

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2024**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Suna Hurman (Mayor), Abdul Abdullahi, Josh Abey, Nicki Adeleke, Gunes Akbulut, Mahmut Aksanoglu, Maria Alexandrou, Nawshad Ali, Kate Anolue, Chinelo Anyanwu, Mahym Bedekova, Alev Cazimoglu, Mustafa Cetinkaya, Lee Chamberlain, Hivran Dalkaya, Chris Dey, Guney Dogan, Hannah Dyson, Elif Erbil, Ergin Erbil, Susan Erbil, Peter Fallart, Reece Fox, Alessandro Georgiou, Margaret Greer, Patricia Gregory, Ayten Guzel, Nelly Gyosheva, Ahmet Hasan, James Hockney, Stephanos Ioannou, Chris James, Rick Jewell, Doris Jiage, Chris Joannides, Joanne Laban, Tim Leaver, Andy Milne, Elisa Morreale, Tom O'Halloran, Ahmet Oykenner, Sabri Ozaydin, Paul Pratt, Michael Rye OBE, Julian Sampson, Ruby Sampson, George Savva MBE, David Skelton, Edward Smith, Jim Steven, Emma Supple, Doug Taylor, Andrew Thorp and Eylem Yuruk

ABSENT Mohammad Islam (Deputy Mayor), Sinan Boztas, Nesil Caliskan, Thomas Fawns, Adrian Grumi, Destiny Karakus, Gina Needs, Bektas Ozer and Nia Stevens

THE MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN TO GIVE A BLESSING

Nick Chanda of the Enfield Revival Church gave a blessing.

1

ELECT A PERSON TO PRESIDE IF THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ARE NOT PRESENT

There was no business transacted under this item.

2

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nesil Caliskan, Sinan Boztas, Mohammad Islam, Destiny Karakus, Gina Needs, Bektas Ozer, Nia Stevens, Adrian Grumi and Thomas Fawns.

3

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the Chamber.

The Mayor on behalf of all councillors, expressed best wishes to King Charles III following the recent announcement of his cancer diagnosis. Also, as Cllr Gina Needs continues with her treatment, to also extend our best wishes to her during her recovery. As members knew, cancer is one of the themes of

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the Mayor's charity this year and she hoped and prayed that a cure was found soon for this disease which affects so many.

The Mayor continued to support the residents of Enfield by attending the Citizenship ceremonies that take place most weeks. She was honoured to stand before the new citizens of Enfield. They stand proud to be part of our borough and she was delighted to receive them. The Mayor also continued to attend local events and was humbled by the kindness bestowed to her from the residents of Enfield.

The Mayor noted that LGBT+ History Month was formally celebrated across the UK in February to claim its past, celebrate its present and create its future. The Mayor sent her best wishes to all our Enfield residents during this time.

The Mayor this morning welcomed the High Commissioner of St Lucia to the Civic Centre to celebrate 45 years of their nation's independence. It gave us time to reflect on the individuals who came to Britain on the Windrush and helped rebuild Britain to be great again after the war.

The Mayoral Gala had been booked for 25th April and the Mayor hoped all would join her to raise much needed funds for her chosen charities: cancer and autism, two very important themes. Raising funds for charities was becoming more and more difficult in the current economic climate and she hoped members could support her.

A sad announcement was made of the sad loss of former Councillor and Past Mayor, Christiana During. She was a dedicated public servant for Enfield for many years, being first elected in 2002 in Ponders End Ward, later Upper Edmonton from 2006-14 and Edmonton Green Ward from 2014 to 2018. She was Mayor of Enfield in 2011-12, being the first female black African Mayor of the borough. She served as a midwife with the NHS from 1962 and later became the Assistant Director of Nursing at North Middlesex Hospital.

Councillors were invited to say a few words in commemoration of the late Christiana During. Cllr Doug Taylor praised her humility, cheerfulness, warmth, and caring approach to residents and the issues they raised. Condolences were sent to her husband and family. Cllr Michael Rye concurred with Cllr Taylor's comments, and that Members would support an initiative to mark her legacy in Enfield. Cllr Joanne Laban also remembered Christiana During's positivity, compassion and care. Cllr Kate Anolue spoke of her long and close friendship with Christiana, a special person with whom she had done everything together. All Members were invited to attend the funeral service on 8th March and pay their respect.

The Mayor had also sadly been informed this week of the passing of former Councillor and Past Mayor Doreen Mardon. Doreen was first elected in 1982 in Huxley Ward and re-elected again in 1990 and 1994 in Raglan Ward. Doreen was inaugurated as Mayor of Enfield in 1992-93.

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Members were invited to say a few words. Cllr Michael Rye spoke of Doreen Mardon's active and generous character, and sent his good wishes to her husband and family. Cllr George Savva recalled enjoying working together with Doreen Mardon for the good of the local community.

The Mayor sent condolences to both families at this very sad time, and Members and all attendees held a minute's silence.

4

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A correction to the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 24th January had been raised and appropriate amendment made: for item 9 Conservative councillors voted to abstain, not against the decision. The revised minutes were included in the second supplementary agenda pack and circulated to all members.

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 January 2024 were received and, subject to the correction set out in the supplementary agenda pack, **AGREED** as a correct record.

5

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor asked the Director of Law and Governance to provide advice further to the advice note provided to all members on the declaration of interests requirements at the Council Budget meeting. In relation to agenda item 6 – Budget Report 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan, any councillor who is two or more months in arrears on their Council Tax should declare this and not take part in the vote. The Director of Law and Governance advised that according to the Council's records there were no members with such outstanding arrears, but that the onus was on members to make the declaration if necessary.

The following councillors declared non-pecuniary interests in the following items:

Items 6 & 11 – Cllr Ayten Guzel who is employed by Unison.

Items 6 & 11 – Cllr Margaret Greer who is employed by Unison.

Items 6 and 11 – Cllr Joanne Laban who served on the National Joint Council (NJC) on the employer side.

Item 7 – Cllr Pat Gregory in relation to Council Tax Support Scheme.

Item 8 – Cllr Guney Dogan who was a commercial unit tenant.

Items 9, and 10 – Cllr Sabri Ozaydin who is a director of Housing Gateway Limited.

Items 9 and 10 – Cllr Doug Taylor who is a director of Energetik.

6

BUDGET REPORT 2024/25 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Cllr Leaver moved, and Cllr Ergin Erbil seconded, the report.

Cllr Leaver introduced the report and highlighted the background context and challenges, including government under-funding and economic pressures. The pressures in the MTFP were set out in Appendix 6 of the report. Consultation in relation to setting the budget, including consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was also noted. The comments of the Chief Finance Officer in respect of the robustness of the budget were included in the report at Appendix 1a and noted. Officers and Cabinet colleagues were thanked for supporting the process. The Council would be setting a balanced budget which was prudent and responsible. Cabinet Members provided detail of pressures affecting service areas, investment in the borough, and protection of services for the most vulnerable residents.

The Opposition expressed their concerns in respect of raising of taxes, fees and charges and proposed cuts to services for residents. Money continued to be spent on external consultants and solicitors, and on Civic Centre refurbishments. The Administration's manifesto commitments were not being kept. Warnings in respect of borrowing and debt servicing had not been heeded. There were concerns regarding the level of reserves. Residents had made their top issues known during the consultation but had been ignored. The balanced budget was dependent on in-year savings, which were known to be rarely achieved, and only 3.5% wage increases.

During the debate, a procedural motion moved by Cllr Ozaydin and seconded by Cllr Ergin Erbil under paragraph 13.20 (viii) of the Council's Procedure Rules to extend the debate for 30 minutes was **AGREED**.

A further procedural motion moved by Cllr Ozaydin and seconded by Cllr Ergin Erbil under paragraph 13.20 (viii) of the Council's Procedure Rules to extend the debate for a further 10 minutes was **AGREED**.

Before members' summing up, a procedural motion moved by Cllr Ozaydin and seconded by Cllr Ergin Erbil under paragraph 13.20 (viii) of the Council's Procedure Rules to extend the time for debate of reports for 60 minutes was **AGREED**.

The report recommendations were agreed following a recorded vote (as required by law) detailed below:

For:

Cllr Abdul Abdullahi
Cllr Josh Abey
Cllr Nicki Adeleke
Cllr Gunes Akbulut
Cllr Mahmut Aksanoglu
Cllr Nawshad Ali

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Cllr Kate Anolue
Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu
Cllr Mahym Bedekova
Cllr Alev Cazimoglu
Cllr Mustafa Cetinkaya
Cllr Hivran Dalkaya
Cllr Guney Dogan
Cllr Elif Erbil
Cllr Ergin Erbil
Cllr Susan Erbil
Cllr Margaret Greer
Cllr Ayten Guzel
Cllr Nelly Gyosheva
Cllr Ahmet Hasan
Cllr Chris James
Cllr Rick Jewell
Cllr Doris Jiage
Cllr Tim Leaver
Cllr Ahmet Oykenner
Cllr Sabri Ozaydin
Cllr George Savva
Cllr Doug Taylor
Cllr Eylem Yuruk

Against:

Cllr Maria Alexandrou
Cllr Lee Chamberlain
Cllr Chris Dey
Cllr Hannah Dyson
Cllr Peter Fallart
Cllr Reece Fox
Cllr Alessandro Georgiou
Cllr Pat Gregory
Cllr James Hockney
Cllr Stephanos Ioannou
Cllr Chris Joannides
Cllr Joanne Laban
Cllr Andy Milne
Cllr Elisa Morreale
Cllr Tom O'Halloran
Cllr Paul Pratt
Cllr Michael Rye
Cllr Julian Sampson
Cllr Ruby Sampson
Cllr David Skelton
Cllr Edward Smith
Cllr Jim Steven
Cllr Emma Supple
Cllr Andrew Thorp

AGREED:

I. Council agreed:

- i. To agree to the budget set for 2024/25 and to agree the Medium-Term Financial Plan, including:
 - a. A net revenue budget of £318.530m for 2024/25, an 11.01% increase when compared with 2023/24.
 - b. The pressures set out in Appendix 6 totalling £48.6m in 2024/25, which include:
 - £11.4m for Demographic pressures within Adults and Children's Social Care and SEN Transport to reflect growing demand in these areas.
 - £17.2m of Inflation and pay award funding
 - £7.7m for Homelessness pressures
 - £2.4m increase in Capital Financing included within the pressures figure, with £11.9m is set aside for Capital Financing over the lifetime of the current MTFP.
 - c. full year effects of prior year savings and income totalling a positive value of £1.322m (due to reversal of one-off savings and reassessment of deliverability of savings previously agreed) set out in Appendix 7.
 - d. the new savings of £10.690m and income proposals of £5.878m in 2024/25 set out in Appendix 8.
 - e. increased Government funding of a net increase of £6.6m (£8.4m for social care in 2024/25, a £1.4m increase in Revenue Support Grant; less £3.2m reduction in other core Government grant funding (excluding business rates).
 - f. total business rates income for 2024/25 at £98.5m, an increase of £9.2m on 2023/24 and £164.1m for Council Tax, an increase of £17.2m.
 - g. the use of one-off funding sources, comprising of:
 - £3.0m benefit from continuing to be a member of the 8 authority Business Rate pool, and
 - £1.0m Collection Fund surplus.
 - h. to note the gap remaining in the MTFP for 2025/26 of £30.267m; and of £85.995m for the period 2025/26 to 2028/29 and the actions being taken to address this challenging position.

II. Council agreed:

- i. With regard to the Revenue Budget for 2024/25 to set the Council Tax Requirement for Enfield at £164.118m in 2024/25; and
- ii. To set the Council Tax at Band D for Enfield's services for 2024/25 at £1,594.08, being a 2.99% general Council Tax increase (£1,360.37) and a 2.00% Adult Social Care Precept (£233.71). The total Enfield element represents an increase of £1.45 per week for a Band D property.
- iii. To note, the Council will levy a Council Tax of £471.40 at Band D on behalf of the Greater London Authority which is an 8.58% increase; equivalent to an increase of £0.72 per week for a Band D property.
- iv. To note, in total the impact of these proposals will be total Council Tax of £2,065.48 at Band D, a 5.79% increase on the 2023/24 level, equivalent to an increase of £2.17 per week for a Band D property.
- v. To approve, in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, the revised discretionary power to levy a Council Tax premium of 100% in respect of second homes from the 1st April 2025. (paragraphs 62 to 63).

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III. Council agreed the planned flexible use of capital receipts in 2023/24 being £2.184m and approve the planned flexible use of capital receipts in 2024/25, being £1.0m (paragraphs 139 to 145 and Appendix 18).

IV. Council agreed to approve that any in year changes required to the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy is delegated to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement and reported to Cabinet in the quarterly Revenue Monitoring reports.

V. Council agreed the Fees and Charges for 2024/25 as set out in the Appendices and to delegate authority to Executive Directors and Directors to negotiate discounts and make in year amendments where appropriate.

VI. Council agreed to note the feedback from the Budget Consultation set out in the Appendices.

VII. Council agreed to note the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting on 15 January 2024 which are set out in Appendix 19b of the report.

VIII. Council agreed with regard to the robustness of the 2024/25 budget and the adequacy of the Council's earmarked reserves and balances to:

- i. note the risks and uncertainties inherent in the 2024/25 budget and the MTFP (paragraphs 157 to 161) and agree the actions in hand to mitigate them;
- ii. note the advice of the Executive Director of Resources regarding the recommended levels of contingencies, balances, and earmarked reserves (paragraphs 36 to 39 and Appendix 1a) when making final decisions on the 2024/25 budget;
- iii. agree the recommended levels of central contingency and general balances (paragraphs 128 to 136);
- iv. note the use of reserves in 2024/25 to meet welfare costs set out in paragraphs 110 to 116, to support households in financial crisis; and
- v. note the overall forecast level of reserves over the medium term, ensuring the Council's financial sustainability set out in paragraphs 128 to 136.

IX. Council agreed the Schools Budget for 2024/25 (paragraphs 169 to 179 and Appendix 22 of the report).

7

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2024/25

Cllr Leaver moved, and Cllr Ergin Erbil seconded the report of the Executive Director - Resources on the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25. This report was in the supplementary agenda.

Cllr Leaver introduced the report. The context to the proposed decisions was highlighted. Enfield had consistently maintained a Council Tax Support

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Scheme which was one of the highest in London but projected future costs had necessitated the proposed revisions. An extensive consultation process had been run, details and results of which were set out in the report. The proposal to increase the Discretionary Hardship fund was highlighted, and the Greater London Authority (GLA) had now confirmed £550k funding for the Council Tax Hardship Scheme, which will now be jointly funded by the GLA and the Council in this first year and would remain at £1.5m. Members expressed that this was a difficult decision to take but would assist with necessary savings. One third of households in the borough would still receive some form of support, and a consistent approach would be taken in a fair and transparent system.

The Opposition expressed sorrow and anger that the Administration proposed to cut the support to around 31,000 households. Those negatively impacted were mainly residents who could least afford it, in the East of the borough in Labour-held wards, and groups including disabled people and single parents. Residents had raised their concerns in the consultation process that they would face poverty and stress, and they would prefer no change in the scheme. There was concern that no transitional arrangements had been proposed. Cllr Gregory raised discussions at Enfield Learning Disabilities Partnership Board and asked for an officer to be allocated as contact for advice and help to those with special needs, and their carers. This request was welcomed by Cllr Leaver and would be actioned.

A recorded vote was requested by Cllr Georgiou, and another 11 members of the Council having stood in support of the request, the report was then agreed following a recorded vote detailed below:

For:

Cllr Abdul Abdullahi
Cllr Josh Abey
Cllr Nicki Adeleke
Cllr Gunes Akbulut
Cllr Mahmut Aksanoglu
Cllr Nawshad Ali
Cllr Kate Anolue
Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu
Cllr Mahym Bedekova
Cllr Alev Cazimoglu
Cllr Mustafa Cetinkaya
Cllr Hivran Dalkaya
Cllr Guney Dogan
Cllr Elif Erbil
Cllr Ergin Erbil
Cllr Susan Erbil
Cllr Margaret Greer
Cllr Ayten Guzel
Cllr Nelly Gyosheva
Cllr Ahmet Hasan
Cllr Chris James

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Cllr Rick Jewell
Cllr Doris Jiagge
Cllr Tim Leaver
Cllr Ahmet Oykener
Cllr Sabri Ozaydin
Cllr George Savva
Cllr Doug Taylor
Cllr Eylem Yuruk

Against:

Cllr Maria Alexandrou
Cllr Lee Chamberlain
Cllr Chris Dey
Cllr Hannah Dyson
Cllr Peter Fallart
Cllr Reece Fox
Cllr Alessandro Georgiou
Cllr Pat Gregory
Cllr James Hockney
Cllr Stephanos Ioannou
Cllr Chris Joannides
Cllr Joanne Laban
Cllr Andy Milne
Cllr Elisa Morreale
Cllr Tom O'Halloran
Cllr Paul Pratt
Cllr Michael Rye
Cllr Julian Sampson
Cllr Ruby Sampson
Cllr David Skelton
Cllr Edward Smith
Cllr Jim Steven
Cllr Emma Supple
Cllr Andrew Thorp

AGREED:

I. Council agreed the revised Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 at Appendix A including:

- i. Restricting council tax support to a maximum Band C council tax liability.
- ii. Introducing a minimum non-dependant deduction for most households with other adults living in the property and increasing the current deductions by 20% as set out in the report.
- iii. Standardising the minimum payment for most working age claimants at 50% (excluding war widows and single people under 25 including care leavers).

II. Council agreed to increase the Discretionary Hardship fund by £1m.

III. Council agreed the Council Tax Support Hardship Policy attached as Appendix E in the report.

IV. Council agreed that authority be delegated to the Executive Director, Resources, to make consequential changes to the Support Scheme and the Hardship Policy in order to effectively implement the decisions of the Council in respect of the Support Scheme and the Hardship Policy.

8

HRA BUDGET AND RENT SETTING REPORT 2024-25

Cllr Savva moved and Cllr Aksanoglu seconded the report of the Executive Director – Resources and Strategic Director of Housing and Regeneration. Details of the HRA Revenue Budget for 2024/25 and the annual rent increase for Council tenants and leaseholder charges were confirmed. There was a need to cover the cost of delivering the service. Efficiency savings would also be made. Investment in stock would prioritise building safety and compliance.

The Opposition expressed concern at more raised charges to be faced by low income households. They also highlighted ongoing issues with delivery of new homes, unsafe tower blocks on the Shires Estate, and non decent housing.

Council was asked, further to Cabinet recommendation, to approve:

I. The detailed HRA Revenue Budget of £81.1m for 2024/25 as shown in paragraph 53 of the report.

II. The 10-year HRA Capital Programme of £900m and borrowing requirements to deliver 3,500 council led homes.

III. A rent increase of 7.7% in line with Government guidelines noting the social, affordable and shared ownership rent levels for the HRA properties in 2024/25.

IV. The level of service charges for 2024/25 for those tenants and leaseholders receiving eligible services at an average increase of 11%. These include enhanced services in response to resident feedback that will be implemented from April 2024 and new services that will be subject to resident consultation, as set out from paragraph 24 of the report.

V. The charges for garages, parking bay and community halls rents as set out from paragraph 41 of the report.

To Note:

VI. The heating charges for 2024/25 for those properties on communal heating systems (both electric and gas) as set out in paragraph 36 of the report.

The recommendations were put to the vote and **AGREED**.

9

CAPITAL STRATEGY AND TEN YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2033/34

The recommendations in this report were put to the meeting under the guillotine arrangements and were **AGREED**.

The Opposition advised that they would have voted against the recommendation.

The Council agreed

I. To approve the:

- a. General Fund 2024/25 capital programme budget of £213.1m and notes the 2024/25-2033/34 ten-year capital programme (as detailed in Appendix A)
- b. 2023/24 £36.5m budget carry forwards requested at Period 8 (November) (as detailed in Appendix B)
- c. Delegation of authority, to the Executive Director of Resources, to transfer unspent borrowing of up to £500k between projects in the capital programme, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance and Procurement.
- d. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Social Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement to agree capital investment into temporary accommodation solutions up to £30m (moving budget from Pipeline to the main capital programme). This is to enable the council to move quickly in bringing solutions to fruition. Any investment approved under this delegation must be self-financing i.e., capable of servicing interest and repaying debt over the useful economic life of the asset.
- e. The delegation to Cabinet approval of projects up to £10m from the Pipeline Programme, provided the programme continues to fit within the affordability metrics.

II. To note:

- a. The Pipeline projects (as detailed in Appendix E). These are indicative project budget estimates that are subject to a full business case review (where relevant) and separate approval, prior to being added to the approved programme.

10

2024/25 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The recommendations in this report were put to the meeting under the guillotine arrangements and were **AGREED**.

The Opposition advised that they would have voted against the recommendation.

The Council agreed

I. To review and note the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 (Appendix 1 of the report).

II. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25.

III. That Quarterly Treasury monitoring, from 2024/25, of the Council's Treasury position including Prudential Indicators is delegated to Cabinet as part of the quarterly monitoring cycle with the exception of the Mid-year update and Outturn positions which will be submitted to Council.

11

REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE STATUTORY PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The recommendations in this report were put to the meeting under the guillotine arrangements and were **AGREED**.

The Opposition advised that they would have voted for the recommendation.

12

COUNCILLOR QUESTION TIME

This item was noted under the guillotine arrangements. Answers to questions were provided in the supplementary agenda.

13

MEMBER ATTENDANCE DISPENSATION

Under the provisions of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, a councillor must have approval by the authority if they are unable to attend a meeting of the authority for a period of six consecutive months. The dispensation must be granted prior to the expiry of that period. This request complies.

The recommendations in this report were put to the meeting under the guillotine arrangements and were **AGREED**.

The Opposition advised that they would have voted for the recommendation.

The Council approved a dispensation which will remain in place until further notice, for Councillor Gina Needs from the requirements of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

14

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

There were no changes to committee memberships.

15

NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no changes to outside bodies memberships.

16

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was **NOTED** as 6 March 2024, (note this meeting subsequently took place on 19 March 2024).