

Minutes of the meeting of the Council

Date: Tuesday, 20 July 2021

Time: 19:00

Venue: Victoria Hall, Ealing Town Hall, New Broadway, Ealing, London, W5 2BY

Attendees:

Councillor Munir Ahmed, Councillor Jasbir Anand, Councillor Jon Ball, Councillor Josh Blacker, Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Councillor Joanna Dabrowska, Councillor Stephen Donnelly, Councillor Yoel Gordon, Councillor Amarjit Jammu, Councillor Yvonne Johnson, Councillor Mrs Seema Kumar, Councillor Bassam Mahfouz, Councillor Tariq Mahmood, Councillor Gary Malcolm, Councillor Shital Manro, Councillor Dee Martin, Councillor Peter Mason, Councillor David Millican, Councillor Kamaljit Nagpal, Councillor Aysha Raza, Councillor Miriam Rice, Councillor Charan Sharma, Councillor Gareth Shaw, Councillor Andrew Steed, Councillor Lauren Wall, Councillor Ray Wall, Councillor Anthony Young

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sumner.

The Mayor explained that some members were choosing to join the meeting virtually. These members would be able to speak at the meeting but would not be able to vote, and their attendance would not be recorded in the minutes for the purpose of their attendance record.

The following members were noted as present virtually:

- Councillor Rai
- Councillor D Crawford
- Councillor K Crawford
- Councillor Busuttil
- Councillor Mohan
- Councillor Driscoll
- Councillor S Ahmed
- Councillor Kelly
- Councillor Rooney
- Councillor R Dheer
- Councillor Tailor
- Councillor Sabiers
- Councillor Midha
- Councillor Byrne
- Councillor Dhindsa

- Councillor Chohan
- Councillor Burke
- Councillor G Mann
- Councillor Anjum
- Councillor Lusuardi
- Councillor Byrne
- Councillor Bell
- Councillor Ball
- Councillor Dhadwal
- Councillor Summers
- Councillor Stafford

2 Matters to be Considered in Private

RESOLVED: That all matters be considered in public as proposed.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes of Meeting Held on 22 June 2021

RESOLVED: That

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 are agreed as a correct record of proceedings.
2. The decisions taken at the virtual meeting held on 22 June 2021 are ratified.

5 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor updated the Council on his activities. The Mayor noted that it was Eid ul adha and wished all members, officers and residents Eid mubarak. Civic Events were beginning to increase as COVID restrictions were being lifted, and the Mayor was looking forward to welcoming Councillors to his upcoming charity events.

Councillor Murtagh and his wife were congratulated on the birth of his baby boy. The Mayor wished Councillor Sumner a speedy recovery from his recent hip surgery.

Council noted that John Delaney, a former Councillor for Springfield Ward, had passed away. Representatives from the Council's political groups gave speeches and Council observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

6 Petitions from Members of the Public

There were no petitions from members of the public.

7 Petitions from Members of the Council

There were no petitions from members of the Council.

8 Questions from Members of the Public

There were no questions from members of the public.

9 Questions from Members of the Council

Councillor Millican asked Councillor Costigan:

How many responses to date has there been on
Commonplace and what % wanted the LTNs removed?

Councillor Costigan responded:

Commonplace is still open until end of the Experimental Traffic
Order (ETO) process at the end of July.

Officers are currently analysing responses with the aim of
reporting these in August /September 2021.

While we can't give you a percentage, we can tell you that the
total number of user responses received on Commonplace
until early April 2021 (the last time a total taken) was 2590.

Councillor Millican can also find initial Commonplace data in
the December 2020 Cabinet report on the Covid Emergency
LTNs Interim Assessment.

The CPZ style consultation is intended to capture a snapshot
of resident's views after 11 months of the trial and ask people
if they want LTN trials made permanent.

We know that there are strong feelings on this issue, and we
want to make sure we know what local people think, and that
we're putting them in the driving seat of change in their
communities.

Consultation is a good thing, and we'll be doing more of it, so I hope the Tories can get used to that.

Councillor Rai asked Councillor Raza:

Since the Euros final we've seen a grotesque amount of racist abuse directed at England penalty takers. Given that the prime minister has repeatedly failed to take this issue seriously, and Tory MPs have boycotted games because players have taken the knee, what is our council doing to help stamp out racism and discrimination in Ealing?

Councillor Raza responded:

Unlike the home secretary – defending people who boycott England games over taking the knee one minute and cheering on our national team the next – in Ealing we are absolutely committed to stamping out racism and discrimination. Fighting inequality is one of three priorities in our council plan, and we're here to listen.

I'm proud that our council established an independent Race Equality Commission in late 2020 in direct response to the issues raised by the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Commission, chaired by leading anti-racism activist Lord Simon Woolley, is listening to people in Ealing talk about their experiences and what they think needs to change, and is taking evidence from leaders across different sectors, including health, housing, the police, education, and employment, challenging them on their plans to address racism and discrimination in Ealing.

The Commission will report on its findings and recommendations in the autumn, which will be directed at the range of stakeholders in the borough, and at London and national levels – and we've committed to implementing its recommendations in full.

As an employer, the Council has also commissioned a significant piece of work with its workforce and leadership teams to ensure we are responsive and alert to the barriers faced by our workforce, ensuring that we remove the barriers for talented individuals to come forward and who represent the community we serve.

The lived experiences of our staff and Councillors will ensure we continue to provide services that meet the needs of our residents, tackle the issues that they are experiencing and ensuring that our support reaches those who are most

vulnerable in our society and releasing the potential of our great borough.

Mr Mayor, there is much more to do on tackling racism and discrimination, but we are fundamentally committed to having the difficult conversations we need to get this right.

Councillor Malcolm asked Councillor Costigan:

With regard to the CPZ style consultation concerning LTNs, why have so many people reported not receiving the consultation forms? There are at least 22 streets in which many people appear not to have received a leaflet. When you were informed of this what did you do?

Councillor Costigan responded:

Mr Mayor, I'm afraid Cllr Malcolm is a little behind on this.

As far as we are aware, and we have GPS tracking on deliveries like this, every street that should have received the forms for the consultation has done.

But I've already spoken to residents groups, including OneEaling, and offered to redistribute forms in areas where they haven't been received. As soon as I receive a list from them I'm happy to take it up.

The leaflets are also available via the council's website and we've been promoting that link widely on our platforms.

Councillor Rooney asked Councillor Blacker:

Yesterday, the government announced they had "opened up" and removed restrictions put in place to control the spread of Covid-19. Can the portfolio holder comment on this recklessness in the face of rapidly spreading Delta variant?

Councillor Blacker responded:

Mr Mayor, we're at a really crucial point right now in our response to the virus and it's alarming to see that the government are still failing to follow the evidence. We want to see restrictions dropped, everyone does.

But we want them dropped for good, and signs right now point to another wave of Covid-19 infections and subsequent lockdowns or restrictions.

Ealing currently has a weekly rate of 313 cases per 100,000

people, with over 1,000 residents testing positive in the last week – alarmingly similar to the rate seen in early February. And the rate is expected to continue to rise rapidly in London over the next few weeks.

The number of people needing to be admitted to hospital for covid-related reasons is also increasing in London, although we are not yet seeing large numbers for Ealing. I'm pleased to say though that as a council we are following the evidence. And we continue to have a cautious, careful and common sense approach through this phase of the pandemic based on risk.

We are continuing with covid-secure measures, including the expectation that staff and residents will continue to use face coverings and social distancing when accessing council services.

Councillor Steed asked Councillor Costigan:

How does the Portfolio Holder reconcile the closing of Stirling Road Recycling Centre in Acton with the Councils response to the Climate Change Emergency?

Councillor Costigan responded:

Mr Mayor, we've committed to be open, inclusive and transparent with residents about decision making in our council. The truth here is that the Stirling Road recycling centre was underused and didn't provide all the services people needed.

Residents will still be able to use the West London Waste Authority provision at Twyford Abbey Road which is close by, and collects a larger variety of materials, including DIY which was not accepted at Acton.

It's also important to note that our neighbours in Hounslow, Brent, Richmond and Harrow only have one recycling centre each, so we were unusual in operating the Acton site too. And we've been assured that other sites have enough capacity to absorb waste that would have been taken to Stirling road.

Meanwhile, providing curbside collection services provides an opportunity for all of us to reduce private car use and minimise negative environmental impact from car trips to recycle.

We're working with WLWA and TRAIID to provide kerbside collection of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and textiles.

And we already offer fortnightly collection of refuse and recycling, bulky waste collection service, garden waste collection service (£1.50 a week) and the provision of additional blue bins for recycling (free of charge) to households that need it.

Mr Mayor, Councillor Steed knows exactly what I'm going to say next, but we need to add some reality to this conversation. This site is closing because of 11 years of austerity – which began when the Lib Dems propped up the Tories. We've lost 64p in every pound and we've had to balance the books.

I believe that it is better to close this centre than to cut spending on social care and support to vulnerable residents. And existing sites, along with the services we already offer for curb side collection, will absorb the waste that would have gone to Stirling road.

Councillor Kumar asked Councillor Manro:

When will the administration announce its plans for Gurnell Leisure Centre?

Councillor Manro responded:

As councillors know, the previous scheme for comprehensive regeneration of this site didn't get planning permission. So the centre is currently in limbo. And part of the site is being used as a key COVID testing site for the north of our borough.

But we know that local people want to see a leisure centre at Gurnell. And so do we. But unfortunately it's not as easy as a lick of paint.

Councillor Mason visited Gurnell only today to see how much work needs to be done, and it's really quite extensive.

We've been told by an independent assessor that to fully refurbish the building and extend the life of Gurnell leisure centre would cost in the region of 18 million pounds.

That's a huge amount of money to find after more than a decade of Tory austerity that's seen the government cut our budget by 64% since 2010.

And it would also need to stay closed for several years for that refurbishment to take place.

It's our intention to bring modern swimming and sports facilities back to Gurnell But it will take some time to put plans together to make this happen.

Mr Mayor, I want to assure local people that the council is invested in Gurnell's future too.

As soon as we know what is achievable on site we'll be bringing forward plans for the local community.

Councillor Anjum asked Councillor Nagpal:

Last week the cabinet approved funding to plug the gap created by the government and ensure over 3,000 children didn't go hungry this summer. What further plans are there to support children over the summer holidays?

Councillor Nagpal responded:

Mr Mayor I'm really pleased to say that Ealing Council has coordinated a full Summer Holiday Activities and Food Programme to provide free holiday activities for school-aged children from reception to year 11 who are in receipt of benefits-related free school meals.

Over 10,000 pupils are eligible to benefit from the programme which runs from 26 July – 27 August 2021.

All over the borough there are now over 50 holiday activity providers, offering a range of free activities as well as healthy meal.

In addition to this programme, the majority of our secondary schools are offering Year 6 summer school programmes to support transition to Year 7.

The youth service will also be delivering the Holiday Activity programme out of Bollo Youth Centre, Westside and the YAC. These programmes will run on average 3 days per week from 12 – 4pm.

Councillors Young, Malcolm, Mahfouz, Gallant, Ball, Raza, Conti, Blacker, Millican, Nagpal, Stafford, Donnelly, J Anand, Manro, L Wall, Brett, Driscoll and Johnson debated the recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Council Plan 2021-22 is agreed.
2. The Council's refreshed equality objectives incorporated into the Council Plan are noted.
3. The progress made against the Council Plan performance indicators at year end 2020-21 is noted.

11 Proposed Changes to the Council's Constitution, in Relation to the Health and Wellbeing Board

RESOLVED: That the changes to the constitution set out in the appendix are agreed.

12 Urgent Key Decisions Exempted from Call-in

RESOLVED: That the urgent key decisions exempted from Call-in are noted.

13 Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies

There were no appointments to Committees and other bodies.

14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on 19 October 2021.

15 Duration of Meeting

7.00 pm to 9.59 pm.