tenant moved to a new Council home where the new rent will be set at the formula rent level from the outset.
- The savings proposal HO102 does not refer to the rent on these homes. Rather, savings proposal HO102 was about homes that are leased from the private rented sector and then used as temporary accommodation. The savings

proposal was for these leases to be made with Homes for Haringey, rather than the Council, once each individual lease comes to an end. Having leases agreed with Homes for Haringey meant that tenants can claim a higher rate of housing benefit (the current local housing allowance), whereas if the lease is agreed with the Council, tenants can only claim 90% of 2011 LHA levels (plus a £40 a week management fee). This leads to additional costs to the Council.

53. APPROVAL OF COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME FOR 2021/22

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategic Regeneration moved the report which set out that since April 2013, Haringey has run a replacement Council Tax Reduction Scheme that protected pensioners (as prescribed by Central Government) and those in receipt of certain disability benefits and passed on the funding cuts by giving a maximum level of support of 80.2% to all other claimants.

It was noted that following a consultation process in 2018, the scheme for 2019/20 was amended to increase the maximum level of support from 80.2% to 100% for working age claimants with children and to reflect some national welfare changes. This scheme continued unchanged for 2020/21.

There is a statutory obligation on the Council to consider, each financial year, whether to revise or replace its scheme and a further obligation to consult residents before the scheme is changed.

This report set out details of the review of Haringey's current Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) 2020/21 and recommends that it continues unchanged for 2021/22.

The Council needed to approve the final scheme by 11th March 2021, even where the scheme remained unchanged ready for implementation on the 1st April 2021.

RESOLVED

1. To note that an Equalities Impact Assessment (**Appendix 4**) had been undertaken in relation to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and that the findings of this EIA must be taken into account when making a decision regarding the Scheme for 2021/22.

2. To adopt the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021/22 as contained in Appendix 3 and therefore retains the same Scheme agreed for 2020/21. This means that from 01st April 2021;

- I. That pensioners continue to receive support for the payment of Council Tax.
- II. That working age claimants in receipt of certain disability benefits continue to receive support for the payment of Council Tax up to 100%.
- III. That working age claimants with children continue to receive support for the payment for Council Tax up to 100%.
- IV. For all other working age claimants, the extent of Council Tax Support available will continue to be capped at 80.2% of Council Tax liability.

3. That authority to be given to the Director of Finance, the Director of Customer, Transformation and Resources and Assistant Director of Corporate and Customer Services to take all appropriate steps to implement and administer the Scheme.

Reasons for decision

The recommendation to retain the current scheme continues to support the Government's initiative of work incentives and pays due regard to the challenging financial climate.

In recognition of the vulnerable sectors of society, additional supportive measures were put into the 2020/21 scheme giving increased protection to approximately 5,600 claimants, and it is proposed that these continue into 2021/22. Maintaining the current scheme ensures that these protected claimants will not be further disadvantaged.

Consideration has been given to revising the current scheme, however a longer period is needed to fully evaluate the impact of the last changes.

The real reduction in Council resources and service pressures have required the Council to implement significant annual expenditure reductions since 2011. These are forecast to continue for 2021/22 and future years. The affordability to the Council of the CTRS scheme therefore continues to be an important consideration.

Haringey is comparable with other London LAs and its scheme reflects the need to strike a fair balance between protecting the wellbeing of our residents and recognising the challenging financial situation we are in.

Appendix 1 breaks down all London LA schemes and some summary points are shown below:

- 15 LAs ask residents for a higher contribution to their Council Tax than Haringey including Enfield, Barnet, Waltham Forest, and Barking & Dagenham.
- Wandsworth and Harrow have the highest contribution level at 30% for non-disabled working age claimants.
- 10 LAs fully cover the shortfall including City of London, Kensington & Chelsea, and Westminster.

Alternative options considered.

It was a statutory requirement to approve the final scheme by 11th March 2021, even where the scheme remained unchanged ready for implementation on the 1st April 2021.

54. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CORPORATE COMMITTEE

The Chair of the Corporate Committee moved his Committee's report and the recommendations it contained, which the Mayor confirmed would be considered under the budget item 13.

55. 2021-22 BUDGET AND 2021-2026 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Mayor invited the interim Monitoring Officer to outline the requirement for votes.

It was noted that the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, and the Council's Standing Orders required the Council to record in the minutes how each Councillor voted, including any abstentions, when determining the Council's Budget and the level of Council Tax to be levied.

The only requirement was to record in the minutes of the meeting how each member voted, and given that there were 3 amendments and a substantive motion to be voted on, it could be recorded in the minutes of the meeting how each member voted, including any who have abstained, by a roll call vote.

The Mayor then called on Councillor Adje to introduce the budget and move the 2021-22 budget and 2021- 2026 Medium Term Financial Strategy and the recommendations a - o at page 306 of the agenda pack. Councillor Ejiofor formally seconded the motion.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Dennison to move the Liberal Democrat group's 3 amendments, as set out in the tabled papers. Councillor Cawley- Harrison formally seconded the amendments and spoke in favour of their adoption.

The Mayor then opened the debate, in which Councillors: Chandwani, Rossetti, Demir, da Costa, Emery, Moyeed, Ibrahim, Barnes, Bull, Ogiehor, Palmer, Ejiofor, and Berryman contributed to the discussion. Councillor Dennison and then Councillor Adje responded to the debate.

The Mayor then called for a vote on Budget Amendment 1. There being 14 Members in favour (Councillors Barnes, da Costa, Cawley- Harrison, Chenot, Connor, Dennison, Dixon, Emery, Hare, Morris, Ogiehor, Palmer, Ross, Rossetti), and

39 Members opposed(Councillors Adamou, Adje, Ahmet, Amin, Berryman, Bevan, Basu, B Blake, M Blake, Brabazon, Bull, Carlin, Carroll, Chandwani, Chiriyankandath, Culverwell, Davies, Demir, Diakides, Dogan, Ejiofor, Gordon, Hakata, Hearn, Ibrahim, James, Jogee, Mitchell, Moyeed, das Neves, Opoku, Rice, Say, Stennett, Stone, Weston, Tucker, Williams, White,)

[Cllr Gunes lost microphone connection and was not able to vote on amendment 1]

No abstentions,

Budget Amendment 1 was declared LOST.

The Mayor then called for a vote on Budget Amendment 2. There being 14 Members in favour (Councillors Barnes, da Costa, Cawley- Harrison, Chenot, Connor, Dennison, Dixon, Emery, Hare, Morris, Ogiehor, Palmer, Ross, Rossetti), and

40 Members opposed(Councillors Adamou, Adje, Ahmet, Amin, Berryman, Bevan, Basu, B Blake, M Blake, Brabazon, Bull, Carlin, Carroll, Chandwani, Chiriyankandath, Culverwell, Davies, Demir, Diakides, Dogan, Ejiofor, Gordon, Gunes, Hakata, Hearn, Ibrahim, James, Jogee, Mitchell, Moyeed, das Neves, Opoku, Rice, Say, Stennett, Stone, Weston, Tucker, Williams, White,)

No abstentions,

Budget Amendment 2 was declared LOST.

The Mayor then called for a vote on Budget Amendment 3. There being 14 Members in favour (Councillors Barnes, da Costa, Cawley- Harrison, Chenot, Connor, Dennison, Dixon, Emery, Hare, Morris, Ogiehor, Palmer, Ross, Rossetti), and

40 Members opposed(Councillors Adamou, Adje, Ahmet, Amin, Berryman, Bevan, Basu, B Blake, M Blake, Brabazon, Bull, Carlin, Carroll, Chandwani, Chiriyankandath, Culverwell, Davies, Demir, Diakides, Dogan, Ejiofor, Gordon, Gunes, Hakata, Hearn, Ibrahim, James, Jogee, Mitchell, Moyeed, das Neves, Opoku, Rice, Say, Stennett, Stone, Weston, Tucker, Williams, White)

No abstentions,

Budget Amendment 3 was declared LOST.

The Mayor then called for a vote on recommendations a to o contained at page 306 paragraph 3.1 of the agenda pack.

There being 40 Members in favour(Councillors Adamou, Adje, Ahmet, Amin, Berryman, Bevan, Basu, B Blake, M Blake, Brabazon, Bull, Carlin, Carroll, Chandwani, Chiriyankandath, Culverwell, Davies, Demir, Diakides, Dogan, Ejiofor, Gordon, Gunes, Hakata, Hearn, Ibrahim, James, Jogee, Mitchell, Moyeed, das Neves, Opoku, Rice, Say, Stennett, Stone, Weston, Tucker, Williams, White)

14 Members opposed(Councillors Barnes, da Costa, Cawley- Harrison, Chenot, Connor, Dennison, Dixon, Emery, Hare, Morris, Ogiehor, Palmer, Ross, Rossetti), and

No abstentions,

The Recommendations were AGREED.

RESOLVED

- (a) To approve the proposed 2021/22 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (2021/26) agreed by Cabinet on 9th February 2021 as set out in Annex 1;
- (b) To approve the increase of 1.99% in Haringey's element of the Council tax and an additional 3% for the Adult Social Care Precept;
- (c) To approve the General Fund budget requirement for 2021/22 of £249.077m, net of Dedicated Schools Budget, as set out in Appendix 1 of Annex 1 to this report;
- (d) To approve the Priority Cash Limits for 2021/22 of £ 249.077m as set out in Annex 2;
- (e) To approve the 2021/26 General Fund Capital Programme set out in Appendix 4 of Annex 1 to this report;
- (f) To approve the strategy on the flexible use of capital receipts as set out in and Appendix 6 of Annex 1 to this report;
- (g) To approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2021/22 as set out in Table 9.4 of Annex 1 to this report;
- (h) To approve the 2021/26 HRA Capital Programme set out in Table 9.5 of Annex 1 to this report;
- (i) To note the Greater London Authority (GLA) precept (para. 7.4);
- (j) To approve the budgeted level of non-earmarked General Fund balance and the specific and other reserves as set out in Annex 3b;
- (k) To approve the reserves policy including the Chief Finance Officer's (CFO) assessment of risk and the assessment of the adequacy of reserves, as set out in Annex 3 (a – c);
- (l) To note the report of the Chief Finance Officer under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of proposed reserves set out in section 9;
- (m) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021/22 set out in Annex 4; and
- (n) To pass the budget resolution including the level of Council Tax, in the specified format, and to determine that the Council's relevant basic amount of Council Tax for the year is not excessive as set out in Annex 5.
- (o) To note the results of consultation as set out in Appendix 8 of Annex 1.

Reasons for decision

The Council approved the Borough Plan 2019-2023 (the Plan) in February 2019. In response to the impact of the Covid19 pandemic on the Borough, its residents and businesses, a Recovery and Renewal process was instigated with the intention that the outcomes be used to inform a review and refresh of the Plan. The Borough Plan sets out the Council's priorities and the 2021/22 Budget and 2021/26 MTFs outlines the overall financial strategy for delivering those priorities. The latter has been developed with reference to the Recovery and Renewal process.

This final MTFs (2021/26) now proposed projects further unidentified savings of £21.9m across the period even if all budget reductions included in the MTFs are delivered and no new pressures identified. This is higher than the £15.5m assumed one year ago in the 2020/25 MTFs. The Council will therefore need to quickly identify major budget reduction measures in future years in order to balance the Budget/MTFS, as set out in section 9.

The 2021/22 Budget & 2021/26 MTFS Cabinet report of 9th February included relevant budgetary allocations announced in the Provisional Local Government Finance settlement on 17th December 2020. The Final Settlement ratified by Parliament on 10th February 2021 made no changes impacting on Haringey's figures so no adjustments to the Budget or MTFS were required. The 9th February report also included Cabinet's response to feedback from the Budget consultation, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and also the outcome of the overall equalities assessment.

Taking all relevant factors into account, including the overall equalities assessment, the outcomes from consultation with residents and business rate payers and the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting held on 18th January 2021, this report sets out Cabinet's 2021/22 Budget and 2021/26 MTFS proposals, including the level of Council tax for 2021/22, for the Council to consider and approve.

The report and recommendations from the Cabinet meeting on 9th February 2021, were agreed in full and are attached as Annex 1.

Alternative options considered

The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget for 2021/22. Therefore, in accordance with legislation and the Council's constitution, this report recommends that the Council should approve the proposed 2021/22 Budget and 2021/26 Medium Term Financial Strategy agreed by Cabinet on 9th February 2021, including the outcomes from the budget consultation exercise, budget scrutiny and equalities review, which is attached as Annex 1 and approve the Council tax for 2021/22. Accordingly, no other options have been considered.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date