



Cabinet

Minutes

14 March 2024

Record of decisions taken at the meeting held on Thursday 14 March 2024.

Present:

Chair: Councillor Paul Osborn

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

Non-Executive Cabinet Member: Thaya Idaikkadar
Kanti Rabadia

Non-Executive Voluntary Sector Representatives: John Higgins

In attendance (Councillors): Peymana Assad For Minute 282
Natasha Proctor For Minute 282
Krishna Suresh For Minute 282
David Perry For Minute 278 - 289

Absent: Harrow Youth Parliament
Representative

278. Apologies for Absence

There were none.

279. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda Item 8 - Harrow Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2024-2037

Councillor Paul Osborn declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was appointed as one of London Councils' Board Members for London Sport. He would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

280. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions received at this meeting.

281. Public Questions

To note that three public questions had been received, 2 were responded to and one would be responded to in writing. The recording had been placed on the website.

282. Councillor Questions

RESOLVED: That four Councillor Questions were responded to and one question would be asked and answered at the next scheduled Cabinet meeting. The recording placed on the Council's website.

283. Key Decision Schedule March 2024 - May 2024

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the Key Decision Schedule for the period March - May 2024.

284. Progress on Scrutiny Projects

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

Resolved Items

285. Harrow Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2024-2037

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Harrow Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2024-2037, including the priority projects Action Plan outlined in Section 4 of the Strategy and the longer-term projects detailed in Appendix 2 of the Strategy, be adopted; and

- (2) the Corporate Director of Place be authorised, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Culture, to update the Strategy and Action Plan be updated in accordance with evidenced changes in demand and need, and update included in an annual review of the Action Plan and Strategy.

Reason for Decision: The Harrow Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy, 2024-2037 would provide the strategic direction to improve Harrow's sports infrastructure and inform future investment in facilities. The Strategy would help to achieve improved health and wellbeing outcomes for Harrow by providing better access to sports facilities and increasing residents' participation in sport and physical activity.

286. Extension to the Property Acquisition Programme

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Corporate Director Place be authorised, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources, to acquire up to 50 additional properties on the open market, to provide temporary accommodation, at a maximum cost of £20.62m, to include the purchase price, all costs associated with the acquisition and initial repairs and refurbishment;
- (2) the Corporate Director of Place be authorised, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources, to negotiate the purchase of properties at a reasonable price given the prevailing market conditions at the time of purchase, supported by a valuation report; and
- (3) the Director of Housing Services be authorised, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to determine the most efficient way to manage the property acquisition programme and invite and evaluate quotes and tenders and award contracts for any services, including repairs and maintenance contracts, necessary for the programme within the agreed budget.

Reason for Decision: To extend the Property Acquisition Programme to provide additional local, good quality temporary accommodation and deliver additional Bed and Breakfast cost avoidance in line with the approved budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

287. Serious Violence Duty Strategy

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Harrow's Serious Violence Strategy be approved so a final version of the Serious Violence Strategy could be published; and
- (2) It be agreed that each annual review falls under the annual consideration of the Community Safety Strategy.

Reason for Decision: This strategy was a statutory requirement in accordance with the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (the 2022 Act).

288. Procurement of Revenues and Benefits Resilience Support

Having noted the confidential report, it was

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the procurement of a resilience contract for Third Party Support for the Revenues and Housing Benefits Service for an initial term of five years with options to extend for a further three years and then a further one year, and an estimated procurement total value of £9.2m, including £2.25m of extra headroom to cater for potential additional work deriving from DWP initiatives, be authorised;
- (2) the draft tender documents be approved;
- (3) the Section 151 Officer be authorised, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources, to make any necessary changes to the tender documents following approval; and
- (4) the Section 151 Officer be authorised following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Human Resources, to award the new contract to the successful bidder.

Reason for Decision: The Revenues and Benefits Service was responsible for the annual collection of £210m Council Tax, £50m Business Rates, £13m Housing Benefit Overpayments, the payment of £90m Housing Benefit and £19m in Council Tax Support.

The Services concerned were of significant importance to the financing and delivery of London Borough of Harrow services and impact upon most households and businesses within the Borough. Customer perception of the Authority may often be influenced by customer experiences of those Services. Consequently, the processing timescale and accuracy of work performed for the services in scope, was likely to shape customer perception of the organisation and the extent to which the core value of “Putting Residents First” was achieved.

Activities for the Services in scope were currently performed by the London Borough of Harrow and Capita Business Services Ltd under a contractual agreement that would expire on 31 March 2025. Consequently, there was a need to determine and agree how the services concerned should be delivered beyond that time, to facilitate effective planning and resourcing of them.

Not procuring an external partner would potentially leave the London Borough of Harrow with limited capability to process work in relation to these services and which in turn would affect collections and payments and impact adversely on the Council’s budget, ability to pay and provide services and its residents and business rate payers.

Cabinet authorisation of the proposed procurement was required to comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

289. Strategic Performance Report Q3 2023-24

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Portfolio Holders continue to work with officers to achieve improvement against identified key challenges (Appendix 1 of the officer report refers); and
- (2) the report be noted.

Reason for Decision: To enable Cabinet to be informed of performances against key measures and to identify and assign corrective action where necessary.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.32 pm, closed at 7.53 pm).

Proper Officer

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| Publication of decisions: | 15 March 2024 |
| Deadline for Call-in: | 5.00 pm on 22 March 2024 (Please note that Call-in does not apply to all decisions). To call-in a decision please contact: Democratic Services via email: democratic.services@harrow.gov.uk |
| Decisions may be implemented if not Called-in on: | 23 March 2024 |