

COUNCIL (COUNCIL TAX) MINUTES

28 FEBRUARY 2019

Present:

- * Councillor Kairul Kareema Marikar (The Worshipful the Mayor)
- * Councillor Nitin Parekh (The Deputy Mayor)

Councillors:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ghazanfar Ali * Richard Almond * Dan Anderson † Jeff Anderson † Sue Anderson * Marilyn Ashton * Peymana Assad * Camilla Bath * Christopher Baxter * Philip Benjamin * Michael Borio * Simon Brown * Sarah Butterworth * Kam Chana * Ramji Chauhan * Niraj Dattani * Keith Ferry * Pamela Fitzpatrick * Dean Gilligan * Stephen Greek * Chetna Halai * Susan Hall * Graham Henson * Maxine Henson * John Hinkley * Nitesh Hirani * Honey Jamie * Ameet Jogia * Jean Lammiman * James Lee * Dr Lesline Lewinson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Ajay Maru * Jerry Miles * Vina Mithani * Amir Moshenson † Chris Mote † Janet Mote * Angella Murphy-Strachan * Phillip O'Dell * Paul Osborn * Mina Parmar * Varsha Parmar * Anjana Patel * Primesh Patel * Pritesh Patel † David Perry * Natasha Proctor * Kanti Rabadia * Kiran Ramchandani * Christine Robson * Lynda Seymour * Mrs Rekha Shah * Sachin Shah * Chloe Smith * Norman Stevenson * Krishna Suresh * Sasi Suresh * Adam Swersky * Bharat Thakker † Antonio Weiss * Stephen Wright
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* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

PRAYERS

The meeting opened with Prayers offered by
Rabbi Kathleen De Matige-Middleton, Mosaic Synagogue.

55. MINUTE SILENCE

Members of Council stood and observed a minute silence for those who had lost their lives on both sides of the current conflict between India and Pakistan.

56. WELCOME

Council welcomed Sean Harriss, Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) to his first meeting.

57. COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2018 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard Almond declared a non pecuniary interest as Chairman of the Parish Church which would be affected as part of the regeneration schemes and regeneration may be mentioned during the course of the meeting.

Item 8 – Final Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2021/22

Councillor Susan Hall declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a member of the Greater London Authority.

Councillor Graham Henson declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was Chair of the West London Waste Authority, a levying authority.

Councillor Ameet Jogia declared a non-pecuniary interest in that his father had been in receipt of Harrow adult social care late last year.

Councillor Paul Osborn declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was Chair of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, a levying authority.

Councillor Krishna Suresh declared a non-pecuniary interest in that his mother was in receipt of social care benefits.

Item 18 (3) – Stem Donor Motion for Kaiya Patel

Councillor Kiran Ramchandani declared a pecuniary interest in that she was employed by one of the organisations referred to in the Motion. She would leave the Chamber for the discussion and voting on this item.

59. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

The Mayor drew Council's attention to the Procedural Motion and tabled amendment to Motion 2.

The procedural motion under Rule 26.1 was agreed so that, in line with previous years and for the purposes of the debate on the Final Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 2021/22, the rules of debate be varied, as set out on the tabled Summons, and that the procedure therein also be applied to the reports on the Corporate Plan (Harrow Ambition Plan), the Treasury Management Strategy Statement including Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20 and Capital Strategy, the Final Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22, the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2021-22, in so far as the recommendations be debated jointly.

RESOLVED: That the partial suspension under Rule 26.1, regarding the moving of recommendations from Cabinet and the rules of debate (including extended time for opening speeches by the political groups), as set out in the Summons be approved for the purposes of the debate upon

- Item 7 - Corporate Plan (Harrow Ambition Plan)**
- Item 8 - Final Revenue Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20 to 20201/22**
- Item 9 - Treasury Management Strategy Statement including Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20 and Capital Strategy**
- Item 10 - Final Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22**
- Item 11 - Housing Revenue Account Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 to 2021-22**

60. PETITIONS

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

- (i) Petition submitted by Mr Keith Wischhusen containing 83 signatures concerning anti-social behaviour and the unlicensed scrap metal business at 54 Rowlands Avenue, Hatch End.

[The Petition stood referred to the Portfolio Holder for Environment].

- (ii) Petition submitted by Kuha Kumaran containing 35 signatures concerning the former Kodak site, Headstone Drive.

[The Petition stood referred to the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning and Employment].

- (iii) Petition submitted by Councillor Ajay Maru on behalf of residents of Elmore Close and Elmore Drive containing 19 signatures requesting double yellow lines at the junction of Kenton Lane and Elmore Drive, Harrow.

[The Petition stood referred to the Portfolio Holder for Environment].

- (iv) Petition submitted by Councillor Marilyn Ashton on behalf of residents in Green Lane, Culverlands Close, Woodside Close and Ben Hale Close containing 75 signatures concerning parking in Green Lane.

[The Petition stood referred to the Portfolio Holder for Environment].

61. 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.

62. LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) The Leader of the Council, Councillor Graham Henson, introduced the item highlighting the achievements, challenges and proposals since the last ordinary meeting. He advised Council that Motion 1, Harrow Council recognises working definition of Islamophobia Motion, was to be deferred until there had been consultation with the community.
- (ii) Other Members of Council spoke and/or asked questions of the Leader of the Council which were duly responded to.

63. CORPORATE PLAN (HARROW AMBITION PLAN)

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Plan 2019 (Harrow Ambition Plan) be approved.

64. FINAL REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2019/20 TO 2021/22

- (i) Further to item 8 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation I of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 February 2019.
- (ii) The Mayor requested that Members, in making the decision on this item, had regard to the Cabinet report of 21 February 2019, the sections on equalities, the equality impact assessments and the results of the budget consultation.

- (iii) Upon the meeting moving to the vote upon the substantive Recommendation it was carried. The voting was as follows:

In Favour of the Motion: Her Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Kareema Marikar, Councillors Ali, Dan Anderson, Assad, Borio, Butterworth, Brown, Dattani, Ferry, Fitzpatrick, Gilligan, Graham Henson, Maxine Henson, Jamie, Lee, Maru, Miles, Murphy-Strachan, O'Dell, Parekh, Varsha Parmar, Primesh Patel, Proctor, Ramchandani, Robson, Rekha Shah, Sachin Shah, Smith, Krishna Suresh, Sasikala Suresh and Swersky.

Against the Motion: Councillors Almond, Ashton, Mrs Bath, Baxter, Benjamin, Chana, Chauhan, Greek, Halai, Hall, Hinkley, Hirani, Jogia, Lammiman, Dr Lewinson, Mrs Mithani, Moshenson, Osborn, Mina Parmar, Anjana Patel, Pritesh Patel, Rabadia, Seymour, Stevenson, Thakker, and Wright.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the 2019/20 budget be approved, being mindful of the results of the various consultations and equality impact assessments, to enable the Council Tax for 2019/20 to be set (Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report refers);
- (2) the Model Council Tax Resolution 2019/20 be approved as set out at Appendix 11 to the Cabinet report;
- (3) in accordance with Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Chief Executive be instructed to place a notice in the local press of the amounts set under Resolution 2 above within a period of 21 days following the Council's decision;
- (4) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) be approved as set out in Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report;
- (5) the addition of £2.627m to the Social Care Reserve be noted as set out in paragraph 1.8 of the Cabinet report;
- (6) the balanced budget position for 2019/20 and the budget gaps of £16.795m and £9.345m for 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively (table 4 of the Cabinet report refers) be noted;
- (7) the intention to increase Council Tax by 2.99% in 2019/20 be noted (paragraph 1.23 of the Cabinet report refers);
- (8) the proposal to increase Council Tax by a further 2.0% in 2019/20 be noted in respect of the Adult Social Care Precept (paragraph 1.23 of the Cabinet report refers);
- (9) the changes to schools funding for 2019/20, as set out in paragraphs 1.57 to 1.63 and Appendix 6 of the Cabinet report, be noted;

- (10) the assumed funding for the protection of social care in 2019/20 through the BCF, as set out in paragraphs 1.62 to 1.68 of the Cabinet report, be noted;
- (11) the draft Public Health budget for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 7 to the Cabinet report, be approved;
- (12) all resident charges relating to child burials (paragraph 1.69, Appendix 18 of the Cabinet report refers) be removed;
- (13) the 2019/20 Members' Allowance Scheme, as set out at Appendix 12 to the Cabinet report, be approved;
- (14) the 2019/20 Annual Pay Policy Statement for Council, as set out at Appendix 13 to the Cabinet report, be approved;
- (15) the Capital Receipts Flexibility Strategy, as set out at Appendix 15 to the Cabinet report, be approved;
- (16) the comments from the various stakeholder meetings, as set out at Appendix 14 to the Cabinet report, be noted.

65. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2019/20 AND CAPITAL STRATEGY

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2019/20 be approved including:
 - Prudential Indicators for 2019/20
 - Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2019/20, (paragraph 42 of the Cabinet report refers)
 - Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20
- (2) the draft Capital Strategy 2019/20, as set out in Appendix H to the Cabinet report, be approved.

66. FINAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 TO 2021/22

RESOLVED: That the Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report, be approved.

67. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2020-21 TO 2021-22

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2019-20 be approved;
- (2) the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme, as detailed in appendix 7 to the Cabinet report, be approved.

68. NON-EXECUTIVE FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2019-20

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the fees and charges listed in Appendix 1 of the report for the financial year 2019-20 be approved and set;
- (2) the Corporate Director Community, following consultation with the Director of Finance and nominated members of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee, be authorised to amend fees and charges in year.

69. CHANGES TO COUNCIL TAX LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTY PREMIUMS

RESOLVED: That the Authority exercises its discretion and changes the premium charged to long term empty property from 1.5 times the standard Council Tax for the said band, to the new ratios as set out in the table below (expressed as additional percentages of annual Council Tax);

Long term empty property criteria giving rise to additional Council Tax premiums;	From 1/4/2019 Financial Year	From 1/4/2020 Financial Year	From 1/4/2021 Financial Year
For Properties which have remained empty for at least 2 Years	100%	100%	100%
For Properties which have remained empty for less than 5 Years	N/A	100%	100%
For Properties which have remained empty for at least 5 & but less than 10 Years	N/A	200%	200%
For Properties which have remained empty for at least 10 Years	N/A	N/A	300%

70. AUDIT COMMITTEE REVIEW

RESOLVED: That the revised terms of reference of the Governance, Audit, Risk Management and Standards Committee, as set out in the Committee report, be approved.

71. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS - APPROVAL OF UPDATED SET

RESOLVED: That the revised Financial Regulations, as detailed at Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report, be approved.

72. INFORMATION ITEM - REMUNERATION PACKAGES OF £100,000 OR GREATER

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

73. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

To note that two questions were received and the recording of the questions and the answers given had been placed on the Council's website.

74. MOTIONS

- (i) Motion in the names of Councillor Paul Osborn and Councillor Marilyn Ashton.

“Anti-Semitism in the Labour Party Motion

This Council notes:

- The Council's adoption of the “working definition of anti-Semitism” at the Full Council meeting on 23rd February 2017.
- The Council's reaffirmation of this definition at the Full Council Meeting on 19th July 2018.
- The resignation of Luciana Berger MP and others from the Labour Party.
- The Labour Party has received 673 anti-Semitism complaints in the last 10 months.
- The comments from Margaret Hodge MP on 11th February 2019 that she is “Not convinced” the Labour leadership is “serious on rooting out anti-Semitism”.

This Council believes :

- All forms of racism and anti-Semitism should be condemned.
- We should stand shoulder to shoulder with our Jewish Community to drive out the scourge of anti-Semitism that has beset Her Majesty's Opposition.

This Council resolves :

- To instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Leader of the Opposition, Jeremy Corbyn, calling upon him to take action to ensure anti-Semitism is taken seriously and properly dealt with in the Labour Party.”

A tabled amendment was received. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.6, the final sentence of the tabled amendment was

ruled out of order.

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

“Anti-Semitism in the Labour Party Motion

This Council notes :

- The worrying rise of anti-Semitism on all sides of politics, across Europe and the United States
- The Council’s adoption of the “working definition of anti-Semitism” at the Full Council meeting on 23rd February 2017.
- The Council’s reaffirmation of this definition at the Full Council Meeting on 19th July 2018.
- The resignation of Luciana Berger MP and others from the Labour Party.
- The Labour Party has investigated 673 cases of alleged anti-Semitism in the last 10 months.
- The steps taken by the Labour Party to deal with these complaints including suspending/expelling over 100 members
- That there is a perception that the Labour Party has not moved quickly enough to deal with anti-Semitism.

This Council believes :

- All forms of racism and anti-Semitism should be condemned.
- We should stand shoulder to shoulder with our Jewish Community to drive out the scourge of anti-Semitism from society

This Council resolves :

- To instruct the Leader of the Council to write to the Leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, calling upon him to take additional action to ensure anti-Semitism is robustly dealt with in the Labour Party.”

RESOLVED (unanimously): That the Motion, as amended and set out above, be adopted.

- (ii) Motion in the names of Councillor Ameet Jogia and Councillor Mina Parmar:

“Stem Donor Motion for Kaiya Patel

This Council agrees to encourage those who hold events with an expected attendance of 150 people or more on council property or facilitated with any Council funding to offer free presence to an organisation that registers people to the stem cell donor list.“

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

- (iii) Motion in the names of Councillor Natasha Proctor and Councillor Sarah Butterworth:

“Parental Leave –

Despite performing above the national average for the number of women councillors, it is clear that Harrow Council must do more to encourage women to put themselves forward to be councillors. One barrier to this may be that there is no legal entitlement for parental leave for any elected representative. Therefore, Harrow Council should adopt its own parental leave scheme for councillors, taking note of the scheme recommended by the LGA Labour Group’s Women’s Taskforce.

The scheme recommended by the LGA Labour Group’s Women’s Taskforce is as follows:

“Introduction

This Policy sets out Members’ entitlement to maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave and relevant allowances.

The objective of the policy is to ensure that insofar as possible Members are able to take appropriate leave at the time of birth or adoption, that both parents are able to take leave, and that reasonable and adequate arrangements are in place to provide cover for portfolio-holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) during any period of leave taken.

Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of local authority councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors – particularly women – and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it.

There is at present no legal right to parental leave of any kind for people in elected public office. This applies to MPs as well as councillors, and has been the subject of lengthy debate. These policies can therefore only currently be implemented on a voluntary basis, although Labour Councils are encouraged to implement them as per the Labour Party Democracy Review which has called for Labour-controlled councils and Labour Groups to adopt a parental leave policy. Discussions are ongoing about changing the law to enable compulsory provision, but until then these policies constitute best practice which Labour Groups (and the councils they control) are strongly advised to adopt.

Legal advice has been taken on these policies, and they conform with current requirements.

1. Leave Periods

- 1.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to 6 months maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.
- 1.2 In addition, where the birth is premature, the Member is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition to the 6 months' period. In such cases any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial 6 months.
- 1.3 In exceptional circumstances, and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more, additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total 52 week entitlement.
- 1.4 Members shall be entitled to take a minimum of 2 weeks paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth of their child(ren).
- 1.5 A Member who has made Shared Parental Leave arrangements through their employment is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate such arrangements in terms of leave from Council.
- 1.6 Where both parents are Members leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.
- 1.7 A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.
- 1.8 Any Member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless the Council Meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period.
- 1.9 Any Member intending to take maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.
- 1.10 Any member taking leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and that they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.

2. Basic Allowance

- 2.1 All Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full whilst on maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 3.1 Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance in full in the case of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave.
- 3.2 Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of absence that person shall receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.
- 3.3 The payment of Special Responsibility Allowances, whether to the primary SRA holder or a replacement, during a period of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave shall continue for a period of six months, or until the date of the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the date when the member taking leave is up for election (whichever is soonest). At such a point, the position will be reviewed, and will be subject to a possible extension for a further six month period.
- 3.4 Should a Member appointed to replace the member on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave already hold a remunerated position, the ordinary rules relating to payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowances shall apply.
- 3.5 Unless the Member taking leave is removed from their post at an Annual General Meeting of the Council whilst on leave, or unless the Party to which they belong loses control of the Council during their leave period, they shall return at the end of their leave period to the same post, or to an alternative post with equivalent status and remuneration which they held before the leave began.

4. Resigning from Office and Elections

- 4.1 If a Member decides not to return at the end of their maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave they must notify the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. All allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.
- 4.2 If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office."

This Council notes:

- That analysis of the 2018 Local Election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 34% of councillors in England are women, up 1% since 2017. Of the seats that were up for election in 2018, 38% went to women, up just 3 percentage points on 2014 when these seats were last contested;
- As of summer 2017, only 4% of councils in England and Wales have parental leave policies, according to research by the Fawcett Society
- That the role of a councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background, and that introducing a parental leave policy is a

step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors, and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors;

- That parental leave must apply to parents regardless of their gender, and that it should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt.

This Council resolves:

- To adopt a parental leave policy that takes due regard of the work of the LGA Labour Group's Women's Taskforce to give all councillors an entitlement to parental leave after giving birth or adopting;
- That the Scheme as adopted will be incorporated into the Council's current Members' Allowance Scheme as appropriate;
- To ensure that councillors with children and other caring commitments are supported as appropriate;
- To notify the LGA Labour Group that this council has passed a motion at full council to adopt the parental leave policy."

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

(CLOSE OF MEETING: All business having been completed, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 10.30 pm).