

EMPLOYEES' CONSULTATIVE FORUM MINUTES

17 JANUARY 2018

Chair:	* Councillor Kiran Ramchandani	
Councillors:	* Mrs Camilla Bath	* Ms Mina Parmar
	* Ms Pamela Fitzpatrick	* Pritesh Patel
	* Graham Henson	* Sachin Shah
Teacher Representatives:	† Ms L Crimmins	- NUT
	* Ms A Lyons	- NAHT
Unison Representatives:	* Mr D Butterfield	* Mr D Searles
GMB Representative:	* Ms P Belgrave	
In Attendance:	Ann Jones	- GMB Branch President
	* Denotes Member present	
	† Denotes apology received	

56. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance.

57. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Item 7 - Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

Councillor Graham Henson declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was a member of the GMB (General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trade Union) and the CWU (Communication Workers Union) and a former member of Unison. In addition, he was a Board member of West London Waste and his cousin was an employee of the Council. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Agenda Item 7 - Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

Councillor Pamela Fitzpatrick declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a member of the Unite union and a trustee of the Harrow Community Library. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Agenda Item 7 - Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

Councillor Kiran Ramchandani declared a non-pecuniary interest in that she was a member of the GMB. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Agenda Item 7 - Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

Councillor Sachin Shah declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was a member of the Unite union. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

58. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2017 be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

The second half of paragraph 2 on page 12 to read:

‘The Divisional Director advised that the rates of pay had been provisionally compared with other London Boroughs and this had revealed that Harrow was the highest payer with the exception of Barnet. He argued that Harrow had a relatively low level of staff turnover in the service, though he accepted that it was difficult to retain agency staff given competition from other employers.’

The following sentence be inserted at Page 12, paragraph 5:

‘The Unison representative added that the decision to change role profiles had been made and agreed at CSB prior to consulting with the unions.’

59. Public Questions, Petitions & Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that none were received.

RESOLVED ITEMS

60. Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

The Forum received a report of the Director of Finance which set out the draft revenue budget for 2018/19 and draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2018/19 to 2020/21.

Following questions and comments from members of the Forum, the Director of Finance advised that:

- the challenges involved in setting a 3-year budget meant that inevitably some items may need to be removed. This could be due to changes in legislation, the lead in time or consultation. The Infinity project had been reversed from the budget, however, work on the development and marketing of Project Infinity would continue and any income generated would be re-instated into the budget as and when realised. Any shortfall would be covered from a number of other sources, for example, collections fund resources, savings on capital financing and additional grant monies;
- the overspend in Adults was being mitigated through the receipt of additional income received after budget setting and the remaining shortfall would be offset through some technical entries and centrally held corporate budgets. The 'Home in Harrow' project had been developed following an evaluation of adult social care delivery in Harrow and was aimed at reducing the number of people requiring residential care packages. A very large proportion of the adult social care budget was spent on residential care packages. She undertook to find out if the Home in Harrow project was part of the Supported Living scheme and would circulate this information to Forum members after the meeting;
- the Council, in conjunction with other West London Authorities had entered into a contract with West London Waste (WLW). The return on the investment income from this was reflected in the investment income budget. These items were reported in the Treasury Management Budget reports. She undertook to circulate more detailed information regarding this to Forum members after the meeting;
- the Portfolio Holder for Community advised that Harrow was in the 'pay as you throw' scheme. The Council received a rebate from WLW, which was allocated to the central budget. He pointed out that costs and returns for waste could vary due to fluctuations in the recycling market. He undertook to look into the figures and share this information with Forum members after the meeting;

- Directorates had been requested to ensure that any savings listed in the budget should be achievable. In cases where a Directorate struggled to achieve savings, it would in the first instance be expected to cover this from within the Directorate and failing that, the shortfall would be achieved across the Council as a whole. She added that the budget monitoring process would begin early, as in previous years, so shortfalls could be identified early and appropriate mitigating measures put in place;
- with regard to the impact of the saving proposals on FTE's, she did not have the exact figures and undertook to provide this information to the Corporate Joint Committee meeting scheduled to take place at the end of January 2018;
- the £8.4m figure related to the cost of borrowing money to fund the Council's Capital Programme, which included essential building and maintenance projects such as schools, roads etc. The Council received investment returns of £1.3m which included returns on the WLWA contract. The investment income from the Council's commercial ventures amounted to approximately £700k and the Council currently had £50m cash balances.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

61. Exclusion of the Press & Public & Reasons for Urgency

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of confidential information in breach of an obligation of confidence, or of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Reason</u>
7.	Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 (Libraries Contract managed by Carillion)	Information under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

62. Draft Revenue Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21

Following news that the Construction company, Carillion had gone into compulsory liquidation earlier in the week, Forum members asked a number of questions and made a number of comments regarding the Council's library services contract which had been managed by Carillion.

The Leader advised that he was in discussions with the Leader of the Conservative Group regarding ways forward in relation to the Libraries contract. He added that he would be consulting both the Leader of the Conservative Group and the legal team before Cabinet made a final decision on the matter.

RESOLVED: That the comments be noted.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.35 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KIRAN RAMCHANDANI
Chair