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**REPORT OF CABINET**

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**MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2004**

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Chair: \* Councillor N Shah

Councillors: \* D Ashton \* C Mote  
\* Burchell \* Marie-Louise Nolan  
\* Margaret Davine O'Dell  
\* Dighé \* Stephenson  
\* Miss Lyne

\* Denotes Member present

[Note: Councillor Mrs Kinnear also attended this meeting to speak on the item indicated at Minute 667 below].

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS****RECOMMENDATION I - Key Decision - 2005-06 Budget and Medium Term Budget Strategy 2005-06 to 2007-08**

The Executive Director (Business Connections) outlined the content of his report, which included a summary of the figures and detailed schedules and all the proposals included in the draft budget. The finance settlement outlined in Appendix F to his report was provisional and the budget might therefore need to be refined when the final settlement was known at the end of January 2005.

Cabinet, having agreed the draft Revenue Budget for 2005-6 for consultation with stakeholders, the draft Medium Term Budget Strategy, the revised Housing Revenue Account for 2004-5, the draft Housing Revenue Account for 2005-6, the draft three year financial strategy for Housing, and having noted the proposed level of capital programme for 2005-6 and that the detailed programme would be reported to Cabinet in January 2005,

**Resolved to RECOMMEND:**

(1) That the Council maintain a minimum level of unallocated General Fund Reserves of £4,000,000 at the end of each financial year;

(2) that the optimal level of unallocated General Fund Reserves was £7,000,000.

(See also Minute 658).

**PART II - MINUTES**

651. **Paul Osburn:**  
Each of the Group Leaders paid tribute to Paul Osburn, Executive Director (People First), who was retiring from the Authority's employ. Members expressed their thanks for all his work and wished him all the best for the future.

Paul Osburn thanked Members for their good wishes.

652. **Declarations of Interest:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following interests were declared:

| <u>Agenda Item</u>  | <u>Member</u>         | <u>Nature of Interest</u>   |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| 12. Key Decision – Proposed Schools Budget 2005/06          | Councillor Burchell   | The Member indicated a personal interest in that his spouse was employed in a local authority maintained school. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.   |
|   | Councillor Dighé      | The Member indicated a personal interest in that his wife was employed in a local authority maintained school and his children attended schools in Harrow. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon. |
| 13. Pinner War Memorial Fund Annual Report 2003-04          | Councillor Burchell   | The Member indicated a personal interest in that he was a trustee of the West House Trust. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.   |
|   | Councillor C Mote     | The Member indicated a personal interest in that, as a Councillor, he was a trustee of the Pinner War Memorial Fund. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.                                       |
| 14. Arts in Public Places Policy                            | Councillor D Ashton   | The Member declared a personal interest in that he was a Council appointed member of the Middlesex Guildhall Collection and Trust Fund. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.                    |
|   | Councillor Stephenson | The Member declared a personal interest in that he was a Council appointed member of the Executive Committee of Harrow Heritage Trust. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.                     |
| 15. Hatch End Cluster Proposal for Extended Schools Funding | Councillor Burchell   | The Member indicated a personal interest in that he was a governor of Cedars First and Middle Schools. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.   |

Councillor Miss Lyne                      The Member indicated a personal interest in that she was a governor of Cedars First and Middle Schools. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Councillor Stephenson                      The Member indicated a personal interest in that he was a governor of Hatch End School. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

653. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2004, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

654. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

The Chair indicated that he was prepared to consider items 12(a), the reference from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee, item 12(b), the recommendation from the Education Consultative Forum in relation to the Proposed Schools' Budget 2005/2006, and item 18(a), the recommendation from the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel in relation to the Transport Local Implementation Plan, as urgent so that they could be considered in conjunction with the associated officer reports.

The Chair indicated that he would be varying the order of business to enable consideration of item 8, Star Rating on Social Services, following item 5. Item 11, the 2005/6 Budget and Medium Term Budget Strategy 2005/6 to 2007/8 and item 12, the Proposed Schools' Budget 2005/6, would then be considered. He asked Members to note that item 10, the draft Capital Programme 2005/6, had been withdrawn from the agenda.

**RESOLVED:** That all business be considered with the press and public present with the exception of the following item for the reasons set out below:

| <u>Item</u>  | <u>Reason</u>   |
|--|---|
| 20. Clarendon Road Public Realm Proposals – Recommendation from the Town Centre Project Panel – Appendices | The appendices contained exempt information under Paragraphs 7 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that they contained confidential information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person and any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the Authority in the course of negotiations for a contract. |

655. **Petitions:**

- (1) Councillor Miss Lyne submitted a petition, which had also been forwarded to Transport for London, containing 10 signatures, in relation to the Bus Shelter at High Road, Harrow Weald (Northbound). The terms of the petition were as follows:-

“We, the residents of the High Road Harrow Weald, strongly urge you to reconsider the placement of the above-mentioned bus shelter, on the grounds of:-

- Invasion of privacy due to increase in number of users
- safety issue
- detriment to the local environment
- increase in number of buses.”

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and noted.

- (2) Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan, as Chair of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel, submitted a petition containing 545 signatures from the Wealdstone Traders' Association in relation to free parking at Peel House. She advised that the petition had the support of the Ward Councillors and read the terms of the petition to the meeting which were as follows:-

"Wealdstone traders and shoppers are concerned by the impending loss of surface car parks in Wealdstone and the effect of loss of trade this will have. We, the undersigned, call upon the Leader of Harrow Council to immediately introduce a period of free parking at Peel House Multi Storey Car Park. We believe this measure would encourage current car park users to relocate to Peel House. We want the same concessions that are already being applied in North Harrow."

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and noted.

656. **Public Questions:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following public questions had been received:-

1.

**Questioner:** Mr L Choules

**Asked of:** Councillor Navin Shah (The Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet)

**Question:** "The Executive Director Urban Living, in a Written response to the former ALMO Shadow Board's submission to the pre-cabinet meeting of 11th November, stated that: "... it demonstrates the Shadow Board's inability to understand the financial projections produced by the Council Officers". The Cabinet is aware that there were several Councillors on the Shadow Board. Does the Cabinet agree with him that Councillors on the Board and by default ALL Councillors are unable to understand financial projections produced by Council Officers. And if they do not agree, do they then agree that the statement reinforces the culture of Officers believing they are superior and are leading the Council Policies, rather than the elected officials which the people of Harrow voted to represent them?"

2.

**Questioner:** Mr Pravin Seedher

**Asked of:** Councillor Navin Shah (The Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet)

**Question:** "Regarding the glossy colour brochure entitled: New Harrow - rescuing a Borough from its History, please explain the background to its production covering its objective, cost and whether its requirement was driven by Officers or by Councillors."

Cabinet noted that Mr Choules had been unable to attend the meeting and had requested a written response, which Councillor N Shah undertook to provide.

An oral answer was provided to Question 2. Under the provisions of the Executive Procedure Rule 15.4, Mr Seedher asked a supplementary question which was additionally answered.

657. **Star Rating Report on Social Services:**

The Chair welcomed Geoff Corre, the Relationship Manager from the Commission of Social Care Inspection (CSCI), who was in attendance to present the Annual Review of Performance and the star rating letter.

Mr Corre outlined the role of the CSCI and the legislative requirements. He advised that the CSCI would be meeting with Harrow's Director of Social Services and senior managers on a regular basis to manage the change agenda. Mr Corre added that the CSCI would continue to monitor Harrow's progress against the performance assessment framework.

In response to Members' concern that staff within Social Services had not received praise nor recognition for their work from the CSCI, Mr Corre advised that the review had been based on admissible evidence and it had not been possible to make subjective statements. In accepting that evidence was required, the Director of Children's Services, in his role as Director of Social Services, indicated that it was important that the work and commitment of staff was recognised in the change agenda.

Members reiterated their dissatisfaction at the lack of recognition given to staff by the CSCI in their Annual Review.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**Reason for Decision:** On 11 November 2004, Cabinet had requested that the CSCI be invited to attend their next meeting to enable the Inspector to present his findings.

658. **Key Decision - 2005-06 Budget and Medium Term Budget Strategy 2005-06 to 2007-08:**

(See also Recommendation I).

The Executive Director (Business Connections) outlined the content of his report and advised that the provisional settlement had been announced on 2 December 2004. The Council's provisional Formula Spending Share for 2005/6 was £248.3m, an increase of £12m or 5.5%. He emphasised that the settlement was provisional and that the budget might need to be refined once the final settlement was known.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) drew Members' attention to Appendix B of his report which set out a summary of the revenue budget for 2005/6 and which would result in a 1.48% increase in Council Tax. When linked to the GLA precept, this would lead to an increase in Council Tax of 2.5%.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) advised Members that the draft Capital Programme 2005/6 would be reported to Cabinet on 13 January 2005.

In response to Members' questions, the Executive Director (Business Connections) undertook to provide a response in relation to the likely Council Tax charge if the Government were to fully fund the cost of the new licensing regime. He also stated that the funding of the social inclusion proposals (detailed elsewhere on the agenda) could be met from reserves as it would be a one-off expense.

Cabinet, having recommended to Council that a level of unallocated General Fund Reserves of £4m at the end of each financial year be maintained and that the optimal level of unallocated General Fund Reserves was £7m,

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the draft Revenue Budget of £254.570m for 2005-06 for consultation with stakeholders be agreed;

(2) that the draft Medium Term Budget Strategy be approved;

(3) that the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2004-05, the Draft Housing Revenue Account for 2005-06 and the draft three year financial strategy for Housing be approved, and that the draft HRA be referred to the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum on 6 January 2005;

(4) to note the proposed level of the capital programme for 2005/06 and that the detailed programme would be reported to Cabinet in January 2005.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure that the Council was planning the use of resources effectively.

(Note: Councillors D Ashton, Miss Lyne and C Mote wished to be recorded as having abstained from voting on the above resolutions due to the late receipt of the report).

659. **Key Decision - Proposed Schools Budget 2005/06:**

The Executive Director (Business Connections) introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the reference from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 December 2004. He advised that the recommendation from the Education Consultative Forum meeting held on 7 December 2004 had been circulated on the third supplemental agenda.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) advised that the draft schools budget would enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations and enable schools to

manage their budgets for 2005/6. He indicated that, in response to concerns expressed at the meeting of the Budget Review Working Group on 14 December 2004, he had contacted the external auditors to seek support for Members on the workings of the education budget.

In noting the reference from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee and the recommendation from the Education Consultative Forum, including the undertaking that strong representations would be made to the Government to ensure that funds for schools were not reduced in the future, it was

**RESOLVED (unanimously):** That the Secretary of State for Education be notified that the Council would fully passport the Schools Block increase.

**Reason for Decision:** It was a requirement of the Education Act 2002 that the Council notified the Secretary of State for Education of the proposed Schools Budget by 31 December 2004.

(See also Minute 652).

660. **Forward Plan 1 December 2004 - 31 March 2005:**

**RESOLVED:** To note the contents of the Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2004 – 31 March 2005.

661. **Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committees:**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no reports had been received.

662. **Social Inclusion in Harrow:**

The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) introduced the report and advised that a senior officer steering group led by the Chief Executive had been established and that, subject to Cabinet approval, the Group would produce an outline strategy and project plan to be considered at a future meeting of Cabinet.

In response to Members' questions, the Director of Strategy (Urban Living) advised that the pilot areas and methods of consultation had not yet been determined. The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Partnership and Human Resources welcomed the cross-party support for the proposal and indicated her hope that, in future, Harrow might be successful in obtaining external funding.

**RESOLVED:** That social inclusion be placed at the centre of Harrow's strategic priorities for the Borough and its people, working closely with partners to:

- break the cycle of disadvantage affecting many residents and provide equal opportunities for all;
- continue the improvement of coordinated services and delivery at local level to bring equality of service to disadvantaged groups;
- plan for the potential risks and opportunities thrown up by the changing demographic, economic and social trends;
- develop two pilot projects, one geographically based, one community based, in the Borough in 2005;
- extend and enhance the Vitality Profiles to inform policy and ensure effective targeting of resources.

**Reason for Decision:** (1) Social inclusion would lead to a better quality of life for all;

(2) resources, services and social inclusion programmes would be more effectively targeted; and

(3) residents and communities experiencing social exclusion would be more accurately identified and would be supported through coordinated initiatives.

663. **Pinner War Memorial Fund Annual Report 2003-04:**

**RESOLVED:** That the Annual Report of the Pinner War Memorial Fund for the year ending 31 March 2004 be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** The Council, as Trustees of the Pinner War Memorial Fund, was required under the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 1995 to prepare an Annual Report including the Accounts of the Fund.

(See also Minute 652).

664. **Arts in Public Places Policy:**

The Executive Director (People First) introduced the report which proposed that the Council adopt an Art in Public Places policy and set up a 'Percent for Art' fund.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Council adopt the Art in Public Places policy outlined in the report of the Director of Learning and Community Development and contained within the supporting documentation;

(2) that a 'Percent for Art' fund be set up to handle contributions from developers as part of Section 106 planning obligations;

(3) that officers develop processes and protocols for Section 106 pre-application procedures and for stakeholder participation in the design process;

(4) that officers explore the establishment of an Art In Public Places Development Trust, including holding discussions with appropriate local agencies and stakeholders.

**Reason for Decision:** Approval would further both the Council's commitment in the Cultural Strategy Action Plan 2003-08 to develop and implement an Arts in Public Places policy, for which a date of 2004-05 was set as the milestone, and its commitment to Policy D30 of its Unitary Development plan. Approval would also enable officers to develop the necessary processes to facilitate the implementation of the policy.

(See also Minute 652).

665. **Hatch End Cluster Proposal for Extended Schools Funding:**

The Executive Director (People First) introduced the report and reminded Members that, in July 2004, they had agreed to extend the community schools pilot, subject to plans receiving Cabinet approval.

Members indicated that it was important to get stakeholders on board and that the reports should be submitted to school governing bodies.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposal from the Hatch End Cluster for developing the community schools' approach be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** Approval of this proposal fitted with the Cabinet decision taken in July 2004 to extend the Community Schools' Programme. The proposal from the Hatch End cluster took forward the development of joined-up, inter-agency provision as set out in the rationale for establishing the People First Directorate and fitted within the corporate strategic priorities.

(See also Minute 652).

666. **Breakspear Crematorium:**

Members considered the report of the Area Director (Urban Living), which sought endorsement to proposed Service Level Agreement revisions and to proposals arising from consultation.

In response to a Member's question, the representative of the Area Director (Urban Living) advised that he would be looking at the feasibility of providing a 24/7 cemetery/crematoria service.

An amendment in the name of Councillor N Shah was moved, put to the vote and it was

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the proposed Service Level Agreement revisions set out in Appendix A to the report of the Area Director (Urban Living) be endorsed;

(2) that the proposals arising from the consultation be approved and incorporated in the capital investment plan to develop infrastructure and improve the customer experience in the partnership with Hillingdon Council;

(3) that further work/negotiations take place with Hillingdon Council in terms of the viability of a community hall and that a further report be submitted to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

**Reason for Decision:** The proposals would contribute to the corporate priority to improve services for local citizens, to enable services to meet community needs in the future and strengthen Harrow's local community by promoting social inclusion amongst its residents.

667. **Planning Services Improvement Plan - Progress Report:**

In accordance with paragraph 18 of the Executive Procedure Rules, the Chair invited, and Cabinet agreed, that Councillor Mrs Kinnear could speak on this item.

The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report, which updated Members on the achievement against the Service Improvement Plan.

In response to questions from Councillor Mrs Kinnear, the Executive Director (Urban Living) advised that the post of section 106 officer was new and that he would look into why key service objective 6: provide an effective enforcement service, was given a medium priority.

In response to Councillor Mrs Kinnear's comments that the number of complaints made to the Chief Executive and the Ombudsman were related to the delay in response from the enforcement service, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Housing indicated that he would discuss this matter with the Chief Executive.

**RESOLVED:** That the update on achievement against the Service Improvement Plan be noted.

**Reason for Decision:** To monitor progress.

668. **Transport Local Implementation Plan:**

A representative of the Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the recommendation from the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel meeting held on 1 December 2004.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the draft policies and programmes to be included in the draft Transport Local Implementation Plan for the purposes of consultation be agreed;

(2) that the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport be authorised to agree updates, changes and the final consultation draft;

(3) that advisers on the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel be invited to the Members' Forum on the Transport Local Implementation Plan.

**Reason for Decision:** The status of the Plan as a statutory document required by the Mayor of London and the statutory requirement for consultation.

669. **Key Decision - Supporting People Review and Inspection:**

The Director of Strategy (Urban Living) introduced the report, which outlined the recommendations of the Supporting People Advisory Panel, and advised that both the Audit Commission and Commission for Social Care Inspection would be carrying out inspections in the week commencing 17 January 2005.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the inspection timetable, process and improvement plan be noted;

(2) that new governance arrangements and the continuing involvement of the Supporting People Advisory Panel Members be noted and agreed;

(3) that the proposed risk management strategy be noted;

(4) that the financial report be noted and that the use of income from charges be retained within the Supporting People budget;

(5) that the continued use of the present system of block gross chargeable contracts be agreed.

**Reason for Decision:** To implement and manage Supporting People in line with guidance from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

670. **Clarendon Road Public Realm proposals - Recommendation from the Town Centre Project Panel:**

The Chief Executive introduced the report, which outlined the recommendations from the Town Centre Project Panel in relation to the Clarendon Road Public Realm proposals. She drew Members' attention to the Part II Appendices, which had been circulated for their information only.

The Chief Executive advised that the report had been submitted to Cabinet on the assumption that the draft Capital Programme would also appear on the agenda for this meeting. However, as the Capital Programme had been withdrawn from the agenda she asked that Members note the recommendation and approve the proposals subject to the Cabinet's consideration of the Capital Programme in January 2005.

**RESOLVED:** That, in principle, the proposals for environmental and public realm improvements in Clarendon Road proceed, subject to the provision in the 2005/6 capital programme.

**Reason for Decision:** Cabinet approval was required to enable the proposed improvements to proceed. The improvements would address the poor environment of a key pedestrian route and set a standard for creating a distinctive town centre environment.

671. **Appointments to Subsidiary Bodies:**

**RESOLVED:** (1) That Councillor Idaikkadar be appointed as Chair of the Best Value Advisory Panel;

(2) that Councillor Bluston be appointed as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Major Minority Group member on the Housing Improvements Options Advisory Panel;

(3) that Councillor Branch and Councillor Thornton be appointed as Reserve Members to Councillor Lyne on the Grants Advisory Panel;

(4) that Councillor Vina Mithani be appointed to the Housing Improvements Options Advisory Panel in place of Councillor Anjana Patel.

672. **Extension and Termination of the Meeting:**

In accordance with the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 22.2 (Part 4D of the Constitution), it was

**RESOLVED:** At 9.59 pm to continue the meeting until 10.15 pm.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.15 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR NAVIN SHAH  
Chair