

MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 28 February 2018
(7:00 - 8:30 pm)

PRESENT

Cllr Syed Ghani (Chair)
Cllr Tony Ramsay (Deputy Chair)

Cllr Sanchia Alasia	Cllr Jeanne Alexander	Cllr Abdul Aziz
Cllr Melanie Bartlett	Cllr Sade Bright	Cllr Laila M. Butt
Cllr Evelyn Carpenter	Cllr Peter Chand	Cllr Josephine Channer
Cllr Faruk Choudhury	Cllr Edna Fergus	Cllr Irma Freeborn
Cllr Cameron Geddes	Cllr Kashif Haroon	Cllr Jane Jones
Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe	Cllr Eileen Keller	Cllr Giasuddin Miah
Cllr James Ogungbose	Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole	Cllr Moin Quadri
Cllr Hardial Singh Rai	Cllr Chris Rice	Cllr Lynda Rice
Cllr Darren Rodwell	Cllr Faraaz Shaukat	Cllr Liam Smith
Cllr Dominic Twomey	Cllr Lee Waker	Cllr Phil Waker

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Syed Ahammad	Cllr Simon Bremner	Cllr Rocky Gill
Cllr Chris Hughes	Cllr Amardeep Singh Jamu	Cllr Mick McCarthy
Cllr Dave Miles	Cllr Margaret Mullane	Cllr Sam Tarry
Cllr Bill Turner	Cllr Jeff Wade	Cllr John White

49. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

50. Minutes (31 January 2018)

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2018 were confirmed as correct.

51. Leader's Statement

The Leader of the Council presented a verbal statement updating the Assembly on a range of matters since the last meeting including:

- The Council's achievement of silver level accreditation against the Investors in People Standard following the recent assessment;
- The opening of a new Occupational Health premises at Porters Avenue Health Centre; and
- The tragic murder of Hasan Ozcan in the Borough on Saturday 3 February 2018. The Leader expressed his condolences to the family.

The Leader also took the opportunity to reflect on the key achievements since his election as Leader in May 2014.

52. Appointments

There were no appointments.

53. Budget Framework 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 - 2020/21

The Cabinet Member advised that a new Borough-wide initiative, to be known as 'the People's Dividend', was to be launched, providing free breakfasts to primary-age school children living in households on the minimum wage or claiming Universal Credit. A pilot scheme to provide school uniforms for those on the lowest household incomes was also being launched.

The Assembly spoke in support of the proposals and, in response to questions, the Cabinet Member advised that:

- Ward Members would be consulted regarding potential improvements to Country Parks in the Borough;
- The budget for gritting roads during adverse weather would not be cut;
- The public consultation on the Council's budget proposals for 2018/19 was wide ranging, although a key focus was given to the Council Tax proposals; and

In accordance with paragraph 10.3.2 of Part 2, Chapter 3 of the Council Constitution, the budget was put to a recorded vote and was **agreed** as follows:

For: Councillors Alasia, Alexander, Aziz, Bartlett, Bright, Butt, Carpenter, Chand, Channer, Choudhury, Fergus, Freeborn, Geddes, Ghani, Haroon, Jones, Kangethe, Keller, Miah, Ogungbose, Oluwole, Quadri, Rai, Ramsay, C Rice, L Rice, Rodwell, Shaukat, Twomey, L Waker and P Waker (31).

Against: None (0)

Abstain: None (0)

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve a base revenue budget for 2018/19 of £145.368m, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, including the new savings proposals and other adjustments as detailed in this report.
- (ii) Approve the adjusted Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) position for 2018/19 to 2020/21 allowing for other known pressures and risks at this time, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, including the additional cost of borrowing to accommodate the capital costs associated with the implementation of the MTFS;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, to finalise any contribution required to or from reserves in respect of the 2018/19 budget, pending confirmation of levies and further changes to Government grants

prior to 1 April 2018;

- (iv) Approve the Statutory Budget Determination for 2018/19 as set out at Appendix C to the report, which reflects an increase of 2.99% on the amount of Council Tax levied by the Council, a further 3% increase in relation to the Social Care Precept and the final Council Tax proposed by the Greater London Assembly (5.1% increase), as detailed in Appendix D to the report;
- (v) Note the update on the Council's transformation programme;
- (vi) Approve the provision of a loan of £2.147m from the General Fund to the Barking and Dagenham Trading Partnership to cover the cost of new vehicles;
- (vii) Approve the Council's draft Capital Programme for 2018/19 to 2021/22 totalling £531.292m, of which £163.672m related to General Fund schemes, £267.620m is HRA and £100m is for Development activity, as detailed in Appendix E to the report;
- (viii) Approve the updated Strategy for the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts at Appendix H to the report and, in doing so, note that the some of the associated savings targets shall be subject to final business cases and confirmation at future meetings of the Cabinet; and
- (ix) Approve the updated Dedicated Schools Budget for 2018/19, including the hourly rate payable to Early Years providers (3 and 4-year olds), as detailed in section 14 of the report.

Councillor Liam Smith left the meeting during deliberation of the item and therefore took no part in the vote.

54. Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2018/19

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment presented the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2018/19 which set out the Council's borrowing, investment and funding plans for the year ahead.

The Cabinet Member referred to the key issues within the TMSS, including interest rate forecasts and the potential effects of Brexit, and its importance in terms of supporting the Council's prudent approach to investments, borrowing and repayments. The report also set out details of the Council's operational boundary and authorised external borrowing limits for 2018/19.

The Assembly **resolved** to approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2018/19 and, in doing so, to:

- (i) Note the current treasury position for 2018/19 and prospects for interest rates, as referred to in paragraph 7.2 of the report;
- (ii) Approve the Council's Borrowing Strategy for 2018/19, incorporating the Debt Repayment Strategy and Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need, as

set out in Appendix 2 to the report;

- (iii) Approve the Annual Investment Strategy for 2018/19, incorporating the Creditworthiness Policy and outlining the investments that the Council may use for the prudent management of its investment balances, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (iv) Approve the Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 – 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (v) Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2018/19, representing the Council's policy on repayment of debt, as set out in Appendix 4 to the report;
- (vi) Approve the Operational Boundary Limit of £1.002bn and the Authorised Borrowing Limit of £1.102bn for 2018/19, representing the statutory limit determined by the Council pursuant to section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003, as referred to in Appendix 3 to the report; and
- (vii) Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment, to proportionally amend the counterparty lending limits agreed within the 2018/19 Treasury Management Strategy Statement.

55. Pay Policy Statement 2018/19

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment presented the draft Pay Policy Statement for the Council for 2018/19 which set out the key elements of the Council's pay policy, as required by the Localism Act 2011.

The Cabinet Member advised that, in line with the Council's commitment to pay its workers no less than the London Living Wage rate, the Cabinet had recently agreed to increase the minimum rate of pay from £9.75 to £10.20 per hour with effect from 6 November 2017.

The Cabinet Member also referred to the pay ratios within the Statement which compared the Chief Executive's salary against the median salary figure for all employees and against the lowest paid employees. It was noted that the Council fared very well in comparison with other Councils, particularly bearing in mind that many of those Councils had outsourced services at the lower end of the pay range.

The Assembly **resolved** to approve the Pay Policy Statement for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham for 2018/19 as set out at Appendix A to the report, for publication on the Council's website with effect from April 2018.

56. Review of Council Governance Arrangements

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Investment presented a report on a review of the Council's governance arrangements.

The report presented a series of proposals from the Member-led Transformation

Task Group to revise the Council's current committee governance arrangements in response to the findings from the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge of the Council in 2014 and the recommendations of the Independent Growth Commission which published its report in 2016.

The main changes to the current committee arrangements related to:

- the creation of a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee, supported by Task and Finish Groups, to replace the existing structure of five themed Select Committees;
- the creation of an Audit and Standards Committee, which combined the current responsibilities of the Standards Committee and the audit functions held by the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee;
- the renaming of the Development Control Board to the Planning Committee and a reduction in the membership from 19 to 10 Members, aimed at enabling more in-depth critical analysis of major development proposals;
- the establishment of Policy Task Groups and the role of Member Champions under the remit of the Cabinet; and
- reducing the term of Member appointments to the Pensions Committee from four years to two years.

The Cabinet Member also referred to the Chief Executive plans to develop arrangements for improved public participation in Council meetings and the work being led by the Director of Law and Governance to properly reflect the new service delivery models such as Be First and B&D Reside within the Council Constitution.

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Agree the new committee structure arrangements as detailed in section 2 of the report, as recommended by the Transformation Task Group, to take effect from the first meeting of the new Council following the Local Elections in May 2018;
- (ii) Note the establishment of Policy Task Groups and the formal creation of the role of Member Champions under the remit of the Cabinet;
- (iii) Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any further non-material changes to the new Articles;
- (iv) Note that amendments / additions to the Constitution to reflect the roles and responsibilities of Be First, B&D Reside and other Council-owned entities, as well as the internal governance arrangements relating to the Shareholder Panel and the Investment Panel as agreed by Cabinet, shall be implemented by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Constitution revision arrangements set out in paragraph 2.1, Part 7 of the Constitution;
- (v) Authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement, to develop arrangements for improved public participation in Council meetings for inclusion in the new Council Constitution;

- (vi) Agree the appointment of the Director of Policy and Partnerships as the Council's statutory Designated Scrutiny Officer; and
- (vii) Note that the new Council Constitution shall be presented for formal adoption at the Assembly on 23 May 2018.

57. Motions

There were none.

58. Questions With Notice

There were none.