

My name is Bharat Gajjar, of the Shree Vishwakarma Association of UK

- 1. I represent over 650 Brent residents and thousands in the neighbouring Boroughs. Collectively the Hindu Council represents 35 thousand Hindus in Brent.**
- 2. All the Executives of the affiliated communities attended and agreed that the withdrawal of the Navratri fund would have a devastating effect upon their communities.**
- 3. We all fully understood the situation the council faces in respect to the reduction of certain budgets and with this in mind are willing to sacrifice the Diwali funding in order to keep the Navratri fund.**
- 4. Diwali is celebrated by the Hindu communities with family & friend at homes with small self funded parties organised, these would continue.**
- 5. Navratri is celebrated by all age groups and is celebrated within a large scale with the large groups of people from all ages getting together and celebrating for 9 days.**
- 6. Navratri is an essential part of the Hindu culture and the loss of the celebrations would have a detrimental effect on some of the communities with Navratri being the most important event during the calendar year that they organise, it also carries very important religious purpose.**
- 7. The funds allocated for Navratri are solely used for the payment of venues mainly school halls within the borough of Brent, so the funds are being re-invested in the system with a number of schools reliant on these essential funds for refurbishment works and purchase of new equipment.**
- 8. Diwali funds are spent on organising and fireworks which do not benefit the community. Not may of my community attend this Diwali Procession not the firework display, as we have our own Diwali functions and programmes**
- 9. Hindu Council Brent has a long standing relationship with Brent Council. We and our affiliated communities and 35,000 members urge yourselves to re-consider your decision.**
- 10. We are happy to relinquish the Diwali funds which are substantially larger to save the Navratri funds, which hold more importance to the 35,000 Hindu members in Brent.**