

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL
TUESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2012**

Councillors Adamou, Adje, Basu, Bevan, Bloch, Browne (Mayor), Bull, Butcher, Christophides, Cooke, Davies, Demirci, Diakides, Egan, Engert, Erskine, Gibson, Goldberg, Gorrie, Griffith, Jenks, Khan, Kober, Mallett, Meehan, Newton, Reith, Rice, Schmitz, Scott, Solomon, Stanton, Stennett, Strang, Strickland, Vanier, Waters, Watson, Weber, Williams and Wilson

Apologies Councillor Alexander, Allison, Beacham, Brabazon, Canver, Dogus, Ejiofor, Hare, McNamara, Peacock, Reece, Whyte and Winskill

Absent: Councillor Reid, Stewart

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CNCL37.	<p>TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alexander, Allison, Beacham, Brabazon, Canver, Dogus, Ejiofor, Hare, McNamara, Peacock, Reece, Whyte and Winskill.</p> <p>An apology for lateness was received from Councillor Amin.</p> <p>NOTED</p>	
CNCL38.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interests.</p> <p>NOTED</p>	
CNCL39.	<p>TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE, CONVENED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISION OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION PART 4 - SECTION K - REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE</p> <p>The Mayor asked Councillor Kober to present the report that went to Special Committee on 4 October 2012 under Part 4 Paragraph 3 of the Council's Constitution together with the recommendations contained therein.</p> <p>Councillor Kober, in formally moving the proposed appointment of Mr Nick Walkley as Chief Executive outlined that the recruitment was an open, transparent, competitive process and had the support of a cross party panel of members.</p> <p>Councillor Kober in reiterating her initial comments advised that</p>	

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she wished to address 3 points to the Council in respect of the proposed appointment.

Firstly, the position had been widely publicised in the Local Government press, on the Council's website, and also through other media. The process of recruitment was managed externally together with an assessment centre exercise, as well as being technically overseen by Derek Myers – who was a well respected individual and former Chief Executive of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Councils. The shortlisting had also been determined by the cross party member panel. The recommended appointee had consistently performed to a very high standard in all disciplines /elements of the recruitment process and the Council had received excellent references from his current and previous employers. Councillor Kober added that the process undertaken had been scrupulous.

Secondly, Councillor Kober referred to the shortlisting of applicants and that there had been considerable experience/talent from the field of applicants and from the brightest and best that Local Government had to offer – who were keen to come to manage the staff team of this Council. In Mr Walkley it was evident that there was a consistent delivery of services throughout his career and a commitment to work with people across different political spectrums, and local community voluntary organisations. Councillor Kober also advised that she was confident of Mr Walkley's skills to manage the senior team and work for all 57 elected Members of the Council.

Councillor Kober reminded all those present that elected members had a mandate by being elected, to all residents and each and everyone of them took this responsibility very seriously. Councillor Kober also advised of the widely reported information regarding the the level of salary that Mr Walkley was on in Barnet and the reported salary he would receive here at Haringey. The salary level of Mr Walkley would be that of the previous Chief Executive of LB Haringey.

Thirdly Councillor Kober referred to the recent concerns of Mr Walkley's appointment as stated in the social media and the on line community, though not personally (or rarely) to herself. Councillor Kober referred to the previous week's local paper headlines questioning whether the new boss of Haringey would usher in an era of privatisation of services across the Council and the simple answer to that question was no. The recommendation to appoint Mr Walklate to the position of Chief Executive was not to emulate the decisions/actions of Haringey's neighbouring Borough Barnet., and that was not the agenda in Haringey. Councillor Kober advised that Mr Walkley clearly knew and understood the Council's agenda for its future and Mr Walkley would assist the Council in delivering those priorities which were

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of greatest importance to the livelihood and welfare of the people of Haringey, namely regeneration, better investment, and opportunity for all.

Councillor Kober added that Mr Walkley recognised that it was politicians that set the policy direction of the Council, and that that was not going to change, and his job would be to serve democratically elected politicians and it would be on this basis that Councillor Kober would request everyone to judge him. In response to those who had this evening been protesting about cuts and privatisation Councillor Kober asked that perhaps they should take their concerns to Central Government and lobby Parliament and the ministers who were cutting Haringey's budget year after year, and the MPs who were voting through the cuts to local expenditure, but not to come the Council screaming and shouting at locally democratically elected members that they were sell outs when Councillors were working together and achieving a cross party consensus and recommending the appointment of a Chief Executive who was qualified to assist Haringey in a time of great turbulence and change.

In conclusion, Councillor Kober thanked Councillors Wilson, Reece, Vanier and Meehan for their huge contribution throughout the process and that together the Panel had shown that politicians had and were able to put aside their political differences and work together in the interests of the Council and the people it served, and that perhaps this should be done more often. Councillor Kober recommended Mr Walkley as the next Chief Executive of the London Borough of Haringey.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Kober for her address and asked Councillor Meehan to speak.

Councillor Meehan, in formally seconding the MOTION, advised that he would reserve his right to speak later in the debate.

The Mayor asked Councillor Wilson to speak.

Councillor Wilson , in thanking the Mayor for the opportunity to speak, and welcoming the remarks of Councillor Kober, referred to the questions he had asked at the previous Council meeting about not having a Chief Executive in post at a difficult time with departments overspending, issues/problems with some schools , the Council's children's service still not up to scratch, and remuneration urgently needed in Tottenham and many parts of the Borough, It was now 4 months since the last Chief Executive left the Council (in surprising circumstances), and if the appointment this evening was approved, how quickly would the new Chief Executive be in post, so that Councillors be assured that decisions needing to be taken, would be taken.

The Mayor asked Councillor Butcher to speak.

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Councillor Butcher put a question to the Leader that given that it was her third Chief Executive in a relatively short term of office, whether she could confirm that she had undertaken any performance management or line management training. He added that he suspected that local tax payers were fed up with picking up the bills for dodgy pay offs when Haringey's Leaders' fall out with their Chief Executives, and whether she could confirm that she had taken any steps to properly manage her top managers rather than waste money on their severance pay.

The Mayor asked Councillor Stanton to speak.

In thanking the Mayor Councillor Stanton advised that he was not convinced that this appointment was in the best interests of the people of Haringey and that he would be voting against the Panels' decision. He referred to his talking to some colleagues about this evening, and somebody had said it felt like the time his daughter brought somebody home – a new boyfriend whom they had heard rather a lot about - You hoped for the best but you feared the worst. He further stated that other people had said to him that it was unfair to judge a person by the company they choose to keep though there was bad company and bad company. Councillor Stanton also said that he had heard another argument that Chief Executives of local Councils should not be a contentious issue, that they were like civil servants - neutral professionals who were there simply to do the bidding of their political masters with equal enthusiasm whichever party was in power – perhaps like a hired Chauffeur – hired to drive you to where you want, at the speed you want and the route that you choose – drive on the left please, yes madam, yes sir., drive on the right – yes madam, sir.

Lastly Councillor Stanton wished to make an entirely non contentious point – to thank some very important backroom volunteers – public spirited people who had worked long and hard without thanks on this – they were Derek Dishman, John Dicks, Vickie Morris, Teresa Musgrove, and Roger Titchbourne known as the Barnet Bloggers – he hoped that as many as possible would learn from their excellent example.

The Mayor asked Councillor Schmitz to speak

In thanking the Mayor Councillor Schmitz, in expressing his pleasure at the Leader of the Council's assurance that she, like his colleagues, would speak with healthy scepticism and with not any enthusiasm that may manifest itself in wholesale privatisation, sought clarification from her that the terms of Mr Walkley's appointment included a probationary period, and if so then for how long.

The Mayor asked Councillor Bull to speak.

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Councillor Bull, in thanking the Mayor, asked the Leader if she could confirm, and agree with himself, that it was the job of elected representatives to dictate policy and set a manifesto, and it was the job of officers to implement it, and with that in mind, if Haringey appointed a Chief Executive who came from an exceptionally right wing Council, over to a democratic socialist Council and that Chief Executive had shown the ability to be able to implement the policies of right wing Barnet Council and now a democratic socialist Council who was a Labour Council, did that not demonstrate that they were the right person for the job.

The Mayor asked Councillor Weber to speak.

Councillor Weber, in thanking the Mayor, and in echoing the comments of Councillor Bull in the assertion that the administration set policy, and officers carried it out, as best as they could, and that it was Councils that set policy, not officers, commented that she expressed her concerns in communications with the Leader and the Assistant Chief Executive – Mr Young about the recruitment process.

The Mayor then called on Councillor Meehan to make his reserved comments.

Councillor Meehan, in thanking the Mayor, and in seconding the MOTION moved by the Leader of the Council, that the Council should appoint Mr Walkley as the new Chief Executive, having been involved in the appointment, Councillor Meehan stated that Mr Walkley had given him the confidence that he was able to the job for Haringey that needed to be done, and he added that it was not the Chief Executive's role to set out how the direction of policies of the Council would travel, but clearly the job of Councillors, and as the longest serving member of Haringey with defending public services over the last 40 years, to then appoint somebody who's task was to privatise the Council's services – that was not going to happen and he promised that this was the case, and that it was for Councillors to ensure clearly the right direction for the Chief Executive to take the Council in.

Councillor Meehan further commented that he was sure that the Chief Executive had the correct skill set, and also the contacts outside of Haringey and that this was going to be very important in terms of Government ministers and others, when the Council was trying to make the case for more resources for the Borough, which he felt that all, including those public attending this evening, would support, and with someone who had confidence in those particular areas.

Councillor Meehan further reiterated that the Council was not up for wholesale privatisation or to make employees terms and conditions worse as opposed to better than they are now, and he

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reminded the meeting of its previous decision to make payments to lower paid workers, so the direction of travel was correct. He concluded that he had every confidence that the Chief Executive would do a good job in Haringey, with the necessary changes believed necessary in the delivery of services across the Borough and in seconding the MOTION asked that the Full Council unanimously agree to the appointment of the Chief Executive.

The Mayor thanked Councillors for their contributions and asked Councillor Kober to respond.

Councillor Kober advised that whilst she would respond to Councillors points of clarification she stated that she was somewhat surprised that Councillor Wilson had stood up and raised issues that she had no knowledge of him raising elsewhere and that though the Council Chamber was the place for debate certainly it was not the primary place to raise issues about service performance and that she stated that she looked forward to receiving the following day an email with details of the concerns that Councillor Wilson had raised and touched upon and of course they would be taken very seriously. In responding to the second part of Councillor Wilson's question - Mr Walkley's starting date was still to be negotiated but hopefully would be the beginning of December.

In response to Councillor Butcher Councillor Kober advised that she had been absolutely confused by many of his comments and that since taking up her tenure as Leader of Haringey Council, there had been a Chief Executive retire, and a Chief Executive who had left recently by mutual agreement with the Council following a change in the set of priorities/challenges that needed to be confronted so the picture painted of the Council being a place where Chief Executives were on a revolving door was not something that neither she or others recognised. It was a fact that performance management was part of the role and something that the Leader took very seriously and something which the opposition would have a roll in. Councillor Kober felt that this tied into the probationary period question as referred to by Councillor Schmitz and in answer advised that this was a 6 month probationary period as was the case for all senior officer posts of the Council,

In response to Councillor Weber's points Councillor Kober advised that Councillor Weber and she had spoken with regard to the best means of engaging with others during the recruitment process and the honest thing to say was that this was always part of a learning process and something to be taken account of when undertaking future senior appointments, and that it was a given that senior officers served all Councillors and that whilst an appointment panel would be fairly small, the Council would need to be engaging with other Councillors wherever possible.

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	<p>Councillor Kober concluded that she had nothing further to add.</p> <p>The Mayor then asked if the MOTION was agreed.</p> <p>On a vote there being 38 for the MOTION, 3 against and 1 abstention it was:</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u></p> <p>That Mr Nick Walkley be appointed as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service and that confirmation be given of this appointment as a permanent employment contract for the post of Chief Executive.</p>	
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The meeting ended at 18.20hrs

COUNCILLOR DAVID BROWNE

Mayor