

19 July 2017

Ordinary Council

Notices of Motion

Report of: *Philip Ruck – Chief Executive*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Seven Notices of Motion have been submitted in accordance with Rule 3 in Part 4.1 of the Constitution - Council Procedure Rules.
- 1.2 Cllr Barrett has submitted four Notices of Motion and in accordance with Rule 3.6, other Members' first submitted Notices of Motion are to be included in the agenda before Cllr Barrett's second and subsequent Notices of Motion.
- 1.3 Cllr Barrett's first Notice of Motion is as follows:

The War Memorials Listing Project

This Council notes:

1. In 2014, to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, Historic England embarked upon a five-year project to add 2,500 war memorials to the List (officially known as the National Heritage List for England).
2. The Government is funding this project through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
3. That no War Memorial is currently listed in the Borough of Brentwood.

This Council believes:

1. War memorials provide us with an enduring link to those hundreds of thousands who gave their lives in the First World War.
2. Further they remain a lasting tribute to all those who have been lost in service of their country and community.

Therefore this Council:

1. Will seek urgent listing of the War Memorial on Shenfield Road, Brentwood.

2. That further investigate all other War Memorials in the Borough for listing, to assist in achieving Historic England's ambition of listing 2,500 War Memorials.

1.4 Cllr Mrs Hubbard submitted the following Notice of Motion:

For Brentwood Borough Council to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism

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, dehumanizing, demonizing, 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 within the Council 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.

1.5 Cllr Aspinell submitted a Notice of Motion as follows:

"Brentwood Borough Council resolves to establish a LATCO that specifically deals with delivering affordable rented housing opportunities across the Borough for all Brentwood residents, particularly our young people, key workers and the elderly, which will provide a valuable source of income for our Council funds".

1.6 Cllr Chilvers submitted a Notice of Motion as follows:

On 31st May 2017, after over 15 years of making Brentwood Council open and transparent to its residents, webcasting ceased.

Although it is understood that the contract has ended and the intention is to start it up in the future, there are many important decisions to be made over the coming months and it is important to ensure that our democracy can be viewed on demand by everyone who wishes to see it.

These days, we do not have to rely on a webcasting company to host our meetings. Indeed, facilities such as Facebook Live can be used now to promote proceedings. Therefore, this council will work towards having an interim solution in place to broadcast its meetings by the first meeting in September.

1.7 Cllr Barrett's second Motion: Empty Homes Discount

This Council notes:

1. From 1 April 2013, billing authorities in England took on an additional power over certain council tax discounts. "Unoccupied and substantially unfurnished" properties may receive a discount of between 0% and 100% of their council tax.

2. That this Council currently offers a 100% discount for a property that is habitable, unoccupied and unfurnished for a maximum of 3 months

3. That this measure imposed a financial burden of more than £70,000 in the 2016/17 financial year.

This Council believes:

1. The Council should offer discounts and exemptions as appropriate to the genuine need of residents, set in a manner that is both fair and seeks to discourage properties being left empty,
2. That it is appropriate to consider this discount, and all discounts offered, in a regular process of review.

Therefore this Council:

1. Will commission officers to investigate, and offer proposals for this discount and other discretionary discounts, to the Policy, Finance & Resources committee as part of the process in developing the Budget for 2018/19.

1.8 Cllr Barrett's third Motion: Second Homes Discount

This Council notes:

1. From 1 April 2013, billing authorities in England took on an additional power over certain council tax discounts.
2. That this Council currently offers a 10% discount where the property is furnished and classed as a second home.

This Council believes:

1. The Council should offer discounts and exemptions as appropriate to the genuine need of residents, set in a manner that is both fair and seeks to discourage properties being left empty,
2. That it is appropriate to consider this discount, and all discounts offered, in a regular process of review.
3. That this specific discount is not necessary or appropriate in the current financial climate and as such should be removed for the 2018/19 financial year.

Therefore this Council:

1. Removes the Second Home Discount for the 2018/19 financial year, giving fair warning of the change to all current beneficiaries, and the Budget for 2018/19 is composed with this as an element.

1.9 Cllr Barrett's fourth Motion: Procurement Procedures and Tax Evasion

This council notes that:

- corporate tax evasion and avoidance are having a damaging impact on the world's poorest countries, to such a level that it is costing them far more than they receive in aid
- this is costing the UK as much as £30bn a year
- this practice also has a negative effect on small and medium-sized companies who pay more tax proportionately.

This council further notes that:

- the UK Government has taken steps to tackle the issue of tax avoidance and evasion by issuing Procurement Policy Note 03/14 (PPN 03/14). This applies to all central government contracts worth more than £5m.
- the existence of voluntary schemes promoting tax compliance such as the Fair Tax Mark, which can serve as an independent means of verification.
- the 2015 Public Contract Regulations which state (in section 4) that local government can choose to adopt Procurement Policy Note 03/14.

This council believes:

- that bidders for council contracts should be asked to account for their past tax record, using the higher standards in PPN 03/14.

Therefore the council will

- Amend procurement procedures to require all companies bidding for service contracts worth more than £15,000 and for works contracts worth more than £250,000 to self-certify that they are fully tax-compliant in line with central government practice using the standards in PPN 03/14, applying to contracts of the size specified above.
- publicise this policy and to report on its implementation annually to Policy, Finance & Resources Committee

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