
REPORT OF CABINET

MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2006

Chair: * Councillor N Shah

Councillors: * D Ashton * Marie-Louise Nolan
† Burchell * O'Dell
* Margaret Davine * Bill Stephenson
* Dighé * Thornton
* C Mote

* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION I - Role of Best Value Advisory Panel**

The Executive Director (Business Development) introduced the report, which advised that the Best Value Advisory Panel had considered its potential future role given the changes in the Best Values regime and the development of the scrutiny function since the Panel's inception. She drew Members' attention to the recommendation from the Best Value Advisory Panel meeting held on 24 November 2005.

Having resolved to dissolve the Panel with immediate effect it was

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That (1) the residual duties of the Best Value Advisory Panel be transferred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Sub-Committees;

(2) the appropriate amendments be made to the Council's Constitution.

Reason for Recommendation: To ensure that the residual functions relating to Best Value were dealt with efficiently.

(See also Minute 890).

PART II - MINUTES

882. **Statement by the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning:**
The Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning advised that, following recent reports in the press in relation to the employment of sex offenders in schools, he wished to make a statement on this issue. He praised the integrity and high standards of staff working in Harrow schools. He further advised that all Harrow Local Education Authority schools followed very strict selection procedures that included the required checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) list 99. These procedures enabled Harrow schools to avoid employing unsuitable people, including sex offenders. Officers had advised that, as far as they were aware, no one on the sex offenders register was employed in a Harrow school.
883. **Declarations of Interest:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.
884. **Minutes:**
RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2005, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
885. **Arrangement of Agenda:**
The Chair drew Members' attention to the urgent item, the recommendation from the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum, held on 5 January 2006, which had only become available after the agenda had been printed and circulated.
- Members noted that there was a further urgent item tabled for their consideration, the role of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel. Consideration of this item would enable the dissolution of the Panel and facilitate the handover arrangements to the Wealdstone Neighbourhood Renewal Project and Forum.
- RESOLVED:** That all business be considered with the press and public present with the exception of the following items for the reasons set out below:-
- | <u>Item</u> | <u>Reason</u> |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 16. Harrow on the Hill Station | The report contained exempt information by virtue of Paragraphs 7 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that it contained 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 for the acquisition or disposal of property. |
| 17. Potential Land Acquisition | The report contained exempt information by virtue of Paragraphs 7 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that it contained 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 for the acquisition of property. |
886. **Petitions:**
RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.
887. **Public Questions:**
RESOLVED: To note that no public questions had been received.

888. **Forward Plan 1 January - 30 April 2006:**
Members noted that the item Shaping Schools for the Future would now be considered in Autumn 2006.
- RESOLVED:** To note the contents of the Forward Plan for the period 1 January – 30 April 2006.
889. **Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committees:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that no reports had been received.
890. **Role of Best Value Advisory Panel:**
(See also Recommendation I).
- Members requested that their thanks be conveyed to those Members and officers who had served on the Panel and acknowledged that it had performed a useful function.
- Having recommended that the residual duties of the Panel be transferred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Sub-Committees it was
- RESOLVED:** That the Best Value Advisory Panel be dissolved with immediate effect.
- Reason for Decision:** There was insufficient business for the Panel to remain viable.
891. **Byron Park Regeneration:**
The Director of Strategic Planning introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the recommendation from the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel meeting held on 15 November 2005.
- RESOLVED:** To note that, following discussions with the Harrow and Wealdstone Swimming Club, the Club was considering the potential of other locations as well as the Byron Park site.
- Reason for Decision:** To note the current situation in relation to Byron Park site and the Harrow and Wealdstone Swimming Club.
892. **Key Decision - Calculation of Council Tax Taxbase for 2006 - 2007:**
The Director of Financial and Business Strategy introduced the report which advised that the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government Act 2003, required the Authority to formally calculate its Council Tax Taxbase for 2006 – 2007 to pass this information to precepting authorities by 31 January 2006. She reported that the number of taxable properties detailed in the report was marginally lower than that reported in December 2005.
- In response to Members' questions, the Director of Business Services explained the reason for the small increase in the number of taxable properties, that the percentage rules in relation to vacant properties were still in place and the justification for the expected collection rate. He added that officers were confident that the collection rate would be achieved.
- RESOLVED:** That (1) the Band D equivalent number of taxable properties be calculated as set out in the appendix to the report of the Director of Business Services in accordance with the Government regulations;
- (2) the provision for uncollectable amounts of Council Tax for 2006 – 2007 be agreed at 1.0% producing an expected collection rate of 99.0%;
- (3) subject to (1) and (2) above, the Council Tax Taxbase for 2006 – 2007 of 84,326 Band D equivalent properties (being 85,178 x 99.0%) be approved, allowing for payment in lieu of Ministry of Defence properties.
- Reason for Decision:** To fulfil the Council's statutory obligation to set the Council Tax Taxbase for 2006 – 2007.
893. **Estimated Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit as at 31 March 2006:**
The Director of Financial and Business Strategy introduced the report which sought approval of an estimated deficit on the Collection Fund.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That an estimated deficit of £452,417 on the Collection Fund as at 31 March 2006 be approved;

(2) to note that an amount of £363,525 would be transferred from the General Fund in 2006 – 2007.

Reason for Decision: To fulfil the Council's statutory obligation to make the estimate by 15 January 2006.

894. **Key Decision - Harrow 14-19 Strategy:**

The Director of Learning and Community Development introduced the report which advised that the strategy was being developed by all the key partners in Harrow and would form part of the bid to the 16-19 Capital Fund for post 16 capital development on high school sites. The capital bid required submission by 31 January 2006. Members noted that a summary of the progress of the Post 16 Collegiate Core Group work had been circulated on the fourth supplemental agenda.

Members indicated that the strategy had cross party support and paid tribute to the work of the schools, colleges and officers.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Harrow 14-19 Strategy be approved, in principle, subject to the final drafting work of the sub group of the Harrow 14-19 Advisory Group;

(2) approval of a bid for capital funding to enable post 16 capital development on high school sites be delegated to the Leaders of the Groups and submitted to the London West Learning and Skills Council by 31 January 2006;

(3) the Harrow 14-19 Strategy and the action plan, which would be finalised following the result of the bid to the London West Learning and Skills Council, be reviewed bi-annually.

Reason for Decision: Harrow needed a strategy agreed by all partners covering 14-19 provision and to enable submission of a bid to the London West Learning and Skills Council by 31 January 2006.

895. **Association of London Government (ALG) TEC 101 Agreement Variation:**

The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report and advised that the Council currently delegated a range of strategic functions to the ALG and ALG Transport and Environment Committee (ALG-TEC). He outlined the current arrangements for enforcement.

Members noted that the ALG-TEC Section 101 was effectively a joint agreement between all London local authorities that delegated powers and responsibilities to a joint committee, ALG-TEC, for specific projects or functions. In agreeing to the ALG-TEC 101 Agreement variation, Harrow would delegate the power to set the level of fixed penalty fines in relation to a range of highway, parking and traffic problems which were essential to complement current day to day enforcement operations to the Association of London Government.

RESOLVED: That the ALG-TEC 101 Agreement variation be approved.

Reason for Decision: Harrow would be empowered to issue fixed penalty fines in respect of certain offences when the level of fixed penalty fines had been set by the ALG. In setting the level of fines centrally for London, parity between local authorities was ensured and Harrow would be protected from the need to undertake local consultation and from challenge on the grounds that these had been set at variance to other local authorities.

896. **Draft London Plan Alterations - Housing Provision Targets - Public Consultation:**

The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the recommendation from the Strategic Planning Advisory Panel meeting held on 4 January 2006.

Members questioned the definition of a 'dwelling', and were advised that it was a dwelling of whatever description. The Executive Director (Urban Living) advised that the type of site would give an indication of the type of dwelling.

A Member expressed the view that it was necessary to emphasise to the Mayor for London that whilst over 4,000 additional homes was achievable, Harrow should not be penalised if that target was achieved prior to the deadline.

In response to a Member's question in relation to the target of 4,000 additional homes, the Director of Strategic Planning confirmed that this figure related to actual builds.

RESOLVED: That a synopsis of the comments contained within the report of the Group Manager (Planning and Development Services) considered by the Strategic Planning Advisory Panel be submitted to the Mayor for London as Harrow's response to the Draft London Plan Alterations – Housing Provision Targets – Public Consultation by 20 January 2006.

Reason for Decision: To provide the Mayor for London with the opportunity to feed the Council's comments into the Examination in Public to be held on the draft alterations. Targets determined through this process would be statutory, and the Council would need to consider these in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

897. **Draft London Plan Alterations - Waste - Public Consultation:**

The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the recommendation from the Strategic Planning Advisory Panel meeting held on 4 January 2006.

RESOLVED: That the specific issues for Harrow contained within the report of the Group Manager (Planning and Development Services) considered by the Strategic Planning Advisory Panel and amended as appropriate in accordance with the comments of the Panel, together with the joint response prepared on behalf of the West London Boroughs (attached at Appendix 1 to the Panel report), be forwarded to the Mayor for London in reply to the Draft London Alterations – Planning for Waste; Planning for Minerals – Public Consultation.

Reason for Decision: To provide the Mayor for London with the opportunity to feed the Council's comments into the Examination in Public to be held on the draft Alterations. Targets determined through this process would be statutory and the Council would need to consider these in the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

898. **Urgent Business - Recommendation from the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum:**

The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report, which had been prepared in response to a recommendation for the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum (TLCF) held on 5 January 2006 in relation to late reports.

The Executive Director (Urban Living) offered his apologies to Cabinet for the situation that had arisen at TLCF and indicated that steps had been taken within Urban Living to ensure that the situation did not arise again.

Members thanked the officer for his reassurance but stated that procedures needed to be put in place across all directorates to ensure that reports were submitted in accordance to deadlines.

RESOLVED: That the report and the actions put in place be noted.

Reason for Decision: To receive and respond to the recommendation from TLCF.

899. **Urgent Business - Role of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel:**

Members received a report proposing the dissolution of the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel as its work would be subsumed into the intended Wealdstone Neighbourhood Renewal Project and Forum.

RESOLVED: That the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel be dissolved following its meeting on 19 January 2006.

Reason for Decision: To enable the Panel to be dissolved in compliance with the Outline Transition Plan timescales previously approved by Cabinet.

900. **Harrow on the Hill Station:**

Members considered a confidential report of the Director of Strategic Planning in relation to Harrow on the Hill Station.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations set out in the report of the Director of Strategic Planning be approved.

Reason for Decision: As set out in the report of the Director of Strategic Planning.

(See also Minutes 885 and 901).

901. **Potential Land Acquisition:**
Members considered a confidential report of the Director of Strategic Planning in relation to a potential land acquisition.

Members discussed the restricted circulation of both this and the previous report. In response, the Director of Corporate Governance advised that, following discussion with the Director of Strategic Planning, the view had been taken that, given the nature of these reports, circulation should be restricted to Cabinet Members on this occasion.

Members requested that a protocol for the circulation of restricted documents be prepared for Member approval and that, in the interim, the Chair of the relevant body be consulted prior to restricting circulation of particular Part II reports.

RESOLVED: That (1) expenditure on exploratory studies and services and an amendment to the Capital Programme for 2005/06 to include the project detailed in the report of the Director of Strategic Planning be approved;

(2) the Council's Contract Procedure rule 3.2, that three tenders be received where the procurement value was between £50,000 and £100,000, be waived and that, on this occasion, only three quotations be received.

Reason for Decision: To ensure corporate backing for a range of work and to allow the smooth and timely progress of the work contemplated.

(See also Minute 885).

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.34 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR NAVIN SHAH
Chair