

Cabinet

Minutes

8 December 2022

Record of decisions taken at the meeting held on Thursday 8 December 2022.

Present:

Chair: Councillor Paul Osborn

Councillors: David Ashton
Marilyn Ashton
Stephen Greek
Hitesh Karia
Jean Lammiman
Mina Parmar
Anjana Patel
Pritesh Patel
Norman Stevenson

**Non-Executive
Cabinet
Member:** Thaya Idaikkadar
Ameet Jogia
Kanti Rabadia

**Non-Executive
Voluntary
Sector
Representative:** John Higgins

**In attendance
(Councillors):** Peymana Assad For Minute 69
Graham Henson For Minute 69
Eden Kulig For Minute 69
David Perry For Minute 65-79
Natasha Proctor For Minute 69

65. Apologies for Absence

None received.

66. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that no declarations of interest were received.

67. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

68. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions had been received.

69. Councillor Questions

RESOLVED: That the Councillor Questions were responded to and the recording would be available on the Council's website.

70. Key Decision Schedule January - February 2023

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the Key Decision Schedule for the period January to February 2023.

71. Progress on Scrutiny Projects

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

Resolved Items

72. Improving the Customer Experience

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Customer Experience Action Plan set out in Appendix A to the officer report, be approved; and
- (2) the progress to date be noted.

Reason for Decision: On 18 July 2022 Cabinet agreed the vision and principles to improve the customer experience of residents interacting with the Council. The action plan outlined how this priority would be achieved and brought together current activity with future proposed direction.

73. Afghan Resettlement Schemes

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the provision of integration support to qualifying Afghan individuals, referred by the Home Office to prevent homelessness, be agreed;
- (2) the Interim Assistant Director of Strategy and Partnerships, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Communities & Culture, be authorised to spend the grant received from the Government to deliver the Afghan Resettlement Schemes programme, which could exceed £3.6 million (based on supporting 30 households); and
- (3) the monthly discretionary voluntary payment to qualifying Afghan individuals in year 1 (£200), in year 2 (£100) and year 3 (£50) for additional financial support, be noted.

Reason for Decision: To ensure the Council was able to assist qualifying Afghan individuals to successfully resettle in the borough and provide integration support as part of the Afghan Resettlement Schemes programme.

74. Q2 Revenue & Capital Budget 2022-23

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revenue and capital outturn positions, as set out in paragraphs 1.2 to 1.4 in the officer report, be noted;
- (2) the proposed additions and amendments to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraphs 3.30 to 3.31 in the officer report, be agreed;
- (3) the Council's Trading Update, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the officer report, be noted; and
- (4) an extension of the contract between the Council and Sancroft Community Care Limited for a period of up to 2 years, be approved, noting that the extension would commence on 8 February 2023 and continue for a period no longer than up to 7 February 2025.

Reason for Decision: To report the 2022-23 financial forecast position at Q2 and to provide an update on trading company performance.

75. Draft Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2025/26

RESOLVED: That the new proposed draft capital proposals, as detailed within Appendix 1 to the officer report, be noted and the final version of the Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2025/26 be submitted to Cabinet in February 2023 for recommendation to Council.

Reason for Decision: To enable the Council to have an approved Capital Programme for 2023/24 to 2025/26.

76. Draft Revenue Budget 2023/24 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft budget for 2023/24 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2025/26 for general consultation set out in Appendices 1(A & B) and 2 to the officer report be approved, so that the budget could subsequently be considered following the consultation responses and the equality impact assessment (s) before referral to Council in February 2023;
- (2) the Autumn Settlement 2022 confirming broad plans for public spending for 2023/24 be noted, and that the draft budget be updated when the detail in the Indicative Financial Settlement, expected in the week commencing 19 December 2022 was announced followed by the Final Settlement no later than January 2023;
- (3) at draft budget stage, an estimated budget gap of £10.923m for 2023/24, £0m for 2024/25 and £10.964m for 2025/26 remained, be noted (noting the caveat regarding the Social Care Grant in Table 1 of the officer report);
- (4) the proposal to increase core Council Tax by 2.99% in 2023/24 and 2024/25 and then by 1.99% in 2025/26, as set out in Table 1 and paragraph 1.17 of the officer report, be noted;
- (5) the proposal to increase Adult Social Care Precept Council Tax by 2% in 2023/24 and then by 1% per annum in 2024/25 and 2025/26 in respect of the Adult Social Care Precept, as set out in Table 1 and paragraph 1.17 of the officer report, be noted;
- (6) the draft Public Health budget for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix 3 to the officer report, be agreed;
- (7) it be noted that no structured changes to the schools funding formula for 2023/24, as set out in Appendix 4 of the officer report, were proposed;
- (8) the assumed funding for the protection of social care 2023/24 through the Better Care Fund (BCF), be noted; and
- (9) the Director of Finance and Assurance, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources, be authorised to agree Harrow's 2023/24 contribution to the London Borough's Grant Scheme, noting that final approval would be sought from Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

Reason for Decision: To ensure that the Council published a draft budget for 2023/24 and a draft three-year MTF5 to 2025/26.

77. Calculation of Council Tax Base for 2023-2024

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the band D equivalent number of taxable properties calculated, as set out in the officer report and in accordance with the Government regulations, be noted;
- (2) the provision for uncollectable amounts of Council Tax for 2023-2024 at 2% producing an expected collection rate of 98%, be agreed;
- (3) a Council Tax Base for 2023-2024 of **89,085** Band D equivalent properties (being 90,903 x 98%) be agreed, allowing for payment in lieu of Ministry of Defence properties;
- (4) having considered the Council Tax Scheme (CTS), it be agreed that no change to the scheme was required and the continuation of the existing CTS scheme, as previously adopted by Full Council, for the 2023/24 financial year be agreed; and
- (5) a new one-off Cost of Living Support Grant to support working age council taxpayers in receipt of council tax support with their council tax bills for the 2023/24 financial year only be agreed, and that officers be authorised to administer awards under the provisions of Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012).

Reason for Decision: To fulfil the Council's statutory obligation to set the Council Tax Base for 2023-2024.

78. Estimated Surplus / (Deficit) on the Collection Fund 2022-2023

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the overall net estimated surplus of £5.582m on the Collection Fund as at 31 March 2023, including a surplus of £0.522m on Council Tax (Harrow share £0.421m) and a surplus of £5.060m on Business Rates (Harrow share £1.518m), be noted; and
- (2) Harrow's share of £1.939m be agreed and transferred to the General Fund in 2023-24.

Reason for Decision: To report to Cabinet on the Council's statutory obligation to estimate the surplus or (deficit) on the Collection Fund for the year end, which formed a major part of the annual budget review process.

79. Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2022/23

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review for 2022/23, be noted; and
- (2) the report be referred to the Governance, Audit, Risk Management and Standards Committee for review.

Reason for Decision: To keep Members informed of the Treasury Management activities and performance to date for 2022/23, promote effective financial management and comply with regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance, along with meeting the requirements of the Council’s Financial Regulations.

[Call-in did not apply to the resolutions above as it was a noting report].

[No conflict of interests were declared or dispensations granted in relation to the above items.]

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 8.12 pm).

Proper Officer

Publication of decisions:	9 December 2022
Deadline for Call-in:	5.00 pm on 16 December 2022 (Please note that Call-in does not apply to all decisions). To call-in a decision please contact: Mwimanji Chellah via email: mwimanji.chellah@harrow.gov.uk
Decisions may be implemented if not Called-in on:	17 December 2022