

CABINET MINUTES

18 MARCH 2010

Chairman: * Councillor David Ashton

Councillors:

* Marilyn Ashton	* Jean Lammiman
* Miss Christine Bednell	* Barry Macleod-Cullinane
* Tony Ferrari	* Paul Osborn
* Susan Hall	* Mrs Anjana Patel

In attendance: Mrs Vina Mithani Minute 777
(Councillors) Bill Stephenson Minute 780

* Denotes Member present

773. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed Catherine Doran, the incoming Corporate Director Children's Services, to her first Cabinet meeting. She was joined by Paul Clark, current Corporate Director, who would be leaving the Council at the end of March 2010.

774. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Item 16 – Grant Funding 2010/11

Councillor Jean Lammiman declared a personal interest in that she was a Council appointee to Harrow Young Musicians, Relate North West London, Harrow Association of Voluntary Services, Harrow Association for the Disabled, Harrow In Europe. She also had personal interests in relation to Harrow Teenage Cancer Trust and Harrow Community Radio.

Councillors David Ashton, Marilyn Ashton, Mrs Vina Mithani and Jeremy Zeid declared personal interests in that they were members of Harrow Agenda 21. Councillor Marilyn Ashton also mentioned a personal interest in Harrow Heritage.

Councillor Bill Stephenson declared a personal interest in that he was a Council appointee on the Bentley Nature Reserve Management Committee.

Councillors Tony Ferrari declared an interest as he was a Council appointee Chair of the Harrow Weald Common Conservators.

All Members would remain in the room whilst the matters were discussed, considered and voted upon.

Agenda Item 7(a) – Integrated Care Organisation (ICO) Challenge Panel

Councillor Mrs Vina Mithani declared an interest in that she worked for the Health Protection Agency. As Chairman of the ICO Challenge Panel, she would introduce the report and answer any questions from Cabinet.

775. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2010, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

776. Petitions

1. Mr J Bond, a local resident, presented two petitions, the first signed by 1,247 people, requesting safety alterations to traffic lights at the junction of George V Avenue/Headstone Lane/Pinner Road. The second petition, signed by 415 people, requested minor extensions to double yellow lines to make exiting onto Headstone Lane from side roads and entry from Headstone Lane into side roads safer.

RESOLVED: That the petitions be received and referred to the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel for consideration.

2. Councillor Mrs Eileen Kinnear presented a petition signed by 56 residents of Roxeth Hill. The terms of the petition read:

“We the undersigned residents of Roxeth Hill, Harrow urge Harrow Council/Police to take prompt action to curtail the illegal passage of overweight vehicles over Harrow Hill and to enforce the legal speed limit on all vehicles using this road at all times day or night.”

RESOLVED: That the petition be received and referred to the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel for consideration, and forwarded to the police.

777. Public Questions

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

1.

Questioner: Karen Harrison, GirlGuiding Middlesex NW

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnership and Finance

Question: Why was £200,000 from reserves used to bail out organisations that had missed the mark while ignoring well tested organisations which have a 100 year track record of serving the community in a unique way?

Answer: I am grateful to you for your question because it permits me to express the Council's appreciation for all the work GirlGuiding does in the community. It recognises that the organisation has been active as long as 1912.

Going back to the question, I need to clarify the purpose of the one-off top-up grant which the Council is proposing to offer to some organisations this year.

This year, the Council wanted to open up the availability of the grants to a wide range of organisations, a wider range than previously, so it published the grants and held workshops to brief the voluntary sector on how to apply.

As a result, we received twice as many applications, rather more than we had expected, but we did not have twice as much budget. This meant that the money was going to be spread more thinly and organisations which relied on grant funding to deliver services for the community would have suffered a sudden and unexpected reduction in their grant.

Cabinet is therefore being recommended to use £189,000 from reserves to top-up the grants being offered for one year only, so that organisations currently receiving a grant will not receive less next year. This will give them a year to adjust to the new grants regime and hopefully find other sources of funding. This was a practical solution to maintain service delivery and not a fresh trawl amongst unfunded organisations.

Obviously, any applicant who was unhappy with the result can appeal, as I appreciate GirlGuiding is doing.

Supplemental Question: The recommendation before you tonight is to decline GirlGuiding's grant application. The rationale is that the monitoring information was not returned and the budget breakdown does not relate to the programme described.

Contrary to this, the monitoring form was returned in full before the deadline and as GirlGuiding Middlesex North West is applying for contribution to costs, I do not know how officers can conclude that the budget does not match the project.

It seems to me that this demonstrates officers have little understanding of applications, the voluntary sector and budgets.

How are you going to remedy the injustice done to GirlGuiding, and potentially other organisations, by Councillors being given incorrect information?

Supplemental Answer: You will appreciate that I cannot comment on the assertions made, but I have received a letter from GirlGuiding, making a formal appeal, which I have passed to officers to process in the formal way. Thank you.

778. Councillor Questions

RESOLVED: To note that the following Councillor Question had been received:

1.

Questioner: Councillor Bill Stephenson

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnership and Finance

Question: The review of the grants system has taken nearly two years. It deliberately set out to encourage more organisations to apply for grants and to put in place a transparent and robust system of assessment. Given this, would Councillor David Ashton not agree that it was inevitable that there would be far more losers and lower grants than in the past. Would he not further agree that it is very disappointing that this system has failed at the first hurdle and had to be bailed out by taking £200K out of the reserves whilst ignoring all the judgements and assessments made under the new system.

Answer: The review of the grants system has not taken two years. It started in April 2009 when the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Review of the Council's relationship with the Third Sector was concluded. That review had other outcomes, such as the Third Sector Strategy and the Grants System Review, which started in April 2009. This Review had to be completed urgently in order to meet the new grants round and Cabinet agreed the Application

Assessment Tool in September 2009.

The Council deliberately opened up the grants system and encouraged more organisations to apply and, at the same time, developed a new system of assessment. This has not led to there being more losers of grants. Indeed 36 new applicants are to be funded based on judgement and assessment process for the first time, which is encouraging. The Council have therefore succeeded in opening up the availability of grants.

The system has therefore succeeded beyond expectations. This has meant that with no increase in the budget, the grant money would have to be spread more thinly.

Therefore, in order to assist currently funded organisations, in delivering important services, to adjust to the new regime, Cabinet is being recommended to use £189,000 from reserves to ensure that applicants who are receiving grant this year receive no less next year. We are not bailing out failure but helping to ensure the business continuity of some front-line service delivery organisations, including those with whom the Council has Service Level Agreements (SLAs), thereby providing a practical solution.

Supplemental Question: Because of the system, it was inevitable that the money would have to be spread more thinly. Would you agree that the incoming administration is going to have to put this right because either you go by the judgements and winners and losers or you actually have to increase the amount of money put into the budget so that it does not lead to systems that lead to outcomes which people are unhappy with.

Supplemental Answer: I do not agree. The additional money that is to be given this year is to satisfy the fact that, in a difficult year, a number of organisations would have had problems providing critical infrastructure services in Harrow.

With regard to next year, the Council has indicated that this is a one-off arrangement to allow the new system to bed in. There will be further clarifications and tweaking of that system. The Council is satisfied and proud that it has augmented grants by £189,000. Thank you.

779. Forward Plan 1 March 2010 - 30 June 2010

The Leader of the Council advised that reports relating to the 'Supported Accommodation Strategy' and 'Transfer of Additional Funding for the Social Care of Adults with a Learning Disability from NHS Harrow to Harrow Council', listed on the March 2010 Forward Plan had been deferred.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2010 – 30 June 2010.

RESOLVED ITEMS

780. Integrated Care Organisation Challenge Panel

Cabinet considered a report of the Integrated Care Organisation (ICO) Challenge Panel, which had been referred to Cabinet by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28 January 2010. The Leader of the Council invited the Chairman of the Challenge Panel to introduce the report, which set out the findings of the Panel that had been established to investigate the implications of proposals to develop an ICO comprising Ealing and Harrow Community Services and Ealing Hospital.

The Chairman of the Challenge Panel explained the background to the establishment of the Panel and briefed Cabinet on its finding. She added that a response from NHS Harrow on the findings was awaited.

The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing stated that the Challenge Panel had been a useful exercise. The Leader of the Council thanked Members of the Challenge Panel and scrutiny officers for the report.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Integrated Care Organisation Scrutiny Challenge Panel be noted.

Reason for Decision: To note the proposals relating to the ICO.

781. Progress on Scrutiny Projects

The Leader of the Council stated that a new programme of scrutiny projects would commence in the Municipal Year 2010/11.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the current progress of the scrutiny reports.

Reason for Decision: To note the progress being made on the various scrutiny reviews.

782. Strategic Performance Report - Quarter 3

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communication and Corporate Services introduced the report, which summarised Council and service performance against key measures, including areas where further action was

required. He outlined the key successes and the challenges that the Council continued to face.

The Portfolio Holder was particularly proud of the Council's achievements that had resulted in the recognition given by the Local Government Chronicle and the Municipal Journal, both of which had short-listed the Council for the 'Most Improved Council' and the 'Best Council' prestigious awards, respectively. The recognition given was a testament to the positive work that had been undertaken by Members and officers.

Cabinet's attention was drawn to the areas where the Council continued to face challenges, such as in customer services. Whilst the time taken to answer telephone calls had improved, more work was required to ensure that the residents of Harrow were not disadvantaged.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted and the Portfolio Holders continue working with officers to achieve improvement against identified key challenges;
- (2) the Flagship Action 1.6 "prepare a Supplementary Planning Document on Conversions of houses to flats" be redefined to reflect its new scope as follows:

Amended Flagship Action:

Develop a residential development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide for planning guidance in respect of all new residential development, including conversions of houses to flats.

Measure:

Approval of a consultation draft of residential development SPD by July 2010. Adoption of the residential development SPD by December 2010.

Reasons for Decision: To enable Cabinet to be informed of performance against key measures and identify and assign corrective action where necessary. To exploit the opportunity for a more robust, extensive and comprehensive SPD to deliver higher quality residential development across the borough in response to continued demand.

783. Response to Sustainability Review

Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director Community and Environment and the Corporate Director Place Shaping, in response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Standing Review commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to explore how far the Council had progressed with incorporating sustainability into its objectives and priorities.

Members welcomed the report and the work undertaken by colleagues serving on scrutiny. The Leader of the Council suggested an environmental friendly alternative to the suggested leaflet on how residents can assist and funding that can be obtained to help residents stem climate change.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review Group in respect of Economic Sustainability be noted;
- (2) with the exception of the distribution of a comprehensive leaflet on how residents can assist and funding that can be obtained to help residents stem climate change, details of which be posted on the Council's website, the recommendations on Environmental Sustainability be accepted;
- (3) the recommendations in respect of Community Sustainability be noted and reflected in the Community Cohesion Action Plan.

Reasons for Decision: The Council was meeting the recommendations in respect of the Economic Sustainability made in the Sustainability Review and will continue to do so through the implementation of the Economic Recovery Plan and Economic Development Action Plan.

To note the work relating to Environmental Sustainability.

To ensure that the recommendations in relation to Community Sustainability will be reflected in the Community Cohesion Action Plan.

784. Key Decision - Communications Plan 2010/11

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communication and Corporate Services introduced the report, which identified the need to extend the current Communications Plan in order to continue with and build-on the improvements made to the service.

In commending the report to Cabinet, the Portfolio Holder drew attention to the positive contribution made by the Communication's Unit in achieving marked improvements in the Council's reputation over the last two years. The recommended campaigns by priority set out in the report were noted.

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services showed her appreciation of the work carried out by the Communication's Unit in respect of Children's Services. Of particular note was the recognition given recently by UNICEF for the Council's work with migrant children and the trafficking of Vietnamese children to work in cannabis factories in the borough. The highlighting and promotion of this issue by the Communications Unit had ensured that the Council was now known and recognised as a forward-thinking organisation, both nationally and internationally.

The Head of Communications outlined the new communication channels and activities proposed in the Plan which would help improve communication further.

The Leader of the Council drew attention to the helpful comments received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He particularly commended the

work carried out by the Communication's Unit, and praised the exemplary work of the Deputy Head of Communications.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 23 February 2010 be noted;
- (2) the Communications Plan be approved;
- (3) the Assistant Chief Executive be authorised to negotiate the delivery of the Communications Plan 2010/11 with Westminster City Council within the terms of the communications contract agreed in 2009.

Reason for Decision: To ensure that the Council continues to inform residents about its services and activities, which contributed to increased overall satisfaction and improved the Council's reputation with key stakeholders and staff.

785. Strategy for People 2010/12

Cabinet considered the report of the Divisional Director Human Resources and Development, which proposed the adoption of the draft Strategy for People 2010/12 that set out the steps for developing the performance, capability and effectiveness of the Council's workforce to achieve the vision to be recognised as one of the best London Councils by 2012. The key drivers of the Strategy were:

- Better Deal for Residents' Programme;
- Council's Vision and Corporate Priorities;
- Views of the Council staff and managers;
- Workforce profile
- Current workforce performance.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communication and Corporate Services outlined the purpose of the Strategy, which was to help increase staff morale as this impacted on both service delivery and the Council's reputation. In addition, the Strategy would be assessed against the 'Use of Resources' assessment, which would contribute to the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the report and was appreciative of the work carried out by staff. He felt that the passion, dedication and enthusiasm of staff was clearly evident now within the organisation.

RESOLVED: That the draft Strategy for People 2010/12 be adopted and publicised, subject to it being 'crystal marked' by the Plain English Campaign.

Reason for Decision: To replace the Strategy for People 2006/09 and align the People Management Strategy to support achievement of the Council's vision to be recognised as one of the best London Councils by 2012.

786. Urgent - Budget Update

The Corporate Director Finance introduced the report, which set out the proposals for the transfer of funds between budgets to enable investment in service priorities.

The Corporate Director referred to the two service priorities where further investment was critical. The first priority was to address the considerable damage caused to the borough's roads and pavements by the recent inclement weather conditions and the investment that was urgently required. The other priority was to continue to develop and support the Better Deal for Residents' Programme with a view to ensuring that it was delivered effectively. Funding had been identified for both priorities.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) £150,000 be vired from a number of budgets within the Community and Environment Directorate to the Highways budget to allow potholes in the borough to be repaired;
- (2) £200,000 of vired from the Creditors Control Account to develop and support the Council's Transformation Programme / Better Deal for Residents' Programme.

Reason for Decision: To enable investment in service priorities.

[Call-In does not apply to the Decision.]

787. Urgent Key Decision - Mill Farm Close Regeneration Proposal

Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director Adults and Housing, which set out proposals to transfer Mill Farm Estate to Catalyst Communities Housing Association (CCHA) to enable its comprehensive regeneration. The regeneration would help deliver a broad range of benefits, including the provision of appropriate play space, a design that would help minimise crime and anti-social behaviour and a range of activities that would increase social inclusion.

The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing thanked officers in both Adults and Housing and the Planning Service for their work in bringing this project to fruition, as it would help transform an estate that was in a relatively poor condition. He drew attention to the consultations undertaken and was pleased that a high proportion of the tenants and leaseholders of the estate had participated in and exercised their vote in selecting the preferred developer.

It was noted that there had been an overwhelming vote in favour of the proposal to transfer the estate to CCHA, which would help secure the estate's comprehensive redevelopment.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise was pleased that the proposal would help deliver a safer environment, with people taking

pride in their environment. She stated that the Planning Committee had also unanimously supported the planning application.

Cabinet was appreciative of the time that residents had spent on the proposal and the close working relationship established with the Council. An officer stated that the proposal would meet the aspirations of the residents of Mill Farm Estate and the Council. Members noted that the proposal was intended to help 'design out crime' and were pleased that additional play spaces had been built into the scheme. The officer stated that grant funding had been received for the proposal and the Council would be working to tight deadlines in order to take this matter forward.

The Leader of the Council advised that he had attended meetings with residents, and was impressed with the proposals put forward. He suggested that officers take this project forward with a view to achieving a 'green flag' recognition from the audit commission.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the clear mandate for transfer demonstrated by the high turnout rate and positive vote by tenants and leaseholders in favour of the transfer of the Mill Farm estate to Catalyst Communities Housing Association be noted;
- (2) an application to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for Consent to the Transfer pursuant to Sections 32 and 43 of the Housing Act 1985 had been made, as approved by Cabinet on 23 October 2008, be noted;
- (3) authority to negotiate and conclude the terms of the agreement for the transfer of the Mill Farm estate (registered under Title Numbers NGL434683 and MX140844) to Catalyst Communities Housing Association (CCHA), together with all supporting documentation including the proposed tenancy agreement for use by CCHA, the obligations for redevelopment of the estate, the terms of the Mill Farm estate forum, nomination rights for the Council, surplus sharing agreement and the giving of any necessary warranties to CCHA and/or its parent group and/or funders be delegated to the Corporate Director Adults and Housing Services, acting in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance Services, the Corporate Director Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing, subject to approval of the planning application and receipt of Secretary of State consent;
- (4) it be noted that a further report may be brought to Cabinet requesting authority to make a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for the acquisition of up to 24 residential leasehold properties on the Mill Farm estate, subject to completion of a CPO Indemnity Agreement that requires Catalyst Communities Housing Association to underwrite the Council's costs;
- (5) authority be granted, at a time to be designated by the Corporate Director Adults and Housing Services (in consultation with the Director

of Legal and Governance Services), to appropriate the parcels of land shown edged red on Appendix 2 to planning purposes subject to the grant of planning permission for regeneration of Mill Farm Close;

- (6) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Adults and Housing Services (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing and the Director of Legal and Governance Services) to take such other steps as necessary in order to facilitate the transfer.

Reasons for Decision: To enable the comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of the Mill Farm estate.

[Call-In does not apply to the Decision.]

788. Key Decision - Determination of Community School Admissions Arrangements - Academic Year 2011/12

The Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development introduced the report, which set out the decision of the Harrow Admission's Forum meeting held 10 February 2010 following consideration of the feedback received on admission arrangements for the 2011/12 academic year and the extension of the sibling link to sixth forms. She outlined the key changes being proposed.

Cabinet, having considered the recommendations made by the Harrow Admissions Forum, agreed the following admission arrangements for Harrow community schools.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the nursery criterion be amended as follows:

If more applications were received than there were places in a Nursery, places would be allocated to children in date of birth order, with older children being offered places before younger children, as follows:

First Children, in date of birth order, who are Looked After by a local authority.

Next Children, in date of birth order, referred by Harrow's Special Education Needs Assessment and Review Service.

Next Other children, in date of birth order.

If, under any criterion, there were more children with the same date of birth than there were places remaining in the nursery, then the available places would be offered to the child(ren) who lived closest. Distance would be measured in a straight line from the home address to the entrance to the nursery. Home to school distance would be measured by Harrow's School Admissions Service.

Parents would only be able to apply to one nursery. However, all unsuccessful applicants be advised that their child's name could be added to the waiting list for any school.

In addition, and to ensure transparency and consistency across the borough, nursery class headteachers agree a protocol, including a timetable for nursery applications and ways of dealing with multiple applications to ensure each child was only offered one nursery place (Appendix 1 of the report refers).

- (2) nursery headteachers be requested to indicate in the offer letter that a place in the nursery did not give automatic entry to the school and that parents must make a separate application for Reception.
- (3) the admission arrangements, including the amended oversubscription criteria for primary and high schools (Appendix 2 of the report refers) , be adopted to ensure twins and other multiple birth children could attend the same school, with the proviso that, for infant classes, the School Admissions Code of Practice was changed to include twins and other multiple birth children as exceptions. For Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, this could only be adopted as an exception to the infant class size prejudice if and when approved by the government
- (4) in line with the guidance and framework already provided, clarification of the medical criterion be agreed as follows:

For Primary and High school

The letter from the hospital consultant must provide information about the child's/parents medical condition, the effects of this condition and why, in view of this, the child needs to attend the parent's preferred school.

If the school was not the closest to home, the consultant must set out in detail the wholly exceptional circumstances for attending this school and the difficulties if the child had to attend another school.

For High School only

Parental medical claims solely on the grounds of the young person's need to be accompanied on the journey to school would not be allowed.

Assessment of medical claims for parents

In assessing these applications independent advice would be sought as appropriate, for example, for mental health claims, advice would be sought through liaising with Harrow's Mental Health Service.

- (5) the proposed schemes of co-ordination for Primary admissions, Secondary transfer, Infant to Junior transfer and In-Year admissions, be adopted.

- (6) in relation to Admission Arrangements 2010, the proposal to amend the nursery tie-breaker to distance from home to school for the 2010 nursery admissions round be agreed as follows:

If more applications were received than there were places in a Nursery, places would be allocated to children in date of birth order, with older children being offered places before younger children, as follows:

First Children, in date of birth order, who are Looked After by a local authority.

Next Children, in date of birth order, referred by Harrow's Special Education Needs Assessment and Review Service.

Next Other children, in date of birth order.

If, under any criterion, there were more children with the same date of birth than there were places remaining in the nursery, than the available places would be offered to the child(ren) who lived closest. Distance would be measured in a straight line from the home address to the entrance to the nursery. Home to school distance would be measured by Harrow's School Admissions Service.

- (7) the Fair Access Protocol be amended as follows:

- a. To make it clear that through the Protocol that Harrow may exceptionally require schools to admit children in excess of the published admission number in order to protect the interests of vulnerable children and those with challenging behaviour. These pupils would be shared equally among Harrow schools. Pupils placed through the Protocol will take priority over children on the waiting lists;
- b. To confirm that the principle underlying the whole protocol was that it applied only to children living in Harrow;
- c. To include that "wherever possible children would be allocated to a school of their faith";
- d. To clarify that the protocol did not cover newly arrived children where a school place had been allocated but, the parents had not taken up the place / the child has not started at the school.
- e. To clarify in so far as is possible, primary pupils would be shared equally across the borough.

Reason for Decision: There was a statutory requirement under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for admission authorities to determine admission arrangements by 15 April in the determination year - by 15 April 2010.

789. Key Decision - Third Sector Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services introduced the report, which set out the background to the development of the Third Sector Strategy and a framework for improved engagement. The framework responded to the recommendation set out in the scrutiny report 'Delivering a Strengthened Voluntary Sector' and the corporate priorities 'Building Stronger Communities' and 'Improve Support to the Vulnerable'.

The Portfolio Holder thanked the Chief Executive of Harrow Association of Voluntary Services (HAVS) for her contribution and partnership working which had helped to develop the Third Sector Strategy.

Cabinet was informed of the consultations undertaken and briefed on the objectives of the Strategy, which were to deepen partnership, build capacity and enable participation.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the consultation response be noted;
- (2) the Third Sector Strategy be approved and implemented.

Reason for Decision: To improve engagement with the Third Sector, help deliver a strengthened voluntary sector, build strong communities and improve support to the vulnerable.

790. Urgent Key Decision - Grant Funding 2010/11

Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director Community and Environment, which set out the recommendations of the Grants Advisory Panel meeting held on 3 March 2010 for the allocation of grants to the voluntary and community sector for 2010/11.

The Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services stated Cabinet was being asked to approve the recommendations contained in the report to enable voluntary and community sector organisations to continue delivering key services in the coming year. In addition, Cabinet was being asked to approve the virement of £189,000 to provide one-off top-up funding to support currently funded organisations at the same level as the current year.

The Portfolio Holder added that the Overview and Scrutiny's review entitled 'Delivering a Strengthened Voluntary Sector' made a number of recommendations including a review of the grants process. This had resulted in new criteria being set, a new assessment process and wider publicity around the availability of grants. As a result of this activity, the Council received an unprecedented level of demand for grant funding and the implementation of the new assessment tool resulted in some unexpected outcomes for currently funded groups. The Council recognises that further refinement of the process is required and will be undertaking this in the coming months in time for the next grants round. In the meantime the one-off virement would enable the Council to continue funding organisations at their

current level giving them a further 12 months to adjust and respond to the new process.

Cabinet was informed that the letter which would be sent to applicants would make clear which element was grant and which was 'one-off' top up. Applicants would be asked to accept the grant in the knowledge of accepting that the one-off top up funding would not be available in future years.

Close working with scrutiny would continue and scrutiny would be updated on the ongoing review. The voluntary sector had been consulted as part of the scrutiny review process and would be consulted on any further changes.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the following be approved:
 - (a) a virement of £125,000 from the 2010/11 contingency to the grants budget in 2010/11, and to further supplement the budget by carrying forward £64,000 from the under-spend on treasury management activity this year to meet the value of the recommended awards, as set out in paragraphs 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of the report;
 - (b) grant awards for 2010/11 set out at appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) the Corporate Director Community and Environment be authorised to withdraw grant awards from successful applicants that fail to provide the Council with supporting documentation by the published deadline of the 29 March 2010, as set out in paragraph 2.2.4 of the report;
- (3) applicants that are successful on appeal be placed on a reserve list so they can be considered for funding when funds become available, as set out in paragraph 3.1.4;
- (4) £58,000 be ring-fenced in the grants budget to enable the Council to meet its commitment to establish a new Equalities Body for 2010/11, (appendix 2 of the report);
- (5) £18,000 be transferred to the Council's Public Realm department to maintain Harrow Weald Common on behalf of Harrow Weald Common Conservators through a Service Level Agreement, (appendix 2 of the report);
- (6) a grant of £15,000 be awarded to the Harrow Heritage Trust from the Council's Capital Programme for the financial year 2010/11;
- (7) a review of grant-making arrangements which report on the current year's process and outcomes take place to ensure appropriate support for the Voluntary and Community Sector in 2011/12.

Reasons for Decision: To enable voluntary and community organisations to deliver appropriate services in 2010/11. To ensure that current grant

recipients did not receive less than they were awarded in 2009/11 during the transitional period.

[Call-In does not apply to the Decision.]

791. Accessible Homes SPD

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise introduced the report, which set out the responses received following the 2009/10 public consultation on the revised Accessible Homes Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the proposed changes to its content in light of the responses received.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the SPD had been improved and updated having taken into account emerging policy and new thinking. The SPD would ensure that robust policies were in place when determining planning applications, and the Local Implementation Supplement 'Conversion of Houses to Flats' would give a clear message to developers of the requirements of the policy when seeking permission to convert houses into flats.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Accessible Homes Supplementary Planning Document at Appendix B to the report be adopted;
- (2) the Divisional Director Planning be authorised to make any typographical corrections and any other non-material changes to the SPD prior to its publication.

Reason for Decision: Public consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) had been concluded, the key issues raised in the consultation had been considered and, where necessary, the draft SPD had been amended. The draft SPD would, upon adoption, supersede the 2006 Accessible Homes SPD and become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

792. Vote of Thanks

Paul Clark, Corporate Director Children's Services

Cabinet thanked the outgoing Director of Children's Services for his outstanding work in the Children's Services Directorate. His professionalism and depth of knowledge had helped to safeguard children in Harrow at a time when, nationally, all local authorities were being scrutinised for their work in this area. Members were appreciative and proud of the work Paul had carried out in his Directorate, in particular in dealing with the recent issue of the trafficking of Vietnamese children. His work in engaging with the youth and giving them a voice was highly commendable.

The Chief Executive thanked Paul for his work and the transformation of the Children's Services Directorate under his leadership. He added that Paul's

work had helped to transform the life chances of young people and improved their quality of life. He congratulated Paul on the work carried out in improving relationships with the Council's partners and OFSTED, and wished him well for the future.

Paul Clark thanked Members for their kind words. Paul also thanked the Council's current and previous administrations under which he had worked for putting politics aside when considering the outcomes and future of children. He stated that the contributions made by young people to the borough should be celebrated and valued.

Councillors Marilyn Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise and David Ashton, Leader of the Council

Councillors Marilyn and David Ashton stated that it had been a privilege and an honour to serve the borough and its residents, and would recommend the job to those wishing to improve the lives of residents and those in less privileged positions. They had enjoyed their various roles in the Council.

Councillor Marilyn Ashton stated that her role as a Councillor had been challenging, particularly in the planning area, which she had grown into with support of the Members and officers. She thanked Members of all parties for putting politics aside at Planning Committee meetings, and stated that she would miss being a Councillor.

Councillor Susan Hall, Deputy Leader, complimented Councillors Marilyn and David Ashton for the splendid work that they had done, which was always delivered with a good sense of humour. She added that Councillor David Ashton had been instrumental in ensuring that the finances of the Council were on a sound footing and that they would both be a difficult act to follow.

The Chief Executive stated that the Council was sorry to lose the expertise and experience of Councillors Marilyn and David Ashton and wished them well for the future. He had enjoyed working with them and it was a testament to their work that the Council had been recognised as a 'Most Improved Council'.

Councillor David Ashton reflected on his work and the challenges he had faced. He stated that he had enjoyed being a Councillor and working with the residents of the borough. He had also welcomed working as a team across political boundaries and the partnerships built with officers which had contributed to a 'better' Council.

Councillor David Ashton wished the incoming administration well for the future, and stated that it had been an honour to have led the Council.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.36 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR DAVID ASHTON
Chairman