

COUNCIL  
10 JULY 2019

(7.15 pm - 10.17 pm)

PRESENT            The Mayor, Councillor Janice Howard  
                         The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Edward Foley

Councillors Agatha Mary Akyigyina OBE, Stephen Alambritis, Mark Allison, Stan Anderson, Laxmi Attawar, Eloise Bailey, Thomas Barlow, Nigel Benbow, Hina Bokhari, Mike Brunt, Adam Bush, Omar Bush, Ben Butler, Tobin Byers, Billy Christie, David Chung, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Pauline Cowper, Mary Curtin, David Dean, John Dehaney, Nick Draper, Anthony Fairclough, Brenda Fraser, Jenifer Gould, Edward Gretton, Joan Henry, Daniel Holden, James Holmes, Andrew Howard, Natasha Irons, Sally Kenny, Linda Kirby, Paul Kohler, Rebecca Lanning, Najeeb Latif, Edith Macauley MBE, Russell Makin, Peter McCabe, Simon McGrath, Nick McLean, Oonagh Moulton, Aidan Mundy, Hayley Ormrod, Dennis Pearce, Owen Pritchard, Carl Quilliam, David Simpson CBE, Marsie Skeete, Peter Southgate, Geraldine Stanford, Eleanor Stringer, Dave Ward, Martin Whelton, Dickie Wilkinson and David Williams MBE JP

1        APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Braund and Crowe. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Kirby.

2        DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest made.

3        MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2019 are agreed as an accurate record.

4        ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Agenda Item 4)

The Leader of the Council, Leader of the Conservative Group, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and Leader of the Merton Park Ward Independent Residents all paid tribute to Councillor Williams on his recent MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Councillor Williams spoke briefly in response.

The Mayor provided a brief update on her activities since the annual Council meeting and encouraged people to attend the Mayor's Charity Cricket Match on 28 July 2019.

## 5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 5)

The responses to the written public questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the questioners in turn to ask (if they wished) a further question to the Cabinet Member. A copy of the supplementary questions and responses will be included in the 'public questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

## 6 COUNCILLORS' ORDINARY PRIORITY QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 6)

The responses to the written member ordinary priority questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the members in turn to ask (if they wished) a further question to the Cabinet Member. A copy of the supplementary questions and responses will be included in the 'member ordinary priority questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

## 7a STRATEGIC THEME: COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS (Agenda Item 7a)

The responses to the written member strategic theme priority questions were circulated prior to the meeting. The Mayor then invited each of the members in turn to ask (if they wished) a further question to the Cabinet Member. A copy of the supplementary questions and responses will be included in the 'member strategic theme priority questions to Cabinet Members' published document.

It was also noted that a copy of the remaining Member questions and responses will be published after the meeting, in line with Constitutional requirements.

## 7b STRATEGIC THEME: MAIN REPORT (Agenda Item 7b)

The Strategic Theme report on Safer and Stronger Communities with a focus on Equalities and Diversity was moved by Councillor Macauley and seconded by Councillor Attawar.

Councillor Simpson and Bokhari also spoke on the item.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Theme report is agreed.

## 7c STRATEGIC THEME: MOTIONS - CONSERVATIVE MOTION (Agenda Item 7c)

The motion was moved by Councillor Barlow and seconded by Councillor Dean.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 18 was moved by Councillor Macauley and seconded by Councillor Mundy.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried unanimously.

The substantive motion (as amended) was then put to a vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED:

This council condemns the rise in knife related murders and robberies in Britain in recent years. Whilst the increase in London is considerably less than in the rest of the country, and whilst Merton has seen less knife crime than other London boroughs, there have been a number of incidents in recent months.

Council therefore calls upon the MET Police to consider installing knife surrender bins at appropriate locations around the Borough, although the Mayor of London has previously expressed the opinion that they are not a particularly effective deterrent.

7d STRATEGIC THEME: MOTIONS - CONSERVATIVE MOTION (Agenda Item 7d)

The motion was moved by Councillor Omar Bush and seconded by Councillor Benbow.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 19 was moved by Councillor Irons and seconded by Councillor Henry.

Councillor Bokhari also spoke on this item.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 49, votes against: 0, abstentions: 7.

The substantive motion (as amended) was then put to a vote and was agreed.

RESOLVED:

This council congratulates Unique Talent and other organisations in the borough for the outstanding work they do in the community to combat gang related violence, intervening to remove young residents from gangs, and mentoring and preparing young people for a life away from crime.

Council calls upon Cabinet to:

- Investigate way of strengthening Merton's partnership with organisations including but not limited to Unique Talent;
- Continue to discuss the strategies that meet the aims of the new Community Plan and Children's and Young People's Plan, with our young residents and organisations including Unique talent and to continue reporting on this progress to Cabinet.

7e STRATEGIC THEME: MOTIONS - LIBERAL DEMOCRAT MOTION (Agenda Item 7e)

The motion was moved by Councillor Fairclough and seconded by Councillor Bokhari.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 20 was moved by Councillor Attawar and seconded by Councillor Allison.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 34, votes against: 22, abstentions: 0.

The substantive motion (as amended) was then put to a vote and was agreed.

#### RESOLVED:

Commends the Cabinet on its 2017 Equalities and Community Cohesion Strategy and the annual process of reviewing and updating its current operational guidance on equality assessments (The website is last dated August 2011, however this needs to better reflect the annual review process). This guidance is fit for purpose and is in line with best practice, particularly in relation to the timing of assessments, and specific consultation on mitigation measures, and the strategy includes a commitment to undertake equality analysis in the council's service planning process, and with the introduction of all major policies and plans.

#### 8 REPORT OF THE RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM 26 MARCH 2019 (Agenda Item 8)

Councillor Omar Bush presented the report which was received by the Council.

#### 9 REPORT OF THE WIMBLEDON COMMUNITY FORUM 28 MARCH 2019 (Agenda Item 9)

Councillor Holmes presented the report which was received by the Council.

#### 10 NOTICES OF MOTION: CONSERVATIVE MOTION (Agenda Item 10)

The motion was moved by Councillor Holden and seconded by Councillor Gretton.

The Liberal Democrat amendment as set out in agenda item 21 was moved by Councillor Fairclough and seconded by Councillor Kohler.

The Liberal Democrat amendment was put to a vote and fell – votes in favour: 25, votes against: 31, abstentions: 0.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 22 was moved by Councillor Whelton and seconded by Councillor Pritchard.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 32, votes against: 25, abstentions: 0.

The substantive motion (as amended) was then put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 32, votes against: 25, abstentions: 0.

RESOLVED:

This council advises the Cabinet to:

- Pay due diligence to the need to improve air quality in considering the cabinet agenda item *Public health, air quality and sustainable transport - a strategic approach to parking charges*.
- Support the work of the cross-party Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel in its work looking at effective solutions to addressing public health concerns and air quality across Merton.

11 NOTICES OF MOTION: LIBERAL DEMOCRAT MOTION (Agenda Item 11)

The motion was moved by Councillor Kohler and seconded by Councillor McGrath.

The Labour amendment as set out in agenda item 23 was moved by Councillor Allison and seconded by Councillor Butler.

The Labour amendment was put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 39, votes against: 0, abstentions: 18.

The substantive motion (as amended) was then put to a vote and was carried – votes in favour: 39, votes against: 0, abstentions: 18.

RESOLVED:

Council Notes:

- That both candidates for the leadership of the Conservative Party have said they would in certain circumstances agree to a 'No Deal' Brexit;
- Warnings from the Governor of the Bank of England, the OECD, the OBR and many other bodies that a 'No deal' Brexit would have severe effects on the economy
- Warnings from the British Medical Association, the Chief Medical Officer and the NHS Confederation about the effects of a 'No deal' Brexit on the supply of medicines and on the NHS more generally;
- That a no deal Brexit would leave British citizens in other EU countries and EU citizens in the UK in a very unclear situation;

Council believes that a 'No Deal' Brexit would have severe adverse effects on the people of Merton Council resolves:

- To ask the Leader of the Council to write to Merton's MPs telling them of our concern about the effects of a 'No Deal' Brexit on the residents of Merton and

asking them to use any necessary Parliamentary means to stop it from happening.

- To ask the Cabinet to ensure it has robust plans to, as far as possible, mitigate the effects of a 'No Deal' Brexit on its operations; to report on these to the September full Council meeting; welcomes the work of the Brexit task group and the advice that it gives, which it provides with due impartiality, integrity and professionalism; and recognises that it needs to be free to carry this work out without its advice being leaked or misconstrued, in the best traditions of Britain's public servants.

## 12 NOTICES OF MOTION: CROSS PARTY MOTION (Agenda Item 12)

The cross-party motion was moved by Councillor Byers and seconded by Councillor Gould.

Councillors McLean, Southgate and Quilliam also spoke on this item.

The guillotine fell at 10.15pm.

The cross-party motion was then agreed.

### RESOLVED:

Merton Council believes that the world is in the midst of a climate emergency and that action is required at all levels of Government – local, national and international – in order to protect our planet for future generations.

This Council notes that:

- on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emissions;
- the report warned that the risk of catastrophic climate change including extreme heat, drought, flooding and climate-related poverty would significantly increase unless global warming could be kept to a maximum of 1.5°C;
- the report authors found that global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate and say that urgent and unprecedented action is required to meet the target.

Council recognises that the scale of the challenge is unprecedented. Approximately 97.5% of emissions within the borough are beyond the Council's direct control, so everyone within the borough has a role to play if we are to successfully reduce emissions. Tackling climate change can only be a common endeavour and will require residents, businesses and other organisations to play their part.

This Council resolves to:

- declare a climate emergency;
- work towards ensuring that the borough is carbon neutral by 2050, in line with the Mayor and the Government’s targets. Achieving this will require significant investment and policy initiatives from the Government, and Council hopes it would be achieved earlier than 2050;
- work towards ensuring that the Council is carbon neutral by 2030, recognising the leadership role it has in the borough;
- develop a working group to support the Council move from declaration to delivery drawing in cross sector expertise, capacity and capability. The working group should draw on existing expertise within the borough as well as including residents who are representative of the borough as a whole;
- set in place a process of engagement and collaborative action that enables an action plan to be considered by Cabinet and Council in early 2020, based on achieving the aforementioned targets.

**The guillotine fell at 10.15pm and the following items were disposed of in turn with no debate.**

13 REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY AND CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 13)

RESOLVED:

1. That the allocation of seats to political groups as set out in Appendix A to the Council report be approved.
2. That the appointment of nominations to those seats as set out in Appendix B to the Council report be approved.
3. That the changes to the membership of committees that were approved under delegated authority since the last meeting of the Council be noted.

14 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19 (Agenda Item 14)

RESOLVED that the Council receives the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.

15 PETITIONS (Agenda Item 15)

RESOLVED that Council accepts receipt of the following petitions:

- presented by Councillor Byers entitled “We call on Merton Council to declare a Climate Emergency”; and
- presented by Councillor Gretton entitled “Ban barbeques from Wimbledon Park”

17 URGENT ITEM: RECRUITMENT FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (Agenda Item 17)

RESOLVED that the recruitment to the post of Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer at a salary exceeding £100,000 be approved.

16 BUSINESS FOR THE NEXT ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
(Agenda Item 16)

That the Strategic Theme for the next ordinary meeting of the Council, being held on 18 September 2019, shall be Sustainable Communities with a focus on Enforcement.