

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON

Meeting held in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre, Uxbridge
on Thursday 6th November 2008 at 7.30pm

Councillor Brian Crowe (Mayor)
Councillor Shirley Harper-O'Neill (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors:	Dave Allam	Catherine Dann	John Major
	Lynne Allen	Santokh Dhillon	Michael Markham
	Bruce Baker	Janet Duncan	Douglas Mills
	Mo Bamber	Tony Eginton	+ Mary O'Connor
	Ann Banks	Janet Gardner	John Oswell
	Tim Baker	Sid Garg	David Payne
+ Richard Barnes	Josephine Barrett	Paul Harmsworth	Ray Puddifoot
	Kenneth Bartram	+ John Hensley	Andrew Retter
	Jonathan Bianco	+ Henry Higgins	Jill Rhodes
	David Bishop	Graham Horn	John Riley
	Lindsay Bliss	Pat Jackson	David Routledge
	Mike Bull	Phoday Jarjussey	Avtar Sandhu
	Keith Burrows	Sandra Jenkins	Robin Sansarpuri
	Paul Buttivant	Allan Kauffman	Scott Seaman-Digby
	George Cooper	Judy Kelly	David Simmonds
	Judith Cooper	Liz Kemp	Brian Stead
	Philip Corthorne	Peter Kemp	Anthony Way
	Geoff Courtenay	Mo Khursheed	Michael White
	Mike Cox	Edward Lavery	Kay Willmott-Denbeigh
	Peter Curling	Richard Lewis	David Yarrow
		Anita MacDonald	

+ Denotes apologies for absence received

1. PRAYERS

Prayers were said by Amir Ahmed.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th September 2008 were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments being made:-

Amend the Supplementary question on 9.3 and response to read:-

'What thoughts does the Cabinet Member have in relation to the comments made in the Northwood Residents Newsletter that the Council is badly managed.'

Councillor Simmonds responded that residents in Northwood have great confidence in its Councillors but I thought the newly elected Member for Townfield Ward's question was about his ward but no, it was about Northwood.'

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest notified.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 4)

Councillor John Riley, who was elected at the by-election for West Ruislip Ward on 2 October 2008, was welcomed to the meeting.

The Mayor thanked those Members who were laying wreaths on behalf of the Council on Sunday and asked that they ensure that they get their wreaths from either the Mayor's Parlour or the appropriate officer.

The Mayor reported that on the 20th October Mayors, Deputy Mayors and District Chairman made a visit to the Bunker at RAF Uxbridge and the Great Barn at Manor Farm. The visit was a success.

The Civic Service would be held at St Giles Church, Ickenham on 1 February 2009.

A remembrance event would be held on Tuesday 11 November at 11 a.m. on the Civic Centre Forecourt. All are welcome to attend.

The Mayor encouraged Members' participation in the Race Night to be held on 20 November.

There would be a Charity Concert on 26 April at the Beck Theatre. The concert would be predominantly performed by young people from the borough including the Beck Youth Theatre and the Hillingdon Music Service.

The Mayor congratulated Ann Newton in Education & Children's Services on her recent promotion.

5. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (Agenda Item 5)

5.1 QUESTION FROM NEVILLE BROOKS TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION – COUNCILLOR KEITH BURROWS

The Mayor informed the meeting that this question had now been withdrawn as Mr Brooks had sadly passed away.

5.2 QUESTION FROM ALLEN BERGSON TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, SPORT AND LEISURE – COUNCILLOR HENRY HIGGINS

'There are conflicting reports that the contract for the equipment at the GYM at Highgrove runs out in 18 months, 24 months, 36 months so no new disabled equipment can be purchased until a new contract, can you tell me the exact position?'

A written response was to be provided to Mr Bergson.

5.3 QUESTION FROM JAMES WARE TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING – COUNCILLOR PHILIP CORTHORNE

'Will the Local Housing Allowance benefit changes be properly explained to all the boroughs residents through both informal and formal education channels to secure no postcode and information lottery by better use of the internet and leaflets?

Supporting Information provided by Mr Ware

This borough has five cross neighbourhood secondary schools, Abbotsfield, Bishop Ramsey, Douay Martyrs, Guru Nanak and Swakeleys, plus borough wide and multi site services such as the Music Service, Youth Awards and Uxbridge College. This excludes the private schools in Hayes and Northwood. Additionally for adults it has one main hospital trust on multi-sites for treating generic illnesses.

All of these allow for couples to meet and settle in different parts of the borough and therefore they should automatically be allowed to do so subject to the will of the governors for political expediency and faith territorialism as occurred in the 1990s

However state schools that are territorial may have pressures put on them not to release the fact that the new Broad Market Rent Areas can leave residents in a given area for life if moving in the state sector is restrictive for Council Tenants owing to the lack of Council Housing owing to a lack of controlled building on Greenfield sites since the 1970s in the North of the Borough and recent developments being mainly part buy part rent borough wide. This is compounded by the fact that cross borough moves can be restrictive in Locata unless you have fixed employment moving or education and housing benefit rents do not reflect full commercial rent rates owing to housing restrictions already outlined.

Therefore it is important and can be done cheaply through the new websites to add benefit claiming and leaflet information to the standard health and central government leaflet drives.

Councillor Philip Corthorne gave the following reply:-

'The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) was introduced from the 7th April 2008 by the Department of Works and Pensions and each Local Authority had to adopt it. It only affects rental properties in the private market with Local Authority and Housing Association properties being exempt from the scheme.

Payment of LHA is usually direct to the tenant, unless they are deemed vulnerable and it is in their interest for the payment to be made to their landlord. The council has adopted a vulnerability procedure that identifies the types of situations where direct payment to a landlord should be considered.

A conference was held for Landlords and Letting Agencies who let property to benefit claimants in Hillingdon, to publicise LHA and the vulnerability

procedure. Overviews of LHA were provided by the benefit training manager to all our partners. An article was published in Hillingdon People around March/April 2008, to reach a wider audience. We have also produced leaflets for both landlords and claimants, which are available from main reception and our web site.

The rates of LHA are publicised on the Council's website and are updated monthly they are also available in paper form, from the benefit reception area, in the Civic Centre. We are currently widening our publicity to encompass schools and other hard to reach areas, to promote take up of benefit.

The feedback from our benefit customers is that there is a high awareness of LHA by benefit claimants, due to national and local publicity and from the landlords that are letting the properties.'

5.4 QUESTION FROM MICHAEL A ROSENTHAL TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR IMPROVEMENT, PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY – COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS MILLS (Councillor Keith Burrows gave the answer to this question)

'Despite the current decline in consumer spending, which is having an adverse effect on all local shopping areas, Hillingdon Council has decided to lavish vast sums of money on Northwood and Ruislip and allowed Northwood Hills Shopping Centre to decline to such an extent that we are left with:

- *No banks*
- *No building societies*
- *Empty shops*
- *Shops constantly having to close*

The remaining shops, relative newcomers to Northwood Hills are fast food shops, creating mess in Joel Street. There is no reason for any family to spend time or money here.

There is an air of dilapidation now about Joel Street. We desperately need money to be spent on regeneration here, and a curb on the landlords' greed. We need small, innovative businesses who probably can't afford to pay the high rents which at present are not justified, and the Council should be helping with this.

As the Cabinet Member responsible for Improvement, Partnerships and Community safety, what do you intend to do to improve the environment and sustainability of Northwood Hills as well as other small shopping centres?'

Councillor Keith Burrows gave the following reply:-

'The Council is very concerned about the loss of local banks, building societies and other amenities that make town centres viable concerns. You will no doubt have seen the other Ward Councillors campaigning against the closure of the Nationwide Building Society in Northwood Hills in the local press.

This Cabinet in September 2007 agree, before the credit crunch, to a Town Centres Initiative and created a dedicated budget supported from within the

Council and from external partners. The objective is to specifically deliver improvements and make a real impact in the sixteen-district town centres thereby supporting their sustainability. Northwood Hills is one of those town centres included in the initiative.

The idea of trying to undertake works across all sixteen centres on a piecemeal basis was rejected and the Cabinet agreed that in the first instance it would concentrate resources in Northwood and Yiewsley / West Drayton.

The work referred to in Ruislip was for improvements to the road layouts and traffic management and was to a large extent funded by Transport for London. The Council took advantage of these works to programme in upgrades to street lighting and pavements to minimise disruption.

Arresting the decline of local High Streets is a challenge for any Council, and although the Council does not have influence over the rents high street landlords charge it is fully committed to working with business and partners to sustain it's town centres.

As well as seeking funds from TFL to support its programme of physical improvements to town centres the Council is looking at other innovative ways to support the future of its town centres. The Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy overview committee have started a major review "Hillingdon: a wireless and business friendly borough?" to review how the Council can undertake its community leadership role of supporting businesses in Hillingdon. A report summarising the Committee's findings will be completed and presented to the Council's Cabinet at the end of April 09. '

6. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES (Item 6)

(i) MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

RESOLVED: That the following changes be made:

COMMITTEE/BODY	CHANGES MADE
Audit Committee	Appoint Cllr Mary O'Connor to replace Cllr Paul Buttivant
Central & South Planning Committee	Appoint Cllr Mike Bull to replace Cllr Paul Buttivant
London Councils Grants Committee	Appoint Cllr Sandra Jenkins as Deputy to replace Councillor Andrew Retter
London Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Appoint Councillor Mary O'Connor as representative and Councillor Judith Cooper as deputy representative
Licensing Committee (1 vacancy)	Appointment of Conservative Councillor to be confirmed
Heritage Builds Bridges (1 vacancy)	Appoint Councillor David Routledge
Hillingdon Community and Police Consultative Group (1 vacancy)	Appoint Councillor John Riley
London Drug Policy Forum (1 vacancy)	Appoint Councillor David Routledge

Ruislip Lido MAG (1 vacancy)	Appointment Councillor John Riley
Ruislip Combined Charities (1 vacancy)	Appointment by Conservative Group to be confirmed
Hoenigsberg Memorial Trust (2 vacancies)	Reappoint Councillor Josephine Barrett as Conservative representative from 14/11/08 and Councillor Tony Eginton as Labour representative from 18/10/08

RESOLVED: That Councillor David Routledge be appointed as Heritage and Built Environment Champion upon the recommendation of the Leader. The Head of Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to agree the role's terms of reference.

7. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007 (Agenda Item 7)

RESOLVED: That

1. Council formally adopt the Leader (appointed by Council) and Cabinet Executive (appointed by Leader) leadership model as specified in The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 with effect from the AGM immediately following the local elections in May 2010, and the appropriate amendments to the Constitution as set out in Appendix to the report subject to the removal of points 4 & 6.
2. The current leadership model be continued up to that time and the Head of Democratic Services be instructed to draw up a timetable, including any transitional arrangements that may be required for agreement with the Leader of the Council.
3. The proposed amendments to Part 4 of the Constitution, as detailed below be approved with immediate effect:

Part 4 – Council Procedure Rule 11.1

This section currently provides that a member may ask a question, without notice of the Leader, a Member of the cabinet or the Chairman of a Committee on a report of a Cabinet or Committee when that item is being received or under consideration by Council. It is recommended that this Rule be revised to remove the reference to Chairmen of Committees.

Part 4 – Committee Procedure Rule 13.5

This section covers the rules surrounding speaking rights and petitions. It is recommended that the final sentence of the first paragraph be amended to read (amendment in italics):

“Where the petition is opposing a planning application and is being reported to a Planning Committee, there shall be the right for the

applicant or their agent to address the Committee for up to 5 minutes in support of the applications. All petitions in relation to Planning Committees should be received by the Head of Democratic Services no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting. Discretion to allow petitions after this deadline can only be approved by the Chairman of the relevant Planning Committee”.

8. TRANSFER OF COUNCIL’S BALANCES INTO THE GENERAL FUND (Agenda Item 8)

RESOLVED: That the transfer of £3m from Balances to the General Fund Priority Growth Budget be approved.

9. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (Agenda Item 9)

9.1 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR DAVID BISHOP TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR IMPROVEMENTS, PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY SAFETY – COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS MILLS (Councillor Keith Burrows gave the answer to this question)

‘With the ‘credit crunch’ affecting consumers propensity to spend, leading to a reduction in activity in shopping centres, what does this Council intend to do to support the future sustainability of shopping centres like Northwood Hills and others, when banks and building societies close their remaining branches? Numerous shops in these parades have decided to close as a result of the lack of any improvement in the local infrastructure. Additional resources provided to neighbouring thriving shopping centres has exacerbated the problem encouraging customers to shop elsewhere. What does the Cabinet Member responsible for Improvements, Partnerships & Community Safety intend to prevent this continual deterioration and decline, which may eventually lead to empty and shuttered shopping parades in numerous locations across the Borough?’

Councillor Keith Burrows gave the following reply:-

‘There is little doubt that most small retailers are feeling the effects of the credit crunch, however there is little in the way of information on how the local shopping parades are being affected. Whilst there are of course certain retailers who are finding the current climate more difficult than others current information from Uxbridge is a little more positive, with retailers reporting sales holding up well.

The Council has already recognised and acknowledged the importance of its local district centres to Hillingdon’s economy and in September 2007 committed it’s self to tackling each of the boroughs sixteen District Town Centres in a rolling programme of improvements. Northwood Hills is one of the boroughs sixteen-district centres.

The programme, which commenced with a major scheme in Northwood, commits a base budget of £250,000 per annum towards improvements. This budget is significantly added to from other relevant budgets and section 106

funding where available and from contributions from external partners such as Transport for London.

The Northwood scheme is well underway and work has started on preparing the next scheme for Yiewsley and West Drayton.

As part of the Local Development framework a study assessed the condition and viability of all of the borough shopping parades. Using this study as evidence the Council has submitted a bid to Transport for London (TfL) to secure resources to support and sustain those parades the study deemed as most in need of investment. If successful the bid will deliver £450,000 over a three-year period.'

Councillor Bishop asked the following supplementary:-

'Can the Cabinet Member advise where the £250,000 had been spent in Northwood Hills?'

'Councillor Burrows advised that in 2007/08 there had been major carriageway works, CCTV installed in Joel Street, Hillside Road crossing, Joel Street zebra crossing, 20 mph schemes, a road safety scheme and a new toilet installed.'

9.2 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR LYNNE ALLEN TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION – COUNCILLOR KEITH BURROWS

'As we are all aware School Travel Plans are intended to encourage safe and healthy transport routes to and from local Schools in the Borough. Could the Cabinet Member please tell us if he is satisfied with the progress with the development of the Plans particularly bearing in mind that these plans are a partnership between Schools and the local Authority.'

Councillor Keith Burrows gave the following reply:-

'In accordance with the Mayor for London's target that all schools in London have a School Travel Plan (STP) by 2009, the Borough has, to date, 67 schools from a total of 103 with completed school travel plans and is currently working with a further 35 schools on their travel plans. This leaves 1 school uncommitted at this stage; despite considerable effort from the council's school travel plan advisors and several other schools to engage with the school to develop their travel plan.

One of the main purposes for a school travel plan is to promote alternative methods of travel to and from school. Hillingdon has achieved a 14% decrease in car use for journeys to school at schools with a School Travel Plan. The average across London is 6%.

The School Travel Plan advisors are working with schools to implement Travel Awareness campaigns and engineering schemes, over 50 schools are signed up to participate in the "Walk on Wednesday's" (WOW) campaign. This is the highest participation level for any borough in London. This will increase as those

schools writing STP's this year are encouraged to participate with secondary schools looking to introduce the campaign for years 7 and 8.

Hillingdon's schools have received over £500k from Transport for London (TfL) in funding for engineering schemes associated with their travel plans. There are 5 engineering schemes totalling £240k, which will be completed in 2008/09 and a further 5 schemes programmed for 2009/10.

Council officers from a number of Directorates continue to work in partnership with outside organisations to implement the completed travel plans. Over the next year this will include:

- Increasing the number of schools involved in WOW
- Encouraging the schools to use the Key Stage and Key Stage 3 cycling curriculum packs produced by TfL.
- Piloting 'Cyclicious' - a scheme to encourage cycling to school in two of the borough's schools for girls
- Joint working with partners on the STP Steering Group (Healthy Hillingdon, Met Police, Community Safety and Hillingdon's Youth and School Councils) to address issues surrounding school travel - 3 schools are to be piloted in spring 2009.
- Making the resource tool "Mapping in Action" available to all schools in Hillingdon
- Introduce termly networking workshops for STP Co-ordinators in the schools.'

Councillor Allen asked the following supplementary question:-

'Why is it that Townfield Ward schools have been given no direction on school travel plans, except for what they have done themselves?'

'Councillor Burrows responded that he was surprised that the Member had waited 20 months to raise this issue but would address the concerns with officers. He said that officers are not overworked and that the Corporate Director had every faith in them. If the Councillor would like to provide the names of the specific schools concerned Councillor Burrows would look into the matter.'

9.3 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR PETER KEMP TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR IMPROVEMENTS, PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY SAFETY – COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS MILLS

'Can the Cabinet Member for Performance, Partnerships and Community Safety tell Council what progress has been made towards the Equalities Standard for Local Government?'

Councillor Douglas Mills gave the following reply:-

'I would like to thank the Member for the question and for the advice and guidance that he provides to the Equalities Panel. The Council has been successfully accredited at Level 3 of the revised standard in October 2007 and a self-assessment was signed off at Level 4 in October of this year. This is 6

months ahead of Capital Ambition's target for London Councils and sets Hillingdon in a good place for achieving excellence in terms of equalities.

While the standard is an externally regulated process we have interpreted it in a manner, which meets the needs of Hillingdon's residents; using equalities data and intelligence to design the policies, processes and services to ensure we are inclusive and that resident's needs are at the heart of what we do.

I would like to thank a particular officer who has led in this area and provided a lot of insight and advice on equalities and has been a central point to how Hillingdon operates. Her skills have been recognised elsewhere and I wish her well in her new job and thank her for the encouragement she has provided to enable us to reach the standards we have.'

There was no supplementary question

9.4 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR TONY EGINTON TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, SPORT AND LEISURE – COUNCILLOR HENRY HIGGINS (This question was answered by Councillor Ray Puddifoot in the absence of Councillor Henry Higgins)

'Having expressed pride in the disposal of the mountain centre at Cwm Pennant during the last Council meeting, has the Cabinet Member changed his mind about whether the Centre will be successful and what is the probability of the Council being liable under the provisions of the assigned lease?'

Councillor Ray Puddifoot gave the following reply:-

'Hillingdon residents deserve better and hopefully the new operator of the centre will make it a success by expanding and improving the facilities to maximise its potential. Hillingdon residents and schools will be able to continue to use the centre. The Council will not be liable under the provision of the assigned lease.'

Councillor Tony Eginton asked the following supplementary question:-

'Considering the comments made at the last Council meeting by Councillor Higgins is the Leader aware that two of the directors had resigned from the company who took over the lease before it was assigned.'

'Councillor Puddifoot responded that he was aware that two of the directors had resigned prior to the assignment of the lease and that under the 1995 Act the lease would default to the original leaseholder but post 1996 that clause in the Act no longer applied so the lease would not default to this Authority.'

9.5 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR JUDY KELLY TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR RAY PUDDIFOOT

'At the recent staff road show held by yourself and the Chief Executive, a DVD was shown which included many examples of the splendid work this Council is doing. At the end it listed some of the awards received by the Council this year. Could the Leader of the Council please tell Members just how many awards this Council has received?'

Councillor Ray Puddifoot gave the following reply:-

'The council has won an amazing 21 awards (31 including the 10 green flag awards) over approximately the last 12 months and are as follows:-

- 10 green-flag awards for our parks
- *Exorllence Award - Highways Maintenance Department*
- A Green Heritage Award - Ruislip woods
- London Warm Zone Achievement Award
- Two RSPCA awards for the Animal Welfare Team
- Greater London Training Award – Adult Education Service with the School Improvement Service
- *Silver Gilt award in the large city category in the London in Bloom Awards*
- Contact centre training award (LG comms awards 2008)
- Local Authority PR team of the Year (LG comms awards 2008)
- Contact centre team of the year (LG Comms awards 2008)
- Local Authority of the Year (LG comms awards 2008)
- Hillingdon's Health and Safety Training Service - Charter Mark
- Best Use of Novell Solutions by the Service Desk (Annual Global Customer Awards 2007)
- Quest Status trademark for Highgrove Pool
- Green Apple Award - Built Environment and Architectural Heritage Award – Ruislip High School
- Lexcel award – Legal Services
- National Youth Agency Quality Mark – Youth and Connexions Service
- Council Worker of the Year – Luke Turner
- Local Hero Awards – Luke Turner and Maggie Ditchburn
- Young communicator of the year – Emma Marsh, Communications Team

Staff who attended the Roadshows were thanked for their work in making a difference and I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank all the staff involved in making Hillingdon a clear leader and innovator across many important areas of Local Government.'

There was no supplementary question.

9.6 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MICHAEL MARKHAM TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR RAY PUDDIFOOT

'I have read a number of concerning comments made by one of Hillingdon's Councillors regarding the effect of the demise of Icelandic banks which may cause worry to both residents and the authority's staff. Would the Leader of the Council please let Members know the true situation?'

Councillor Ray Puddifoot gave the following reply:-

'I would like to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for his support on this issue. The current financial crisis is a global issue and further to the statement made in November, the Government are in positive negotiations and have frozen the assets of Icelandic Banks in this country. The Council have sufficient assets

after its liabilities so will not be insolvent and I would ask Councillors and staff to pass this message on to reassure those residents who enquire about the financial situation of the Council.'

Councillor Markham asked the following supplementary :-

'Can the Leader reassure Members that the matter was discussed at the Leaders' Committee .'

'Councillor Puddifoot informed the meeting that the issue was discussed at the Leaders' Committee on 14 October with four members speaking at that meeting. The Local Government Association had also worked on the matter and there would continue to be an all-party approach on this matter.'

9.7 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR MIKE COX TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION – COUNCILLOR KEITH BURROWS

'Is the Cabinet Member responsible for planning satisfied that Hillingdon's policies sustainable development adequate to ensure that our local town centres are protected against the bullying tactics of big developers and supermarkets?'

Councillor Keith Burrows gave the following reply:-

'The Council through its planning policies in the adopted Unitary Development Plan supports the retention of local shops and resists new retail developments that may adversely affect local shopping centres, where it can be demonstrated that there is likely to be harm to local shops and centres.

Even on smaller scale proposals a retail impact assessment is sought in order to assess the likely impact on local shops and centres. Further assessments are also required as appropriate to judge the likely environmental impacts, including traffic impact, noise and air quality assessments.

Examples where the Council has refused planning applications for supermarkets and defended its decision on appeal is the initial Tesco application in Yiewsley, which was dismissed on appeal and the Tesco application at the Master Brewer site, which Tesco withdrew at appeal.

The Council is preparing its Core Strategy as part of its Local Development Framework and as part of this process, it will consider ways of strengthening its policies with regard to protecting its existing Town Centres. Changes to the Government's policies regarding retail developments and the changes that will arise as a result of the review of the London Plan will also have to be taken into account.'

There was no supplementary question

9.8 QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR ALLAN KAUFFMAN TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR IMPROVEMENTS, PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY SAFETY – COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS MILLS

'How many alley gates have been provided to stop crime and anti social behaviour in the past two financial years?'

Councillor Douglas Mills gave the following reply:-

'I am pleased to report that in the last two years this Council has provided in excess of 100 alley gates across the borough. 50 schemes have been implemented so far this year with a further 25 planned.'

Councillor Kauffman asked the following supplementary question:-

'Can the Cabinet Member advise about the rumour that alley gates are not being funded by Chrysalis Funding as the expenditure is being spent elsewhere?'

'Councillor Mills responded that anyone saying that funding for alley gating is being cut back is misleading the public or at worst being dishonest. Not only is the funding not being cut but additional funding is being put forward to supplement the Chrysalis fund.'

10. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (Item 10)

10.2 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS MILLS ON ISSUING GUIDELINES IN RELATION TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT

'This Council notes the Government's intention to issue guidelines in relation to the new Sustainable Communities Act and asks for a report to be prepared for Cabinet taking into account both the guidelines and the following Hillingdon principles:

- The ease of access and self help approach to engaging the local community through schemes such as Chrysalis and Street champions.
- Avoidance of an Area committee based approach but to develop with our partners locality working reflecting shared intelligence of needs.
- Development of Street Champions / Street Ahead to reflect consultation with residents on possible options for use of focussed revenue / capital resources designed to enhance Civic pride.
- Utilisation of SNT Ward panels to better reflect a wider zonal aspect of joint service delivery aimed at achieving "nice place to live" recognition.'

The motion was seconded by Councillor Philip Corthorne

Councillor Paul Harmsworth moved an amendment as follows:-

That Council

- (i) expresses its concern at the decline of local services and facilities, local economies and local communities;*
- (ii) notes that this combination of factors increases people's feelings of exclusion and lack of involvement; and*
- (iii) further notes that local authorities and their communities know best on the solutions to local problems and so should determine how to promote thriving communities; and so*
- (iv) supports the bottom up process in the Sustainable Communities Act designed to allow local authorities and their communities to drive the help that central government gives in reversing community decline and promoting thriving, sustainable communities;*
- (v) notes that the Act became law in October 2007 with full cross party support and that this was a result of 5 year campaign run by a coalition of over 90 national citizen organisations called Local Works;*
- (vi) notes that the Act gives local authorities the power to*
 - make proposals to government on the action government must take to reverse community decline and promote sustainable communities, and*
 - argue for a transfer of public money and function from central to local control;*
- (vii) notes that the Act defines the sustainability of local communities broadly, that definition having the 4 aspects of*
 - the improvement of the local economy,*
 - protection of the environment,*
 - promotion of social inclusion, and*
 - participation in civic and political activity;*
- (viii) notes that the Local Works campaign give a number of reasons for why a local authority should choose to use the Act, those reasons being*
 - 1. Assistance from government – Community decline is happening everywhere and local authorities are not able to prevent it on their own. They need government help. This Act gives government a legal duty to 'assist local authorities in promoting the sustainability of local communities'. So by 'opting in' local authorities are, in fact, signing up to receive 'assistance'.*
 - 2. Power to determine that assistance – The Act also gives local authorities (and their representative body, the Local Government Association) real power to determine the nature of the assistance that they receive from government, as explained more fully in our campaign broadsheet on implementing the Act (contact us for free copies).*

3. *Strength in numbers – By opting in, local authorities can act in unison to put in proposals to government supported by their colleagues elsewhere. Joint suggestions by many authorities will make it even harder for the government to refuse to act on suggestions made by local authorities.*
4. *Transferring functions and monies from central to local control – The Act also enables local authorities – and thus local authorities acting together – to request the transfer of functions from government or government agencies to themselves. Because decisions on these requests must be made by the LGA and the Secretary of State trying to reach agreement (i.e. in co-operation), this can be used to regain from central government control of many powers and spending that affect local areas.*
5. *Access to Central Spending Accounts Information – The requirement in the Act for the government to ‘open the books’ will mean that local authorities will know just how much extra money they can access if they push for a transfer of functions.*
6. *Democratic citizen involvement – All politicians (and many local authority officers) talk a lot about lack of public involvement in democracy. The recent Power showed that the more people think that their involvement matters, the more they are likely to get involved. The very ‘hassle’ required by this Act reaching agreement with – not consulting – citizens’ panels) empowers citizens. Local authorities may well consider that this is a way of increasing citizen involvement; and*
 - (ix) *resolves, when invited to by central government in October 2008, to use the Act by preparing and submitting proposals on how central government can help; and*
 - (x) *further resolves to*
 - *to inform the local media of this decision;*
 - *to write to local MPs, informing them of this decision; and*
 - *to write to Local Works (at Local Works, c/o Unlock Democracy, 6 Cynthia St, London N1 9JF) informing them of their resolution to use the Act.’*

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Sid Garg

Following debate (Councillors Anthony Way, David Simmonds, David Bishop, John Major and Andrew Retter) the amendment was put to the vote and lost.

The motion as originally moved was put to the vote and agreed.

RESOLVED: That this Council notes the Government’s intention to issue guidelines in relation to the new Sustainable Communities Act and asks for a report to be prepared for Cabinet taking into account both the guidelines and the following Hillingdon principles:

- **The ease of access and self help approach to engaging the local community through schemes such as Chrysalis and Street champions.**
- **Avoidance of an Area committee based approach but to develop with our partners locality working reflecting shared intelligence of needs.**
- **Development of Street Champions / Street Ahead to reflect consultation with residents on possible options for use of focussed revenue / capital resources designed to enhance Civic pride.**
- **Utilisation of SNT Ward panels to better reflect a wider zonal aspect of joint service delivery aimed at achieving “nice place to live” recognition.’**

10.1 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR ANITA MACDONALD ON EDUCATION AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES

‘The Council recognises the good work being done by Education and Children’s Services to raise achievement and attainment in our schools. For instance, standards have risen again this year and schools should be congratulated on their continuing progress.’

Given today’s uncertain career climate it is vital to ensure that our young people receive the best possible start in life that we in Hillingdon can give them. It is therefore important wherever possible that incoming funding streams are directly targeted at the particular areas prioritised by this Council to date.

In order to ensure that this Council continues to perpetuate good standards in Education and Children’s Services, it requests that the appropriate Policy Overview Committee monitors and evaluates funding streams to ensure we are maximising opportunities for young people and their families.’

The motion was seconded by Councillor Peter Curling

Following debate (Councillors David Simmonds, John Major, Ray Puddifoot) and on being put to the vote the motion was lost.

10.4 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR MIKE COX ON REVIEWING BUSINESS RENT INCREASES

‘This Council notes the appalling increases in rents that the London Borough of Hillingdon has imposed on struggling small shops and businesses. This Council calls on the Cabinet Members responsible for finance and partnerships to urgently review these increases and ask the Corporate Services Policy Overview Committee to investigate the Council’s actions and policies.’

The motion was seconded by Councillor Jill Rhodes.

Councillor Sid Garg moved an amendment as follows:-

In first line delete 'appalling', in second line delete 'imposed on' and replace with 'demanded from'. In second line after 'businesses' insert 'notwithstanding the current financial climate' and delete lines 4 & 5 altogether and add the following:-

'to consider the possibility of temporarily reducing rents or not increasing rents for struggling shops and businesses wherever reasonable and possible. This council further asks the Corporate Services and Partnership Policy Overview Committee to reassess this Council's current policies on rent review in Leases granted by the Council to small shops and businesses and to investigate the possibility of this Council adopting the Code for Leasing Business Premises in England 2007 for any future lease negotiations with small shops and businesses.'

The motion would then read:-

'This Council notes the increase in rents that the London Borough of Hillingdon has demanded from struggling small shops and businesses notwithstanding the current financial climate. This council calls on the Cabinet Members responsible for Finance and Partnerships to urgently review these increases and to consider the possibility of temporarily reducing rents or not increasing rents for struggling shops and businesses wherever reasonable and possible. This council further asks the Corporate Services and Partnership Policy Overview Committee to reassess this Council's current policies on rent review in Leases granted by the Council to small shops and businesses and to investigate the possibility of this Council adopting the Code for Leasing Business Premises in England 2007 for any future lease negotiations with small shops and businesses.'

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Paul Harmsworth.

Following debate (Councillor Jonathan Bianco and Anthony Way) the amendment was put to the vote and lost. The original motion as moved was put to the vote and lost.

10.3 MOTION FROM COUNCILLOR PETER CURLING ON THE BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY PROGRAMME

'The Council recognises the huge significance of the BS21 programme for Hillingdon, giving a huge opportunity for young people in the Borough to benefit from vastly improved school buildings and ICT equipment.

Given the combination of today's uncertain financial climate and future building programmes, Council requests that The Cabinet prioritise the BS21 programme to ensure that we continue to proceed in the current wave six, as planned.

Council also calls on the Government to bring all subsequent waves forward, especially as this is exactly the type of development that can help in times of an economic downturn by providing jobs and local regeneration. This would not only ensure we obtained high quality facilities but would also ensure that Hillingdon continues to develop and improve borough-wide education strategies for a 21st Century provision.'

The motion was seconded by Councillor Anita MacDonald

Following debate (Councillors David Simmonds, Anthony Way, Jill Rhodes, Douglas Mills) the motion was put to the vote and lost.

The meeting closed at 9.57pm.