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COUNCIL - 22.1.2025

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 22 JANUARY 2025

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT

Mohammad Islam, Margaret Greer, Abdul Abdullahi, Josh Abey, Nicki Adeleke, Gunes Akbulut, Maria Alexandrou, Nawshad Ali, Kate Anolue, Ian Barnes, Mahym Bedekova, Alev Cazimoglu, Mustafa Cetinkaya, Lee Chamberlain, Hivran Dalkaya, Chris Dey, Hannah Dyson, Elif Erbil, Susan Erbil, Peter Fallart, Reece Fox, Alessandro Georgiou, Patricia Gregory, Adrian Grumi, Ayten Guzel, Nelly Gyosheva, Ahmet Hasan, James Hockney, Stephanos Ioannou, Chris James, Doris Jiagge, Chris Joannides, Destiny Karakus, Joanne Laban, Tim Leaver, Elisa Morreale, Ahmet Oykenner, Sabri Ozaydin, Bektas Ozer, Paul Pratt, Michael Rye OBE, Julian Sampson, Ruby Sampson, George Savva MBE, David Skelton, Edward Smith, Jim Steven, Emma Supple, Doug Taylor and Andrew Thorp

ABSENT

Mahmut Aksanoglu, Chinelo Anyanwu, Sinan Boztas, Guney Dogan, Ergin Erbil, Thomas Fawns, Suna Hurman, Rick Jewell, Andy Milne, Gina Needs, Tom O'Halloran, Nia Stevens and Eylem Yuruk

THE MAYORS CHAPLAIN GAVE A BLESSING

Imam Saifur Rahman from Quran Academy 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 were received from Councillors Chinelo Anyanwu, Guney Dogan, Ergin Erbil, Suna Hurman, Rick Jewell, Andy Milne, Gina Needs, Tom O'Halloran, Nia Stevens and Eylem Yuruk.

Councillors Mahmut Aksanoglu, Sinan Boztas, and Thomas Fawns were absent from the meeting.

3

MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the chamber and gave some feedback on his recent and future engagements.

COUNCIL - 22.1.2025

The Mayor thanked his Deputy Mayor, Cllr Margaret Greer for her continued support and for attending many events on his behalf during the Christmas period.

The Mayor welcomed Cllr Ian Barnes to his first council meeting following the by-election in November.

The Mayor took the opportunity to give thoughts and prayers to those who had lost their lives and possessions in the recent fires in Los Angeles.

A sad announcement was made of the sad loss of former Deputy Lieutenant, Council Leader, Mayor and Freeman of the Borough, Graham Eustance OBE.

Councillors were invited to say a few words in commemoration of the late Graham Eustance OBE.

Councillor Michael Rye OBE described Graham as a significant figure in the borough's history over the past 50 years. He served on Enfield Council for 42 years, initially elected for Willow Ward, which later became Town Ward.

In 1964, he decided to run for councillor due to a proposed ring road through Enfield Town that would threaten St Andrew's Church and Churchyard. As a church member, he found this unacceptable, motivating him to stand for election. His leadership abilities were evident early on when he attended Chace Boys, a Secondary Modern School, where he was Head Boy, a role he took great pride in.

During his time on the council, he served on nearly every committee, with a particular focus on Housing and Social Housing. As Chairman of Housing, he even lived in a tower block in Edmonton for a period of two weeks to understand the living conditions of council tenants. He successfully sought and secured European investment towards regeneration in Edmonton.

He also enjoyed serving on external bodies, with a keen interest in public transport. He served on the London Canals Committee, which involved extensive travel around London by boat. As Housing Associations grew, he served on Newlon Housing Board and continued his involvement even after stepping down from the council.

Councillor Rye fondly recalled the joy and memories of going on several holidays with Graham.

Councillor Doug Taylor praised Councillor Michael Rye OBE for his heartfelt tribute to Graham Eustance, who will be greatly missed.

He noted that serving as a councillor for 42 years is a testament to both longevity and dedication to the borough. Graham's service included two terms as Mayor and six years as Leader of the Council.

He first met Graham in 1998 when he became a councillor and described him as a warm, approachable, and spirited individual, qualities that are vital in politics. Although Graham was a conservative at heart, he was always open to considering the other side of the argument.

Graham was also deeply involved in community groups and played a key role in the early efforts to secure land for Chicken Shed.

On behalf of the Labour Group, Doug extended his condolences to Graham's family and wished he may rest in peace.

The Mayor will send condolences to his families at this very sad time.

Members and all attendees held a minute's silence.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Item 11 – Councillor Josh Abey declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item on Treasury Management as he is a director of Housing Gateway Ltd.

Item 11 – Councillor Doug Taylor declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item on Treasury Management as he is a director of Energetik.

Motion 13.14 – Councillor Elif Erbil declared a non-pecuniary interest in the motion on the NHS as she works for the NHS.

Motion 13.14 – Councillor Hannah Dyson declared a non-pecuniary interest in the motion on the NHS as she works for the NHS.

5 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous council meeting held on Wednesday 6 November 2024 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

6 PETITION: STOP THE CLOSURE OF THE ENFIELD SEXUAL HEALTH & CONTRACEPTIVE SERVICE

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

7 OPPOSITION PRIORITY BUSINESS - SEXUAL HEALTH PROVISION IN ENFIELD

Cllr Ruby Sampson introduced the Opposition Priority Business paper on Sexual Health Provision in Enfield.

Cllr Ruby Sampson welcomed the news to reverse the decision of the proposed closure of the Town sexual health clinic, noting that closing it would have exacerbated the health inequality between the western and eastern parts of the borough.

Cllr Ruby Sampson emphasised that council services should be local, accessible, and inclusive. The sexual health situation in Enfield is alarming, with the Town clinic conducting approximately 8,000 consultations for sexually transmitted infection tests annually. Despite this, Enfield ranks 25th out of 150 local authorities for high HIV prevalence and gonorrhoea diagnoses. While at-home test kits are available, they do not cover a full range of diseases, genital mutilation, or sexual abuse, and the instructions at present are only in English. Therefore, in-person testing, where translators are available during appointments, would be more beneficial for residents.

Cllr Alev Cazimoglu (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) responded that the Opposition had prematurely used their OPB to discuss this item, as there were no plans to close the clinics. The Opposition had been kept well-informed and up to date on this issue, including being notified in December 2024 that an informal agreement had been reached to keep the clinic open, with a paper scheduled to go to the Healthy and Safe Communities Scrutiny Panel next week.

The Cabinet Member acknowledged that the council always strives to improve services for its residents. Despite a 24% decrease in government funding, the council has maintained good services and facilities and has transitioned to a tariff-based model to provide better value services. They confirmed that the existing clinics will remain open and continue to provide essential services to the community. The council will continue to collaborate with women's health services at White Lodge, ensuring the availability of sexual health services, including private care provision for long-acting and reversible contraception, as well as e-service online testing and in-clinic testing.

Members of the Opposition supported the decision to keep the clinics open, as closing them would have forced residents to travel outside the borough, potentially deterring them due to the cost and effort involved. Some residents might find it difficult or uncomfortable to visit their local GP surgery, whereas attending a health clinic offers anonymity and could be more appealing. It was encouraging to see that cervical cancer screening has been part of the services offered for the past 18 months. This test can save approximately 5,000 lives each year in the UK.

During the debate, a procedural motion was moved by Cllr Bektas Ozer and seconded by Cllr Chris Dey under paragraph 13.20 (viii) of the Council's Procedure Rules to extend the debate for a further 30 minutes which was put to the vote and **AGREED**.

The Majority Group responded that the clinic provides accessible services and tools for residents to take charge of their own sexual health confidentially with

the continuation of providing in person services and is a vital part of overall health in general. This is a non-statutory service that has been kept running and invested in despite increasing financial pressures.

Cllr Ruby Sampson, in summing up, expressed disappointment that nurses and staff members of the clinic were initially served termination notices in November for early February, which were later revised to the end of March which undoubtedly created a stressful and uncertain period for those staff members especially over the Christmas period. She also acknowledged that while GP surgeries do offer contraception, it is extremely difficult to access due to lack of staff and available appointments.

Cllr Alev Cazimoglu responded that it was a disgrace that staff members were served contract termination notices, but this was a matter for the North Middlesex Hospital as they are the ones who employ its staff, not the council.

The Cabinet Member reiterated that there will be no changes to the current sexual health provisions within the borough and the council will continue to provide the best services for its residents.

The Mayor, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules, asked the Opposition if they wish to go to a vote on to approve the Majority Group's response and Councillor Alessandro Georgiou replied that they did.

The response from the Majority Group that the recommendations in the Opposition Priority Business paper not be taken forward was put to the vote and was **APPROVED**.

The recommendations in the Opposition Business paper were therefore not accepted.

8

JOINT LOCAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2024-2030

Cllr Alev Cazimoglu (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) moved, and Cllr Abdul Abdullahi (Cabinet Member for Childrens Services) seconded the report.

Cllr Alev Cazimoglu introduced the report of the draft Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and outlined the Health and Wellbeing Board's approach for developing a joint action plan and reporting procedure to track progress.

Members expressed their support for the strategy and the council's vision to empower every Enfield resident to live healthier for longer; and the long-term ambition is for every resident to Start Well, Live Well and Age Well. Members also thanked the officers and councillors involved in developing the strategy.

Following the debate, the recommendations were put to the vote and **AGREED**.

9

COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES TAX BASE REPORT FOR 2025/26

The Mayor acknowledged that Councillors had received written advice from the Monitoring Officer relating to section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 prior to the meeting and invited Councillors to declare if any were in arrears of Council Tax which had been outstanding for more than two months. There were no declarations.

Cllr Tim Leaver (Deputy Leader) moved, and Cllr Sabri Ozaydin (Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Placemaking) seconded, the report.

Cllr Tim Leaver introduced the report, which recommended the Council Tax and Business Rate bases for 2025/26. These must be agreed and notified to the Secretary of State and the Greater London Authority by the 31st January.

There were no changes announced in the 2024 Autumn Statement relating to the Council Tax increase limits and so the 2024/25 permitted increases remain. Therefore, the proposed limits for 2025/26 will be 2.99% for Core Council Tax and a further 2.00% for Adult Social Care precept, giving local authorities the option of increasing Council Tax by a maximum of 4.99% in 2025/26, beyond which a local referendum would be required.

The proposed schedule of discounts and premiums were set out in the report. Proposed changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme were currently subject to consultation and would be submitted to the next meeting of Council for approval. The report also set out information in relation to the 2025/26 Business Rate base and the transitional relief scheme.

The Opposition expressed their concerns that despite the business rates retention giving the Council 30% of business rate income, debt maintenance took up a lot of funds. There were proposed above-inflation increases in fees and charges, and cuts to some services. Pledges regarding Council Tax Support had been broken; the proposed changes would impact the worst-off residents in the borough. The Council Tax increase would come at time when residents were facing increased costs of living and most of whom are in the east of the borough.

Members stated that Enfield Council had one of the strongest schemes for Council Tax Support in London, and a significant percentage of residents received a discount.

Council was asked to:

- I. Agree, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of the Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, that the amount calculated by the London Borough of Enfield as its Council Tax Base for 2025/26 shall be 104,291 Band D equivalents based on a 94.99% collection rate;

COUNCIL - 22.1.2025

- II. Note the proposed 2025/26 business rates (NNDR) estimated total net yield of £132.1m, for all preceptors (Central Government, GLA and LB Enfield) based on current information available and delegates to the Executive Director of Resources authority to determine the business rates estimate for 2025/26 and certify the final NNDR1 form prior to its submission by the deadline of 31 January 2025;
- III. Note the implementation of the revised discretionary power to levy a Council Tax premium of 100% in respect of second homes from 1 April 2025, having made the necessary determination one year in advance in February 2024, as required by the legislation.
- IV. Agree to levy a Council Tax premium of 100% in relation to dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than one year (but less than five years).
- V. Note the schedule of all discounts and premiums now in place, as set out in paragraph 7 below.

Following the debate, the recommendations were put to the vote and **AGREED** with the following votes:

For (26)

Against (1)

Abstentions (23)

A procedural motion was moved by Cllr Bektas Ozer and seconded by Cllr Chris Dey under paragraph 13.20 (viii) of the Council's Procedure Rules to extend the debate on reports for a further 20 minutes which was put to the vote and **AGREED**.

10

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

Cllr Ayten Guzel (Cabinet Member for Housing) moved, and Cllr Tim Leaver (Deputy Leader) seconded, the report.

Cllr Ayten Guzel introduced the report and provided an update of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) forecast outturn position for 2024/25 at Quarter 3, covering both revenue and capital expenditure associated with delivering the Council Housing service for the benefit of tenants and leaseholders. The report presented an overall positive position, success in delivering significant improvements to housing stock, and enhancements to services including the roving security patrols were highlighted.

Members of the Opposition expressed concerns that there are still residents living in the structurally unsound Shires tower blocks two years after they were decommissioned and due to be decanted which is unacceptable, and it should

be made a priority to rehouse these residents into safe and appropriate accommodation as soon as possible.

The Majority Group responded the administration is taking the necessary steps continue to invest in council homes to deliver improvement to decency standards, comply with building, fire safety regulations, and improve the energy performance of its council properties alongside continuing to deliver new council homes through development, estate regeneration and acquisitions programmes.

Following the debate, the recommendations were put to the vote and **AGREED**.

11

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR UPDATE 2024/25

In accordance with the guillotine arrangements in the Council Procedure Rules, the recommendations in the report were put to the vote without debate and were **AGREED**.

12

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.

In accordance with the guillotine arrangements in the Council Procedure Rules, the recommendations in the report were put to the vote without debate and were **AGREED**.

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

13

QUESTIONS

In accordance with the guillotine arrangements in the Council Procedure Rules, answers to questions were taken as printed in the Supplementary Agenda.

14

MOTIONS

In accordance with the guillotine arrangements in the Council Procedure Rules all Motions **LAPSED** and were not debated.

15
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

In accordance with the guillotine arrangements in the Council Procedure Rules, the following changes to committee memberships were noted:

Councillor Ian Barnes to replace Councillor Nia Stevens on General Purposes Committee and serve as Chair.

Councillor Chris Dey to replace Councillor Joanne Laban on General Purposes Committee.

Councillor Kate Anolue to be a member of the Staff Appeals, Appointment and Remuneration Committee.

Councillor Joanne Laban to replace Councillor Maria Alexandrou on Staff Appeals, Appointment and Remuneration Committee.

16
NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no changes to outside body memberships.

17
DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was **NOTED** as Thursday 27 February 2025 at 7pm.

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