

---

**REPORT OF CABINET**


---

**MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2005**


---

Chair: Councillor N Shah

Councillors: \* D Ashton \* Marie-Louise Nolan  
 \* Burchell \* O'Dell  
 \* Margaret Davine \* Bill Stephenson  
 \* Dighé (Deputy Leader in the Chair) \* Thornton  
 \* C Mote

\* Denotes Member present

**PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**

**PART II - MINUTES**

835. **Declarations of Interest:**

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

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
14. Key Decision – Children’s Centres	Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan	The Member indicated a personal interest in that she was the Chair of Governors at Whitefriars First and Middle Schools. She would remain in the room whilst this matter was considered and voted upon.
	Councillor Chris Mote	The Member indicated a personal interest in that his sister was a teacher in the Borough. He would remain in the room whilst this matter was considered and voted upon.
19. Key Decision – Local Development Framework – Statement of Community Involvement	Councillor Burchell	The Member indicated a personal interest in that he was the Council’s representative on the Harrow Town Centre Forum, which had been consulted on this matter. He added that Labour Members had a personal interest in that the Greenhill and Marlborough Branch Labour Party had been consulted on this matter. Labour Members remained in the room whilst this matter was considered and voted upon.

[Note: The Director of Financial and Business Strategy declared an interest in relation to item 13, the Future of Economic Development and Regeneration, as she was a board member of Harrow in Business. She did not participate in this item and remained in the room whilst this matter was considered and voted upon.]

836. **Minutes:**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

837. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

The Chair indicated that he would be varying the order of business to allow consideration of item 7, Young People’s Participation Strategy, after item 5, public questions, to enable a group of young people to make a presentation to the meeting.

Members noted that item 11, Harrow, West London and London 2012 had been withdrawn from the agenda.

**RESOLVED:** That all business be considered with the press and public present.

838. **Petitions:**

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

839. **Public Question Time:**

1.

**Questioner:** Mr Pravin Seedher

**Asked of:** Councillor Sanjay Dighe, (Portfolio Holder for Business Connections and Performance)

**Question:** "An efficient and well managed council scrutinises every pound before it is spent to ensure benefit to tax payers and service users whereas our labour council utilising the spend now and don't worry about it approach is either unable to tell us the cost (e.g change in Logo) or finds out 5 years later (e.g Social care). Given this culture of free spending how does this labour administration hope to achieve the excellent financial management rating it seeks but clearly does not have?"

2.

**Questioner:** Mr Barry Macleod -Cullinane

**Asked of:** Councillor Sanjay Dighe (Portfolio Holder for Business Connections and Performance)

**Question:** "The Sunday Times reported this week that database integration costs would amount to around £500 per ID Card; since local government databases are some of the most important databases in terms of the information the Government wants to collect, how much of that reported £500 per card in database integration costs does the Portfolio Holder for Finance expect to land on Harrow Council and be added to the Council Tax?"

[Note: An oral answer was provided to each question. Under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 15.4, each questioner asked a supplemental question. An oral answer was provided to Mr Seedher and the Portfolio Holder for Business Connections and Performance undertook to provide a written response to Mr Macleod-Cullinane's supplemental question].

840. **Young People's Participation Strategy:**

The Chair welcomed a group of five young people to the meeting and invited them to make a presentation to Cabinet in relation to the Young People's Participation Strategy. The young people included representatives of the Youth Council and the Looked After Group. Following the presentation and introductions, there was a discussion between Members and the young people. Members were invited to attend an event, APSIG on health, on 23 November 2005.

Members congratulated the young people on their presentation and indicated that they had some good ideas. A number of suggestions were made as to ways of involving young people in decision-making and how the process could be taken forward including:-

- participation by young people in the Harrow People magazine
- the establishment of a specific area on the Council's website;
- that young people might wish to be involved in the consultation in relation to the Statement of Community Involvement, which appeared elsewhere on the agenda for the meeting;

Members indicated that they hoped that young people would be involved in the decision making process. It was commented that Councillors should be accessible.

Members noted that, in terms of participation, the young people were also engaging with children under 13 years of age.

The Director of Children Services introduced the report and reminded Members of the benefit of having young people involved in the decision making process. He thanked the young people and officers for their work on the strategy and proposed that Executive Directors, Directors and Portfolio Holders work with young people to identify practical projects that they could be involved in.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Young People's Participation Strategy be endorsed;

(2) that Members be nominated to participate in the Monitoring Group;

(3) that Executive Directors, Directors and Portfolio Holders identify projects that young people could participate in.

**Reason for Decision:** Participation was a central part of the Council's delivery against its Corporate Priorities. The initiative contributed to the Council's engagement aim of delivering further activities, which involved and collaborated with target groups, rather than simply consulted.

841. **Strategic Performance Report - Quarter 2 2005/2006:**

The Director of People, Performance and Policy introduced the report to the Performance Board and outlined the actions being taken. He highlighted the significant areas of progress during the second quarter and the areas requiring further work.

The Director of People, Performance and Policy reported that the Audit Commission had advised that the scoring system for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment was to be altered this year to a star rating. The final methodology had recently been published and officers were currently of the view that the Council would receive a 2 star rating in December.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the Performance Report and the actions being taken be noted;

(2) that the officers note the adaptations identified by the Performance Board and incorporate them into the Strategic Performance Report.

**Reason for Decision:** It had been previously agreed that Cabinet would receive quarterly monitoring information reports in its role as Performance Board.

842. **Forward Plan 1 November 2005 - 28 February 2006:**

In response to a Member's question in relation to Third Party Reporting of Racial Incidents, an item appearing on the Plan, the Chief Executive advised that following the publication of the Plan it had been determined that this issue would be brought forward as part of the Local Area Agreement and would not be reported separately to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:** To note the contents of the Forward Plan for the period 1 November 2005 – 28 February 2006.

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

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

844. **The Council's Calendar of Meetings 2006/7:**

The Director of Corporate Governance introduced the report, which proposed the dates for the Authority's Calendar of Meetings for the Municipal Year 2006/07. He drew Members' attention to a tabled amendment, which proposed the inclusion of the festivals of Navratri and Dussera and the rescheduling of the Community Consultative Forum proposed for 27 September 2006.

**RESOLVED:** That the Calendar of Meetings for the Authority for the Municipal Year 2006/2007 as set out in the report of the Director of Corporate Governance and the tabled amendment be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** The Calendar of Meetings was approved on an annual basis at approximately this time of the year for the succeeding Municipal Year. Approval facilitated the planning of forward commitments by both Members and officers.

845. **West London Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan:**  
The Director of Strategic Planning introduced the report, which sought approval to the West London Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan. It was a requirement of the London Development Agency that each sub regional partnership developed such a strategy and implementation plan.
- The Director of Strategic Planning reported that the Implementation Plan was now complete and had been the subject of extensive consultation with stakeholders and partners. He added that the aim of the proposals was to put the Council in a good position for future funding bid opportunities.
- RESOLVED:** That the West London Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan be approved.
- Reason for Decision:** The proposals were linked to the corporate priorities and provided a sub regional context to local activity, helped Harrow to align future economic development to sub regional priorities where appropriate and provided opportunities to work on shared priorities and projects with colleagues in other Boroughs.
846. **The Future of Economic Development and Regeneration:**  
The Director of Strategic Planning introduced the report, which aimed to provide assurance that current services would be maintained and that projects which had been committed to with secured funding were taken forward whilst the function of regeneration and economic development was reviewed.
- In response to a Member's question, the Director of Strategic Planning advised that the format for Member involvement had not been finalised but that he anticipated that a Member/officer working group would meet on a regular basis.
- RESOLVED:** That plans for comprehensive review of regeneration and economic development function be approved.
- Reasons for Decision:** To provide direction to the Council's regeneration and economic development functions.
- (See also Minute 835)
847. **Key Decision - Children's Centres:**  
The Director of Children Services introduced the report, which advised that the Harrow Children's Centre Strategy provided an opportunity to join together other key strategies and to maximise the benefits.
- The Director of Children Services reported that Harrow had not so far been successful in securing Sure Start funding and that the existing Children's Centres had been developed using Council funding. The Council were required to develop and deliver six more Children's Centres over the next six years. He reported that, whilst the site of the centres was not commercially sensitive information, there was not a formal agreement in place and therefore some sensitivity was required.
- Cabinet requested that their thanks be conveyed to the officers who had worked on the strategy.
- RESOLVED:** That the Harrow Children's Centres Strategy, attached at Appendix A, and the Policy, attached at Appendix B to the report of the Director of Strategy (People First), be approved.
- Reason for Decision:** The implementation of the Harrow Children's Centres Strategy would bring significant benefits to children and families who lived in Harrow.
- (See also minute 835)
848. **Children Services Workforce Strategy:**  
The Executive Director (People First) introduced the report, which proposed a new Workforce Strategy for improved services in the Children's Services Social Services Department. She reported that, like many other local authorities, Harrow experienced difficulty in recruiting staff, particularly in Children's Services. It was hoped that the strategy would lead to a more stable workforce in the future and save money on agency staff fees. The aim was to make Harrow a more attractive place to work and stay.

**RESOLVED:** That the new Workforce Strategy for improved services in the Children's Services Social Services Department be adopted.

**Reason for Decision:** To fully implement a major change programme to the structural, financial and managerial relationship of social workers in the Children's Services Department of People First enabling a more sustainable workforce providing better services at a considerably reduced cost to the Council.

849. **Key Decision - Waste Management Service:**

The Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report which outlined proposed price increases and changes to the admissions policy in relation to the Civic Amenity Site.

In response to a Member's question in relation to the practicality of requiring photographic identification in order to tip waste free of charge at the Civic Amenity site, the Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) advised that the public were now used to providing photographic evidence to prove identity to enable a broad range of day to day transactions to be completed. Additionally, many people now carried photocard driving licences, which would help proof of identity.

Some Members expressed concern that increasing the charges might result in an increase in fly tipping. The Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) advised that this was a consideration but that in the current year an increase in fly tipping had not been experienced.

In response to a Member's question about the use of trailers by residents to tip waste at the Civic Amenity Site, the Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) indicated that whilst there did not appear to be an extensive use of trailers to tip waste he would recommend that they be included in the policy in the same manner as vans. A Member commented that some residents might use a trailer to tip waste rather than transporting it to the Site in their car.

The Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) clarified that, in relation to the recycling of business waste, there was a free paper and bottle collection but that a free collection of organic waste was not suggested at this stage.

Members indicated that there should be publicity of the price increases and admissions policy.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the proposed price increases and admissions policy set out in Section 2.1 to the report of the Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) be approved;

(2) that the Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) be requested to prepare a further report on the proposal for the inclusion of trailers in the admissions policy for consideration by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport, in consultation with the nominated Members.

**Reason for Decision:** To tighten the procedures at the Civic Amenity Site to reduce the misuse of the free service offered to residents. The Council would increase its income and reduce its future liabilities under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme.

850. **Neighbourhood Renewal Transition Plan:**

The Director of Strategic Planning introduced the report, which sought approval to the recommendations for an outline Transitional Neighbourhood Renewal Plan.

The Director of Strategic Planning emphasised that the work currently undertaken by Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel (WRAP) would be subsumed into the Wealdstone Neighbourhood Renewal Project and Forum.

The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Partnership and Human Resources advised that Members of WRAP were aware of the proposals and that they would have a position on the new Forum. However, it was important to have a wider participation.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposal for an outline Transitional Neighbourhood Renewal Plan be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** To provide the opportunity to pilot the neighbourhood renewal approach to work in Wealdstone.

851. **Key Decision - Older Persons' Housing Review:**  
The Director of Community Care introduced the report which provided the strategic basis upon which to develop an implementation plan that would improve older persons' housing services in Harrow across all tenures.
- Members welcomed the report and commented that the group of older people now needed to focus on the development of the recommendations and action plan.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the Older Persons' Housing Review report and recommendations be noted;
- (2) that the proposals for implementing the recommendations, as set out in paragraph 2.2.4 of the report of the Interim Director of Corporate Property and Director of Community Care be approved;
- (3) that a cross party Member panel receive regular briefings on progress;
- (4) that a progress report be submitted to Cabinet in six months' time.
- Reason for Decision:** The report provided the strategic basis upon which to develop an implementation plan that would improve older persons' housing services in Harrow across all tenures.
852. **Key Decision - Local Development Framework - Statement of Community Involvement:**  
The Acting Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the recommendation from the Strategic Planning Advisory Panel.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) progress to the Submission stage and the six week statutory period;
- (2) that the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Housing be authorised to approve the printed Statement of Community Involvement in order to meet the Local Development Scheme Timetable;
- (3) that the Director of Legal Services be authorised to serve any statutory notices that may be required.
- Reason for Decision:** Public involvement in the preparation of the SCI was a positive move towards increasing public awareness at the outset of the preparation of the Local Development Framework. Maximising engagement would enhance the Council's corporate objective of promoting diversity and inclusion and reduce public opposition to policy implementation.
- (See also minute 835)
853. **Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2005:**  
The Director of Financial and Business Strategy introduced the report, which set out the current revenue and capital budget positions.
- The Director of Financial and Business Strategy reminded Members that in her previous report she had advised that there was a projected overspend of £3.1m. Since that report, further issues had emerged and she highlighted the additional £400,000 pressure identified in relation to asylum seeker costs. An overspend of £3m was now forecast and, in order to contain expenditure, she advised that intensive work was being undertaken.
- The Director of Financial and Business Strategy reported that the net position of the Reserves was just over £4m at the end of 2005/06 and that it was currently forecast that Reserves would remain above this figure. She indicated that two thirds of the procurement savings had been achieved and that the option for securing a further £1m by the year-end was being considered.
- In response to a Member's concerns in relation to the level of Reserves and the setting of procurement savings targets, the Director of Financial and Business Strategy undertook to provide Members with a monthly update report on these issues.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the current revenue and capital budget position be noted;
- (2) that a virement within the capital programme to increase the provision for Leisure Centre toilet refurbishment be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** To effectively monitor the Council's revenue and capital budgets.

854. **Employees Displaced by the Middle Management Review:**

The Executive Director (Business Development) introduced the report, which outlined the arrangements for managing employees potentially displaced by the Middle Management Review (MMR) process. She advised that a full report would be submitted to Cabinet in the new year to include Urban Living.

The Executive Director (Business Development) reported that Unison had been consulted on the proposals and she read their statement to the meeting.

In response to a Member's question as to the potential costs of the displaced staff in Urban Living, the Executive Director (Business Development) advised that, as the MMR process in that directorate had not been completed, this was difficult to determine. However, the current best estimate was a potential cost of £800,000. Following on from this, another Member restated his concerns in relation to the potential impact of the process on the level of Reserves.

The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Partnership and Human Resources emphasised the importance of having a process in place to deal with displaced staff and added that those affected would be supported, in consultation with Unison.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the arrangements for managing employees potentially displaced by the Middle Management Review process be noted;

(2) that the potential financial implications of the cost of severance payments in the current and the next financial year be noted.

**Reason for Decision:** The report was interim and advised Members of the arrangements put in place to manage those employees potentially displaced by the MMR process and potential financial implications.

855. **Revised Health and Safety Policy:**

The Executive Director (Business Development) introduced the report, which outlined the revised Health and Safety policy.

**RESOLVED:** That the revised Health and Safety policy be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** Following the Health and Safety Executive Audit during January/February 2005 a number of recommendations were made including revision of the Health and Safety policy. Successful implementation of the Health and Safety policy would enable better use of resources by reducing the incidence of work related ill health and injury.

856. **Membership of the Budget Review Working Group:**

The Leader of the Conservative Group indicated that in variation to the changes to membership of the Budget Review Working Group included on the agenda that he wished to propose that Councillor John Cowan be appointed in place of Councillor Pinkus and that Councillor Pinkus be appointed as a reserve.

Members noted that the membership of the Open Budget Steering Group would also be altered as a result of these proposals.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor John Cowan be appointed to the membership of the Budget Review Working Group, and therefore the Open Budget Steering Group, in place of Councillor Pinkus and that the order of the Conservative Group Reserve Members be as follows:-

1. Romain
2. Mrs Kinnear
3. Pinkus

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.58 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR SANJAY DIGHE  
(Deputy Leader in the Chair)