

## **ASSEMBLY**

Wednesday, 6 December 2006  
(7:00 - 9:30 pm)

### **PRESENT**

Councillor J Davis (Chair)  
Councillor W F L Barns (Deputy Chair)

Councillor A Agrawal	Councillor J L Alexander
Councillor R W Bailey	Councillor Mrs S J Baillie
Councillor R J Barnbrook	Councillor R J Buckley
Councillor Ms E Carpenter	Councillor S Carroll
Councillor H J Collins	Councillor N Connelly
Councillor J R Denyer	Councillor Miss C L Doncaster
Councillor R W Doncaster	Councillor Mrs S A Doncaster
Councillor C J Fairbrass	Councillor M A R Fani
Councillor Mrs K J Flint	Councillor N S S Gill
Councillor S S Gill	Councillor D Hemmett
Councillor I S Jamu	Councillor S Kallar
Councillor Mrs C A Knight	Councillor Miss T A Lansdown
Councillor R C Little	Councillor J E McDermott
Councillor Mrs P A Northover	Councillor W W Northover
Councillor E O Obasohan	Councillor B Poulton
Councillor Mrs J E Rawlinson	Councillor Mrs L A Reason
Councillor Mrs V M Rush	Councillor L A Smith
Councillor Miss N E Smith	Councillor J Steed
Councillor D A Tuffs	Councillor Mrs P A Twomey
Councillor G M Vincent	Councillor L R Waker
Councillor P T Waker	Councillor Mrs M M West
Councillor J R White	

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor G J Bramley	Councillor Mrs D Hunt
Councillor J K Jarvis	Councillor M A McCarthy
Councillor M E McKenzie	Councillor L Rustem

#### **55. Declaration of Members Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **56. Minutes (ordinary Assembly on 11 October 2006 and the Special Assembly 11 October 2006)**

**Agreed.**

**57. Presentation by Anne Bristow, Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services**

Received a presentation by Anne Bristow, the newly appointed Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services. The presentation outlined the role of the Adult and Community Services Department in improving the quality of life, improving health as well as creating choices and control for the resident's of the Borough.

**58. Local Government Ombudsman - Annual Letter 2005 / 2006**

Received the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2005 / 2006, presented by Mr Tony Redmond, the Local Government Ombudsman.

The report commended the Council on a number of issues including a general reduction in the number of complaints received, a total of 86 complaints against last year's total of 103, and the previous year's total of 133. The most significant trend was a fall in housing related complaints from 60 to 42. Complaints relating to housing benefit and social services also fell.

It was particularly pleasing to note that Barking and Dagenham was the only Local Authority not to receive any complaints regarding planning issues and that the average response time to first enquiries was 21.6 days against a requested timescale of 28 days.

Mr Redmond also commended the relationship between his office and the Corporate Complaints Team and the Council's willingness, in general, to respond constructively to settlement proposals.

Members welcomed the report and thanked Mr Redmond for his presentation.

**59. Local Issue - Heritage Services Presentation**

Received a presentation by Heather Wills, Head of Community Services and Libraries, Judith Etherton, Borough Archivist and Birthe Christensen, Museum Manager, Valence House. The presentation outlined the importance of heritage, a brief description of Valence House and Eastbury Manor House and the future capital developments at these sites, as well as an overview of the services provided.

**60. Motions**

**Motion 1. Development, Planning and Regeneration**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Barnbrook and seconded by Councillor Bailey:

“The Council and thus local people must have the last say in all matters in regard to development, planning and regeneration, without veto, and not other authoritative (*sic*) bodies.”

Following discussion on this item it was moved by Councillor Mrs Reason and seconded by Councillor Agrawal that the motion be now put. The motion was put to the vote and by a majority vote the motion was **not agreed**.

## **Motion 2. Flying of the Union Flag**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Mrs Knight and seconded by Councillor Barnbrook:

“To help restore civic pride and embrace the values of citizenship and Britishness (*sic*) that the Union Flag should fly over all council buildings 12 months of the year.”

The following amendment (amendment 1) was moved by Councillor Connelly and seconded by Councillor Bailey:

Add at the end - “As well as the union flag being displayed on all public buildings the cross of Saint George and the council crest flag should be displayed at the same time, these should be the only flags displayed.”

The following amendment (amendment 2) was moved by Councillor Little and seconded by Councillor Fairbrass:

Replace the original motion with – “That this Council adheres to its current custom of following the regulations, circulated by Command of Her Majesty, for flag flying on Government Offices.”

The first amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **not agreed**.

The second amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **agreed**.

**Agreed**, that this Council adheres to its current custom of following the regulations, circulated by Command of Her Majesty, for flag flying on Government Offices.

## **Motion 3. Covering of the face in public buildings**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Bailey and seconded by Councillor Steed:

“In the interest of safety and community integration that all items that fully cover the face should be banned from all public buildings. This includes crash helmets, ski masks and balaclavas, and all religious face coverings such as the burqa and niqab.”

The following amendment (amendment 1) was moved by Councillor Connelly and seconded by Councillor Bailey:

Add at the end - "If there is a genuine medical reason for the face needing to be covered e.g. burns victim or other covering to prevent injury or infection, that covering to be allowed in public buildings."

The following amendment (amendment 2) was moved by Councillor Mrs Rush and seconded by Councillor Agrawal:

Replace the original motion with – "This Council will invite all visitors to cash offices, in Civic buildings, to voluntarily remove any head covering on entry, however we acknowledge the diversity of individuals and respect the right of our residents and visitors to exercise their lawful rights."

The first amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **not agreed**.

The second amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **agreed**.

**Agreed**, that this Council will invite all visitors to cash offices, in Civic buildings, to voluntarily remove any head covering on entry, however we acknowledge the diversity of individuals and respect the right of our residents and visitors to exercise their lawful rights.

#### **Motion 4. Collective Worship in Schools**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Buckley and seconded by Councillor Steed:

"To improve integration and instil Christian values all maintained schools which have currently opted out of a daily act of collective worship should be (sic) made to reinstate them."

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Alexander and seconded by Councillor Agrawal:

Replace the original motion with – "This Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children's Services."

The amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **agreed**.

**Agreed**, that this Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

**Motion 5. Halal Meat in Schools**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Bailey and seconded by Councillor Barnbrook.

“All Halal meet (*sic*) be banned from all schools within the borough because the process of slitting an animal’s throat and leaving it to bleed to death without it being stunned is barbaric.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Fairbrass and seconded by Councillor L Smith:

Replace the original motion with – “This Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children’s Services.”

The amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **agreed**.

**Agreed**, that this Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children’s Services.

**Motion 6. School Uniforms**

Withdrawn.

**Motion 7. Maintenance and Replacement of fencing on Council Properties**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Barnbrook and seconded by Councillor Bailey:

“That funds be set aside for the maintenance and replacement of fencing on all council properties front and back.”

Following discussion on this item the motion was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **not agreed**.

**Motion 8. Allocation of new Council Housing**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor R Doncaster and seconded by Councillor Barnbrook:

“That all new council housing built in the Borough should be allocated to people that were born in the Borough or have lived continuously in the Borough for a period of not less than ten years.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor L Smith and seconded by Councillor S Gill:

Replace the original motion with – “This Council calls upon the Government to remove the restrictions on financing / funding in the Housing Act, for Council house building that applies to Local Authorities, and thereby allowing said authorities the same parity as the public sector/registered social landlord.”

The amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **agreed**.

**Agreed** that this Council calls upon the Government to remove the restrictions on financing / funding in the Housing Act, for Council house building that applies to Local Authorities, and thereby allowing said authorities the same parity as the public sector/registered social landlord.

### **Motion 9. Metal Detectors in Schools**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Steed and seconded by Councillor Buckley:

“That all schools should have metal detectors and full time security contractors present through out the day to reduce knife crime and improve security and discipline.”

The following amendment (amendment 1) was moved by Councillor Connelly and seconded by Councillor Bailey:

Add at the end – “Anybody caught within a school with an offensive weapon without good reason to be sanctioned for example, a large fine to be paid directly to school funds, expulsion from all the schools in the Borough.”

The following amendment (amendment 2) was moved by Councillor Mrs Rush and seconded by Councillor Agrawal:

Replace the original motion with – “This Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children’s Services.”

The first amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **not agreed**.

The second amendment was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **agreed**.

**Agreed**, that this Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children's Services.

**Motion 10. Canvassing by Unregistered Political Groups**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Miss Lansdown and seconded by Councillor Steed:

“That all unregistered political groups that are not standing candidates in any elections should be banned from canvassing, leafleting and any other activities that may unduly influence the outcome of elections.”

Following discussion on this item the motion was put to the vote and by a majority vote was **not agreed**.

**Motion 11. St George's Day**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Bailey and seconded by Councillor Barnbrook:

“That St Georges Day (*sic*), our national saint, be recognised by the Council and money set aside for set (*sic*) Georges Day celebrations.”

Following discussion on this item it was moved by Councillor Mrs Reason and seconded by Councillor Agrawal that the motion be put. The motion was put to the vote and by a majority vote the motion was **not agreed**.

**Motion 12. Singing of the National Anthem**

Received the following motion moved by Councillor Mrs S Doncaster and seconded by Councillor Barnbrook:

“That to increase integration and improve citizenship all schools as part of their assembly should sing the National Anthem.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Alexander and seconded by Councillor Agrawal:

Replace the original motion with – “This Council notes the motion and reminds all Councillors that the Governors of the school set the school policy and the day to day running of the school is a matter for the Head Teacher. If the mover of this motion has concerns about the policy of any school then they are advised to contact the Corporate Director of Children's Services.”

At 9.30 pm, it was moved by Councillor Fairbrass and seconded by Councillor Mrs Rush that the meeting end. This was agreed by a majority vote leaving unfinished business referred to the next meeting including the completion of the debate on motion 12 above.

**61. Appointments**

Deferred to the next meeting.

**62. Leader's Question Time**

Deferred to the next meeting.

**63. General Question Time**

Deferred to the next meeting.

**64. Final Report of the Leasehold Management Scrutiny Panel**

Deferred to the next meeting.