

CABINET

MINUTES

17 OCTOBER 2013

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)**

Mano Dharmarajah	Minute 698
Asad Omar	Minute 698
William Stoodley	Minute 698

* Denotes Member present

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

700. Key Decision - Capital Programme 2013/14 - Additional Schools Grant Funding

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report on the Targeted Basic Need Programme (TBNP) and the delivery of the school projects. The report identified the recommended procurement route in order to achieve value for money within timescales.

The Portfolio Holder added that due to the increase in the number of children of school age and the pressures in providing school places, various measures had been put in place including the bidding for grant funding from the

government. He acknowledged the history of cross-party working on this matter and was pleased that additional funding had been secured. The funding would help Harrow increase the number of school places available, expand the much needed Special Educational Needs provision and additional secondary school places. Further reports would be submitted to Cabinet on the progress made of this long term programme. He agreed that he would ensure that the Targeted Basic Need Programme funding, which had a tight deadline, was progressed swiftly and that it was not caught up in any procurement issues.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools highlighted the significance and the importance of education, as it opened up opportunities. She added that it was important to recognise that Harrow's children would be the adults of tomorrow and it was pleasing to note that the quality of education provided in Harrow schools was excellent.

In response to a question from a non-voting non-Executive Member in relation to the administration's commitment to the schools priority funding projects in Marlborough and Vaughan Schools, the Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools stated that she had met with the Headteacher of Marlborough School and would be meeting with the Headteacher of Vaughan School and was confident that both projects would proceed.

The Leader of the Council responded to a question on the challenges around the construction of additional buildings in schools and the options to decant children to other safe sites in the borough, such as the Civic Centre site. She explained that all options would be explored and that Ward Councillors would be made aware of the proposals.

A non-voting non-Executive Cabinet Member commented that the cross-party working had worked well and asked if similar measures would be put in place as part of the implementation of the Building Schools for the Future Programme. Both the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Finance stated that a cross-party governance structure would be put in place. In relation to a question on the lessons learnt from the proposals for Whitmore High School, and as a local authority managing large contracts which required sufficient staff resources, the Portfolio Holder for Finance stated that the Council was not adopting any different processes except that capitalisation would take place as part of the project.

The Leader of the Council added that previously checks and balances had not been put in place and the Director of Finance and Assurance would ensure that sufficient safeguarding measures were put in place. It was important that correct processes were followed for all projects. In response to a comment about differences of opinion from officers, the Leader stressed the importance of having these differing views, as they allowed Members to reach informed and prudent decisions.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That the 2013/14 Capital Programme be adjusted to include £9.583m Targeted Basic Need Programme (TBNP) funding and the 2014/15 and 2015/16 Programmes be agreed as part of the budget setting process.

Reason for Recommendation/Decision: To increase the amount in the Council's Capital Programme for 2013/14 and carry out the procurement process to deliver the projects within tight timescales.

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 recommendation to Council and where the item has been noted.]