

COUNCIL (COUNCIL TAX) MINUTES

16 FEBRUARY 2012

Present:

- * Councillor Mrinal Choudhury (The Worshipful the Mayor)
- * Councillor Nizam Ismail (The Deputy Mayor)

Councillors:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Husain Akhtar * Sue Anderson * Nana Asante * Marilyn Ashton * Mrs Camilla Bath * Christine Bednell * James Bond * Mrs Lurline Champagnie OBE * Kam Chana * Ramji Chauhan Bob Currie * Margaret Davine * Mano Dharmarajah † Tony Ferrari * Keith Ferry * Ann Gate * Brian Gate * David Gawn * Stephen Greek * Mitzi Green * Susan Hall * Graham Henson * Thaya Idaikkadar * Krishna James * Manji Kara * Jean Lammiman * Barry Macleod-Cullinane * Kairul Kareema Marikar * Ajay Maru * Jerry Miles * Mrs Vina Mithani 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Amir Moshenson * Chris Mote * Janet Mote * John Nickolay * Joyce Nickolay * Christopher Noyce * Phillip O'Dell * Asad Omar * Paul Osborn * Varsha Parmar * David Perry * Bill Phillips * Raj Ray * Richard Romain * Anthony Seymour * Lynda Seymour * Navin Shah * Mrs Rekha Shah * Sachin Shah * Zarina Sheikh * Stanley Sheinwald * Victoria Silver * Bill Stephenson * William Stoodley * Krishna Suresh * Sasi Suresh * Yogesh Teli * Ben Wealthy * Simon Williams * Stephen Wright
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* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

PRAYERS

Prayers were offered by Mr Nila Madhava on behalf of the Mayor's Chaplain.

173. COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 3 November 2011 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

174. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor invited appropriate declarations of interest.

Item 8A – Integrated Planning: Corporate Plan 2012/13

Item 8B – Integrated Planning: Final Revenue Budget and MTFS 2012/13 to 2014/15

Item 9 – Final Housing Revenue Account and MTFS 2012/13 – 2014/15

Item 10 - Capital Programme 2012/13 - 2014/15

Item 11 – Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy and Strategy 2012/13

Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane declared a personal interest in that his sister was a teacher at Hatch End High School.

Item 16(1) – Motion – Proposed Privatisation of London Fire Brigade Merton Control Room

Councillor Susan Hall declared a prejudicial interest as a member of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA).

Councillor Navin Shah declared a prejudicial interest as a GLA Member of LFEPA and had taken legal advice on this issue.

Item 16(3) – Motion – Whitchurch Pavilion and Playing Fields

Councillor Amir Moshenson declared a prejudicial interest as he lived in the vicinity of the area in question.

Councillor Nana Asante declared a personal interest as her church, on occasions, utilised Whitchurch Playing Fields.

Councillor Camilla Bath declared a personal interest as she was the Chair of Governors of the Whitchurch First School and Nursery.

Item 16(4) – Motion – HPCCG

The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Mrinal Choudhury) declared a personal interest as he had chaired the last Annual General Meeting of the Harrow Police and Community Consultative Group (HPCCG).

Councillor Nana Asante declared a personal interest as she had attended the last Annual General Meeting of the HPCCG.

Councillors Susan Hall and Vina Mithani declared personal interests as they were Councillor representatives on the HPCCG.

Item 16(5) – Motion – Fairtrade

Councillor Nana Asante declared a personal interest in that she was Chair of the Fairtrade Campaign.

Councillors Husain Akhtar, Camilla Bath and Yogesh Teli declared personal interests as they had attended meetings of the Fairtrade Campaign.

Item 16(6) – Motion – NHS

Councillors Sue Anderson and Ann Gate declared prejudicial interests as employees of the NHS.

Councillor Husain Akhtar declared a personal interest as his children worked for the NHS.

Councillor Lurline Champagnie declared a personal interest as she was a member of the Royal College of Nurses.

Councillor Brian Gate declared a personal interest as he was married to an employee of the NHS.

Councillor Krishna James declared a personal interest as she was a qualified nurse and several of her relatives worked for the NHS.

Councillor Vina Mithani declared a personal interest as she worked for the Health Protection Agency.

Councillors Chris and Janet Mote declared personal interests as their daughter worked for the NHS.

Item 16(7) – Motion – Step Free Access to Stations

Councillor Camilla Bath declared a prejudicial interest as an appointed member of the Rail Liaison Committee.

Councillor James Bond declared a personal interest as an employee of Transport for London.

Item 16(8) – Motion – London Living Rent

Councillor Nana Asante declared a personal interest in that she was in receipt of benefit and the London Living Rent affected her.

Item 16(9) – Motion – Carers in Harrow

Councillor Sachin Shah declared a prejudicial interest as he worked for a charity which provided personal care.

Councillor Sue Anderson declared that as she was registered as a carer with the Council.

Item 16(10) – Motion – Whitchurch Lease

Councillor Amir Moshenson declared a prejudicial interest as he lived in the vicinity of the area in question.

Councillor Camilla Bath declared a personal interest as Chair of Governors for the Whitchurch First School and Nursery.

Item 16(11) – Motion – Mayor of London

Councillor Navin Shah declared a personal interest as a Greater London Authority (GLA) Member.

175. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that he, together with the Deputy Mayor and Honorary Alderman, had attended nearly 500 engagements to date. The Mayor paid particular attention to the following:

- attended the North Holocaust Memorial Day event held in the Council Chamber;
- hosted a visit from the Anglican Alliance which had involved representatives from across Africa developing their knowledge of the Council;
- hosted a Tea Reception for Harrow Bereavement Care.

The Mayor also congratulated, on behalf of the Council, those Harrow residents that had been awarded New Year Honours by Her Majesty the Queen.

RESOLVED: That the report of the Worshipful the Mayor upon his official duties, as tabled, be noted and received.

176. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

- (i) The Mayor advised that he had received notice of the withdrawal of Motion 16(13) – Council Tax from its proposer and seconder. The amendment contained in the tabled papers, would therefore not be considered;

- (ii) The Mayor stated that he had received notice of an alteration to the proposer and seconder for Motion 16(1) – Proposed Privatisation of London Fire Brigade Merton Control Room. Councillor David Perry would now be the proposer and Councillor Brian Gate the seconder.
- (iii) The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved a procedural motion under Rule 26.1 that in line with previous years and for the purposes of the debate on the Final Revenue Budget and MTFS 2012/13 to 2014/15, the rules of debate be varied, as set out in the tabled documents, and that the procedure therein be also applied to the reports on the Corporate Plan 2012/13, Final Housing Revenue Account and MTFS 2012/13 – 2014/15, Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2014/15 and Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy and Strategy 2012/13, insofar as the recommendations and amendments be debated jointly. This was agreed.
- (iv) The Mayor proposed that if the debate on items 8-11 continued beyond 10.30 pm, he would consider the guillotine as having been reached and that all remaining items on the Summons would be voted on without debate, in accord with Rule 9.3.
- (v) The Mayor announced that he had received notice, within the tabled papers, of 3 amendments in respect of Motions on the Summons. These would be dealt with individually at the items concerned.
- (vi) The Mayor informed Council that Motions 16(3) - Whitchurch Pavilion and Playing Fields and 16(10) - Whitchurch Lease fell within the remit of the Executive and therefore, stood referred to the next meeting of Cabinet.
- (vii) The Council received notification within the tabled papers of an Urgent Motion (Council Prayers). The Leader of the Council rose to request that the Urgent Motion not be admitted as the issue was currently under appeal and a legal ruling was awaited. Upon a vote the Urgent Motion was refused.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the withdrawal of Motion 16(13) – Council Tax be noted;**
- (2) the change of proposer and seconder for Motion 16(1) – Proposed Privatisation of London Fire Brigade Merton Control Room be noted;**
- (3) the partial suspension under Rule 25.1, regarding the moving of recommendations from Cabinet and the rules of debate (including extended time for opening speeches by both political groups), as set out in the tabled papers, be approved for the purposes of the debate upon:**

Item 8A – Integrated Planning: Corporate Plan 2012/13;
Item 8B – Final Revenue Budget and MTFS 2012/13 - 2014/15;
Item 9 – Final Housing Revenue Account and MTFS 2012/13 - 2014/15;
Item 10 - Capital Programme 2012/13 – 2014/15;
Item 11 – Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy and Strategy 2012/13;

- (4) it be noted that should the debate on items 8-11 continue beyond 10.30 pm, in accord with Rule 9.3, the guillotine procedure would come into force and the remaining items on the Summons would be voted on without debate;**
- (5) the 3 further amendments tabled in respect of Motions on the Summons, be dealt with individually at the Motions concerned;**
- (6) it be noted that Motions 16(3) - Whitchurch Pavilion and Playing Fields and 16(10) - Whitchurch Lease fell within the remit of the Executive and stood referred to the next meeting of Cabinet;**
- (7) the Urgent Motion (Council Prayers) be not admitted.**

177. PETITIONS

In accordance with Rule 10, the following petitions were presented:

- (i) Petition submitted by Councillor Susan Hall, containing 26 signatures of Members and residents, expressing concern over the impact of the Council's proposed changes to Staff Terms and Conditions on non-teaching staff in schools and other low paid staff.

[The petition stood referred to the Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services].
- (ii) Petition submitted by Councillor Janet Mote, containing 30 signatures of residents, objecting to the application for a telephone mast at the junction of Pinner Road / George V Avenue, Planning No: P/0066/12".

[The petition stood referred to the Planning Committee].
- (iii) Petition submitted by Councillor Chris Noyce, containing 45 signatures of residents, objecting to the proposed development situated at 6 The Glen, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 5AY Ref: P/3271/11.

[The petition stood referred to the Planning Committee].
- (iv) Petition submitted by Councillor Chris Noyce, containing 10 signatures, requesting a security gate in the alleyway for Lucas Avenue and Clitheroe Avenue residents.

[The petition stood referred to the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety].

178. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

In accordance with Rule 12, the questions submitted by members of the public and responded to by Portfolio Holders is contained at Appendix I.

179. PETITION - ADMIRAL NURSING

- (i) In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme, Members considered a petition which had initially been received at its meeting on 3 November 2011;
- (ii) the petition contained over 2,000 signatures and its terms were read by Mr Neville Hughes, Head Petitioner, as follows:

'We, the undersigned, urgently request the Council of the London Borough of Harrow and NHS Harrow to reinstate the Admiral Nursing Service in Harrow. Admiral Nurses provide a unique and critical service for Residents who have any form of Dementia, and their carers.'

- (iii) A debate was held on the content of the petition.

RESOLVED: That the petition be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

180. INTEGRATED PLANNING: CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13

- (i) Further to item 8A on the Supplemental Summons, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved Recommendation I of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2012. The Leader also tabled three amendments to the formal Recommendation, which proposed minor amendments to the Priority Actions concerning Affordable Housing, Waste Reduction and Delivering Improved Performance of Highways as follows:
 - Priority Action, 'Affordable Housing' to read: "139 affordable housing units delivered. This reflects an appropriate affordable housing proportion as set out in the Core Strategy for Housing target and the current delivery pipeline reported by Housing".
 - Priority Action, 'Reduce the amount waste produced by the borough', to include the following measures:
 1. Number of Home composting kits taken up by Harrow residents. Each Home Composter diverts 150kg of waste;

2. Two West London Waste 'Let's Get Cooking Clubs' set up in Harrow, which are projected to reduce waste by 27 tonnes.

- Priority Action, 'Deliver improved performance of our Highways through a more efficient contract' to include the following measure - ensure the projected efficiencies are delivered.

- (ii) Further to the decision at Resolution 176 above, the amendments and Recommendation were debated jointly.
- (iii) Following a full debate, the amendments outlined at (i) above were voted upon and agreed.
- (iv) Upon the meeting moving to a vote upon the substantive Recommendation this was carried and adopted.

RESOLVED: That the Corporate Plan 2012/13 be adopted.

181. INTEGRATED PLANNING: FINAL REVENUE BUDGET AND MTFs 2012/13 TO 2014/15

Further to item 8B on the Supplemental Summons, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved Recommendation II of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2012 together with the tabled version of the Council Tax Resolution, which had been subject to minor amendments to reflect new legislative requirements.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the budget be approved to enable the Council Tax for 2012/13 to be set;**
- (2) the Policy on the Use of the Contingency be approved;**
- (3) the Schools Budget be approved;**
- (4) the Reserves Policy be approved;**
- (5) the Virements Rules be approved;**
- (6) Members' Allowances be frozen for a further year and the current approved Members' Allowances Scheme be adopted for 2012/13;**
- (7) in the event that responsibility for public health is transferred to the Council during 2012/13, authority be delegated to the Interim Corporate Director Resources to incorporate the transferred amount into the budget;**
- (8) the Council Tax resolution, set out at Appendix II to these minutes, be approved and published.**

182. FINAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT AND MTF5 2012/13 - 2014/15

Further to item 9 on the Supplemental Summons, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved Recommendation III of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2012.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the borrowing of additional debt, as a consequence of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reform, for a fixed rate of over 5 years with the continuation of a single pooled approach to the management of debt, be approved;**
- (2) it be noted that the Tenants', Leaseholders' and Residents' Consultative Forum had given conditional support to a 50 years loan and single pool arrangement, provided that there was some form of 'guarantee' that the Council would deliver the total package of measures to address housing service pressures;**
- (3) the HRA Budget 2012/13, as set out at Appendix III to these minutes, be approved.**
- (4) the HRA Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix IV to these minutes, be approved and the balance of the £500k Section 106 monies allocated to extensions for Council homes, approved in March 2008 for the financial years 2008/10, be extended to 31 March 2013.**

183. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 to 2014/15

Further to item 10 on the Supplemental Summons, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved Recommendation IV of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2012.

RESOLVED: That the Capital Programme for 2012/13 - 2014/15 be approved.

184. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP) POLICY AND STRATEGY 2012/13

Further to item 11 on the Supplemental Summons, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved Recommendation V of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2012.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators be approved;**

- (2) **the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Strategy 2012/13 be approved.**

185. CORE STRATEGY ADOPTION

- (i) Further to item 12 on the Supplemental Summons, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bill Stephenson, moved Recommendation VI of the Cabinet meeting held on 9 February 2012.
- (ii) During the consideration of the item a Member rose to express concern that the item was not subject to debate.
- (iii) The Mayor reminded Councillors that following agreement at Resolution 176 above the guillotine procedure was in operation and that the item would be moved to an immediate vote.
- (iv) Upon a vote the Recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Core Strategy be adopted, as part of the Development Plan for Harrow.

186. AMENDMENT TO HARROW COUNCIL'S LICENSING POLICY TO INCLUDE A STATEMENT IN RELATION TO THE OLYMPICS 2012

Further to item 13 on the Summons, the Chairman of Licensing and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Mano Dharmarajah, moved Recommendation I of the meeting held on 21 November 2011.

RESOLVED: That the following amendment to Harrow Council's Licensing Policy (otherwise known as the 'Statement of Licensing Policy') be agreed and adopted as part of the Licensing Policy:

"The Council is fully committed to a safe and successful Olympic and Paralympic Games in London during 2012. The Council recognises that the resources of the police, transport and emergency services will be planned out and prioritised for the security of major events before, during and after the Games, as a minimum from 15 July 2012 until 16 September 2012.

Due consideration will be given by the Council to representations from the Police in relation to licence applications for temporary and/or parallel events during Games time on the grounds of public safety and security when police and other emergency services resources are insufficient to deal with the risks presented. Where, as a result of representations from a responsible authority, it is identified that a licence or proposed event presents a risk that the licensing objectives will be compromised, it is likely that such applications will not be granted."

187. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2012/13

- (i) In accord with legislative requirements Members considered a report detailing the Council's draft Pay Policy Statement 2012/13 which required publication by 31 March 2012.
- (ii) During the consideration of the item the Leader of the Opposition rose, on a point of clarification, to question whether the report was sufficiently complete to be considered by Council, as the report did not identify fully the electronic link points referenced within it.
- (iii) The Mayor confirmed that, following legal advice, he was satisfied the report was acceptable, noting that the query should have been raised as part of the Procedural Motions at Resolution 176 above.
- (iv) Several Councillors rose and withdrew for the remainder of the meeting. The meeting remained quorate following the withdrawal of these Councillors.
- (v) Upon a vote the Recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement 2012/13 be agreed for publication on the Council's website.

188. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

As the guillotine procedure was in force no Councillors questions were heard. The questions and subsequent responses by Portfolio Holders, are contained at Appendix VI to these minutes.

189. MOTION - PROPOSED PRIVATISATION OF LONDON FIRE BRIGADE MERTON CONTROL ROOM

- (i) At item 16(1) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors David Perry and Brian Gate in the following terms:

"This Council notes that:

- The Conservative-controlled London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA), supported by Mayor Boris Johnson, is proposing to privatise the 999 Control Room function and hand over the running of this essential component of one of London's major emergency services to a private contractor.
- A quarter of a million emergency calls are made to the London Fire Brigade Control Room each year requiring an immediate and considered response by the highly-trained professional Brigade staff.

- No consideration has been given to any other option to provide the service, including an in-house bid, or to the financial implications of taking this route.

This Council is concerned that such a privatisation will:

- Put the safety of our local Harrow residents at risk due to the lack of any risk assessment being carried out.
- Outsource a vital service to a company whose primary focus, as a private enterprise, must be profit for its shareholders.
- Have a detrimental effect on the speed of response from the Control Room and the quality of advice given to those at the scene of a fire.
- Mean additional cost to Londoners in monitoring and ensuring the necessary high performance of the contractor.
- Further demoralise staff who have not only identified savings of £1.5m but worked extended shifts during times of need, such as the recent riots in London.

This privatisation is typical of the Conservative-led Government's attack on our cherished public services including our schools, armed forces and the NHS. The outsourcing of major London Fire Brigade functions, including essential 999 services, means that Conservative ideology is being put before the interests of ordinary Londoners. Londoners not shareholders must come first.

Harrow Council therefore opposes the plan to privatise the London Fire Brigade's 999 Control Room function and instruct the Chief Executive to write to Mayor Boris Johnson to use his powers of direction to stop LFEPA proceeding with the proposal and to seek support from local MPs, the London Assembly and council unions."

- (ii) Upon a vote the Motion was carried.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion be adopted.

190. MOTION - COUNCIL TAX

- (i) At item 16(2) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Susan Hall and Barry Macleod-Cullinane in the following terms:

"This Council notes that every single London council is either freezing or cutting their council tax this year.

Additionally, this Council is aware of the difficult economic climate, and of the challenges faced by many residents in making ends meet.

Therefore, this Council commits, in principle, to freezing council tax for 2013/14 and 2014/15, with a view to cutting it if financial pressures allow.”

- (ii) The Motion was not carried.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be not adopted.

191. MOTION - WHITCHURCH PAVILION AND PLAYING FIELDS

In accordance with Rule 14.7, this Motion stood referred to the Executive.

192. MOTION - HPCCG

- (i) At item 16(4) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Krishna James and Sasikala Suresh in the following terms:

“This Council notes with concern the risk that oversight of the Police and the Community Consultative work undertaken by HPCCG over the past 30 years will come to an end. It is of real concern that no contingency plans have been made to ensure that the work continues. It is important to note that the need for a systematic two way conversation between the community and its police service was recognised in Section 96 of the Police Act 1996; which requires ‘that arrangements be made in the Metropolitan Police District by the Metropolitan Police Authority, after consulting with the Commissioner, for obtaining the views of people in that area about matters concerning the policing of the area and for obtaining their cooperation with the police in preventing crime in the area’.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Harrow’s 3 MPs, GLA Member and the Mayor of London and ask that they work to ensure that Harrow residents are able to engage with the Police and help keep Harrow one of the safest boroughs in London.”

- (ii) The Motion was agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion be adopted.

193. MOTION - FAIRTRADE

- (i) At item 16(5) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Nana Asante and Sue Anderson in the following terms:

“This Council notes the close working relationship that Harrow Fairtrade Campaign and Brent Fairtrade Network have developed over the past year.

This Council also notes that the Fairtrade Cotton Bunting Challenge aims to link Brent Town Hall and Harrow Civic Centre.

In light of these links, this Council congratulates our sister borough Brent on achieving Fairtrade status and instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Leader of the Council and Brent Fairtrade Network offering Harrow's best wishes for their celebration on 3rd March 2012."

- (ii) The Motion was agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion be adopted.

194. MOTION - NHS

- (i) At item 16(6) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Krishna James and William Stoodley in the following terms:

"This Council notes that the NHS bill currently going through Parliament is ill thought out and costly. It is immoral to be wasting close to £1 billion at a time when austerity measures are being implemented in all areas of life, including this Council. This Council notes with concern the risk to Patient Care being produced by this attack on the NHS.

Several Professional Health bodies, the Royal College of GPs, the Royal College of Nursing and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, have grave concerns regarding the reforms to the NHS. Since these esteemed professional organisations have asked that the Bill be scrapped altogether, it can only mean that pushing through the reforms will lead to poor health care for Harrow residents.

This Council notes that the medical director of the largest commissioning cluster in the capital has said hospitals in north west London "will almost certainly" have to close.

This Council wishes to record its clear support for the Royal College of GPs, the Royal College of Nursing and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists in their opposition to these market driven plans to privatise the NHS from the backdoor in the name of modernisation.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the 3 MPs to express our concerns about the risk to the NHS and to ask that Harrow's 3 MPs categorically reject these proposals and work to ensure that Harrow residents are guaranteed free health care at the point of use."

- (ii) There was a tabled amendment in the names of Councillors Barry Macleod-Cullinane and Simon Williams, which sought to amend the Motion to read:

"This Council notes that the NHS bill currently going through Parliament is ill thought out and costly. It is immoral to be wasting close to £1 billion at a time when austerity measures are being implemented in all areas of life, including this Council. This Council notes with concern the risk to Patient Care being produced by this attack on the NHS.

Several Professional Health bodies, the Royal College of GPs, the Royal College of Nursing and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists, have grave concerns regarding the reforms to the NHS. Since these esteemed professional organisations have asked that the Bill be scrapped altogether, it can only mean that pushing through the reforms will lead to poor health care for Harrow residents.

This Council notes that the medical director of the largest commissioning cluster in the capital has said hospitals in north west London "will almost certainly" have to close.

This Council wishes to record its clear support for the Royal College of GPs, the Royal College of Nursing and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists in their opposition to these market driven plans to privatise the NHS from the backdoor in the name of modernisation.

This Council notes for information that, under the existing organisational structure of the National Health Service:

1. Harrow Primary Care Trust (PCT) was rated as the sixth worst PCT in the country in 2010 (138th out of 144) by the Health Service Journal, with the second worst competency rating.
2. Despite receiving 5% extra funding from the previous government, Harrow PCT is making up to £57 million of cuts during this year to tackle its own financial mismanagement. Harrow PCT's former chief executive said that its financial problems were "probably bigger than any other PCT in London".
3. Harrow PCT has already cut £2 million out of mental health services, vital to some of Harrow's most vulnerable residents, and is now looking to cut IVF and other services.
4. Harrow PCT ranks in the bottom third for England and the bottom 15% for London for recovery rates for depression and anxiety, with just 35% of patients given psychological therapy for depression and anxiety returning to full health. Harrow PCT ranks 25th out of 29 in London, and 111th out of 152 nationwide.
5. Harrow PCT abruptly closed the Pinner Village Surgery in 2010 without proper consultation and weak justification, inconveniencing thousands of Harrow residents.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the 3 MPs to express our concerns about the risk to the NHS and to ask that

Harrow's 3 MPs categorically reject these proposals and work to ensure that Harrow residents are guaranteed free health care at the point of use."

- (iii) The Motion, as set out at (i) above was carried.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion, as set out at (i) above, be adopted.

195. MOTION - STEP FREE ACCESS TO STATIONS

- (i) At item 16(7) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Sue Anderson and Bill Phillips in the following terms:

"This Council congratulates Campaigners who have continued to keep the issue of step free access at Harrow's stations in the public eye. This Council instructs that the Chief Executive write to the Mayor of London to remind him that Harrow residents would like the necessary investment to be made in public transport infrastructure so that residents can enjoy step-free access to local stations."

- (ii) There was a tabled amendment in the names of Councillors Susan Hall and Barry Macleod-Cullinane, which sought to amend the Motion as follows:

"This Council congratulates Campaigners who have continued to keep the issue of step free access at Harrow's stations in the public eye. This Council instructs that the Chief Executive write to the Mayor of London.

This Council notes that the collapse of Metronet has delayed getting step-free access for Harrow on the Hill station.

This Council further notes that using capital presently earmarked for investment for revenue support purposes would necessarily reduce the funds available for infrastructure works on the Underground network and thus create further delays in securing the funds for implementing step-free access upgrades at Harrow on the Hill and other stations across Harrow."

- (iii) Upon a vote, the amendment at (ii) was lost.
- (iv) Upon a further vote the substantive Motion at (i) was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion, as set out at (i) above, be adopted.

196. MOTION - LONDON LIVING RENT

- (i) At item 16(8) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Nana Asante and Thaya Idaikkadar in the following terms:

“This Council notes with concern the negative impact of Housing Benefit changes on Harrow residents and urges that Harrow’s 3 MPs campaign to ensure that Harrow residents are able to work and live in the borough.

This Council affirms the importance of family and community and wishes to place on record its support for the London Living Rent which would ensure that no one pays out more than 1/3 of their wages on rent enabling families to stay together and strong communities to be built in the borough.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Harrow’s 3 MPs and ask that they support the London Living Rent so that it becomes part of legislation.”

- (ii) There was a tabled amendment in the names of Councillors Barry Macleod-Cullinane and Paul Osborn, which sought to amend the Motion as follows:

“This Council notes with concern the negative impact of Housing Benefit changes on Harrow residents and urges that Harrow’s 3 MPs campaign to ensure that Harrow residents are able to work and live in the borough.

This Council affirms the importance of family and community and wishes to place on record its support for the London Living Rent which would ensure that no one pays out more than 1/3 of their wages on rent enabling families to stay together and strong communities to be built in the borough.

This Council notes for information that rent control, of which the London Living Rent is a variant, has been described by Swedish economist Assar Lindbeck ‘as the most efficient technique presently known for destroying a city – apart from bombing.’

This Council therefore refers this motion to Cabinet with a recommendation that it commission a report from the Housing Department on the impact the London Living Rent would have on Harrow; specifically with regard to housing demand and supply.

This Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to Harrow’s 3 MPs and ask that they support the London Living Rent so that it becomes part of legislation.”

- (iii) Upon a vote, the amendment at (ii) was lost.
- (iv) Upon a further vote the substantive Motion at (i) was agreed.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion, as set out at (i) above, be adopted.

197. MOTION - CARERS IN HARROW

- (i) At item 16(9) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Margaret Davine and Victoria Silver in the following terms:

“This Council celebrates:

- The valuable role performed by over 2000 carers in Harrow, in the majority of cases without any financial help from the public purse.
- The contribution of Harrow Carers, Crossroads and other partners in the Voluntary Sector that provide support and services, commending the valuable work they do in supporting carers and in highlighting their needs.

This Council further congratulates:

Our Council officers, especially those in the Carers Teams, for their continued commitment to supporting carers, as the Council prepares to roll-out Personal Budgets for carers in April 2012 - also welcomes the initiative by Lincolnshire City Council, Plymouth City Council and others who have appointed a 'Carers Champion' with cross-cutting responsibilities, across all departments; and we call on Harrow Council to follow this excellent example and appoint a similar champion in Harrow to promote better respite, care, respect and access to innovative support services for all of our carers.”

- (ii) The Motion was agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion be adopted.

198. MOTION - WHITCHURCH LEASE

In accordance with Rule 14.7, this Motion stood referred to the Executive.

199. MOTION - MAYOR OF LONDON

- (i) At item 16(11) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Susan Hall and Barry Macleod-Cullinane in the following terms:

“This Council notes that, since the election of the present Mayor of London in 2008, he has delivered the following for Harrow and its residents:

- A frozen Mayoral precept for 3 years and a cut this year – following a 152% increase over the previous 8 years – saving Harrow households over £440.
- Over £2.5 of funding from the Outer London Fund to invest in the promotion and regeneration of Harrow Town Centre and North Harrow.
- 35 more police officers, 7 more PCSOs, and 72 more Special Constables, with the introduction of single police patrols leading to over 3,000 more patrols each year. The number of police across London as a whole has increased by 1,000, with Special Constables nearly doubling to almost 5,000.
- A 6% overall fall in crime, with 24% and 21% decreases in robberies and youth crime respectively.
- Nearly £1 million of Transport for London investment in Harrow's roads and pavements.
- The expansion and improvement of 12 bus routes, with 3 more added.
- The planting of over 500 new trees, which is more than in almost any other London borough.

This Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Mayor of London and London Assembly to express our gratitude for his investment and continued interest in and support for Harrow.”

- (ii) Upon a vote, the Motion was not carried.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be not adopted.

200. MOTION - RAF NORTHOLT

- (i) At item 16(12) the Council received a Motion in the names of Councillors Bill Stephenson and Nana Asante in the following terms:

“This Council is appalled to learn from a leaked report in the Guardian newspaper (Wednesday, Jan 25) that ‘The Ministry of Defence is thinking of selling off one of its oldest and most internationally renowned airports, RAF Northolt, and that ‘... there have been high level talks in Whitehall about whether the airfield could even become a satellite for nearby Heathrow.’

This Council notes this is not the first time that this has been suggested and each time, it has been overwhelmingly rejected by local residents

for all the reasons for which the Government rejected the third runway at Heathrow Airport – noise, pollution and traffic congestion.

This Council believes that this ‘stealth’ expansion of Heathrow through the sale and redevelopment of RAF Northolt would be a disaster for residents in Harrow and across West London.

This Council calls on the Government to issue an immediate statement withdrawing this suggestion and instructs the Chief Executive to enlist the support of Harrow’s three MPs, the Brent and Harrow GLA member and other neighbouring local authorities, MPs and GLA members to oppose this catastrophic proposal.”

(ii) The Motion was agreed by general assent.

RESOLVED: That the substantive Motion be adopted.

201. MOTION - COUNCIL TAX

This Motion was withdrawn.

202. DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURE - COUNCIL

The Director of Legal and Governance Services advised of an urgent decision taken in respect of a matter reserved to Council since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the decision taken under delegation by the Director of Legal and Governance Services, on behalf of Council, be noted.

203. PROCEDURE FOR TERMINATION OF MEETING

At 10.40 pm, upon the conclusion of the debate on items 8-11 and as agreed at Resolution 176, the Mayor advised that the guillotine procedure was in operation for the determination of the remaining business on the Summons. This was applied to the following Items:

Items	Reports
12	Core Strategy Adoption
13	Amendment to Harrow Council’s Licensing Policy to Include a Statement in Relation to the Olympics 2012
14	Pay Policy Statement 2012/13
15	Questions with Notice

Items	Reports
16(1)	Motion – Proposed Privatisation of London Fire Brigade Merton Control Room
16(2)	Motion – Council Tax
16(3)	Motion – Whitchurch Pavilion and Playing Fields
16(4)	Motion – HPCCG
16(5)	Motion – Fairtrade
16(6)	Motion – NHS
16(7)	Motion – Step Free Access to Stations
16(8)	Motion – London Living Rent
16(9)	Motion – Carers in Harrow
16(10)	Motion – Whitchurch Lease
16(11)	Motion – Mayor of London
16(12)	Motion – RAF Northolt
17	Decision Taken Under Urgency Procedure - Council.

(CLOSE OF MEETING: All business having been completed, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 10.50 pm).

COUNCIL

16 FEBRUARY 2012

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 6)

A period of up to 15 minutes is allowed for the asking of written questions by members of the public of a Member of the Executive or the Chairman of any Committee.

1.

Questioner: Jessica Lawrence

Asked of: Councillor Phillip O'Dell, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety

Question: "When is an investigation going to be undertaken regarding the expenditures of the arboricultural department and the manner in which payments are made to contractor Gristwood & Toms and an investigation into the dissatisfactory works they carry out in mismanaging the trees in the borough which in my neighbourhood of West means pollarding in an excessive and particularly unsightly manner"

Answer: Written answer as follows to be provided as questioner not present.

Gristwood and Toms are a respectable tree maintenance company who have worked for the London Borough of Harrow for a number of years and also hold maintenance contracts with other boroughs in West London. I see no particular reason to investigate the financial arrangements of this contract. However, by co-incidence the tree maintenance contract has been scheduled this year for a routine internal audit. Once completed the audit will contain recommendations that the Council will action according to our financial procedures.

2.

Questioner: Dennis Foxley on behalf of non-teaching staff from Cannon Lane Junior School

Asked of: Councillor Brian Gate, Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges

Question: "What consideration has the Council given to the detrimental impact the proposed changes to terms and conditions, (or reductions in salary) to non-teaching staff employed in schools,

would have on the education of children in Harrow schools?

Non-teaching staff have already suffered a pay freeze for 3 years whilst teachers have enjoyed annual increments. A further loss in salary would be divisive, resulting in a demoralised workforce and would erode support that is given to teachers. Without the commitment and goodwill of the non-teaching staff there would be a decline in the provision of high quality teaching and learning in Harrow schools.”

**Answer:
(Provided by
Cllr Henson,
Portfolio
Holder for
Performance,
Customer
Services and
Corporate
Services)**

Thank you for the question. It gives us an opportunity to explain more around the terms and conditions. As you will be aware, the economic climate remains very challenging and like all councils, Harrow has to deal with the Government’s public spending cuts at the same time as addressing an increasing demand for our services.

During 2012/13 and beyond, as shown in the Corporate Plan that is on the agenda tonight, the Council will need to continue to look for efficiency savings to meet the exacting financial targets set by Government. Indeed, as the extent of the cuts to public spending and the Government’s agenda for public service reform became clearer, it plainly showed that the Council is facing some big changes which required us to drive radical thinking about the future shape and size of the Council.

Harrow Council has been challenged to make £62m savings over four years which is equivalent to a third of our controllable budget and every part of the Council needs to contribute to the savings if we are to help protect frontline services.

In their autumn statement last year, the Government announced that there was likely to be a further two years of cuts requiring £10m per year of further savings to achieve in 2015/16.

In the past the Council has a record of being extremely effective in achieving savings for improved efficiencies without the need of extensive service cuts or large scale redundancies that many other councils have had to implement.

Meeting these challenges has involved some highly innovative work that has enabled us both to improve the services we offer and save money and I am proud of the transformation and modernisation that we are delivering across our services. We are also saving money through reducing our property costs, moving staff into the Civic Centre from other premises and reviewing and renegotiating all our contracts for supplies and services, but these measures alone will not achieve the necessary reductions in costs we need to make.

When we set the budget last March we agreed there had to be a

balance between changes to services and changes for staff. Staff costs are one of the Council's largest areas of expenditure, and therefore we have had to look at where we could make savings in our terms and conditions of employment. In considering options it is right that we also take the opportunity to modernise and improve what we offer as well as to save money. Many non-teaching staff would see a benefit from some of the options being considered. This contrasts with a number of other councils which have imposed blanket pay reductions for staff.

We value the contribution of all our staff and we recognise that the tough economic climate has affected all staff and for non-teaching staff the public sector pay freeze, which we now face for a third consecutive year and it is very difficult. We also value the significant contribution non-teaching staff make to the high standards of achievement in our schools.

Unlike most other councils who have implemented variations to terms and conditions of employment with the prime objective to reduce costs, we are taking a more balanced approach to modernising terms and conditions of employment so they effectively support the future needs of the Council, extend choice to individual employees in their employment package and simplify and reduce administration whilst at the same time, reducing employment costs. Indeed, the driving principles that have been set are to modernise, simplify, reduce costs and give greater choice.

Importantly, we recognise that schools' staff are employees of the Council and therefore it would be wrong for us not to consult them when we are considering changes to terms and conditions. Teachers are not being consulted because their terms and conditions are determined by the Government and not the Council.

However, the Council also recognises that the employment position is different for staff in schools. Therefore if, following consultation, the Council decides to offer new terms and conditions; the Council will recommend that schools also implement the new terms but ultimately that decision would be made by each school's Board of Governors.

Supplemental Question: Non-teaching staff in schools do not enjoy the same terms, conditions and benefits as other Council staff (i.e. overtime, car allowance, flexi time and paid holidays). Why are they being grouped together with other Council workers? Non-teaching staff were excluded from all previous consultations on this matter; the staff survey in March 2011, briefings in August and September which we heard nothing about. Headteachers only informed staff in our school of the proposals in January 2012.

Supplemental Answer: The consultation, last year, was dealing with the Council staff and was looking forward to modernising terms and conditions. As we have now moved into a wider sphere, it is only right that we also consult with the non-teaching staff in schools as they too are employees of the Council. All staff should be encouraged to respond to the consultation so those views can be taken on board. At the end of the consultation a number of the options will be revisited and looked at. I will say that at the end of the day for the school staff, non-school staff, it is down to the actual school governing bodies whether they wish to bring those changes in, not the Council.

The Council make a recommendation one way or the other but some of the things that were looked at in the previous consultation, also looked at bringing people up to the London Living Wage which will affect people in schools. It will also look at increasing annual leave, around some of the terms that some people have, not all have annual leave, I appreciate that but some do and it would look at addressing some of those anomalies that are around parts of the Council. The consultation is going to be genuine and I would urge you to respond to it. We can always have discussions later, once the consultation is finished.

3.

Questioner: Jeremy Zeid

Asked of: Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation

Question: "What are the costs and revenue implications of Bailiff Incentives that have now come into practice and what is being done to monitor and regulate performance while also protecting those at the receiving end from ill-treatment and unreasonable charges?"

Answer: Firstly, I wish to clarify that we are in the process of tendering for bailiff services. The current contract that we have was set in place in October 2007 and the existing arrangements have not been changed, they are not new.

The existing contracts allowed for bailiff firms to pay back to the Council, on a voluntary basis, a percentage of the fees which they have collected from debtors. On the basis that this is already being done, a new tender will formalise this and make it a contractual obligation for a small percentage to be paid back to Harrow, which will provide an extra guaranteed income stream for the future.

The contract itself contains a section which asks contractors to

set out their fees for different actions and the level of those fees. Bailiffs will only be allowed, and I emphasise, will only be allowed, to charge these fees which have been agreed in the contract. Additionally the evaluation matrix for the contract weights fees more favourably the lower they are set, providing contractors with an incentive to keep them as low as possible.

We already have regular contract liaison meetings with our contractors and this will continue. More formal contract meetings are held quarterly as are meetings with the CAB which brings issues to us for our attention. This together with a complaints register which the bailiffs companies must hold under the contract, provides case studies and lessons for us to learn which are fed back into the process to improve operational efficiency whilst providing safeguards against vulnerable clients.

The contract lays down strict guidelines to ensure that all debtors are dealt with in a professional manner and in order to achieve this, the tender includes sections on customer care and the bailiff code of conduct which must both be met and adhered to.

We are aware that the recession will lead to increase indebtedness, increased unemployment, increased incidents of mental health problems, family breakdowns and increased incidents which may well bring more residents in contact with bailiffs. To counteract this and to ensure the right approach is provided by future contractors, officers will be setting up workshops with any new contractors to ensure extra safeguards are put in place as may be relevant.

It should also be noted that a recent Scrutiny report about indebtedness found that the Council's debt collection was very professionally run and we are looking to suggestions made in their report as to how we can deal with the most vulnerable people, particularly those with mental health problems.

Supplemental Question:

Bailiffs have been given enhanced powers under the last Government and I personally watch the action of some of these professionals (no identification, white van). I am aware of a person who ended up paying £850 for a £60 parking ticket. The bailiffs would not come back to release the clamp for a whole day. They were very threatening, extremely nasty people and had been licensed.

Now would you not agree that these strong arm tactics and charges are, in fact, a disgrace and the public cannot even get to Northampton to challenge these things in the clearance centre there? They are disproportionate and unjust. How many other Harrow residents have suffered this legal extortion, with menaces?

Supplemental Answer: As I indicated to you, I hope that you raised that case with us immediately. It sounds disgraceful, it should not happen and there are safeguards we put in place where bailiffs do not carry out their obligations that we deal with them very strictly. However if people do not report them and if we do not have the reports, we cannot deal with them, so I do not know whether you took it up. If you did not, you can get in touch with me.

4.

Questioner: Joan Penrose

Asked of: Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation

Question: “Five of the six users and carer members of the Mental Health Day Care Steering Group put questions to the 6th February Cabinet meeting complaining about the current consultation on mental health day services.

What are you going to do to address our many concerns which include:

1. Consultation questionnaire fails to ask stakeholders (users, carers and staff) what their needs are;
2. Consultation questionnaire fails to state what proposals for new day services actually are – except in the most general terms.”

Answer: I would like to say first that I am very committed, as is everyone in my department, to ensure that the mental health day service consultation results in the best possible services for people.

(Provided by Cllr Margaret Davine, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing)

You have raised two specific issues. The point about the questionnaire, it is concerned with the broad shape of the service. It is not concerned with the detailed service specifications, so it is not the right place to be discussing actual needs. It is about the framework and the shape of the service we will have after the consultation and we have received some really, really good feedback.

Last Thursday you asked to meet with the Leader and myself and we have arranged that meeting so we can discuss it there as well. We also agreed, because it was raised at the Cabinet meeting, that we will involve the Steering Group and other service users in the work to actually develop the service specification but that is not what this consultation is about at the moment. It is to get the people who use day services, views on the shape of the service they would like and that is the way, the

spirit, in which we are conducting it.

Supplemental Question: Speaking of the shape of the service, and thank you for that answer, the assumption in the consultation is that day services means day centres.

Now, some of you have heard of the service called "Confidence for Life". It is a new way of working with mental health service users and carers and this was mentioned many times by service users and carers in previous workshops and consultation events over the last few years. Yet, although this model of service is officially a day service, it is not mentioned anywhere as a possibility.

Stakeholders might have illuminating views on such an option for themselves were they to have a chance to consider it. We were hoping that the day centre review would encourage us to be part of a creative exercise in order to bring about much needed change. Could you look into that?

Supplemental Answer: I will look into that, I know a lot about "Confidence for Life". We are very keen to see that functioning in Harrow but, it is not what this consultation is about and you say that the consultation concentrates on day services in buildings, particularly to look and see if there is an appetite among our users to have maybe one Hub building and lots of other services out in the community to encourage and help and support mental health users.

So I will take that on board. It would have come up anyway at the point of doing the service specifications but, I certainly do not agree with you that we are concentrating just on buildings.

5.

Questioner: Ann Freeman

Asked of: Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation

Question: "Why does Harrow Council continue to refuse the request to investigate the neglect of people living in the units in Weldon Crescent, Greenhill Road, Field End Road and receiving Floating Housing Support from the Supporting People Service, over 10/11 years, that is prior to change to the new Provider, Richmond Fellowship? (The new service is gradually proving to be everything that a person with mental illness needs to feel at home and to be given confidence and skills to live independently)."

Answer:
(Provided by
Cllr Margaret
Davine,
Portfolio
Holder for
Adult Social
Care, Health
and
Wellbeing)

Well, first of all, I am pleased that you are happier with the improving service which is being provided by the Richmond Fellowship. We discussed this last Friday and you told me there that you were pleased from that point of view.

On your wider point, I am not refusing to look at the services prior to that and the very reason that the new tender was put out to Richmond Fellowship was that we were aware that there were problems in some of those units and that is why we tried to work with CNWL. We were not happy about that and so we put out the new tender to Richmond Fellowship. We do have monthly meetings with Richmond Fellowship and they have not raised any of those concerns but we will ask them.

What I refused to do was to have an independent inquiry which would be costly. The resources I have to use for mental health services and to improve mental health services, I am not willing to spend any of that on an independent inquiry. We will of course continue to ensure that Richmond Fellowship are improving the services, and try to put everything right that went on before but we are nearly one year on and I am very pleased that people are finding that the newer service is an improving and better one.

Supplemental
Question:

Are you, Councillors not uneasy that the neglect happened? That the Council's own quality assurance framework did not stop it happening? That the people, the same people, managers, care co-ordinators, community psychiatric nurses and psychiatrist who had overall charge of those vulnerable Harrow residents in those units and Floating Support, they have mental illness if you do not know, remain caring in our Harrow Adult Mental Health Service now?

Supplemental
Answer:

I was very concerned that the service at the beginning of last year was quite sub-standard. I have tried my best to address that and it is now improving. I have said to you that if you bring me particular instances, I will look into that but, I am not going to pay for an independent inquiry. I am not going to start any kind of witch hunt around people that were serving. We are looking to improve the services step by step as best as we can.

Following the publication of the Cabinet Decision Notice, minor drafting changes were made to the Model Tax Resolution. The amended version below is the Resolution for Council decision making purposes.

Model Council Tax Resolution

Harrow Council

Council Tax Resolution 2012-2013

Council is requested to determine the level of the Council Tax for 2012-2013 in the light of the information on the precept and make the calculations set out in the resolution shown below.

- (1) To note that at its meeting on 15 December 2011 Cabinet agreed the amount of 88,140 as its Council Tax Base for the year 2012-2013. [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992, as amended (the "Act")].
- (2) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2012-2013, in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Act:
- (i) Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for items set out in Section 31A (2) (a) to (f) of the Act . £582,789,314
 - (ii) Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for items set out on Section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act . £409,676,096
 - (iii) Being the Council Tax Requirement for the year calculated in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, namely the amount by which the aggregate at (2(i)) above exceeds the aggregate at (2(ii)) above. £104,582,517
 - (iv) Being the basic amount of Council Tax for the year, being the Council Tax Requirement at (2(iii)) above, divided by the Council Tax Base set out at (1) above, in accordance with Section 31B(i) of the Act. £1,186.55

(v) Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	791.03	922.87	1,054.71	1,186.55	1,450.23	1,713.90	1,977.58	2,373.10

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (iv) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D excluding precepts from any other authority.

(3)

That it be noted that for 2012-2013 the Greater London Authority stated the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	204.48	238.56	272.64	306.72	374.88	443.04	511.20	613.44

(4)

Agree that the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Act, hereby sets the aggregate amounts of Council Tax for 2012-13 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in the table below.

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	995.51	1,161.43	1,327.35	1,493.27	1,825.11	2,156.95	2,488.78	2,986.54

(5) Determine for the purposes of section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Act that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2012-13 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under section 52ZC of the Act.

HARROW COUNCIL
REVENUE BUDGET SUMMARY 2012-2013

	2011-2012 Original Budget £000	2012-2013 Original Budget £000
Local Demand - Borough Services		
Adults and Housing	67,508	66,431
Children's Services	40,852	39,475
Community and Environment	43,986	48,674
Place Shaping	4,382	3,547
Legal and Governance	3,566	3,379
Assistant Chief Executive	12,275	3,854
Corporate Finance	7,834	18,634
Transformation Programme	-389	-519
Total Directorate Budgets	180,014	183,475
Corporate items	2,213	148
Provisions for debt/litigation	325	425
Capital Financing adjustments	-4,463	-8,327
Council Tax Support Grant	-2,580	-2,608
Total Net Expenditure	175,509	173,113
Collection Fund Surplus b/f	-1,978	-1,335
Formula Grant	-70,126	-67,196
Local Demand on Collection Fund	103,405	104,582
Funds / Balances		
Balances Brought Forward	7,000	7,000
Adjustment to Balances	0	0
Balances Carried Forward	7,000	7,000
Council Tax for Band D Equivalent		
Harrow (£)	1,186.55	1,186.55
<u>Increase</u> Harrow (%)	0.00%	0.00%
Taxbase	87,148	88,140

HRA Budget 2012-13 and MTFS 2013-14 to 2014-15- Expenditure

	Budget 2012-13 (Feb 2011) £	Budget 2012-13 (latest) £	Budget 2013-14 (proposed) £	Budget 2014-15 (proposed) £
Operating Expenditure:				
Employee Costs	1,466,670	2,094,741	2,014,747	2,013,620
Supplies & Services	639,260	707,360	711,460	713,347
Utility cost (Water & Gas)	679,000	551,007	594,438	641,980
Estate & Sheltered Services	2,774,510	2,207,096	2,345,300	2,513,044
Central Recharges	3,088,770	3,345,714	3,412,628	3,480,880
Operating Expenditure	8,648,210	8,905,918	9,078,573	9,362,871
Repairs Expenditure:				
Repairs - Voids	636,410	689,250	730,000	700,000
Repairs - Responsive	2,744,430	2,436,612	2,578,289	2,747,751
Repairs – Other	2,091,140	2,365,521	2,341,412	2,367,105
Total Repairs Expenditure	5,471,980	5,491,383	5,649,701	5,814,856
Other Expenditure:				
Contingency - General	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Investment in Services	0	900,000	1,400,000	1,300,000
Bad or Doubtful Debts	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
RCCO	0	0	440,372	1,979,800
Charges for Capital	2,770,420	6,420,024	6,397,124	6,349,444
Depreciation	4,148,000	5,991,190	6,111,000	6,233,200
HRA Subsidy	6,988,350	0	0	0
Total Other Expenditure	14,306,770	13,711,214	14,748,496	16,262,444
Total Expenditure	28,426,960	28,108,515	29,476,770	31,440,171

HRA Budget 2012-13 and MTFS 2013-14 to 2014-15 - Income

	Budget 2012-13 (Feb 2011) £	Budget 2012-13 (latest) £	Budget 2013- 14 (proposed) £	Budget 2014- 15 (proposed) £
Income				
Rent Income – Dwellings	-25,397,420	-26,205,980	-27,151,130	-28,129,310
Rent Income – Non Dwellings	-761,970	-684,491	-686,101	-687,706
Service Charges - Tenants	-665,540	-686,121	-703,203	-720,709
Service Charges – Leaseholders	-760,410	-548,550	-556,868	-565,589
Facility Charges (Water & Gas)	-517,320	-515,960	-526,279	-536,805
Interest	-6,120	-4,000	-4,000	-4,000
Other Income	-183,010	-83,000	-83,000	-83,000
Transfer from General Fund	-163,000	-163,000	-163,000	-163,000
Total Income	-28,454,790	-28,891,102	-29,873,581	-30,890,119
In Year Deficit / (Surplus)	-27,830	-782,587	-396,811	550,052
BALANCE brought forward	-2,681,730	-2,422,353	-3,204,940	-3,601,751
BALANCE carried forward	-2,709,560	-3,204,940	-3,601,751	-3,051,699

HRA Capital Programme

	2012-13 No. of properties	2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £	2014-15 £
Capitalised salaries	-	310,000	310,000	317,750	326,000
Contingency	-	50,000	-	-	-
Major voids	30	50,000	75,000	76,870	78,800
Kitchens including rewiring	200 300	625,000 500,000	800,000 700,000	820,000 717,500	842,000 736,000
Bathroom including rewiring	1,000 100	625,000 500,000	500,000 250,000	512,500 256,250	525,000 263,000
Health & Safety programme	300 40	900,000 480,000	2,352,350 400,000	2,411,160 512,500	2,672,000 525,320
Gas heating programme	120 200	300,000 700,000	300,000 50,000	307,500 51,250	315,220 52,550
Enveloping programme	70	500,000	200,000	205,000	210,130
Door entry upgrade/renewal	5 7	25,000 -	25,000 50,000	25,630 51,250	26,300 52,530
Lifts	5	250,000	350,000	256,250	262,660
Digital TV aerials	120	250,000	275,000	281,880	288,920
Electric night storage heating	60 120	100,000 30,000	125,000 60,000	128,100 61,500	131,330 63,040
Water tank replacement	100	600,000	600,000	615,000	630,400
Sheltered warden voids	-	-	75,000	76,870	78,800
Structural issues / drainage	- 300	- -	- 1,500,000	256,240 -	262,000 -
Boiler replacement programme	-	(635,000)	-	-	-
Partial heating upgrade Garages Aids & Adaptations Capitalisation – response repairs Develop wider Housing initiatives Carried Forward Less : overprogramming					
Council Funded expenditure	3,175	6,160,000	8,997,350	7,941,000	8,342,000
Grant funded Extensions	3	200,000	200,000	-	-
Total HRA Capital Programme	3,175	6,360,000	9,197,350	7,941,000	8,342,000

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

COUNCIL

16 FEBRUARY 2012

QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE (ITEM 11)

Fifteen minutes will be allowed for Members of the Council to ask a Portfolio Holder a question on any matter in relation to which the Executive has powers or duties.

1.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Bob Currie (Portfolio Holder for Housing)

Question: With the small fall in RPI inflation since the government's rent determination, will the Council pass on this fall to tenants terms of its rent demands for 2012/13?

Answer: I admire your thirst for education as this is the identical question which you asked me at last weeks Cabinet. I have no reason to change what is in my written answer to you in reply to this same question. I hope you will not find it too confusing.
(answered by Cllr Bill Stephenson)

As you will be aware the Government has a fixed formula for determining the maximum rents to bring about 'convergence' as laid out in the February Cabinet papers. It is RPI (in September) + .5% + £2. RPI in September 2011 was 5.6% and this gives an average rent increase of 6.74% and average increase of £6.45 to £102.15 a week. The lower rate of RPI is therefore irrelevant.

Consultation with TLRCF took place on 30th January 2012. Tenants accepted the increase but had concerns regarding the ability to pay rents following benefit reforms. The additional resources freed up by the Housing Finance reforms will enable investment in services, subject to further consultation, some of which are expected to be targeted to support those most affected by the wider welfare reforms.

The Council has just passed the budget in any case where the rents have been set as above as determined by the Government.

2.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Phillip O'Dell (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety)

Question: "Your administration reduced police numbers by cutting the Council-funded team. Why did you not use this budget as an opportunity to correct said cut and both restore and increase the size of the team, thanks to the 2-for-1 offer from the Metropolitan Police?"

Answer: The good work which the Council-funded Police team is recognised by everyone. This administration is fully committed to providing appropriate and affordable support to the Police as our leading partner in crime reduction. However, as we must all also recognise, the Council's financial position has changed radically since the original agreement was signed which I wish to remind Cabinet members that Cllr. Hall for got to renew. We were therefore able to take advantage of the "2-for-1" funding scheme that has been welcomed as it has allowed us to continue to provide significant of support to the Police in the face of our current circumstances which I know they value. The number of officers provided was determined in consultation with the Police Borough Commander, as were the operational objectives that underpin the new agreement. I remain satisfied that this arrangement offers a sustainable solution which benefits both the Police and our community at large.

3.

Questioner: Councillor Paul Osborn

Asked of: Councillor Bill Stephenson (Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation)

Question: "Why have you not extended to us the same courtesy I always extended to you to ensure you were always briefed on business cases before they were passed and why, in relation to the Mobile and Flexible Working, did the Corporate Director move the arranged briefing to 22nd February on the basis it wouldn't go to Cabinet until March?"

Answer: I am sure you will recall that under your administration the Business Transformation Panel did not meet regularly and you introduced an irregular ad-hoc arrangement.
(answered by Cllr Graham Henson)

I assume that your question regarding business cases, relates solely to the transformation programme Mobile and Flexible Working Project, as you have not advised me of any concerns

regarding the many and various business cases that are produced by officers, as part of our normal business as usual processes.

Unfortunately the Mobile and Flexible Working Project Manager, is on leave this week, so I do not have access to all of the information which I would liked to have used, to respond to this question.

As we all know the Mobile and Flexible Working Project has been ongoing for some considerable time. I have been advised by the Project Manager, that he has maintained good communications with regard to this project and I know you met with him on 17 October 2011, where you also discussed the experience of Mobile and Flexible working at another Council. The subject matter alone suggests to me, that wide ranging dialogue was well established. I have been given to understand that Members within your Group have made a really positive contribution to the development of the project through contact with the Project Manager.

I am therefore really disappointed that you are suggesting that we have not sought to involve your Group in this Project, that is a key building block for a modernised Council, and the success of which, is crucial to the transformation of the Council's business.

The Forward Plan documents, issued from November 2011 to February 2012, have all shown the Mobile and Flexible Working Project, as being presented at Cabinet on 9 February 2012.

I accept that there was discussion with Officers, which considered presenting the Mobile and Flexible Working Project at March 2012 Cabinet. However, this was never agreed, as it was in my considered opinion, essential that the project report was presented at Cabinet, at the same meeting at which we agreed the budget, revenue and capital.

I am aware that Scrutiny Officers were asked to arrange a briefing meeting to discuss Mobile and Flexible Working. I understand that you asked to participate in this meeting and that the Project Manager immediately agreed to this request.

The meeting was originally scheduled for Tuesday 24 January, to follow a discussion involving Councillors Anderson and Wright, and Place Shaping Officers, on another matter. However the meeting had to be rescheduled, as the Project Manager was unable to make the agreed date.

Scrutiny Officers coordinated the revised arrangements, with Wednesday 22 February being agreed. I was unable to make

the other date proposed of 29 February.

The arrangements for the meeting were coordinated by Scrutiny Officers and the Corporate Director, Place Shaping, had no involvement whatsoever, in directing or influencing the date and timing of the meeting. I am sure that if you had asked for a briefing, once you had received last week's Cabinet agenda that this would have been provided without hesitation.

As I have already said, the Mobile and Flexible Working Project is crucial to the development of the Council's business. More importantly it is crucial to the development of the services, which we provide to our customers, the residents and businesses of Harrow.

I really do hope that Councillor Wright will continue to work closely with Councillor Bill Philips and I because their knowledge and expertise in particular, is highly valued, and Paul I would welcome your positive support and assistance, and would enjoy the opportunity to work cross party to deliver a successful outcome for this project.

At this stage we have agreed the budget resources necessary to enable the implementation of our Mobile and Flexible Working Project. This decision has been made subsequent to careful and comprehensive evaluation of available technology, but more importantly the experiences of other organisations, in particular other Councils.

Following tonight's decision in respect of the revenue and capital budgets, we are now ready to initiate our project, and I am very keen that from the outset, that we work in a transparent and collaborative way, utilising all available expertise.

So, not only do I want to act courteously, by ensuring that you have access to information, much more importantly, I hope that you will feel able to work positively and closely, with me, so that together, we can ensure the success of this project.

We are both scheduled to attend the Scrutiny meeting next Wednesday 22 February, and we can agree at that meeting arrangements for the way forward.

4.

Questioner: Councillor Kam Chana

Asked of: Councillor Margaret Davine (Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing)

Question: It was reported this week that the majority of people in Lambeth who receive Discretionary Disabled Freedom Passes will lose them as a result of new eligibility criteria. Can you confirm both the number and the proportion of recipients in Harrow who will lose their Discretionary Passes as a result of your administration's new eligibility criteria – introduced last October?

Answer:
(Answered by
Cllr Bill
Stephenson) When we came to power we found that concessionary travel passes were in a mess. There was little or no consistency as to who got a pass and who did not. These decisions were often taken on the basis of doctors' letters contrary to the very strong advice of the Department of Transport. As part of the major Adult Social care consultation we came up with a set of clear criteria for the award of Discretionary Freedom Passes to ensure that anyone with a major disability physical or mental would quite rightly be eligible for such a pass. We did this only after consulting our users and stakeholder organisations such as HAD, CAB, MIND, AGE UK etc for almost a year and involving them in the drafting of the new policy and associated criteria.

We also introduced rigorous consistent tests along those already in place for the issue of Taxicards to ensure that everyone is treated fairly with an independent appeals system.

Our Discretionary Freedom Pass numbers were by far the highest in London at around 1888. Only two other councils award DFPs to over a thousand. Whereas our neighbouring councils Barnet (0), Ealing (9), Hillingdon (2), Hounslow (3) offer less than ten each and 14 overall

Undoubtedly some residents who previously had a Discretionary Freedom Pass will no longer be eligible for one under the new eligibility criteria. In order to ensure that anyone in this position will have plenty of time to make alternative arrangements, we have implemented an 18 month notice period which in effect means that no one will lose their current Discretionary Freedom Pass until March 31 2013. We will send out several reminders starting in May to ensure those affected are reminded to plan for the change.

We believe that by changing the policy we now have a very fair and equitable system which ensures we make the best use of resources to help the most vulnerable. We will keep the matter under continuous review.

5.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Mitzi Green (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services)

Question: "The funding for Children's Centres is to be cut by £1 million over the next two years. How have you assured that those residents who rely on the services the Centres provide most of all will not be affected by these cuts?"

Answer: We have already protected the Children's Centres for use by those residents who rely on the services by keeping them open after having to make £1.2million in cuts.

In considering how best this could be done to ensure maximum protection for those residents who rely on the services provided, a major staff, partner and user survey was undertaken, a full report of which was presented to Cabinet in December.

This independent report concluded that parents (97%), partners and staff 'all valued the Children's Centres highly'.

Over three quarters of parents said that they appreciated 'the helpful and welcoming staff' and were positive about the benefits of the co-locating of complimentary services.

Also covered by the survey were a number of focus groups, where there was the opportunity to offer suggestions as to how the Centres could be developed in the future.

Suggestions included, 'widening the age range to provide services for more children' and encouraging 'youth clubs, voluntary organisations and local groups of residents to use the centres'.

51% of parents 'supported charging for some services' and 70% were positive about the principle of parents 'getting involved in helping run services or volunteering themselves'.

In their conclusion the researchers stated that 'Harrow Children's Centres are a vital resource within the community ... and should not close'.

It is within this context that a staff consultation is now underway, looking at achieving 'a sustainable future for our Children's Centres' by introducing a hub and spoke operating model.

This should enable all 16 centres to remain open.

The detail of the model was also presented to the December

Cabinet.

It consists of four main hubs with linked delivery points.

- Four hub managers would be appointed (under the Council's Protocol for Managing Change) and some standardised job descriptions would be developed to increase flexibility and movement across the network.
- The hubs arrangement takes into account geographical location, size and usage of the existing centres and the nature of services currently provided.
- Duplication would be reduced and centres would open as and when needed - either longer or shorter hours than may currently be the case.

In addition to the financial and political imperatives, we have seen in recent years significant demographic changes locally and a raising of the standards necessary to meet Ofsted expectations of 'good' or 'outstanding' for the Centres.

The proposed model would allow us to target staff and resources at those areas where they are most needed and focus on those children, families and young people in the most vulnerable groups. This in turn will lead to improved performance and outcomes, particularly at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

In short, the proposal agreed by Cabinet, with any additions arising from the staff /union consultation (closing on Friday 24 February), will:

- Achieve the required savings.
- Sustain the 16 delivery sites.
- Provide a more effective and efficient model of service delivery.
- Ensure users get more of what they want.

Finally, as part of the new Quality Assurance, Commissioning and Schools Division within Children's Services, there will be an opportunity to increase the frequency of user monitoring and engagement. This will enable us to gauge the impact of the changes and further adapt as the local or national environment requires.

6.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Bill Stephenson (Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation)

Question: “Harrow has the highest average number of people per house in the whole of London. This is because we have solid communities with families sharing homes. Families need houses not flats. In the last 12 months the Council has approved over 400 flats but only just over 100 houses. The Council's own Annual Monitoring Report boasts that they have built “well above the target densities” - cramming people into densely built flats. As Chairman of the Major Developments Panel, why is your administration undermining the structures of family homes and open spaces that underpin much of what is best about Harrow?”

Answer: The Annual Monitoring report 2010/11 provides a summary of the decisions of the Planning Service and activities of the development industry in Harrow over the year. The report shows that during the year, 462 flats and 115 houses were completed. Of these a total of 142 provided 3 bedrooms or above with only 30 units as studio apartments.

**(Answered by
Cllr Keith
Ferry)**

Harrow has a range of housing needs, including large homes for families and smaller flats and apartments for young people starting out on their own and older residents seeking to downsize from larger family homes. The Planning Service and Housing Departments together work to negotiate with developers to secure the best the mix of unit sizes and tenure, having regard to the site location, design considerations, affordability, the Boroughs overall housing needs and commercial viability.

Alongside the adopted and emerging planning policies and the Council's housing strategy, the market is also beginning to respond to the changing pattern of demand in the Borough. By way of an example, I point to the recent application by Berkeley Homes in Stanmore – to seek to increase the number of larger flats and to remove entirely and reduce by more than half the number of studio and one bedroom apartments still to be built whilst increasing the number of 2 and 3 bedroom flats by 31 and 45 respectively. These proposed changes were welcomed and supported by the Planning Committee at their meeting in January this year.

The report also records average density of development over each year from 2002/3 onwards. In this regard I am pleased that as a result of an increasingly robust dialogue with

developers and reflecting the aspirations of the community at large, the report shows a significant fall in average density from 613 Habitable Rooms per Hectare in 2009/10, to 404 in 2010/11 for schemes of 10 + units. This figure does reflect a more dispersed pattern of new housing built at appropriate densities across the Borough but illustrates how officers and the Administration, are trying to manage growth needs alongside safeguarding the special character of the Borough.

The Council is also, I hope, adopting tonight a Core Strategy, that provides not only a long term vision for the Borough, but a clear roadmap for development to meet the Boroughs housing needs to 2026. The Council has been able to achieve this whilst safeguarding the green belt, residential gardens and open spaces from development.

7.

Questioner: Councillor Paul Osborn

Asked of: Councillor Bill Stephenson (Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation)

Question: "In the last 12 months Harrow was the worst borough in West London in terms of job creation, and self employment dropped in the last 12 months to the lowest level since 2004. What is your administration doing to help this situation?"

Answer: Although there does appear to be a reduction in the levels of self employment in Harrow, this should be taken in context of the overall levels of Economically Active residents in the Borough and the levels of Employment of Economically Active residents - all of which are the highest of all the West London boroughs. In addition Harrow has the lowest levels of benefit claimants as a proportion of residents seeking work.

**(Answered by
Cllr Keith
Ferry)**

Based on figures from the Office for National Statistics, in Harrow, I am really pleased to be able to report, that the number of vacancies has almost doubled from 437 in December 2010 to 923 in December 2011

In comparison to the other West London Boroughs, the ratio between the number of Job Seekers Allowance claimants and unfilled vacancies, show that Harrow has the third lowest level in West London.

Unfortunately the figures from the Office for National Statistics do also show that the level of self employment amongst 16 to 64 year olds has decreased from a peak of 12.3% in 2006/7 to 9.6 in 2010/11.

Although the levels for self employment and job creation have dropped, it should be noted that Harrow:

- has the highest levels of economically active residents in West London;
- has the highest proportion of economically active people in employment in West London;
- and, has the lowest levels of benefit claimants as a proportion of residents seeking work in West London.

What is the Council doing to address employment levels?

Given that employment levels in Harrow are linked to the wider London economy, the Council has a target of maintaining the differential between the JSA claimant levels in Harrow and those of London.

The Council is working on a number of projects to meet this target including:

- helping residents find employment through the Xcite project and the Construction Training Initiative, with over 85 people into work this financial year;
- holding Xcite employment fairs, attended by local business and training providers and regularly attracting over 550 members of the public;
- adopting an Apprenticeship Policy and promoting the launch of the Apprenticeship scheme to promote employment and training opportunities within the Council and the Council supply chain;
- working with the Job Centre to promote the national Enterprise Clubs scheme;
- supporting Harrow in Business to help start up and grow existing businesses through the Transition Fund;
- supporting Reed's DWP ESF Families programme to help people with intergenerational unemployment;
- promoting Reed's Futures programme working with 16 - 19 year olds Not in Education Employment or Training.