

CABINET

13 FEBRUARY 2020

Record of decisions taken at the meeting held on Thursday 13 February 2020.

Present:

Chair: * Councillor Graham Henson

Councillors: * Sue Anderson * Varsha Parmar
* Simon Brown * Christine Robson
* Keith Ferry * Krishna Suresh
† Phillip O'Dell * Adam Swersky

Non-Executive Cabinet Member: * Antonio Weiss

Non-Executive Voluntary Sector Representative: * John Higgins

In attendance: Richard Almond Minute 287
Marilyn Ashton
Paul Osborn
Anjana Patel

* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

283. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Phillip O'Dell.

284. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Item 9 – Regeneration Programme Update – Building a Better Harrow

During the course of the meeting, Councillor Paul Osborn, who was not a member of the Cabinet, declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he lived near Vaughan Road Car Park. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

Agenda Item 12 – Strategic Review of Education IT System

During the course of the meeting, Councillor Adam Swersky declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he had a friend who managed a competitor education IT provider. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

285. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that the no petitions had been received.

286. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that one public question had been received and responded to and the audio recording had been placed on the website.

287. Councillor Questions

RESOLVED: The Councillor questions were responded to and the audio recording placed on the Council's website.

288. Key Decision Schedule February - April 2020

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the Key Decision Schedule for the period February – April 2020.

289. Progress on Scrutiny Projects

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

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

290. Final Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2022/23

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That the capital programme, as detailed within Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

RESOLVED: That the top slicing 10% of all existing Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) balances and future receipts across the borough for the management and delivery of projects funded by NCIL (paragraphs 22 to 24 of the report), be approved.

Reason for Recommendation: To enable the Council to have an approved Capital Programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23.

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 to the decision above as it was reserved to full Council.]

291. Final Revenue Budget 2020/21 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-21 - 2022-23

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That

- (1) the 2020/21 budget be approved, being mindful of the results of the various consultations and equality impact assessments, to enable the Council Tax for 2020/21 to be set (Appendix 2 of the report refers);
- (2) the Model Council Tax Resolution 2020/21 be approved, as set out at Appendix 11 to the report;
- (3) in accordance with Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Chief Executive be instructed to place a notice in the local press of the amounts set under recommendation 2 above within a period of 21 days following the Council's decision;
- (4) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) be approved (Appendix 2);
- (5) the balanced budget position for 2020/21 and the budget gaps of £11.414m and £11.178m for 2021/22 and 2022/23 respectively (table 6 refers) be noted;
- (6) the intention to increase Council Tax by 1.99% in 2020/21 (paragraph 1.23 refers) be noted;
- (7) the proposal to increase Council Tax by a further 2.0% in 2020/21 in respect of the Adult Social Care Precept (paragraph 1.23), be noted;
- (8) the changes to schools funding for 2020/21 as set out in paragraphs 1.51 to 1.55 and Appendix 6 of the report be noted;
- (9) the assumed funding for the protection of social care in 2020/21 through the BCF as set out in paragraphs 1.59 to 1.62 of the report, be noted;
- (10) the draft Public Health budget for 2020/21 (Appendix 7) be approved;

- (11) the 2020/21 Members' Allowance Scheme be approved (Appendix 12);
- (12) the 2020/21 Annual Pay Policy Statement be approved (Appendix 13);
- (13) the Capital Receipts Flexibility Strategy be approved (Appendix 14).

[Call-in does not apply to the decision above as it was reserved to full Council.]

RESOLVED: That

- (14) with regard to the informal London Business Rates Pooling agree resolutions 15 and 16 below:
- (15) participation in the informal London Business Rates Pool be approved with effect from 1 April 2020 (to 31 March 2021) and authority be delegated to the Director of Finance, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, and the Monitoring Officer, to finalise the details for the informal pool;
- (16) the Director of Finance be authorised, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources and the Monitoring Officer to consider such consultative reports as the Lead Authority might circulate and to respond on behalf of the authority with regard to any recommendations.

Reason for Recommendations: To ensure that the Council sets a balanced budget for 2020/21.

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.

292. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2020-21 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2021-22 to 2022-23

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That

- (1) the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2020-21 be approved;
- (2) the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, as set out at Appendix 7 to the report, be approved.

[Call-in does not apply to the decision above as it was reserved to full Council.]

RESOLVED: That

- (3) the proposed average weekly rent for non-sheltered and sheltered accommodation of £116.24 and £96.71 for 2020-21 respectively as set out in paragraph 30, be approved;
- (4) proposed average weekly tenant service charge of £3.30 per week as set out in paragraph 37, be approved;
- (5) proposed average weekly rents for affordable rented and shared ownership accommodation of £202.21 and £210.45 for 2020-21 respectively as set out in paragraph 31 to 32, be approved;
- (6) an increase in the overall HRA Capital programme of £103,377,380 made up £19,400,000 planned investment and £83,977,380 Building Council Homes for Londoners (BCHfL) as set out in paragraphs 52 to 62, be approved;
- (7) proposed increases in Facilities and Community Halls charges of 5% and 4% respectively, and those for Garages and Water to remain unchanged as set out in appendices 3 to 6, be approved;
- (8) the following be noted:
 - reconfigured planned investment programme which was designed to reflect the revised focus and priorities as well as supporting increased flexibility in its delivery;
 - assumptions made in construction of the budget;
 - Risk Management Implications which required prudent financial reserves, volatility around borrowing costs and ongoing probability of reforms in the housing sector.

Reason for Decision: To recommend the HRA budget and capital programme for 2020-21 and the MTFs for 2021-22 to 2022-23.

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.

293. Annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement including Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21 and Capital Strategy for 2020/21

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That

- (1) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2020/21 be approved including:
 - Prudential Indicators for 2020/21
 - Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2020/21

- Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21
- (2) the draft Capital Strategy 2020/21, set out in Appendix H to the report, be approved.

Reason for Recommendation: To promote effective financial management and comply with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2003 and other relevant guidance.

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 as the decision is reserved to full Council.]

294. Draft Borough Plan 2020-2030 including the Draft Corporate Plan

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That

- (1) the draft Borough Plan 2020-2030 be approved to Council for consultation;
- (2) the draft priorities for the Council for the 2020/21 year be adopted and that all service planning activity be driven by the new set of Corporate Priorities;
- (3) responsibility be delegated back to Cabinet for approving the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan by June 2020, which would set out the Council's shorter term contribution and performance measures for delivery of the Corporate Plan (Borough Plan).

[Call-in does not apply as the decision is reserved to full Council.]

RESOLVED: That

- (4) the Director of Strategy and Partnerships, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make any minor amendments to the Plan as necessary prior to the matter going to Council;
- (5) following consultation, the final Borough Plan 2020-2030 be submitted to Council for approval in February 2021; and
- (6) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to comment on the Draft Borough Plan and consider how they want Scrutiny to be involved in the further development of the Borough Plan.

Reason for Recommendation: To update the Council's Policy Framework and set out the Council's longer term direction of travel for the borough,

establishing a vision which is owned by partners and jointly delivered, following a year of consultation.

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.

RESOLVED ITEMS

295. Disposal of small HRA sites via the GLA's Small Sites Small Builders Programme

Having considered the confidential appendix, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the properties detailed in the report be declared surplus to Council requirements;
- (2) the financial implications and estimated sale prices detailed in Appendix A to the report be noted;
- (3) the Divisional Director of Housing be authorised to enter into a revenue funding agreement with the Greater London Authority (GLA) in relation to the 5 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) sites to fund due diligence investigations prior to disposal;
- (4) the Divisional Director of Housing following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, be authorised to take all appropriate actions to dispose of the properties and the identified Council property assets using the GLA Small Sites Disposal Programme;
- (5) the Divisional Director of Housing be authorised, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and ward councillors, to identify further suitable HRA sites for disposal via this method if the sites identified in the officer report were found to be unsuitable.

Reason for Decision: To dispose of sites efficiently to achieve capital receipts and to enable the provision of good quality housing in Harrow.

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.

296. Regeneration Programme Update - Building a Better Harrow

RESOLVED: That the ongoing progress of both the delivery of the Council led Regeneration activities and public and private sector partners across the borough be noted.

Reason for Decision: To provide an update report to Members on the progress of all Regeneration activity being designed and delivered across the borough.

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 did not apply as the decision was to note the report].

297. Harrow Strategic Development Partner - progress update

Having considered the confidential appendix, it was

RESOLVED: That the progress of the procurement of a Strategic Development Partner pursuant to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 be noted.

Reason for Decision: To provide an update on progress with the implementation of the decision taken in May 2019 to procure a Strategic Development Partner to assist with the delivery of a number of the Council's core strategic development sites within the Regeneration programme, including the delivery of a new Civic Centre, and to approve funding to ensure high quality and expert advice was available to the Council for the rest of the procurement.

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 did not apply as the decision was to note the report].

298. Adult Social Care Charging Policy Review

RESOLVED: That the following proposals be approved from 1 April 2020:

- (1) Set Up Fees and Annual Administration Fees for self-funders for both Residential and Non-Residential care and support services be implemented to ensure full cost recovery in line with the Care Act;
- (2) Provisional Assessments for Non-Residential financial assessments be implemented so that contributions towards care would be charged from the start of the care and support services being provided;
- (3) a Minimum Assessed Charge of £5 per week for Non-Residential financial assessments be implemented to ensure cost effective use of resources;

- (4) Couples rate be used instead of Single person's rate for calculating MIG+25% for couples under retirement age (18 – 64) for Non-Residential financial assessments;
- (5) Single person rate be replaced with Couples rate for those aged 65 and above for Non-Residential financial assessments;
- (6) the 50% disregard on Private/Occupational Pensions & Annuities income be removed, so the full amount of the pension would be included within the financial assessment to bring Harrow in line with national (and local) charging policies for those receiving care and support;
- (7) the additional 25% allowance provided to those in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) Premium Rate and who received care and support in their own homes be removed; the policy would provide for an individual assessment of care needs through the disability related expenditure to ensure that vulnerable individuals were not disadvantaged.

Reason for Decision: To bring the policy and processes in line with the Care Act 2014 and other local authorities (both locally and nationally). The removal of additional disregard allowance would bring Harrow in line with neighbouring Boroughs.

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.

299. Strategic Review of Education IT System

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Corporate Director of People and the Corporate Director of Resources, following consultation with their respective Portfolio Holders, be authorised to approve the award of the contract by way of direct award to Capita One for 3 years, with an option to extend for a further year, and migrate to Capita One's cloud-based 'Software as a Service' offer via the Kent Commercial Services (KCS) Framework or other appropriate procurement route;
- (2) in the event that the preferred option set out in 1 above was not possible, the current arrangements continue with Capita One on site, and appropriate support for the system be included in the new Corporate IT model, which would be in place from October 2020.

Reason for Decision: To bring the Education IT system in line with the Corporate IT Strategy and enable a fuller review of the current and alternative systems, allowing for testing of the market in the medium term.

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.

300. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 2019/20 - Quarter 3 as at 31 December 2019

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revenue and capital forecast positions, as set out in paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of the report, be noted.
- (2) the proposed addition to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 3.51 of the report, be approved;
- (3) progress on the Council's Trading Company, as detailed in Appendix 6 to the report be noted.

Reason for Decision: To report the 2019/20 forecast financial position as at Quarter 2 (30 September 2019); to update Cabinet on the progress of the 2019/20 Revenue budget and Capital Programme; and to seek approval for an adjustment to the Capital Programme which required Cabinet approval in accordance with the Authority's Financial Regulations.

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.

301. Risk Based Verification in Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support

Having considered the confidential appendix, it was

RESOLVED: That the removal of Risk Based Verification from the administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support with effect from 1 April 2020 be agreed.

Reason for Decision: To inform Cabinet of the reduction in the number of new claims for Housing Benefit as a result of the rollout of Universal Credit and the level of complexity of a high proportion of residual claims which, alongside the implementation of a revised Council Tax Support scheme that used Universal Credit notification as a claim for Council Tax Support for the working age had made the Risk Based Verification process less effective in the administration of Housing Benefit. To request Cabinet's approval to remove the use of RBV with effect from 1 April 2020 Furthermore, the implementation of a revised Council Tax Support scheme that uses the Universal Credit notification as a claim for Council Tax Support for the working age and allows validation of most working age claims from Universal Credit, also nullifies the need for using Risk Based Verification for Council Tax Support assessments

The Department of Work and Pensions required any changes to Risk Based Verification to be made at the start of the financial year.

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.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 7.50 pm).

Proper Officer

Publication of decisions:	14 February 2020
Deadline for Call-in:	5.00 pm on 21 February 2020 (Please note that Call-in does not apply to all decisions). To call-in a decision please contact: Daksha Ghelani on 020 8424 1881, email daksha.ghelani@harrow.gov.uk
Decisions may be implemented if not Called-in on:	22 February 2020