

COUNCIL MINUTES

3 DECEMBER 2015

- Present:**
- * Councillor Krishna Suresh (The Worshipful the Mayor)
 - * Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah (The Deputy Mayor)
- Councillors:**
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ghazanfar Ali * Richard Almond * Mrs Chika Amadi * Jeff Anderson * Sue Anderson * Marilyn Ashton * Mrs Camilla Bath * June Baxter * Christine Bednell * James Bond * Michael Borio * Simon Brown † Kam Chana * Ramji Chauhan * Bob Currie * Niraj Dattani * Margaret Davine * Jo Dooley * Keith Ferry * Ms Pamela Fitzpatrick * Stephen Greek † Mitzi Green * Susan Hall * Glen Hearnden * Graham Henson * John Hinkley * Ameet Jogia * Manjibhai Kara † Barry Kendler * Jean Lammiman * Barry Macleod-Cullinane | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Kairul Kareema Marikar * Ajay Maru * Jerry Miles * Mrs Vina Mithani * Amir Moshenson * Chris Mote * Janet Mote * Christopher Noyce * Phillip O'Dell * Paul Osborn * Nitin Parekh * Ms Mina Parmar * Varsha Parmar * Primesh Patel * Pritesh Patel * David Perry † Kanti Rabadia * Kiran Ramchandani * Mrs Christine Robson * Lynda Seymour † Aneka Shah * Sachin Shah * Norman Stevenson * Sasi Suresh * Adam Swersky * Bharat Thakker * Antonio Weiss * Georgia Weston * Anne Whitehead * Stephen Wright |
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- * Denotes Member present
- † Denotes apologies received

PRAYERS

The meeting opened with Prayers offered by Reverend Matthew Stone, Mayor's Chaplain & Rector of St John The Evangelist, Stanmore.

125. MINUTE SILENCE

The Mayor, elected Members and all those present observed a Minute's Silence in respect of those who had lost their lives to terrorist atrocities across the world.

126. COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2015 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor invited appropriate declarations of interest.

Councillor Susan Hall declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she had a business in Wealdstone, which was the subject of a public question and a petition. She would remain in the room whilst the matters were considered and voted upon.

128. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

- (i) The Mayor drew Council's attention to the tabled Procedural Motions. The Motions were agreed.
- (ii) The Mayor drew Council's attention to the amendments to the Harrow £159 Campaign Motion and the Government Cuts making Harrow Residents poorer Motion contained in the Tabled Documents. The amended Motions were agreed.
- (iii) The Mayor also drew Members' attention to a further tabled amendment.

129. CROSS PARTY MOTION - HARROW UNITED IN THE FACE OF TERRORIST ATROCITIES MOTION

The Council received a cross party Motion in the names of Councillor David Perry, Councillor Susan Hall, Councillor Keith Ferry and Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane.

"This Council notes:

- The shocking events in Paris on Friday 13th November, where 132 innocent people were killed in terrorist atrocities.
- The recent terrorist attacks across the world; with 224 people losing their lives in the bombing of a Russian passenger plane, 40 people killed in bombings in Beirut, 5 people shot to death at a Jerusalem synagogue and 20 people killed at a hotel in Bamako. Terrorism knows no borders, and these horrific incidents are just some examples of the lives lost to terrorist atrocities over the past few weeks.
- The outpouring of condolences from across our many communities in Harrow, with declarations of support and solidarity with the families who have lost loved ones in terrorist atrocities across the world.

This Council believes:

- Harrow's diversity is our strength; we are proud to be a Borough where people of different backgrounds and faiths respect each other.
- Elected representatives of all parties should work together to keep our residents safe and to condemn acts of terror that threaten our shared values of democracy and freedom of expression.

The Council resolves:

- To hold a minute's silence at Full Council to mark with respect and sorrow all of the victims of terrorist atrocities across the world.
- To condemn anyone who would try to promote fear or hatred in our Borough.
- To show strong local leadership in promoting tolerance, respect and cohesiveness amongst our many communities; events like the Paris shootings should not divide us."

Upon a vote, the Motion was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Motion, as set out above, be adopted.

130. PETITION: RESCUE OF PINNER MEMORIAL PARK

In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme, Council received a petition containing over 2,000 signatures as follows

- (i) Petition submitted by residents containing approximately 5,029 signatures in relation to the "Rescue of Pinner Memorial Park" and to "Bring back Tracy Full time".
- (ii) Debate was held on the content of the petition.

RESOLVED: That the petition be referred to the Chief Executive for consideration.

131. PETITIONS

In accordance with Rule 10, the following petition was presented

- (i) Petition submitted by Councillor Susan Hall containing 2,400 signatures requesting that the Council re-think the plans for a new Civic Centre in Wealdstone.

[The petition stood referred to Council for debate on 25 February 2016 in accordance with the Petition Scheme].

132. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

To note that one question from a member of the public had been received and responded to, and the recording of this question and the answer given had been placed on the Council's website.

133. LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Perry, introduced the item highlighting the achievements, challenges and proposals since the last ordinary meeting. He also paid tribute to Clifton Jackson and Keith Chilvers who had recently passed away.
- (ii) Other Members of the Council spoke and/or asked questions of the Leader of the Council which were duly responded to.

134. HARROW YOUTH OFFENDING PARTNERSHIP YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2015-18

RESOLVED: That the Harrow Youth Offending Partnership Youth Justice Plan 2015-18 be approved.

135. REVISED POLICIES UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003 AND THE GAMBLING ACT 2005

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the revised Licensing Policy be approved; and
- (ii) the revised Gambling Policy be approved.

136. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION ARISING FROM THE COUNCIL'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE WEST LONDON ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD

RESOLVED: That the amendments to the Constitution set out in the report be approved.

137. DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER THE URGENCY PROCEDURE - COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

138. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Six Councillor questions were received and were responded to and a recording placed on the Council's website.

139. MOTIONS

Further to the procedural Motion previously agreed, at item 13 the Council received two Motions:

- (i) Motion in the names of Councillor David Perry and Councillor Sachin Shah.

“Harrow £159 Campaign – Motion

Council notes:

- That previous administrations, both Labour and Conservative, have both campaigned to get Harrow a fairer grant deal from Central Government.
- The report by LG Futures (Analysis of Funding Drivers, October 2014) was commissioned to understand Harrow's funding context in comparison with other London boroughs, and the rest of the UK. The report made a number of findings that have raised concerns about Harrow's spending power and how our Government grants are calculated.
- In respect of spending power, the analysis found that in Harrow our residents have £39.8m less spent on them than the London average – that is £159 less per person than the average Londoner.
- The formulas used by Government date back to 1978 and do not reflect Harrow's current needs, particularly given the pressures from homelessness and welfare changes.

- Harrow receives less funding than the London average on account of a range of factors including its lower population density, having less residents on welfare, amongst other technical points.
- Harrow also receives less funding than the national average on account of it being in London and “Damping”, a process by which boroughs take additional reductions to buffer other boroughs, reallocates a lot of Harrow’s funding elsewhere.
- This unfair funding from Central Government is a double blow on top of the £83m of cuts imposed on Harrow Council and our residents by central Government.
- The Chancellor’s announcement at the Comprehensive Spending Review on Wednesday 25th November that over the course of this Parliament all Local Authorities Revenue Support Grant will be phased out, and instead Local Authorities will have full retention of their local business rates.
- The Council’s commitment to being an efficient and well run organisation, including it’s ambitious commercialisation programme that will create £5m of income by 2018/19, to help make up the shortfall caused by central Government cuts.

Council believes:

- The funding formulas need to be updated so that Harrow gets the money necessary to continue Building a Better Harrow, protecting frontline services and ‘Making a Difference’ to our community.
- We have not been given sufficient detail by Government about how they will administer and implement the change in Local Government finances to a new system whereby Council’s will have the full retention of local business rates, whilst the Revenue Support Grant will be phased out entirely.
- In Harrow our falling business rates, in part due to the government’s disastrous ‘Office to Residential’ scheme, means that this will amount to a further cut to local services.
- Greater fairness in the funding system, so that:
 - “Damping” is reduced, and Harrow’s resources are not pulled into an endless cycle of re-allocation to other boroughs.
- The weighting of resources and government grants is changed to reflect the changing nature of London. The future settlement needs to acknowledge the role of outer London authorities in maintaining the progress and status of the capital.

- A request that the Government provide an advantage to Harrow when making funding decisions for other grants in light of our shortfall.

Council resolves:

- To support the Harrow '£159' campaign to get Harrow its missing millions.
- For the Chief Executive to write to local MPs and Assembly Members to ask them to support the Harrow '£159' campaign and lobby central government to ensure that Harrow does not lose out when the Revenue Support Grant is phased out and replaced by full retention of local business rates.
- For the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister explaining the Council's funding shortfall."

Upon a vote, the Motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Motion, as set out at (i) above, be adopted.

- (ii) Motion in the names of Councillor Pamela Fitzpatrick and Councillor Adam Swersky. The tabled amendment was voted upon but not carried.

"Government cuts making Harrow's residents poorer – December 2015 Full Council

This Council notes:

- In the summer budget the Chancellor announced £12 billion of cuts to the welfare budget by 2019/20. This package included a proposal to freeze all working-age benefits for the duration of the current parliament, cuts to Tax Credits and a freeze to Local Housing Allowance rates, at a time when rents are rapidly increasing.
- There is a full blown Housing crisis in London; currently in Harrow 600 families are in temporary accommodation, including B & B's, many of which are out of the Borough.
- Due to a mixture of low wages and unsustainable increases to House prices and rents there have been exponential increases of residents being forced to use the Private Rental Sector for Housing. These costs are often met by Housing Benefit, but through the Local Housing Allowance scheme limits the amount of housing benefit a person can claim well below the level of rents in Harrow. Even families in work have to rely on housing benefits to pay the rent, mainly due to the Government's repeated inability to tackle low-pay and the housing crisis – something the Chancellor's

Comprehensive Spending review failed to meaningfully deal with. In all, 57.6 per cent of London's households in receipt of LHA have a member who is in employment.

- The Chancellor has delayed plans to cut the tax credits threshold and taper from April 2016, until Universal Credit is rolled out nationally in four years time. In the Comprehensive Spending Review, it was announced that these plans will be delayed, following public outcry, lobbying by the Labour Party and backbench Tories, rejection by the House of Lords and detailed analysis showing that millions of families across the country would lose out on thousands of pounds. This u-turn is welcome and means:
 - Working tax credit threshold will remain at £6,420 (this is the income level at which tax credits start to be reduced).
 - Child tax credit threshold will remain at £16,105.
 - The taper (rate at which tax credits are reduced) will remain at 41%.
- However some changes to Tax Credits will still be implemented in April 2016, which will hit larger families or those without a steady income, such as residents on zero-hour contracts.
- There are over 15000 families in Harrow receiving Tax Credits, which help the lowest paid families in Harrow with the cost of essential items such as food, child care and heating.
- Analysis by the Institute of Fiscal Studies have shown that even after taking into account the new minimum wage and increase to tax free personal allowance these cuts to Tax Credits, including those that have been delayed will leave millions of families across the Country and in Harrow worse off by thousands of pounds.

This Council believes:

- In a Borough where 40% of residents earn below the London Living Wage, these cuts will have a disproportionate affect in Harrow, where thousands of families rely on Tax Credits to top up their wages and housing benefit to pay their rent. A situation which will only be made worse when Universal Credit is rolled out, which will include the delayed cuts to Tax Credits.
- A four year freeze to Local Housing Allowance rates will make a dire situation even worse for many of our residents who are unable to find affordable homes.
- This freeze will make it increasingly difficult for key workers such as nurses and shop assistants to live in London - all our residents will suffer if these workers are forced to move away from London.

- This Government’s housing and welfare policies are hitting in work families, and are making the housing crisis even worse in Harrow.

The Council resolves:

- That the Chief Executive writes to the three local MPs in Harrow to raise our concerns directly with Government about the potential impact of the cuts to Tax Credits and freezing Local Housing Allowances to families in our Borough.
- The Council monitors the impact of cuts to Tax Credits and the roll-out of Universal Credit in Harrow via the welfare reform board.
- Formally state our objection to cuts to the future Tax Credits and freezing Local Housing Allowances that will leave our residents poorer by thousands of pounds.”

Upon a vote, the Motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Motion, as set out at (ii) above, be adopted.

140. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Having been put to the vote it was

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business for the reasons set out below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Reason</u>
25.	Remuneration Packages and Severance Payments of £100,000 or greater	Information under paragraph 1 (contains information relating to any individual).

141. INFORMATION REPORT - REMUNERATION PACKAGES AND SEVERANCE PAYMENTS OF £100,000 OR GREATER

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(CLOSE OF MEETING: All business having been completed, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 10.09 pm).