

MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 30 January 2019
(7:00 - 9:15 pm)

PRESENT

Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe (Chair)
Cllr Faruk Choudhury (Deputy Chair)

Cllr Andrew Achilleos	Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah	Cllr Sanchia Alasia
Cllr Saima Ashraf	Cllr Abdul Aziz	Cllr Toni Bankole
Cllr Simon Bremner	Cllr Princess Bright	Cllr Sade Bright
Cllr Laila M. Butt	Cllr Evelyn Carpenter	Cllr Peter Chand
Cllr John Dulwich	Cllr Edna Fergus	Cllr Cameron Geddes
Cllr Syed Ghani	Cllr Rocky Gill	Cllr Kashif Haroon
Cllr Amardeep Singh Jamu	Cllr Jane Jones	Cllr Eileen Keller
Cllr Mohammed Khan	Cllr Donna Lumsden	Cllr Olawale Martins
Cllr Mick McCarthy	Cllr Giasuddin Miah	Cllr Margaret Mullane
Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole	Cllr Simon Perry	Cllr Moin Quadri
Cllr Foyzur Rahman	Cllr Tony Ramsay	Cllr Chris Rice
Cllr Lynda Rice	Cllr Ingrid Robinson	Cllr Paul Robinson
Cllr Darren Rodwell	Cllr Emily Rodwell	Cllr Faraaz Shaukat
Cllr Bill Turner	Cllr Dominic Twomey	Cllr Lee Waker
Cllr Phil Waker	Cllr Maureen Worby	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Josie Channer	Cllr Irma Freeborn	Cllr Dave Miles
Cllr Glenda Paddle	Cllr Muhammad Saleem	

42. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

43. Minutes (21 November 2018)

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2018 were confirmed as correct.

44. 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:

- Serious Crime Summit: This was an opportunity to ask the community to work with the Council and its partners. The Council has had a record number of views of its posts on the summit responding very positively on social media. The Summit announced the intention to launch a Commission on Domestic Violence tackling the 'normalisation' of DV in the local community.

- Brexit – Consideration of the potential implications for the Council across a range of areas including the local adult care workforce which is made up of 53% British nationals, 13% from within the European Economic Area (EEA) and 34% outside the EEA, those capital schemes in receipt of EU funding, the impacts on business rates, council tax collection, as well as on a number of Council contracts. In that respect initial discussions with service providers in Care and Support have not revealed any significant concerns.
- Wall of Shame introduced in January 2019 was one of the Council's initiatives to tackle GRIME CRIME.
- The New film studio and Travelodge purchase on the London East site.
- Talks with University College London (UCL) about bringing a science-engineering facility into the borough.
- New homes: 80% of those which are in shared ownership have gone to Barking & Dagenham residents.
- Purchase of Barking Power Station: this has been bought by the Corporation of London and was another step towards the Council's aspiration of also securing Spitalfields, Smithfield's and Billingsgate Markets.
- The unveiling of the first modular swimming pool at the Becontree Leisure Centre, which was opened by a past Olympic Champion (Rebecca Adlington).
- Secret Cinema is coming to the borough and has the potential to excite residents and bring a new cultural experience to the borough.
- Video footages of young people committing anti-social behaviour outside subways in the Heathway, Dagenham recently. The Council were meeting local Headteachers to identify those who were present and took part although they did not represent the vast majority of law-abiding young people in the borough.

With the permission of the Chair the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration advised that the new Mental Health Charter had been launched immediately prior to the Assembly meeting. She stated that stigma on mental health and the issues involved would not be tolerated. She added that Councillor C. Rice, the new Member Champion would be raising awareness of mental health and seeking to include this within training on first aid.

45. Appointments

The Assembly **resolved** to appoint Councillor C. Rice as a Governor representative on the North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), following his recent appointment as the Council's Member Champion for Mental Health.

46. Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum and Young Mayor Annual Report 2018

The Assembly received the BAD Youth Forum's Annual report, introduced by the Head of Engagement Opportunity and Wellbeing, who was accompanied by representatives of the Youth Forum.

This report detailed the achievements of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum during 2018. Outlining the work of each of the sub-groups, their aims and the impact of the work have completed.

The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum was now in its 17th year. It existed to provide young people with a formal platform to express their views and be ambassadors for young people locally. The Forum elected 60 young people each year through a democratic election process in each school, supported by Democratic Services. In 2018 ELUTECH opted to become members of the Forum, electing their first ever representatives. Trinity Special School elected new representatives this year, via an internal election process suitable to the needs of students.

The Forum representatives highlighted a number of areas of their work during the year, including:

Community Action Sub-Group: Young people expressed concerns about the quality of education being provided by supply teachers in secondary schools. They also led Drug and Alcohol Awareness Sessions where young people discussed concerns about a lack of awareness of drugs and alcohol and their effects on young people.

Crime Sub-Group: Throughout the year, the Group continued to discuss issues relevant to young people, including crime and in particular knife crime and invited Cabinet Members and the Metropolitan Police to a meeting to discuss their concerns in this matter.

Young Mayor Sub-Group: Events included Women's Empowerment Month launch and the Youth Parade. The chosen charity during the year was the New Horizon Youth Centre which raised £4770.89 towards their work and this would be used to purchase ID cards for young people who accessed the New Horizon Youth Centre in the form of a passport.

Young Inspectors Sub-Group: Young inspectors were commissioned by Public Health Officers in the borough to quality assure the Come Correct Condom Distribution scheme (C- card scheme) in Barking and Dagenham. They also inspected retail outlets that were selling knives, in some cases to underage children. In answer to a question from Members, representatives of the Sub-Group confirmed they would consider inspecting other areas.

The Chair thanked representatives of the Forum for their excellent presentation and their work during the year. Members welcomed their work in raising civic pride and considered they were a credit to the borough, which included their sterling work on inspections at pharmacies, selling of knives, drug and alcohol and quality of teachers. They also welcomed their attendance at a recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in which they related their experiences going to and from and being at school.

47. Final Third Local Implementation Plan Submission

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing introduced a report on the Council's third Local Implementation Plan (LIP3), which set out the Council's long-term strategy for delivering improvements to the transport network and services in support of the Borough Manifesto ambitions for delivering inclusive, sustainable growth in Barking and Dagenham.

A draft LIP3 was approved by Cabinet on 16 October 2018 (Minute 42 referred) and submitted to Transport for London (TfL) for comment on 2 November. A five-week period of consultation with a range of statutory and local stakeholders then ensued which ended on 7 December. At the same time, consultation was undertaken on a draft Environmental Report, produced as part of a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the LIP. The Cabinet Member advised that some minor changes had been made to the final LIP3 as a result of the feedback received.

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the minor changes to the draft Third Local Implementation Plan (LIP3) following the formal consultation period; and
- (ii) Approve the final draft version of the LIP3 for submission to Transport for London and sign-off by the Mayor of London.

48. Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019/23

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration. As required by the Health and Care Act 2012, a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy was required for 2019-2023 to follow on from the 2015-2018 strategy. The strategy set a renewed vision for improving the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities at every stage of people's lives. The three priority themes for the strategy have been agreed by Health and Wellbeing board in January 2019 when presented with the 2017 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA):

- 1) *Best Start in Life*
- 2) *Early Diagnosis and Intervention*
- 3) *Building Resilience*

The Cabinet Member advised that there would be zero tolerance for domestic abuse which costs £666m in the UK. She highlighted Outcome 3 (improved multi-agency support for those with adverse childhood experiences).

Members welcomed the Strategy including outcomes, priorities and enablers and considered that early intervention in ensuring health and wellbeing was important. They welcomed the JSNA and priority 3 (building resilience) and empowering residents and considered it also important for improved 'joined up' services with the NHS and its partners including the Council.

Members welcomed the health checks which were available for residents aged over 50 but take up of these checks was quite low and this needed to be

publicised to a greater degree.

In answer to a question about the link to the Council's Parks Strategy and outcome 5(to improve physical and mental health wellbeing), the Cabinet Member confirmed that whilst there was a link between both Strategies it should be re-emphasised as utilising parks and green spaces played a key role in enhancing and improving health and well-being.

The Assembly **resolved** to note the content of the Strategy including the 3 priority themes, and the 7 outcomes within the document.

49. Council Tax Support Scheme 2019/20

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Core Services introduced a report on the local Council Tax Support (CTS) Reduction Scheme for 2019/20.

The Cabinet had considered the report at its meeting on 22 January 2019 and recommended that the fundamentals of the scheme remain unchanged from 2018/19, although some amendments were necessary in order to align with the latest Government welfare reforms, such as Universal Credit.

The Assembly **resolved** that the Council Tax Support (CTS) Reduction Scheme implemented for 2018/19 be retained for 2019/20, subject to the following minor amendments:

- Treat Universal Credit Award Notifications as an Intention to Claim CTS providing that a valid claim form for CTS is made within a month of the decision to award Universal Credit;
- Adopt a shortened claim form for the purposes of claiming CTS when Universal Credit has been awarded;
- Accept Universal Credit as a "passported" benefit when claiming within a month of a new liability for CTS purposes;
- Amend the capital threshold for CTS purposes to £10,000 for working age persons to align it with Pension Age capital limits; and
- Re-introduce backdate on CTS of up to four weeks, subject to good cause to align it with the Housing Benefit scheme.

50. Motions

Moved by Councillor Ashraf and seconded by Councillor Kangethe:

"This Council expresses alarm at the rise in antisemitism in recent years across the UK. This includes incidents when criticism of Israel has been expressed using antisemitic tropes. Criticism of Israel can be legitimate, but not if it employs the tropes and imagery of antisemitism.

We therefore welcome the UK Government's announcement on December 11th 2016 that it will sign up to the internationally recognised International Holocaust

Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) guidelines on antisemitism which define antisemitism thus:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

The guidelines highlight manifestations of antisemitism as including:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanising, demonising, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

This Council welcomes the cross-party support around the country for combating antisemitism in all its manifestations. This Council hereby adopts the above definition of antisemitism as set out by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and pledges to combat this pernicious form of racism.”

Members of the Assembly spoke in support of the motion.

The motion was **carried** unanimously.

51. Questions With Notice

Question 1

From Councillor Dulwich

Following the introduction of PSPOs (Public Space Protection Orders) in parts of Barking & Dagenham, does the relevant Cabinet Member feel that the PSPOs have been a success so far?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety

Public Space Protection Orders (or PSPOs) are a way of tackling anti-social behaviour in public spaces where people should expect to be able to go about their business without fear. They send an important message to the community that we are serious about tackling antisocial behaviour which can so often be a blight on an area's reputation. By placing conditions or restrictions on an area, PSPOs can then be enforced.

The PSPO in Thames Ward helps tackle the nuisance caused by speeding vehicles and joy riders. in Abbey Green, Barking Park and Mayesbrook Park, these tackle dog fouling and the Heathway and Broad Street (in Dagenham), and Barking Town Centre PSPO help tackle anti-social behaviour. These PSPO's enable officers to issue fixed penalty notices on the spot to those causing a nuisance, including those drinking alcohol, spitting, urinating or begging in an aggressive way.

The Council have issued 94 fixed penalty notices for offences caused and secured an 82% payment rate for those notices.

The Council's efforts in cracking down on dog poo through our dog poo DNA initiative have won us plaudits in the UK. The work officers do on Abbey Green and Barking and Mayesbrook Parks has reinforced this work.

The Council need to do more in our PSPOs on the Heathway, Broad Street (in Dagenham), and Barking Town Centre. The key to their success is the support and inclusion of local police teams patrolling alongside enforcement officers. It makes a huge difference to the effectiveness of our officers, including their ability to verify offenders' details as well as when dealing with people under the influence of drink or drugs, if the police are present. PSPOs are not the only way to tackle crime, but they are an important tool in tackling anti-social behaviour. The Council's Wall of Shame is another. When the Council last consulted residents, 9 out of 10 were in favour of the PSPOs.

These may be times of austerity and limited public resources, but residents are also living through a time when crime and fear of crime is at a record high. By working together with the police, the Council can use our limited resources more effectively and make the local community a safer place.

Question 2

From Councillor Khan

What action is being taken by the Council to reduce homelessness in Barking & Dagenham?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Aspiration

The Council have recently published the Draft Homelessness Strategy which sets out its on-going commitment to prevent and alleviate homelessness in the borough and builds on the work undertaken through Community Solutions which over the last two years has led to a 42% reduction in the number of people who are officially homeless and needing to be rehoused by the Council. This has been delivered within the challenging environment of increasing property prices and the roll out of Universal Credit and other welfare reforms, which have made it increasingly difficult for those on lower incomes to secure accommodation locally.

As required by the new Homelessness Reduction Act, the Council have provided information, advice and personalised planning to deliver sustainable housing solutions to those eligible for assistance from the Council. Between April - December 2018 the Council has assisted 1548 households threatened with homelessness. This was nearly double the number of households supported as the previous year.

The Council support pathways into employment and training and through the Homes and Money Hub assist residents in maximising their income. Where appropriate the Council offers discretionary funding to support those residents willing to help themselves sustain their tenancies and avoid the risk of homelessness. The use of Discretionary Housing Payments helped 1,286 residents sustain their tenancies in 2018.

The Council's rent deposit scheme and Prevention Fund have helped 377 households from becoming homeless so far this year through providing them with financial assistance to find accommodation in the private sector or keep their current home available to them. This is over three times the number of people who were assisted in this way as last year.

The Council has enabled residents to move into an offer of a private rented property which they can afford, and successfully enabled 237 households to move into such accommodation.

As the main causes of homelessness are landlord evictions and parental exclusion from the home, the Council are continuing to liaise with private sector landlords and working with families who may be looking to eject their children or family from households. This has, over the last three years, led to a 43% reduction in households becoming homeless because of landlords regaining their properties and a 56% reduction in those excluded by parents.

The Council has also recently committed to tackle rough sleeping in the borough. While the numbers are historically low in comparison to neighbouring boroughs, the sight of street sleeping is a stark reminder of people's desperation and the

Council plan to adopt a partnership No Second Night Out model of working with rough sleepers. This will provide a place of safety where the needs of rough sleepers can be quickly assessed and receive access to recovery and housing services

Question 3

From Councillor P. Robinson

The Government recently announced a new Long-Term Plan for the NHS. What assessment has the Cabinet Member for Social Care & Health Integration made of the impact this may have on NHS services that are used by residents of our borough?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration

The NHS Long Term Plan has finally arrived. There is much in the plan that the Council support, including:

- • The shift in focus to primary and community services
- • Extra funding for those places with the greatest health inequalities
- • Action on screening and vaccination inequalities
- • £30M for rough sleeping initiatives
- • Additional NHS gambling clinics
- • We welcome too the strong focus on mental health.

But all of the commitments above cannot be done by the NHS in isolation. They need collaboration with local authorities.

The NHS Plan pushes the creation of Integrated Care Systems, where health and care work more seamlessly, shifting resources out of expensive hospital care and into prevention and early intervention. This is what the Council are working on with its health partners and London Boroughs of Redbridge and Havering. However, the Council is concerned that:

- The plans are 'undeliverable' without a good spending review settlement for public health and social care; and
- The NHS needs to invest in and jointly commission first-line community support services, like our Community Solutions service, to deliver the plans efficiently – we need to operate as a care system.

The Council are very concerned about a commitment to review at the commissioning of sexual health services, school nurses and health visitors, services that are commissioned by local authority Public Health teams. There has been no consultation with the Council, which implies that the arrangement is not working, although there is no evidence of that. There is, however, evidence of the pressure of reducing public health funding by Government, so maybe NHS England should consider reviewing this.

In terms of the joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the challenge to the Client

Commissioning Group (CCG) is that they are receiving an additional £19 million to take more account of very high deprivation and of mental health and community care needs in the borough.

There should be greater work undertaken through the Integrated Care Partnership Board (ICPB) and jointly invest in our transformation plans for prevention, independence & resilience, inclusive growth and participation & engagement. With each part funded appropriately and sustainably.

Question 4

From Councillor Akwaboah

What is the Council's position on the proposed academisation of Catholic schools in Barking & Dagenham?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement

This Council opposes the academisation of LBBB Catholic schools and wholeheartedly supports Catholic education. Usually a school would become an academy because it is vulnerable or failing, however, all Catholic schools in Barking and Dagenham are good or outstanding and Catholic education is flourishing in the borough and the strong family of schools and headteachers support each other and share good practice.

The Council have helped a Catholic primary school in difficulties and has a very strong record of school improvement and invested over £13 million in Catholic school buildings in recent years to improve and expand them. The Council has improved facilities for vulnerable pupils and has a responsive and expert service for children with high needs. The Council offers a Borough-wide rich school curriculum in sports, arts, music, outdoor education, sports and healthy schools.

Question 5

From Councillor Rahman

Given that the parking restrictions in Barking Town Centre are in place until 9 pm every evening, is there any possibility that the hours of operation could be changed in future?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety

The Town Centre area is still heavily used into the evenings by visitors, commuters and businesses. Residents raised this as an issue during the consultation process and felt that finishing the zones at 5.30pm was too early and might prevent them from being able to park when arriving home from work. The hours of operation were therefore extended to 9pm to facilitate resident parking. The current restrictions are in place as a result of consultation. Therefore, the restrictions could change in future, although this will depend on residents' views as part of any future consultation.

Question 6

From Councillor Fergus

What is the Council doing to tackle fuel poverty in Barking & Dagenham?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing

2.5m households in the UK are estimated to be fuel poor, of which more than 8,000 households in Barking and Dagenham are struggling because of low incomes, high energy prices and energy inefficient housing. However, over the last few years the Council has lifted an estimated 3,000 households out of fuel poverty through a mix of energy efficiency advice, promoting access to cheaper tariffs and a programme of retrofitting, heating and insulation works to social and private sector housing.

In January 2019, the Council launched Beam Energy in partnership with the not-for-profit energy company Robin Hood Energy, to provide residents access to a range of more affordable fuel tariffs which will be within cheapest 15% on offer in London. As the market stands at the moment Beam's standard variable tariff is already 4% cheaper than the big six energy companies and Beam's prepayment offer is 7% cheaper and the most competitive fixed term tariff is 9% cheaper, giving many residents an opportunity to get a good deal, save some money and warm their homes for less: this offer will be open to anyone living in London and the Eastern region. For vulnerable households, Beam is also offering an annual £140 Warm Homes Discount every winter to help towards fuel costs. As the contract develops the Council will complement this through a fuel debt support initiative which will seek to assist voluntary sector partners support households who are in arrears with their energy bills.

In addition, the Council are in discussions with energy suppliers regarding access to the Government's ECO3 funding, so that the Council can carry out heating and insulation works to 1,267 council owned properties which we have been identified as being cold, inefficient E, F and G rated properties. Up to 10,000 Owner-occupiers and almost 4,000 private rented tenants could also benefit from such measures where they are in receipt of qualifying benefit.

Over the last seven years the Council have obtained an estimated £15m of external funding for heating, insulation and retrofitting works for over 10,000 older homes in Barking and Dagenham, across all tenures and as part of the planning process the Council need to be satisfied that all refurbishments and new-build properties meet the insulation and conservation of fuel and energy requirements laid out in Part L of the Building Regulations.

Question 7

From Councillor Oluwole

Does the Council have any plans to redevelop derelict sites with old garages and use them to provide homes for local residents.?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Social Housing

The Council and Be First have a good track record in redeveloping unused garage sites into new affordable housing. In the current financial year completed examples include Burbridge and Tarling Close where high-quality bungalows have been built housing 16 households. These schemes have delivered affordable rent bungalows enabling older and disabled residents to move to purpose-built homes and release larger, under occupied homes for local families. The schemes have won prestigious design plaudits and been very well received by residents. Mitchell Close (off Burford Close) also delivered a further 6 affordable homes following on from a number of 'infill' schemes in previous years.

Schemes in Sugden Way and Wivenhoe Road have recently secured planning approval and will be under construction later this year. Chelmer Crescent in Thames View is currently in the design stage whilst a number of other garage sites are currently being considered with feasibility work underway. Be First will continue to liaise with My Place on further opportunities to unlock delivery of new homes wherever feasible.