

TOWN CENTRE PROJECT PANEL

1 AUGUST 2006

Chairman:	* Councillor Marilyn Ashton	
Councillors:	* David Ashton	* Navin Shah
	* Mrs Kinnear	* Bill Stephenson (1)
	* Chris Mote	
Advisers (non-voting):	* Mr Abe Hayeem	– Canons Park Residents' Association
	* Mr Baj Mathur	– Harrow Heritage Trust
	* Mr John Palmer	– Harrow Agenda 21

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 - Public Realm Strategy - Appointment of Consultants**

The Panel received reports of the Director of Strategic Planning in both the public and private sessions of the meeting, which sought confirmation of the appointment of a consultant design team to prepare a Public Realm Strategy for Harrow Town Centre. A summary of the fees presented by each of the consultants interviewed was presented to Members in the private session of the meeting.

The Director informed Members that interviews had taken place on 31 July 2006 with a view to recommending the appointment of a multi-disciplinary consultant team to take the Strategy forward, following consideration by the Panel. He briefed the Panel on the interview process, details of which were set out in his report. The Director identified the individuals who had served on the selection panel and, on its behalf, recommended the appointment of Urban Initiatives for the purposes of preparing a Public Realm Strategy for Harrow Town Centre. In recommending the appointment, the Director praised the approach taken by Urban Initiatives on public realm, which had been realistic and imaginative.

Members were informed that, subject to their appointment, Urban Initiatives would be accountable to the Panel, which would receive presentations and reports on a regular basis setting out the work undertaken on behalf of the Council. Resources were available in the Council's Capital Programme to carry out improvements to the public realm with a view to ensuring a uniform approach to urban design.

In response to questions from Members and non-voting advisers, the Director stated that:-

- there would be an interaction between scrutiny and the Panel on public realm and that reports would be presented to both bodies simultaneously;
- sustainability and accessibility issues would be fully addressed in the Public Realm Strategy and he agreed that a holistic approach was essential;
- the Council's Access officer, who would serve on the client steering group set up to oversee the Strategy, would be fully involved;
- work on the Strategy would commence in August 2006 with the intention of it being completed at the beginning of 2007, following appropriate consultations with physical improvement works following in 2007/08;
- the appointment of Urban Initiatives would be subject to a review upon completion of the Strategy with the Council having the right to withdraw prior to proceeding to detailed design, if necessary;
- the Council's public works' partner, Accord MP, would be fully involved in the implementation process.

A Member identified the existing problems of wheelchair access in Harrow Town Centre adjacent to the St. George's Shopping Centre, which required immediate attention.

Following a short discussion, it was

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to the Portfolio Holder for Property, Housing Planning (Development) and Planning (Strategic))

That the appointment of Urban Initiatives as a consultant design team to prepare a Public Realm Strategy for Harrow Town Centre be confirmed.

REASON for Recommendation: To confirm the appointment of a consultant design team following selection interviews on 31 July 2006. The development of a distinctive and a high quality public realm would help to transform Harrow Town Centre into a thriving, attractive and safe centre, better able to compete with neighbouring centres.

[Note: Councillors Navin Shah and Bill Stephenson wished to be recorded as having abstained from voting on this recommendation on the grounds that they were not aware of the criteria applied by the selection panel when choosing to recommend the appointment of the company].

(See also Minutes 3 and 7).

RECOMMENDATION 2 - Retail Development Potential in Harrow Town Centre

The Panel received a report of the Director of Strategic Planning, which sought authority to investigate the potential benefits of appointing a strategic developer partner to bring forward retail development opportunities in Harrow Town Centre. It was intended to work with three to four development partners to look at opportunities. Alternatively, the potential of working with a single development partner would be explored. It was important to ensure that Harrow Town Centre operated as a viable Centre and that it attracted retailers who appealed to a 'broader' clientele.

The Director confirmed that there would be no financial costs in undertaking the investigation, other than officer time and consultancy costs, which would be contained within the approved Capital Programme. He informed the Panel that he would report back on the progress made to the next meeting of the Panel. In response to a question from a Member, the Director explained that consultation on the Retail Capacity Study with existing retailers in Harrow Town Centre had been undertaken.

In response to a question from another Member, the Chairman explained the reasons behind the Council's intention to withdraw from the Town Centre Management initiative. She stated that a measured judgement had been taken on this matter.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Cabinet)

That officers be authorised to investigate the potential benefits of appointing a strategic developer partner to bring forward retail development opportunities in Harrow Town Centre.

REASON for Recommendation: To advise Members of the options available to bring forward retail development opportunities in Harrow Town Centre. A strategic partnership with an experienced retail developer would improve the prospects of securing additional retail development in Harrow Town Centre and reduce the risk that development opportunities identified by the Council would not be taken forward.

(See also Minute 3).

PART II - MINUTES

1. **Appointment of Chairman:**

RESOLVED: To note the appointment of Councillor Marilyn Ashton at the Cabinet meeting on 8 June 2006 as Chairman of the Town Centre Project Panel for the Municipal Year 2006/07.

2. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Phillip O'Dell

Reserve Member

Councillor Bill Stephenson

3. **Declarations of Interest:**

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

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
7. Appointment of Advisers	Councillor Janet Mote	The Member, who was not a Member of the Panel, declared a personal interest in that she was a member of Harrow Heritage Trust. She remained in the room whilst this matter was discussed.
12,13 and 15. Public Realm Strategy – Appointment of Consultants/Retail Development Potential in Harrow Town Centre	Councillor Mrs Kinnear	Declared a personal interest in that she lived on the edge of Harrow Town Centre. Accordingly, she remained in the room whilst these matters were considered and voted upon.
	Councillor Navin Shah	Declared a personal interest in that he lived in the area. Accordingly, he remained in the room whilst these matters were considered and voted upon.
	Councillor Narinder Singh Mudhar	The Member, who was not a Member of the Panel, declared a personal interest in that he was the Vice-Chairman of Harrow Town Centre Forum. He remained in the room whilst these matters were discussed.
Urgent Item - Harrow on the Hill Station and Adjoining Land	Councillor Bill Stephenson	Declared a personal interest in that he was a Governor of Harrow College. Accordingly, he remained in the room whilst matters were considered and voted upon.

4. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Centre Project Panel (an Executive Panel) meeting held on 4 April 2006, being the predecessor body to this Advisory Panel, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

5. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda items be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances / Grounds for Urgency</u>
7. Appointment of Advisers	The draft report was being consulted on at the item of the dispatch of the agenda and was not available in its final form in time to be included on the agenda. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, to allow the appointments to be made.
Urgent Business – Harrow on the Hill Station and Adjoining Land	The report was not available at the time of the dispatch of the agenda as there had been developments in this area, which Members had to be appraised of. They were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, so that the way forward could be discussed.

(2) 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>
15. Public Realm Strategy – Appointment of Consultants Urgent Business - Harrow on the Hill Station and Adjoining Land	The reports contained exempt information by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that they contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

6. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman:**
Nominations were received and seconded for Councillors Mrs Kinnear and Navin Shah. Upon being put to a vote, it was

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs Kinnear be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Town Centre Project Panel for the Municipal Year 2006/07.

7. **Appointment of Advisers:**
During discussion on the report, a Member asked if additional advisers could be appointed and questioned whether there was a limit on the number of advisers that could be appointed. The Chairman agreed to discuss these issues separately with the Member.

The Director of Strategic Planning informed the Panel that, in accordance with the provisions set out in Part 5 – Codes and Protocols – Section G (Confidentiality of Part II reports) of the Council's Constitution, it was his opinion that the advisers appointed should not, on this occasion, be permitted to remain in the room during the discussion on the Part II items (Public Realm Strategy – Appointment of Consultants and Urgent Business – Harrow on the Hill Station and Adjoining Land) on the grounds that the release of the information would significantly prejudice the interests of the Council.

RESOLVED: That the following non-voting advisers be appointed to the Panel for the Municipal Year 2006/07:-

Mr John Palmer - Harrow Agenda 21
Mr Abe Hayeem - Canons Park Residents' Association
Mr Baj Mathur - Harrow Heritage Trust.

(See also Recommendation 1 and Minutes 3 and 12).

8. **Terms of Reference:**
RESOLVED: That the terms of reference of the Town Centre Project Panel be noted.

9. **Public Questions/Petitions/Deputations:**
RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15, 13 and 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution) respectively.

10. **Public Realm Strategy - Appointment of Consultants:**
(See Recommendation 1).

11. **Retail Development Potential in Harrow Town Centre:**
(See Recommendation 2)

12. **Urgent Business - Harrow on the Hill Station and Adjoining Land:**

Dandara's Planning Application

The Director of Strategic Planning gave an oral briefing to Members in the private session of the meeting on the recent developments in relation to the planning application submitted by Dandara for the redevelopment of 51 College Road. He added that, following a request from Dandara, the Development Control Committee, at its meeting held on 26 July 2006, had deferred consideration of the planning application for a further dialogue between the Council, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the applicant. The Panel was informed that these discussions were outstanding.

Harrow College

The Director of Strategic Planning circulated a confidential paper in the private session of the meeting. He sought Members' views on the way forward following the discussion with Harrow College.

Following a short discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That (1) the reports be noted;

(2) it be noted that the Director of Strategic Planning would respond in writing to Harrow College along the terms suggested by Members and circulate the letter to Members of the Panel.

(See also Minutes 3 and 7).

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.31 pm, closed at 9.22 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARILYN ASHTON
Chairman