

CROYDON COUNCIL

MINUTES

**of the meeting held on
Monday 20th April 2015 at 6.30 p.m.
in the Council Chamber**

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR MANJU SHAHUL-HAMEED - PRESIDING.

Councillors Audsley, Ali, Avis, Bains, Bashford, Bee, Benn, Bennett, Bird, Bonner, Butler, Buttinger, Canning, Chatterjee, Chowdhury, Clancy, Clouder, Collins, Creatura, Cummings, Fisher, Fitzsimons, Flemming, Gatland, Godfrey, Hale, Hall, Hay-Justice, Henson, Hollands, Hopley, Jewitt, Kabir, Khan B, Khan S, King Kyeremeh, Lawlor, Letts, Lewis, Mann, Mansell, Mead D, Mead M, Mohan, Neal, Newman, O'Connell, Pelling, Perry, Pollard H, Pollard T, Prince, Quadir, Rendle, Ryan P, Scott, Selva, Speakman, Stranack, Thomas, Thompson, Watson, Wentworth, Winborn, Wood, Woodley, Wright

ABSENT: Councillor Brew

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologises were received from Councillor Brew.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council (Council Tax) Meeting held on 23 February 2015 be signed as a correct record.

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

All Members of the Council confirmed that their interests as listed in their Declaration of Interests Forms were accurate and up-to-date.

4. URGENT BUSINESS (If Any)

None

5. EXEMPT ITEMS

None

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked Members for their support of her various charity events. She reminded Members of forthcoming events, details of which were on noticeboards in the Members area.

Councillor Tony Newman, Leader of the Council welcomed Councillor David Wood following his successful election in Selhurst Ward.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – QUESTIONS FROM THE PEOPLE OF CROYDON.

Under the provisions of the Council Procedure Rules (Croydon Constitution, Part 4A), written questions had been submitted and written replies were given by the relevant Cabinet Member. These were placed in the Chamber and Public Gallery. Oral supplementary questions were asked by members of the public. Oral replies were provided by the relevant Cabinet Members.

Oral Supplementary questions were asked by:

- PQ024-15 – Mrs Jones
- PQ025-15 – Mr Weaving
- PQ027-15 - Mrs Ahmed
- PQ029-15 – Mr Samuel

[Note the written Public Questions and written replies can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/council-questions]

8. MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

Two motions were submitted for debate in accordance with Council Procedure Rules as follows:

- 1. Proposed by Councillor Kathy Bee
Seconded by Councillor Robert Canning.**

“This Council supports the proposed implementation of 20 mph zones in order to make our communities safer.”

Councillor Kathy Bee in moving the motion said she was pleased to be speaking about the introduction of 20mph zones which were a key Labour Manifesto pledge. She went on to say that all residents would be consulted on the 20mph zones scheme over the next three years. The introduction of the zones would make the boroughs roads safer as it had been proven that the risk of death from accidents was reduced at that speed. Cllr Bee said that slower traffic speeds would have added health benefits as it would encourage people to walk or cycle. In summing up Cllr Bee said that this was not an anti-motorists policy but a policy for all of Croydon’s residents to make Croydon’s road safer.

Councillor James Thompson, speaking against the motion said that the proposals for 20 mph zones was an ill thought out policy and that reckless drivers were responsible for speeding. He went on to say that a blanket policy across the borough was not what residents wanted and did not address individual ward issues. He asked what public consultation would take place, what surveys had been undertaken and what residents association had been asked. In summing up he said that residents in his Ward did not agree with a blanket policy.

Councillor Sean Fitzsimons, speaking for the motion, said that he had been keen to introduce 20mph zone Borough wide in 2009 but that it had been rejected by the previous administration. He spoke about some roads in his Ward where speeding traffic had been a problem and the removal of speed humps and other methods of speed reduction in spite of residents wanting the speed of traffic reduced. In summing up he spoke about the research that had been undertaken in Addiscombe that showed strong support for traffic calming measures.

Councillor Richard Chatterjee, speaking against the motion, opened saying that consultation was a key issue. He went on to say that organisations like RoSPA and '20 is Plenty for Us' draw a distinction between zones and limits and show examples of how these work and the costs implications. He went on to speak about the way that different zones could be managed, they could be time managed, for example outside schools. In summing up Cllr Chatterjee said that the knock on effects of introducing the 20mph limits such as speeding between zones and slow traffic should also be considered.

Councillor Vidhi Mohan, speaking against the motion, said that all councillors wanted to make sure the Boroughs road were safe but the introduction of a blanket 20mph zones was not the answer. He asked where the accidents 'blackspots' in the Borough were as the evidence does not suggest that all roads are dangerous. He went on to ask how the consultation would be undertaken; would it be by notices on lampposts or an online survey, or would all residents be written to. In summing up he asked what would happen if residents rejected the 20mph zone and how would police enforce the new limits.

Councillor Robert Canning, seconding the motion said that slower speeds were safer for residents. He agreed that consultation and enforcement were key issues but that Labour councillors would ensure their residents knew if their area was one of the five that would be initially consulted on. He said that no assumptions would be made about the introduction of the scheme as it would depend on the responses from that consultation. In summing up he said that responsible motorist would drive at the speed limit and that targeted traffic calming and police enforcement could be introduced.

The motion was **put** and **carried** with no votes against.

**2. Proposed by Councillor Tim Pollard
Seconded by Councillor Dudley Mead**

"This Council strongly supports residents' aspirations to own their own homes, is committed to development of new build on brownfield sites and supports tenants' desire for quality homes at a price they can afford."

Councillor Tim Pollard, in moving the motion, said that on his side of the Chamber they understood the importance of people owning their own homes, if they rent they want a good standard at a price they could afford. He said for many people renting is a step towards owning their own home but for that many unable to achieve this dream, especially in London. He went on to speak about the 'right to buy' scheme that had allowed people to own their home at an affordable price. In summing up he

questioned the Labour record on building new houses and said more could be done to identify 'brown field' sites in public ownership that could be used for to meet the housing need and protect the boroughs green spaces.

Councillor Alison Butler opened by saying who would not agree the motion; indeed it talks about values that the Labour party hold dear. She went on to question the party opposite record on social housing, the lowest level of houses built since the 1920's, lowest level of home ownership since 1985, lowest number of affordable homes built in the last 5 years and the reduction in grants to housing associations. Councillor Butler also spoke about the bedroom tax, benefits cuts with no allowance for rent levels in London, permitted development allowing developers to build without including affordable housing or limiting the size of properties, vacant building credit and their opposition to the landlord licensing scheme. In summing up Cllr Butler said that right to buy was an attack on housing stock and did nothing to help the housing shortages.

Councillor Jason Perry, speaking for the motion, said that the key issue was one of supply to meet the demand in the town and that Croydon has a robust local plan and policies that encouraged local development. He went on to say that there were many brownfield sites in the borough and that under the previous administration there was a 5 year housing supply plan something that other boroughs do not have. There is a borough character appraisal and plans to provide thousands of new homes, many of which are in the town centre. He went on to say that this was achieved without the need to build in back gardens or conservation areas. Cllr Perry questioned the requirement of a 50% affordable housing level that would risk many developments and make schemes unprofitable for developers.

Councillor Oliver Lewis, opened by saying that the Labour group would support the motion as they supported residents owning their own homes. However he went on to say that the administration was working with developers to include more affordable properties in the scheme. He went on to question the previous administrations record on affordable housing levels in development schemes. He went on to say that the administration would match resident's ambitions for Croydon, to buy or rent a decent home in Croydon. He spoke of the 'use it or lose it' policy where developers were holding prime sites but not taking any development forward.

Councillor Tony Newman, said that whilst the administration agreed with the words of the motion they did not agree with the policies. He went on to speak about young people being priced out of the housing market, a shortage of affordable houses and rouge landlords. He spoke of the administration's policy to increase the affordable housing levels for new development schemes for 30% to 50% and the implementation of the Landlords Licencing Scheme.

Councillor Dudley Mead, seconding the motion, said he was pleased everyone agreed that it was everyone's aspiration to have a house and to own it. He went on to speak about the administration's failure to complete the building of 41 houses that were in progress when Labour came to power. He went on to speak about the standards of rented accommodation in the town and said that the previous administration did pursue rogue landlords. On the Landlords Licensing scheme Cllr Mead said the Cabinet Member for housing had said that 94% of private landlords

were satisfactory therefore the Council should be pursuing the 6% of rogue landlords that do not maintain satisfactory standards.

The motion was **put** and **carried** with no votes against.

9. BUSINESS REPORT OF THE LEADER INCORPORATING COUNCILLORS' WRITTEN QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS

The Leader presented the Business Report summarising the proceedings of the Cabinet since the last meeting of the Council.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules, written questions had been submitted in advance by Council Members and written replies had been given by the relevant Cabinet Members. The questions and answers had been placed in the Chamber. Supplementary questions were asked by Members of the Council and replies were given by the relevant Cabinet Members.

Each Cabinet Member was asked in turn if they had anything to add to their report. Questions were then invited from the Chamber for each Cabinet Member who replied orally to the questions on specific paragraphs or submitted questions.

The following Members asked questions on the Business Report

The Leader: Councillors T Pollard, Pelling, D Mead, Audsley, Hopley and Stranack

Councillor Flemming: Councillors Gatland, Stranack and Bird

Councillor Godfrey: Councillors Bashford, Rendle, Mohan

Councillor Bee: Councillors Mohan, Prince, Thomas, Pelling, Buttinger, and Audsley

Councillor Watson: Councillor Mohan

Councillor Collins: Councillors Thomas, S Khan and Bashford.

Councillor Hall: Councillors Cummings, Creatura and Rendle

Councillor Woodley: Councillor M Mead

At 20.45 Councillor Newman moved a procedure motion 1.11.9 to move to the next item of business. This was seconded by Councillor Collins and agreed by Council.

The following Cabinet Members made announcements:

Councillor Godfrey: Updated Council on the progress of the Ashburton Park Library building refurbishments. He also advised that Monks Hill Community Centre would open on April 25th and thanked staff across the Council for their work in this respect.

Councillor Watson: advised Council that a review was being undertaken of gambling and betting shop licenses and the fees charged and a report will come back to Council later in the year.

Councillor Hall: Clarified that Pensions Committee was clear on governance issues and the desire to work in a cross party way.

Councillor Butler: Paid tribute to officers, Dave Sutherland and Peter Brown who were leaving the Council and thanked them for all they had done for Croydon. She wished them well for the future.

Council RESOLVED

- to adopt the Children and Families Plan 2015-16 and;

- to adopt the Interim Equalities and Inclusion Plan 2014-16

10. ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2014/2015 and SCRUTINY BUSINESS REPORT

Councillor Fitzsimons moved the business report and Councillor Bonner seconded

Councillor Fitzsimons advised Council that there may be some minor amendments to the Annual report and that the Committee had empowered him approve any such amendments. Councillor Fitzsimons introduced the report saying that it detailed the cross party work of the committee over the last year. He thanked the Councillors, Cabinet Members and members of the public who had participated in the Scrutiny process over the year. Cllr Fitzsimons went on to say that the purpose of Scrutiny was to hold the executive to account and give people a voice. Question and answer session with Cabinet Members had been reintroduced, streets and environment was reviews for the first time in 4 years, a number of mini reviews were undertaken and there was an increase in pre decision scrutiny. Young people had also been given a voice in the process. In summing up Cllr Fitzsimons thanked the Deputy Chair and Vice Chair of the sub committees and also all councillors for engaging in the process. He hoped that more back benchers would become involved over the coming year.

Councillor Bonner, Chair of Health, Social Care & Housing Sub Committee, spoke of the work of the subcommittee; this included a mock CQC review at Croydon University Hospital. Cllr Bonner advised Council that meetings were now being held in the community.

Councillor Bashford, Chair of Children and Young People Sub Committee, spoke of the work of the subcommittee and advised Council that training would be given on Safeguarding.

Councillor Flemming thanked Cllr Fitzsimons and Cllr Bashford for their work around children and safeguarding and advised that the safeguarding training would be mandatory for Members.

The following Members asked questions:

Councillor Oliver Lewis: Thanked Cllr Bashford for involving young people. Asked about the Royal Mail mini review.

Councillor Stephen Mann: Praised the work done by the chairs of each of the committees. Asked about Woodside station.

Councillor Toni Letts: Thanked the chair for the mini review completed around youth employability and congratulated all involved in taking scrutiny out to schools.

Oral replies were given by the respective Scrutiny chairs.

Council **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

11. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES AND AUDIT COMMITTEE 2014/15

Councillor Kyeremeh moved the report and Councillor Kabir seconded.

Councillor Kyeremeh introduced the report saying that the committee had been set up to bring together the previous Corporate Services Committee and Audit Advisory Committee. The committee had covered a wide range of topics and held training sessions that all Members had been invited to. Cllr Kyeremeh congratulated officers who were involved in producing the Council's final accounts and the Council's Risk Register. He congratulated Simon Maddocks, Head of Governance and the Council's fraud team who had been nominated for a number of national awards. In summing up he thanked officers and Members for their work over the year.

Councillor Cummings asked about the appointment process for the independent members.

Council **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

12. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Councillor Mansell moved the report and Councillor Margaret Mead seconded.

Councillor Mansell introduced the report and explained that the Board is a partnership of commissioners, NHS providers and patient representative and was a non-political Board. Cllr Mansell thanked Cllr Margaret Mead, the vice chair, and other councillors and officers for their work over the year. She went on to say that the purpose of the Board was to improve the health of the people of Croydon.

The following Councillors asked questions:

Councillor Rendle – Regarding the work plan and autism awareness among health workers.

Councillor Clouder – The pressures seen on mental health services

Councillor Hopley – Asked about the political neutrality of the Board.

Oral replies were given by the Chair

Council **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

13. COUNCILLORS' OPEN SESSION ON WARD MATTERS ON BEHALF OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Councillor Wood in his first speech since being elected said it was an honour and privilege to represent **Selhurst Ward**. Cllr Wood spoke about the makeup of the Ward and described it as a gateway to central Croydon. It included national and international recognised names like the Brit School and Crystal Palace football club. He went on to say that people were moving to Selhurst from outside the borough as the offer of affordable homes, excellent transport links and schools were a benefit for the area. He also spoke about the challenges in the Ward, including zero hour's contracts, poorly maintained properties and discrimination.

Councillor Winborn spoke of the start of regeneration of **Fairfield Ward** that had taken place over the last 8 years. She went on to speak about the preservation of the heritage of the area with improvement to Fairfield Halls of paramount importance. The redevelopment of the Whitgift Centre would bring

new homes and jobs and the numerous residential developments would provide family homes.

Councillor Ali said that she was proud to serve the people of **Woodside Ward** and took Members on a virtual tour of Portland Road to highlight the challenges faced by residents. She spoke about the work of the Citizens Advise Bureau and the issues regularly raised including problems with landlords. This issue would be addressed by the introduction of the Landlords Licensing Scheme. She also spoke about cuts in social housing stocks, waiting times for GPs, improved street cleaning and new bins being introduced by the Labour administration. She praised the work of local residents in setting up a street market.

Councillor Margaret Mead spoke about **Heathfield Ward**, saying it was a privilege to represent a vibrant and diverse community. She thanked all those at CUH hospital for the work involved in the successful bid for the A&E at the hospital that would bring improved facilities. She also thanked the previous administration for the new 'one form' entry at Forestdale School providing 60 additional places for local children; the build at Quest Academy and congratulated them on their award of the autism certificate and the Tree House unit at Courtwood primary providing spaces for up to 14 children with Asperger's.

Councillor Rendle took Members of a virtual car ride around **Ashburton Ward**. Long Heath Gardens, a diverse and vibrant community with cleaner streets. Long Lane Wood and the bird sanctuary are being renovated. He thanked the Monks Orchard Residents Association for long service and dedication to the area. Ashburton playing fields for all to use, Stroud Green has a new school and cleaner roads and the Addiscombe Boys & Girls Club. Spring Lane Bridge is now open to buses therefore improving the transport links for the area. Ashburton Park to be used as a multi-use community facility. He also spoke about the variety of local shops and food outlets in Lower Addiscombe Road and the good work being undertaken by various local residents associations on issues such as road safety. .

14. PETITIONS TO BE PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS TO COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF CROYDON

Petitions were presented formally by Councillors as follows in accordance with Council Procedure Rules:

1) A petition presented by Councillor Steve Hollands (for Councillor Steve O'Connell) on behalf of residents of Hayes Lane junction with Park Road.

2) A petition presented by Councillor Stuart King on behalf of residents of Gonville Road.

3) A petition presented by Councillor Vidhi Mohan on behalf of residents of Hamlyn Gardens.

3) A petition presented by Councillor Vidhi Mohan on behalf of residents of Norbury Avenue.

These petitions were referred to the relevant Cabinet Member. In accordance with the Council's Constitution the reply to these petitions will be included in the agenda for the next Ordinary Council meeting.

15. RESPONSES TO PETITIONS PRESENTED TO COUNCIL ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF CROYDON

In accordance with the Council procedure rules, the printed responses were open to questions from Councillors. There were no questions.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CABINET AND COMMITTEES DEFERRED FOR DEBATE

There was no business under this item.

17. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting ended at 21:56

Full copies of the Council agenda, reports and appendices are available in the on the Council website at www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/minutes/committees

The webcast of this meeting can be found at www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/dande/broadcasts