

# CABINET MINUTES

## 10 APRIL 2014

**Chairman:** \* Councillor Susan Hall

**Councillors:**

* Kam Chana	* Janet Mote
* Tony Ferrari	* Paul Osborn
* Stephen Greek	* Simon Williams
* Manji Kara	* Stephen Wright
* Barry Macleod-Cullinane	

**Non Executive  
Non Voting  
Councillors:**

* Graham Henson	* David Perry
* Thaya Idaikkadar	

**In attendance:  
(Councillors)**

James Bond	Minute 817
Mano Dharmarajah	Minute 817
Keith Ferry	Minute 817
Mrs Vina Mithani	Minute 825
William Stoodley	Minute 817

\* Denotes Member present

**[Note 1:** The Leader of the Council welcomed all to the last Cabinet meeting for the Municipal Year 2013/14. The Leader stated that the agenda would be taken in the order set out and that whilst 15 minutes were allowed for the asking and answering of public and Councillor questions, she was minded to allow all questions to be answered at the meeting. She added that the audio recording of the public and Councillor questions and answers would be placed on the Council's website within 5 clear working days of the meeting. Individual requests for transcripts would be considered on a case by case basis.]

[**Note 2:** In light of a pecuniary interest declared by the Leader in relation to item 15 'Business Rates – Retail Relief' (Minute 813 refers), the meeting, in respect of this item, was chaired by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane.]

## **Welcome**

The Leader of the Council welcomed Chris Spencer, Interim Corporate Director of Children and Families, to his first Cabinet meeting. She also welcomed Dr Andrew Howe, Director of Public Health, to Cabinet.

### **812. Apologies for Absence**

None received.

### **813. Declarations of Interest**

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

#### Agenda item 4 – Petitions

Upon submission of a petition relating to Vaughan Road, Councillor Paul Osborn declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he lived on that road. He remained in the room to listen to the terms of reference of the petition and whilst the matter was referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment.

#### Agenda Item 15 – Business Rates – Retail Relief

Councillor Susan Hall declared a pecuniary interest in that she owned a business in the borough. She would leave the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Prior to the consideration of the item, Councillor Chris Mote declared pecuniary interest in that he owned a business in the borough. He left the room and did not listen to the debate on this item. Councillor Janet Mote also declared an interest in that her husband, Councillor Chris Mote, had a business interest in the borough. She left the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

### **814. Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2014 be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

### **815. Petitions**

#### (1) Meadow Road, Pinner - Petition

Brian Cox, a resident of Meadow Road, presented a petition signed by 84 residents with the following terms of reference: "Complaint relating to neglect of pavements, road surfaces and trees."

The petition included two letters, one outlining the background and action required and the other to residents setting out details of why the petition had been organised.

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment for consideration.

(2) Twyford Road – Petition

Councillor Kairul Marikar presented a petition signed by 30 residents with the following terms of reference:

“We, the undersigned, residents of Twyford Road urge Harrow Council to resurface Twyford Road and to place street curbs around the grass verges on the road to prevent people driving over them. The reasons why we are calling for action is because of the following:

- Vehicles are cutting corners and driving over the grass verges along the street; street curbs should put in to prevent vehicles from doing this;
- The roads are in a poor state of repair and urgently need to be resurfaced;
- No work has been done on the road for a long time, and urgent repairs are necessary.

We urge Harrow Council to take the appropriate action.”

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment.

(3) Petition to resurface both pavements along Vaughan Road

Councillor Kairul Marikar presented a petition signed by 46 residents with the following terms of reference:

“We, the undersigned residents urge Harrow Council to resurface the side of the pavement along Vaughan Road that has been neglected. Our reasons for supporting this petition are as follows:

- The Council has only resurfaced one side of the pavement along Vaughan Road;
- This means one side of Vaughan Road is still a hassle to use for those in wheelchair, or who use a pram for their young children;

- It is unfair that only one side of the pavement was resurfaced; all residents of a road should benefit from resurfacing works along their road.”

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment.

(4) Petition to resurface both pavements along Tintern Way

Councillor Kairul Marikar presented a petition signed by 33 residents with the following terms of reference:

“We, the undersigned residents, urge Harrow Council to resurface the pavement along Tintern Way that has been neglected. Our reasons for supporting this petition are as follows:

- The pavement along Tintern Way is in a very bad state and has deteriorated over many years;
- There has been no improvement works to the pavement for a long time;
- It is uneven, with large areas of cracks, which makes it inconvenient to use, particularly for those in a wheelchair or with young children;
- The state of the pavement negatively impacts on the surrounding area.”

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment.

(5) Petition against the possible introduction of yellow lines/CPZ on Rayners Lane Estate under Welbeck Road Area Parking Review Consultation

Mr Emmanuel Opaleke, Chairperson of the Rayners Lane Estate Tenants’ and Residents’ Association, presented a petition signed by 265 people with the following terms of reference:

“I am aware of the consultation on Welbeck Road Area Parking review and do not think I have problems with Parking big enough to merit introduction of a CPZ in my area. I am likely to suffer a disadvantage with any introduction of CPZ other yellow lines for safety reasons and access purposes.”

The petition was accompanied by a letter making reference to the consultation.

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment for consideration.

(6) Tenby Road and Kamrans Place – Petition

Councillor Margaret Davine presented a petition signed by 58 residents with the following terms of reference:

“To reduce speeding and ensure road safety we are requesting that speed humps are continued down the cul-de-sac end of Tenby Road.”

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment for consideration.

(7) Petition – Resurfacing of Shrewsbury Avenue

Councillor Krishna James presented a petition signed by 67 residents with the following terms of reference:

“We, the undersigned residents, of Kenton East Ward, request that Harrow Council resurfaces the road in Shrewsbury Avenue, as it has not been done since the 1970s and the tarmac is in a very poor state.”

**RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment for consideration.

(8) Grimtsyke Car Park – Petition

Councillor Stanley Sheinwald presented a petition signed by 2800 residents with the following terms of reference:

“We, the undersigned, want the Harrow Council to install 20 minute free parking in the Grimtsyke Car Park as business is suffering since the meters were installed.”

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the petition be received and referred to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment for consideration;
- (2) in accordance with the Petition Scheme, the petition, once validated, be considered/debated by full Council.

## 816. Public Questions

To note that four public questions had been received and, in the absence of three questioners, written responses were sent to them and these have been placed on the Council’s website. One questioner was present at the meeting

and his question was responded to. In line with the statement made by the Leader of the Council (see Note 1 above), the recording had been placed on the website.

#### **817. Councillor Questions**

To note that nine Councillor questions had been received and responded to. In line with the statement made by the Leader of the Council (see Note 1 above), the recording had been placed on the website.

#### **818. Key Decision Schedule - April to June 2014**

The Leader of the Council reported that two additional key decision items had been added to the April 2014 Cabinet agenda since the April 2014 Key Decision Schedule (KDS) was published. These items were:

Item 11 – Whitchurch Playing Fields – Free School;

Item 17(a) – Appointment of Contractor to deliver works arising from a successful bid to Department of Energy and Climate Change under the Green Deal Communities Fund.

**RESOLVED:** To note the contents of the Key Decision Schedule for the period April to June 2014.

#### **819. Progress on Scrutiny Projects**

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

#### **RESOLVED ITEMS**

#### **820. Review of Climate Change and Delivering Warmer Homes Strategies**

Cabinet received a reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18 March 2014, together with a report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise which reviewed the progress of the existing climate change strategy and set out proposals to improve delivery.

**RESOLVED:** That the reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted and the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise be requested to submit a report to the June 2014 Cabinet meeting responding to the comments and suggestions made therein.

**Reason for Decision:** To respond appropriately to the reference.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** None.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

*[Call-in does not apply].*

## **821. Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery**

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools introduced the report, which reported on the statutory proposals to expand permanently Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery which had been published on 13 February 2014 for a four week representation period. This report provided information and recommendations to enable Cabinet to determine the statutory proposals.

The Portfolio Holder added that the Council had submitted bids to the government's Targeted Basic Need Programme (TBNP) for the expansion of a number of primary schools. One of the successful bids was the expansion of St Anselm's Catholic Primary School, a voluntary aided school. However, due to various challenges, it had not been possible to deliver on this project and the government had agreed that the funding be transferred to Elmgrove Primary School and that it would provide the same number of school places as the original application. She commended the report to Cabinet and to approve the statutory proposals.

**RESOLVED:** That the statutory proposals to expand permanently Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery by one form of entry (30 pupils) from 1 September 2015 be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** To enable the Local Authority to fulfil its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places in its area.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

## **822. School Expansion Programme**

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools introduced the report, which updated Cabinet on the implementation of the school expansion programme and requested authority to determine the terms of any lease back of land required by the Council as part of the academy conversion process.

The Portfolio Holder identified the key aspects of the report, including the position in relation to Whitefriars Community School, Harrow Teacher's Centre, Avanti House primary and secondary phases and Aylward Primary School details of which were set out in the report. She added that, in relation to Special Educational Needs (SEN), statutory proposals would be published after Easter 2014 in relation to the proposed additional SEN provision at Earlsmead Primary School and West Lodge Primary School had been developed and agreed with the schools. Also, the government had announced that, from September 2014, all state funded school children in Reception Year 1 and Year 2 would receive free school lunch.

A non-voting non-Executive Cabinet Member asked about the scope of the leasing arrangements and how the school meals programme would be delivered. In response, the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise

explained that, in October 2012, officers had been delegated authority to agree the terms of leases. However, no authority had been given in relation to the terms of any lease back arrangements, particularly in relation to a proportion of the site that should not be transferred, for example the Children's Centres. The recommendation in the report allowed for this omission. The Portfolio Holder stated that, in relation to the school meals, £600,000 was available for use. A review of the current practice in each school was underway and officers would explore the various options available. Officers were looking at packed or cold lunches as an option, which the DfE appeared to be satisfied with at this time.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the update report on the implementation of the School Expansion Programme be noted;
- (2) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and Major Contracts, to determine the terms of any lease back of land required by the Council as part of the academy conversion process, to include Children's Centres, on the best possible terms available.

**Reason for Decision:** To enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places in its area and secure lease back of land required by the Council as part of the academy conversion process.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

### **823. Whitchurch Playing Fields - Free School**

Cabinet received a joint report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise and the Interim Corporate Director of Children and Families, which set out property proposals for the establishment of a free school at Whitchurch Playing Fields.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the report and was proud of the work undertaken to provide the UK's first state funded Hindu secondary school. She asked that a letter from Thomas Eggar LLP, acting on behalf of the Whitchurch Fields Consortium, be circulated to Cabinet Members and proceeded to read out the contents of the letter. She asked the Director of Legal and Governance Services for advice on the contents of the letter.

The Director of Legal and Governance Services advised and reassured Cabinet that whilst the letter contained an implication that the solicitors for the Whitchurch Consortium might apply for an injunction to stop the proceeding, there was nothing in the letter, in his considered opinion, which would entitle a court to grant an injunction. He added that the letter was effectively saying that "we want an injunction while the solicitors find out what was going on". The Director stated that no court would grant an injunction on that basis. He

advised Cabinet that there were no grounds on the basis of the letter for it to not go ahead and make a decision that evening.

A Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Member referred to the previous decision of Cabinet on 22 November 2011 and enquired if the procedures and processes were correct to allow Cabinet to make a different decision in respect of the Whitchurch Playing Fields. He was of the view that Cabinet had to rescind its previous decision. He questioned if the school and the site were right for each other, and clarified that his group were not opposed to the principle of a Hindu school in the borough. He asked about the admission policy and was informed that, as with the existing Avanti school, Avanti House did not enforce a faith-based admissions policy.

In response, the Leader of the Council stated that no agreements had been concluded with the Whitchurch Consortium. The Consortium's project had been put on hold when an application was received by the Council to register the Whitchurch Playing Fields as a Town and Village Green. This application was subsequently refused. If the Council wanted to progress the Whitchurch Consortium project, an application to the Secretary of State would be required for a lease because of the established school use as the Public Inquiry into the Town and Village Green application had established that there was an element of regular school use.

The Leader stated that the site in question had good transport links, it would provide much needed school places in Harrow and the residents of Harrow had welcomed the proposal. She was of the view that it was the right school in the right place.

The same Non-Voting Non-Executive Member referred to the lack of consultation and referred to the issue of consultation raised by the administration when the proposals from the Whitchurch Consortium had been considered. He referred to the planning regulations for new developments and the traffic impact on the area and whether these had been considered. The Leader of the Council replied that full consultation would take place at the planning application stage and mentioned that the feasibility study had considered the issue of drainage and flood risk. The Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise informed Cabinet that the Council had been told by the Education Funding Agency that 3 of the 5 aspects of the feasibility study had been completed and they had subsequently confirmed formally that they wished to acquire the site.

In response to further questions from the same Member about the legality of the process and the reference in the report to the potential adverse impact for race and faith, the Leader of the Council said that the borough had other religious schools and it was essential that choice was provided.

Another Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Member was concerned about the manner in which the proposal had been handled and the lack of consultation, which had been a major issue for the administration when the Whitchurch Consortium bid had been considered. He asked how the Olympic legacy fitted in with the proposed use of the site and the revised appendix 2 in

respect of the Community Use Agreement. The Leader of the Council responded as follows:

- increased community use was key in respect of the proposal. Both Stanburn and Whitchurch schools were in the vicinity of the site in question and would provide additional community use facilities;
- the issue of community use was a moveable feast. She wanted the best possible outcome whilst ensuring that the fields were properly maintained. It was essential that there was optimum space for use by children;
- her administration had made huge achievements in a short space of time and she referred to this Hindu school proposal and the drive for a cleaner and safer borough as examples.

The same Non-Voting Non-Executive Member referred to the last statement and stated that achievements can be made whilst in power and in opposition. Whilst he appreciated that decisions would change, the administration had not been upfront with regard to the proposal as mentioned by the public questioner earlier. He asked if the proposal before Cabinet was concrete, as his group would wish to assist, particularly with regard to the Community Use Agreement.

The Leader and the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise stated that the 3 parties concerned were in agreement with the Community Use Agreement but that it did not preclude other uses. There was a need for it to be seen as a community facility.

The same Non-Voting Non-Executive Member referred to the huge gains made in the provision for sport for the disabled when in power and it was important that this area continued to be championed. He offered to help with a view to maximising the opportunity given in the context of the proposal. It was essential that the Council did not sell itself short. He referred to the London Youth Games and those that would represent Harrow in the games. He considered this a key area in which young people could become interested in sport and was disappointed that this had not been prioritised. It was also essential that there was free provision.

The Leader of the Council said that she had identified funding to improve sports pavilions, which would be of benefit to sports clubs. She was currently working with a boxing club on finding them a new home, for example. She had been exploring the provision of disabled access across all sporting venues and considered such provision to be an integral part of all sports clubs. She agreed that free provision of community facilities for all was an important ingredient.

The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources was disappointed with the lack of enthusiasm of other political groups in what was a remarkable achievement. A Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Member asked for this statement to be retracted and that his group did not object to

the proposal and was supportive of the provision for the young and disabled. The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources stated that at no stage had any of the other political groups congratulated the Council on obtaining funding for the proposal.

The Deputy Leader applauded the proposal and referred to the provision of sporting facility to be provided, which would provide a magnet for other users. The Whitchurch Playing Fields currently lacked suitable sporting facilities and the proposal would ensure better facilities for community use. He congratulated the Leader of the Council and those involved for an excellent proposal.

The same Non-Executive Non-Voting Cabinet Member stated that at no time had his group been negative about the proposal. They considered it to be a fantastic achievement and had welcomed the proposal. Their main concern was the reduction of community use, and acknowledged that the consultation and the planning processes would be conducted in due course.

Another Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Member acknowledged that the Council was at the beginning of a very challenging process. He asked how the proposal would meet with the Harrow Core Strategy. In response, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Regeneration stated that the planning process would be rigorous and that the Planning Committee was responsible for adherence to the Core Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools welcomed this exciting proposal.

The Leader of the Council stated that she wanted to ensure that the proposal provided the best outcomes for the residents.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Environment and Enterprise, following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, to:
  - a) enter into an agreement for lease with a Free School, which is most likely to be Avanti Schools Trust, subject to the grant of planning consent for the creation of a Free School;
  - b) agree the terms of a 125 year lease at a peppercorn rent, subject to the construction of the school and ancillary works;
  - c) negotiate and agree the terms of a Community Use Agreement to form part of the lease.

**Reason for Decision:** To enable the local authority to fulfil its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places in its area and enter into the necessary lease agreement for the land.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

**824. Appointment of Contractors to the Framework to Deliver Adaptations to all Tenures**

The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing introduced the report, which described the outcome of the tender process to select contractors to the framework for the provision of Disabled Adaptations Services.

The Portfolio Holder responded to questions from Non-Voting Non-Executive Members in relation to the delay in bringing this matter to Cabinet as the commencement of the Framework was 1 May 2014, why there was a mark-up on goods and materials and the advertising methods used locally, including how many bidders were local contractors. The Portfolio Holder explained that a robust tendering process had been essential before the matter could be presented to Cabinet but that it was not for the Council to determine the tenders submitted. He agreed to provide a written response on the advertising process and the number of local contractors.

Following consideration of the related confidential appendix, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the appointment of the following contractors to the Framework Agreement be approved:
  - a. Amwell Construction Ltd
  - b. B & H Builders
  - c. C.E.Flynn Builders
  - d. Cameron Makenzie
  - e. David Martin Carpentry Contractors
  - f. Effectable Construction Services Limited
  - g. Expert Property Solutions
  - h. Euro Contracts (London) Ltd
  - i. F G Mileham Building Contractors Ltd
  - j. Field Brothers (Luton) Ltd
  - k. G & M Builders
  - l. H Carolan Construction
  - m. H D Property Services Limited
  - n. Jeffery & Wilkes Building Contractors Ltd
  - o. Mark Brown Builders
  - p. Mullin & Sons Ltd
  - q. R & R Builders
  - r. Terry and Stephens;
  
- (2) the commencement of the Framework from 1 May 2014 for a period of four years (3 years with the option to extend for a further one year subject to performance review and Council agreement) for the provision of Disabled Adaptations be agreed.

**Reason for Decision:** For several years the Council has been using an approved list of mostly small to medium sized local contractors to deliver this service. A formal tendering process was undertaken to formalise arrangements that would facilitate mini-competition amongst contractors who have already been through a competitive process.

In compliance with the Council's Standing Orders an open tendering procedure has been followed and based on the results a decision has been made to award the contracts to the most economically advantageous tenders.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** Using a large main contractor but it was decided that due to the vulnerability of the client base, smaller specialised contractors would be able to give a more personal service. It was also recognised that the procurement fitted in well with the "shop local" ideal. Past experience had shown that when Kier delivered the disabled adaptations for Council tenants, costs were more than double.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

## **825. Response to NHS Health Checks Scrutiny Review**

Cabinet received a report of the Director of Public Health, which set out the response of Public Health to the winter 2013 Scrutiny review of the NHS Health Checks programme in Harrow and Barnet.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the Chairman of the Scrutiny Review Group to the meeting to address Cabinet and present the findings of the Review Group.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Review Group reported that, in April 2013, the Centre for Public Scrutiny launched an NHS Health Checks programme. Between September and December 2013, the Centre for Public Scrutiny was commissioned by Barnet and Harrow Councils to undertake a review of the NHS health checks services, as it was felt that the take up of health checks in Harrow and Barnet was poor. Due to their joint public health function, a number of areas which could benefit were identified. It was suggested that the process of health checks needed to be streamlined in order to make the experience more attractive. It was essential that various ailments were picked up earlier and health checks were an essential part of this process. As a result, it was felt that health checks should be offered to people in the 40-70 years age range. The Chairman of the Scrutiny review Group concluded that the findings and recommendations were integral and it was essential that the service received optimal resources.

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing thanked the Scrutiny review Group for their report. He acknowledged that there were different ways of providing services and recognised the importance of health checks. He suggested that local football clubs could be one avenue where the profile of health checks could be raised. It was important to review the manner in which the Councils provided health checks. He was confident that

the Improvement Plan would address the various issues. He encouraged all to take up a health check, particularly men.

In response to questions from various Cabinet Members about the drop in the number of people eligible to receive health checks, whether or not the budget was sustainable and how hard to reach group would be targeted, the Portfolio Holder explained that people were going to different places for their health checks, there was an underspend on the money available for health checks and early health checks could also save money spent by the hospitals. There was also a gender issue. Many obstacles prevented people from going for health checks and streamlining was therefore essential. Express health checks were required.

The Leader of the Council thanked Members for their contributions on this important issue.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Public Health response to the Scrutiny Review recommendations be noted;
- (2) the progress on recommendations at appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (3) Cabinet supports the Scrutiny Review in its recommendations to Public Health England;
- (4) Cabinet agrees to receive updates from the Centre for Public Scrutiny on progress against the recommendations to Public Health England.

**Reason for Decision:** To enable Public Health to progress action against the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Review, as set out in the Director of Public Health's response in appendix 1.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

## **826. Affordable Housing Programme Update**

The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing introduced the information report, which provided an update on the Affordable Housing Programme referred to as "Homes for Harrow". The Portfolio Holder informed Cabinet that between 53 and 95 sites had been identified for the Programme following which feasibility studies and site visits were conducted. There was also a desire to bring back garage sites into use and it was intended to complete the feasibility work by mid-April 2014. Simultaneously, the Council was carrying out an assessment to develop or regenerate its estates and 9 sites had been identified. He paid tribute to his immediate predecessor for removing the log jam.

The Portfolio Holder identified the next steps. Work was needed to ensure that the financing was in place, how the estates were decamped to allow them to be regenerated, including the management of any decamping. Additionally, the potential for building new homes needed to be explored.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Portfolio Holder and his immediate predecessor for the achievement in the last 9 months. The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, in his capacity as Harrow on the Hill Ward Councillor, thanked the Members concerned for earmarking Grange Farm estate for regeneration, as the homes were damp and cold and suffered from sewage drainage problems.

In response to a question from a Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Member, on the consultation process with leaseholders, the Portfolio Holder reported that events and drop-in sessions had been held. He added that there was a need to engage with all parties concerned, including those living in the surrounding estate who would suffer disruption. All leaseholders had been informed of the proposals by way of a letter.

**RESOLVED:** That the report and the ongoing commitment to progress the Affordable Homes Programme approved by Cabinet on 20 June 2013 be noted, including the continuation of the design feasibility and financial modelling work to take forward the infill and regeneration proposals.

**Reason for Decision:** To provide a progress update on the delivery of key housing objectives.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

*[Call-in does not apply].*

## **827. Business Rates - Retail Relief**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report, which set out the new policy for Business Rates Retail Relief following the announcement by the government, in their Autumn Statement on 5 December 2013, to introduce support for certain categories of retailers.

The Portfolio Holder cited the relevant legislation that had brought about the proposal and how it would support local shopping centres. He added that the report set out the Council's mechanism for transferring the money to local retail businesses. He responded to a question from a Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Member and confirmed that there was no impact on the Council's budget as all the money was provided by the government.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) Business Rates Retail Relief be awarded for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16 only, under the powers of section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended by the Localism Act 2011;
- (2) the Business Rates Retail Relief Policy be adopted for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16 only.

**Reason for Decision:** To allow the Council to support its local retail businesses to adapt to the changing environment through the award of this relief over the years 2014/15 and 2015/16. Actual costs to the Local Authority of any relief that falls within the criteria stated within the Business Rates Retail Relief Guidance (as issued by central government in January 2014) would be reimbursed through the business rates retention scheme.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

## **828. Election Print Procurement**

The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources introduced the report, which sought authority for the Council to enter into a framework agreement jointly with the London Boroughs of Barnet and Hounslow for the provision of Electoral Services printing and postage requirements for a period of 5 years.

**RESOLVED:** That authority be delegated to the Director of Legal and Governance Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources, to enter into a 5 year framework agreement jointly with the London Boroughs of Barnet and Hounslow for the provision of all Electoral Services' printing and posting with the successful bidder following the tender process currently in progress.

**Reason for Decision:** To enter into a framework agreement jointly with the London Boroughs of Barnet and Hounslow to:

- allow the Council to have a clear and robust arrangement for requesting, obtaining and awarding print and postage contracts for appropriate electoral services activities;
- allow the Council to have a solution which efficiently supported and facilitated compliant electoral processes and the management and delivery of future elections and other electoral activities within the borough;
- provide the Council the 'best in class' levels of value-for-money, quality assurance, resilience and supplier service for its electoral print and postage requirements.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

**829. Appointment of a contractor to deliver works arising from a successful bid to Department of Energy and Climate Change under the Green Deal Communities Fund**

The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing introduced the report, which described the outcome of a bid for funding to the Department of Energy and Climate Change under the Green deal Communities Fund, including the conditions of that grant funding. The report also set out the requirement to urgently procure a contractor to enable the Council to deliver those requirements within a short timescale.

The Portfolio Holder applauded the award of £1,457,100 which would help deliver a number of initiatives to provide warmer homes to residents in Harrow's private housing stock and to help combat fuel poverty. He thanked the Head of Asset Management for her work in taking this initiative forward and commended the report to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Community, Health and Wellbeing, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing, to award a contract to deliver energy efficiency works utilising grant funding awarded to Harrow by the Green Deal Communities Fund;
- (1) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Community, Health and Wellbeing, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing, to authorise expenditure from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to include energy efficiency works to a number of Council owned houses in the contract up to a maximum value of £800,000.

**Reason for Decision:** In January 2014 the responsibility for the delivery of the Climate Change strategy transferred from Environment and Enterprise to Housing. On 28 March 2014 the Council was awarded £1,457,100 grant funding from the Green Deal Communities Fund to deliver principally solid wall insulation in private homes. To utilise the grant funding by March 2015 and to allow the work to be completed during good weather. To award the contract as soon as possible to allow the Council to maximise the opportunity provided by the Summer months to carry out the works and deliver warmer homes to as many Harrow residents as possible.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:** As set out in the report.

**Conflict of Interest relating to the matter declared by Cabinet Member / Dispensation Granted:** None.

### **830. Vote of Thanks**

The Leader of the Labour Group thanked officers for their hard work over the 4-year period.

The Leader of the Council thanked Cabinet Members for their contributions at Cabinet meetings and their support and assistance in making valuable changes for the benefit of the borough in the last six months. The Leader also thanked the Non-Voting Non-Executive Cabinet Members for their participation and in providing checks and balances in the decision-making process. She applauded that, as a result of the recent changes made to the Constitution, future Cabinet meetings would allow a checks and balances process to continue by allowing Opposition Member(s) to serve on Cabinet.

The Leader also thanked officers for their support. She thanked the Head of Paid Service for stepping into the breach following the retirement of the Chief Executive. She also thanked the Director of Legal Services and the clerk for the smooth running of Cabinet. Finally, she thanked the political assistants who were present at the meeting and the Head of Communications.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.32 pm, closed at 8.35 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR SUSAN HALL  
Chairman