

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING 20 FEBRUARY 2006

Councillors: *The Mayor (Councillor Griffith), *The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Adamou);
Councillors *Adjé, *Aitken, *Basu, *Bax, *Beacham, *Bevan, *Blanchard, *Bloch, *Herbie Brown, *Jean Brown, *Bull, Canver, *Davidson, *Davies, *Dawson, *Diakides, *Dillon, *Dobbie, *Dodds, Edge, Engert, Featherstone, *Floyd, *Haley, *Hare, *Harris, *Hillman, *Hoban, *GMMH Rahman Khan, *Knight, *Krokou, *Lister, *Makanji, *Manheim, *Meehan, *Millar, *Milner, *Newton, *Oatway, Patel, *Peacock, *Erline Prescott, *Quincy Prescott, *Reith, Reynolds, *Rice, Robertson, *Santry, Simpson, *Stanton, *Sulaiman, *Williams, *Winskill and Wynne (one vacancy).

* Members present

104. APOLOGIES: (Agenda Item 1) Apologies were received from Councillors Canver, Engert, Featherstone, Gilbert, Patel, Reynolds, Simpson and Wynne and Cllr Bull for lateness.

105. LATE/URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS: (Agenda Item 2) See items 108, 111 and 115.

106. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: (Agenda Item 3)

Members were asked by the Mayor to declare any personal interest in respect of items on the agenda. In accordance with Part 2 of the Members Code of Conduct set out in the Council Constitution, any member disclosing a personal interest which was also prejudicial would be asked to withdraw from the Chamber during consideration of the item and neither were they to seek to improperly influence a decision on the said item.

No such declarations were made.

107. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST CONCERNING OUTSTANDING COUNCIL TAX OR COMMUNITY CHARGE: (Agenda Item 4)

Members were also reminded of the need to consider whether they needed 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 was two months or more outstanding.

No such declarations were made.

108. MINUTES: (Agenda Item 5)

The Mayor agreed to the admission of the minutes as urgent business. Due to the short time scale between meetings, it had not been possible to circulate the minutes with the Council Summons. The minutes needed to be confirmed at the next available meeting.

Copies of the Minutes having been circulated, they were taken as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 6 February 2006 be signed as a true record.

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109. MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS: (Agenda Item 6)

The Mayor thanked the Interim Chief Executive, Max Caller for the service he had given to the Borough over the last few months and wished him well for his future endeavours.

110. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER: (Agenda Item 7)

The Leader of the Council referred to the Council Tax rate which would be set at this meeting and he was pleased to announce that this represented just a 51p per week rise for a Band D property. Further, he felt that this had not impacted on service delivery as the Council had recently been awarded a 3 Star CPA Rating (out of a possible 4 stars). The Leader stressed the importance of keeping tax increases low whilst keeping service levels high. The Council's priorities were based on working with partners and local communities, to raise educational achievement for all children, to make our services excellent for every resident, to build strong and safe and to put people first. The Leader of the Opposition spoke in response.

111. FINANCIAL PLANNING 2006/7 AND 2008/9 AND TO AGREE THE COUNCIL TAX FOR 2006/7 (Report of the Director of Finance, Agenda Item 8):

The Mayor agreed to admit the report as urgent business. The report could not be circulated earlier as vital information was awaited from the preceptors. The report needed to be admitted in order that the Council Tax may be set for 2006/07.

RESOLVED:

1. That the final settlement and the decisions of the school's forum and levying authorities be noted.
2. That the consequent changes to budgets be agreed.
3. That the business unit cash limits, set out in Appendix C of the report, be agreed.
4. That the Greater London Authority precept be noted.
5. That the budget resolution in the specified format as set out in the attached appendix be agreed.
6. That the reserves policy attached at Appendix E of the report, be noted.

112. REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Agenda Item 9)

The meeting received a tabled addendum following the resignation of Councillor Gilbert.

RESOLVED

1. That the commencement of employment of Dr Ita O'Donovan, the new Chief Executive, be noted as 6 March 2006.
2. That Dr O'Donovan be confirmed to the positions of Chief Executive, Head of

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Paid Service and Returning Officer with effect from 6 March 2006.

3. That all references in the Council's Constitution to Interim Chief Executive that were agreed at the Council meeting on 18 July 2005 be amended to read Chief Executive with effect from 6 March 2006.
4. That the resignation of Councillor Gilbert with immediate effect, due to personal family reasons, be noted.
5. That the following vacancies on bodies created by the resignation of Councillor Gilbert be noted:
 - Audit Committee
 - Licensing Committee
 - Licensing Sub D
 - Muswell Hill Area Assembly
 - Hornsey Housing Forum

113. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER: (Agenda Item 10)

There were no matters to report.

114. DEPUTATIONS AND PETITIONS: (Agenda Item 11)

There were no requests for deputations. There had been no petitions for submission.

115. QUESTIONS: (Agenda Item 12)

The Mayor agreed to the admission of this report as urgent business. Under Standing Orders, notice of questions was not requested until five clear days before the meeting, following which matters raised had to be researched and replies prepared, in order to be given at the meeting.

There were 8 oral questions and 17 for written answer.

Oral Question 8 was not reached in the allotted time and a written answer was supplied to this question.

116. MOTIONS: (Agenda Item 13)

It was moved by Councillor Williams and Seconded by Councillor Davies that:

“This Council recognised that the illegal use of knives among the young is unacceptably high, that stiffer sentences for carrying a gun have been successful and stiffer sentencing for carrying a knife would be similarly successful in reducing knife crime;

Calls on the Government to treat knife crime more seriously by amending the Violent Crime Bill currently progressing through Parliament to increase the sentence for carrying a knife in public from two to seven years.”

An amendment to the motion was moved by Councillor Sulaiman and seconded by Councillor Dobbie proposing :

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That everything after “is unacceptably high” be deleted and the following inserted:

“and notes that over 5800 convictions were secured in 2004 (the last year for which figures are available) for carrying an offensive weapon (a category which may include knives and bladed weapons), an offence carrying a penalty of up to 4 years imprisonment.

The Council notes that the Liberal Democrats have referred to the “Scandal of prison overcrowding” and rejects a policy that would lead to people who happened to be carrying a knife filling our prisons for seven years each, while the maximum penalty for actual bodily harm remains at five years.

This Council believes that the Labour Government’s decision not to enter in a Dutch auction on prison sentencing policy to garner headlines, but instead to tackle at source the roots of knife and gun crime, through building respect in our communities and promoting safer streets for all, is the correct policy and reflects the Labour Movement’s emphasis on tackling the causes of crime not just the symptoms.

This Council deplores the decision of Liberal Democrats on the Greater London Assembly last week, to vote against introducing Safer Neighbourhoods teams for every ward in London this April; deplores the policy of the Liberal Democrats to legalise buying alcohol at the age of 16, regrets the support of the Liberal Democrats for giving convicted murderers the vote, and most of all deplored the repeated efforts by the Opposition to make up simplistic policies for our communities on the back of an envelope.

This Council therefore endorses and supports the government’s temperate and proportionate approach and welcomes the introduction of new policing teams for every ward by London’s Labour Mayor.

This Council therefore supports neighbourhood policing in every ward as a central part of ensuring our communities are safer and as a key pillar of our strategy for reducing knife and gun crime in our communities.

This Council is committed to working with the Mayor to deliver neighbourhood policing in every ward in Haringey by May of this year”.

The Amendment to the Motion was then put to the meeting and declared CARRIED.

A named vote was requested in respect of the Substantive Motion.

For: The Mayor (Councillor Griffith), the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Adamou), Councillors Adje, Basu, Bevan, Blanchard, Herbie Brown, Jean Brown, Bull, Davidson, Dawson, Diakides, Dillon, Dobbie, Dodds, Haley, Harris, Hillman, Khan, Knight, Krokou, Lister, Makanji, Manheim, Meehan, Millar, Milner, Peacock, E Prescott, Q. Prescott, Reith, Rice, Santry, Stanton and Sulaiman.

Against: Councillors Aitken, Beacham, Bloch, Davies, Floyd, Hare, Hoban, Newton, Oatway, Williams and Winskill.

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Absent : Councillors Bax, Canver, Edge, Engert, Featherstone, Patel, Reynolds, Robertson, Simpson and Wynne.

Councillor Gilbert – resigned from the Council.

The Substantive Motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor Griffith
Mayor