

Council

Minutes

30 September 2021

Present: Councillor Ghazanfar Ali (The Worshipful the Mayor)

Councillor Sasi Suresh (The Deputy Mayor)

Councillors: Richard Almond Dr Lesline Lewinson

Jeff Anderson

Ajay Maru

Sue Anderson

Janet Mote

Marilyn Ashton

Phillip O'Dell

Peymana Assad

Paul Osborn

Camilla Bath

Nitin Parekh

Christopher Baxter

Mina Parmar

Philip Benjamin

Varsha Parmar

Michael Borio

Anjana Patel

Simon Brown

Primesh Patel

Sarah Butterworth

Pritesh Patel

Ramji Chauhan

David Perry

Pamela Fitzpatrick

Natasha Proctor

Stephen Greek

Kiran Ramchandani

Chetna Halai

Rekha Shah

Graham Henson

Sachin Shah

Maxine Henson

Chloe Smith

John Hinkley

Norman Stevenson

Nitesh Hirani

Krishna Suresh

Ameet Jogia

Adam Swersky

Jean Lammiman

Stephen Wright

Joined Virtually: Dan Anderson

Vina Mithani

Kam Chana

Amir Moshenson

Niraj Dattani

Angella Murphy-Strachan

Dean Gilligan

Kanti Rabadia

Susan Hall

Christine Robson

James Lee

Lynda Seymour

Kairul Kareema Marikar

Bharat Thakker

Jerry Miles

Antonio Weiss

Absent:

Keith Ferry

Honey Jamie

PRAYERS

The meeting opened with Prayers offered by His Holiness Shri Rajrajeshwar Guruji, Founder and Spiritual Leader of the International Siddhashram Shakti Centre

214. Minute Silence

Members of Council stood and observed a minute silence for the late Councillor Chris Mote, former Deputy Mayor and Leader of the Council.

Members paid tribute to the late Councillor Chris Mote.

215. Council Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 5 May 2021 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

216. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Declarations of Interests published in advance of the meeting on the Council's website be taken as read and noted;
- (2) it be noted that the following interests were also declared:

Item 21 – Motions (2) Planning Motion

Councillor Paul Osborn declared an interest in that he lived in Vaughan Road. He would leave the Chamber if the interest became pecuniary.

Councillor Kiran Ramchandani declared a pecuniary interest as her partner was employed in community development for housing developers. She would leave the Chamber for the discussion and vote on this item.

Councillor Sachin Shah declared a pecuniary interest as he was employed in community development for housing developers. He would leave the Chamber for the discussion and vote on this item.

Item 21 – Motions (3) Food Poverty Motion

Councillor Michael Borio declared a non-pecuniary interest.

Councillor Kiran Ramchandani declared a pecuniary interest as she was employed by Citizens' Advice which was campaigning in relation to Universal Credit. She would leave the Chamber for the discussion and vote on this item.

Councillor Sachin Shah declared a pecuniary interest as his partner was employed by Citizens' Advice which was campaigning in relation to Universal Credit. He would leave the Chamber for the discussion and vote on this item.

Item 21 – Motions (4) Deliver a Better Built Environment in Harrow Motion

Councillor Kiran Ramchandani declared a non-pecuniary interest as her partner was employed in the development industry.

Councillor Sachin Shah declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was employed in the development industry.

217. Procedural Motions

The Mayor indicated that given the earlier start time of the Council meeting he proposed that the closure time of the meeting be 9.30 pm. Upon being put to the vote this was agreed.

The Mayor indicated that he would vary the order of business to take item 9, Appointment of Honorary Recorder for Harrow Council, following item 4, Procedural Motions. This was agreed.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.11, Councillor Paul Osborn raised a point of order in relation to the proposed Labour Amendment to Motion 4, Deliver a Better Built Environment in Harrow, in that it negated the Motion, contrary to Council Procedure Rule 17.6.1.

218. Civic Functions

The Mayor announced that the Annual Civic Remembrance Service would be held on Sunday 14 November 2021.

219. Petitions

In accordance with Rule 10, the following petitions were received:

- (i) Petition submitted by Mr Sanjay Pall on behalf of the residents of Hillcrest Avenue containing 22 signatures in relation to the condition of the pavement and road surface.
- (ii) Petition submitted by Mr Michael Rowe on behalf of the residents of Lucas Avenue containing 34 signatures in relation to speeding vehicles in the road.
- (iii) Petition submitted by Councillor Krishna Suresh on behalf of the residents of Yeading Avenue containing 61 signatures in relation to the condition of the pavements.

- (iv) Petition submitted by Councillor Ameet Jogia on behalf of the residents of Pangbourne Drive containing 48 signatures in relation to the condition of the pavements and driveways.

[The petitions stood referred to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change].

220. Public Questions

No public questions were received.

221. Leader and Portfolio Holder Announcements

- (i) The Leader of the Council, Councillor Graham Henson, introduced the item highlighting the achievements, challenges and proposals since the last ordinary meeting. Councillor Peymana Assad, Portfolio Holder for Community Cohesion, Crime and Enforcement also provided an update.
- (ii) Other Members spoke and/or asked questions of the Leader of the Council which were duly responded to.

222. Appointment of Honorary Recorder for Harrow Council

RESOLVED: That, pursuant to Section 54 of the Courts Act 1971, Her Honour Judge Rosa Dean be appointed to the Office of Honorary Recorder of Harrow during her tenure as Resident Judge at Harrow Crown Court.

223. Dispensation for Members of Council

RESOLVED: That all Members of Council be granted a dispensation from the requirement to physically attend a meeting of the Council until 30 April 2022 provided that they attend a hybrid/ virtual meeting during the period of the dispensation, to reflect the continuing impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

224. Review of Polling Places and Polling Districts

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the recommendations of the Polling District Review Working Group in relation to the individual polling districts and polling places for all future elections with effect from May 2022 to May 2027 set out in the officer report, together with the amendment to Wealdstone North Ward as set out in Appendix 1 to the recommendation be approved; and**
- (2) any further changes in venue within a polling district be agreed by the Returning Officer following consultation with ward members.**

225. Constitution Update

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the amendments to the Constitution set out in Appendix 1 to the officer report be agreed;**
- (2) it be noted that the Monitoring Officer had a delegation to make minor housekeeping amendments prior to the new document being published.**

226. Appointment of Employers' Representative (Scheduled and Admitted Bodies) to the Pension Board

RESOLVED: That Dr Simon Radford be appointed to the Pension Board as the Employers' Representative (Scheduled and Admitted Bodies).

227. Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21

RESOLVED: That the Scrutiny Annual Report 2020-21 be endorsed.

228. Scrutiny Work Programme 2021-22

RESOLVED: That the Scrutiny Work Programme 2021- 22 be endorsed.

229. Information Report - Decisions taken under the Urgency Procedure - Council

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

230. Information Report - Decisions taken under the Urgency Procedure - Executive

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

231. Information Report - Remuneration Packages of £100,000 or greater

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

232. Information Report - Remuneration Package and Severance Payment of £100,000 or greater

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

233. Questions with Notice

To note that no Councillor questions had been received.

234. Motions

(i) "One Hour Free Parking Motion

Motion in the names of Councillor Paul Osborn and Councillor Anjana Patel

This Council notes:

- The Covid-19 Pandemic has had a devastating effect on business of all sizes, but especially small to medium business.
- While it is recognised that the government went above and beyond to support businesses through Covid grants and business rate relief, many businesses are still struggling.
- Eighteen months of lockdown have taken their toll on businesses in Harrow.
- Parking costs, even before the pandemic, often discourage people from shopping locally.
- Local Authorities should be doing everything in their power to encourage residents to use local shops and support local businesses.
- Research collected for smallbusiness.co.uk in 2017 shows that 9 in 10 residents would be more likely to visit the high street if there were some element of free parking.
- In February at the Budget Full Council meeting, Harrow Conservatives proposed a costed solution which would deliver one-hour free parking at Council car parks for one year.

This Council resolves:

- To support local residents when parking to use local shops.
- To call on the Executive to implement the fully costed proposals put forward by Harrow Conservatives at the February Full Council meeting and introduce one-hour free car parking across all Council car parks."

Upon the meeting moving to a vote, the Conservative Group requested a recorded vote. The Motion was lost.

For the Motion: Councillors Almond, Ashton, Bath, Baxter, Benjamin, Chauhan, Greek, Halai, Hinkley, Hirani, Jogia, Lammiman, Dr Lewinson, Janet Mote, Osborn, Mina Parmar, Anjana Patel, Pritesh Patel, Stevenson and Wright.

Against the Motion: Councillors Jeff Anderson, Sue Anderson, Assad, Borio, Brown, Butterworth, Fitzpatrick, Graham Henson, Maxine Henson, Maru, O'Dell, Parekh, Varsha Parmar, Primesh Patel, Perry, Proctor, Ramchandani, Rekha Shah, Sachin Shah, Smith, Krishna Suresh, Sasikala Suresh and Swersky.

Abstain: The Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Ghazanfar Ali].

(ii) **“Planning Motion**

Motion the names of Councillor Graham Henson and Councillor Natasha Proctor

This Council believes planning works best when developers and local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes.

This Council therefore calls on the Government to

- protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications
- undertake a review of permitted development rights
- implement stronger controls to ensure Ministers making decisions on planning applications are not connected, financially or personally, with related parties to the application

The Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the three Harrow Members of Parliament – Gareth Thomas, Bob Blackman and David Simmonds – to inform them of this motion, seek their support for the points made, and their commitment to oppose any changes that seek to reduce the rights of communities to object to individual planning application and for the letters and any responses to be published for residents”.

A tabled amendment was received and duly seconded. Upon being put to the vote the amendment was lost.

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

[Councillor Kiran Ramchandani and Councillor Sachin Shah left the Chamber for the discussion and vote on this item].

(iii) **“Food Poverty Motion**

Motion in the names of Councillor Pamela Fitzpatrick and Councillor Krishna Suresh

Council notes:

- That the Covid pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted the issue of food insecurity in the UK, resulting in a crisis of food poverty with approximately 10 million people experiencing food insecurity. This crisis is born out of the political choices and systemic failings created by a decade of austerity and policies that have torn in the social security safety net. As a result, many in our communities have reached a crisis point.

- The use of food banks was increasing well before the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, food bank use has effectively doubled, and all indications are that this situation will continue to get worse.
- The Trussell Trust reported the number of food parcels given to children rose by 52 per cent during the pandemic. These figures are devastating for one of the richest nations in the world and highlight the sheer scale of inequality in the UK.
- Harrow has seen a growing number of children living in poverty. In Harrow there are over 18,000 children living in poverty and we see the profound and devastating consequences of food insecurity on the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of citizens in our communities.
- The recent How Are You (HAY) report, which had over 6,000 responses from Harrow young people showed that that over one in ten of us worry that our family might run out of food because of lack of money or other resources. Further analysis revealed a significant negative link with food insecurity on how we feel mentally and physically.
- The community kitchen in Wealdstone served over 500,000 meals and during the pandemic redistributed over 1000 tonnes of food destined for waste, The Breaking Bread Trust and other charities in Harrow are seeing high demand, and My Yard have delivered over 50 tonnes of surplus food to residents.
- During the pandemic, Harrow Council stepped up to ensure that Free School Meal provision was extended over the summer holidays, ensuring that no child went hungry whilst out of school. Whilst the Council is proud to have provided this support, the Government must be compelled to act in such circumstances and not be shamed into doing so by Premier League footballers.
- The consistent high rates of poverty across Harrow and we recognise the growing concern amongst our health and care professionals of the current situation. The situation is likely to be exacerbated through the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and the resulting economic uncertainty.
- A very bad situation is about to be made a whole lot worse with the pending cut of £20 week. The cost of everyday living is soaring, yet this represent the biggest overnight cut to the basic rate of social security since World War II and will pile unnecessary financial pressure on families, both in and out of work. Save the Children has found that almost half of Universal Credit claimants don't think they can live on £20 less each week; 61% claimants state they will struggle to afford

food, 48% worry they won't be able to cover essential bills and 37% will struggle to pay for children's books and toys.

- The National Living Wage for those over 23 is £8.91 an hour. Income tax would take off £1.78 of that and National Insurance another £1.07. For people on UC who work (around 40% of claimants), the more they earn - above an in-work allowance - the more their benefit reduces. For every extra pound earned, the benefit payment reduces by 63p. This would almost certainly apply to this full-time worker, taking off £3.82, bringing the hourly total to £2.24. That means they would have to work about nine hours to take home £20. (calculation originally done by the Resolution Foundation)
- The National Food Strategy, Independent Review, published earlier this year, is the first independent review of England's entire food system for 75 years. Its purpose is to set out a vision for the kind of food system we should be building for the future, and a plan for how to achieve that vision.
- That the Government recognises the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the "fundamental right to be free from hunger" (Article 11:2).

Council notes:

- That the Covid pandemic has exacerbated and highlighted the issue of food insecurity in the UK, resulting in a crisis of food poverty with approximately 10 million people experiencing food insecurity. This crisis is born out of the political choices and systemic failings created by a decade of austerity and policies that have torn in the social security safety net. As a result, many in our communities have reached a crisis point.
- The use of food banks was increasing well before the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, food bank use has effectively doubled, and all indications are that this situation will continue to get worse.
- The Trussell Trust reported the number of food parcels given to children rose by 52 per cent during the pandemic. These figures are devastating for one of the richest nations in the world and highlight the sheer scale of inequality in the UK.
- Harrow has seen a growing number of children living in poverty. In Harrow there are over 18,000 children living in poverty and we see the profound and devastating consequences of food insecurity on the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of citizens in our communities.

- The recent How Are You (HAY) report, which had over 6,000 responses from Harrow young people showed that that over one in ten of us worry that our family might run out of food because of lack of money or other resources. Further analysis revealed a significant negative link with food insecurity on how we feel mentally and physically.
- The community kitchen in Wealdstone served over 500,000 meals and during the pandemic redistributed over 1000 tonnes of food destined for waste, The Breaking Bread Trust and other charities in Harrow are seeing high demand, and My Yard have delivered over 50 tonnes of surplus food to residents.
- During the pandemic, Harrow Council stepped up to ensure that Free School Meal provision was extended over the summer holidays, ensuring that no child went hungry whilst out of school. Whilst the Council is proud to have provided this support, the Government must be compelled to act in such circumstances and not be shamed into doing so by Premier League footballers.
- The consistent high rates of poverty across Harrow and we recognise the growing concern amongst our health and care professionals of the current situation. The situation is likely to be exacerbated through the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and the resulting economic uncertainty.
- A very bad situation is about to be made a whole lot worse with the pending cut of £20 week. The cost of everyday living is soaring, yet this represent the biggest overnight cut to the basic rate of social security since World War II and will pile unnecessary financial pressure on families, both in and out of work. Save the Children has found that almost half of Universal Credit claimants don't think they can live on £20 less each week; 61% claimants state they will struggle to afford food, 48% worry they won't be able to cover essential bills and 37% will struggle to pay for children's books and toys.
- The National Living Wage for those over 23 is £8.91 an hour. Income tax would take off £1.78 of that and National Insurance another £1.07. For people on UC who work (around 40% of claimants), the more they earn - above an in-work allowance - the more their benefit reduces. For every extra pound earned, the benefit payment reduces by 63p. This would almost certainly apply to this full-time worker, taking off £3.82, bringing the hourly total to £2.24. That means they would have to work about nine hours to take home £20. (calculation originally done by the Resolution Foundation).
- The National Food Strategy, Independent Review, published earlier this year, is the first independent review of England's

entire food system for 75 years. Its purpose is to set out a vision for the kind of food system we should be building for the future, and a plan for how to achieve that vision.

- That the Government recognises the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the “fundamental right to be free from hunger” (Article 11:2).

The Council agrees that:

- Our society should be taking progressive steps towards the eradication of hunger, and towards the development of fair and balanced system for sustainable farming and fishing that works for both food producers and consumers alike.
- The government must take a lead on making this happen, for everyone’s benefit, by upholding our Right to Food.
- The Government has a duty to ensure nobody in our communities goes hungry and that the “Right to Food” should be enshrined in UK law in order to make clear this obligation and
- Free School Meal provision should be extended in line with a recommendation of the National Food Strategy, Independent review, as the current threshold means that families must be extremely poor to qualify.

Therefore the Council resolves to:

- **Call upon the Government to:**
 1. Include the ‘Right To Food’ in the ‘National Food Strategy’.
 2. Extend Free School Meals provision throughout school holidays.
 3. Retain the £20 uplift to Universal Credit.
 4. Scrap the five week waiting period for Universal Credit.

Taken together, these measures would help to alleviate some of the worst food insecurity in our country and ensure that the Right to Food is properly recognised in law.

Further, council resolves: -

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to Henry Dimbleby to further to request for the ‘Right to Food’ to be incorporated into the ‘National Food Strategy’.

For the council to clearly signpost the support, networks and guidance that is available in Harrow, and promote through appropriate channels to our residents and businesses.”

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

[Councillor Kiran Ramchandani and Councillor Sachin Shah left the Chamber for the discussion and vote on this item].

(iv) **“Deliver a Better Built Environment Motion**

Motion in the names of Councillor Marilyn Ashton and Councillor Stephen Greek

Harrow, like many London boroughs, has seen extensive changes in the built environment over the last decade. As the demand for housing has risen, Harrow has seen a significant increase in high-rise buildings as well as the conversion of family homes into flats and HMOs.

This Council notes:

- The Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG) has recently considered a draft of a Small Sites Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 - This document is currently private and confidential. However, it is noted that there is no mention of limiting the number conversions of single-family dwellings into flats or HMOs.
- In recent years there has been a notable increase in HMOs and conversions of family homes into flats.
- Large HMOs and conversions of houses into flats runs contrary to the suburban and family focused character of our borough.
- The strain that these additional units (in the form of conversions and HMOs) can put on our existing infrastructure.
- **This resolution is designed to assist the Council in having the tools to be able to win an appeal on excessive numbers of conversions and HMOs.**

This Council resolves:

- To protect the suburban and family friendly character of Harrow’s housing stock.
- To reaffirm its commitment to putting quality housing for families front and centre of our borough’s planning policy.
- In addition to the Small Sites Design Code SPD, this Council asks the PPWG to also consider:

- Adopting a policy which would limit the number of conversions of family houses in any street to no more than 20% of the total housing stock in the street.
- Adopting a policy which would limit the number of large HMOs (six or more tenants) in any street to no more than 10% of the total housing stock in the street.”

A tabled amendment was received and duly seconded. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

Upon being put to the vote, the substantive Motion was agreed as follows: -

“Harrow, like many London boroughs, has seen extensive changes in the built environment over the last decade. As the demand for housing has risen, Harrow has seen a significant increase in high-rise buildings as well as the conversion of family homes into flats and HMOs.

This Council notes:

- The Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG) has recently considered a draft of a Small Sites Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 - This document is currently private and confidential. However, it is noted that there is no mention of limiting the number conversions of single-family dwellings into flats or HMOs.
- In recent years there has been a notable increase in HMOs and conversions of family homes into flats.
- Large HMOs and conversions of houses into flats runs contrary to the suburban and family focused character of our borough.
- The strain that these additional units (in the form of conversions and HMOs) can put on our existing infrastructure.
- **This resolution is designed to assist the Council in having the tools to be able to win an appeal on excessive numbers of conversions and HMOs.**

This Council resolves:

- To protect the suburban and family friendly character of Harrow’s housing stock.
- To reaffirm its commitment to putting quality housing for families front and centre of our borough’s planning policy.”

RESOLVED: That the Motion, as amended and set out at above,

be adopted.

235. Procedure for the Termination of Meeting

At 9.16 pm, during the debate on item 21 (2) Planning Motion, it was proposed that the guillotine be extended to 9.45 pm to enable debate on Motion 3, Food Poverty. Upon being put to the vote this was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the provisions of Rules 9.2 and 9.3 be applied as set out above.

(Close of Meeting: All business having been completed, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 9.58 pm).