

CABINET MINUTES

13 FEBRUARY 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 776
Krishna James	Minute 776
Jerry Miles	Minute 788
Asad Omar	Minute 776

* Denotes Member present

781. **Key Decision: Corporate Plan 2014/15**

The Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources was proud to present the Council's Corporate Plan for 2014/15, the first of an integrated series of papers that set out the Council's strategic direction, vision and priorities and how these would be funded. He outlined the Council's Vision 'a place to live and work and be proud of' and the three Priorities, 'Cleaner, Safer and Fairer', which would help deliver the Vision by targeting resources, as follows:

Cleaner: A borough where streets were cleaned regularly and parks and green spaces were places to enjoy;

Safer: A borough where residents felt safe to live and enjoy their lives. The administration would work with the police and other partners to make Harrow even safer;

Fairer: A borough where hard working residents could bring up their families knowing they would have fair access to opportunity.

The Portfolio Holder provided examples of measures that had already been put in place to ensure a Cleaner, Safer and Fairer Harrow, such as additional street sweeping in town centres, targeting of 'beds in sheds', an injection of extra investment in Children's Services in the context of the safeguarding role, avenues to reduce Council Tax, an increase in the personalisation of services, which had helped to empower users, and additional money to combat fraud.

The Portfolio Holder added that the administration had embarked on a journey that would deliver effective and efficient services, deal with issues left behind by a previous administration, such as the Council's IT Contract. Moreover, the performance management infrastructure required focus so that it was forward looking and a useful tool instead a 'box ticking' exercise. In response to questions about the provision of affordable housing, the Portfolio Holder stressed that the Corporate Plan was a high level document which contained key strategic directions and highlighted expected benefits to enable the Council to achieve its mission objective(s). He explained that the detail of a Cleaner, Safer and Fairer agenda would be provided in the Service Plans.

The Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing stated that in terms of the provision of affordable housing and the 35% target given by the Mayor of London, the administration would be looking to achieve the target, identify which groups were affected, and ensure that residents had every opportunity to acquire ownership of a home.

A non-voting non-Executive Cabinet Member was of the view that the administration had failed to address the IT issues in 2008, but this claim was refuted by the Portfolio Holder who stated that the administration had left the IT system in a stable position. It was the current IT contract entered into by the previous administration(s) that was causing problems, as it was running two years behind schedule and continued to be beset with everyday problems thereby stopping the Council to move forward. He also stressed the importance of not signing up to long term contracts, particularly in the run up to a local election.

A non-voting non-Executive Cabinet Member acknowledged the importance of the Corporate Plan but stated there was lack of substance, particularly for those residents in need of support. He cited the removal of the Hardship Fund as an example. He was of the view that the Corporate Plan supported personal projects and created more managers. The Portfolio Holder refuted this view by stating that the number of managers had been reduced and that the administration's Cleaner, Safer and Fairer agenda would protect front line services for the residents of Harrow.

Another non-voting non-Executive Cabinet Member stated that saying nothing had happened in the past three years was an understatement when the report included achievements. He referred to the sweeping statements, such as 'would improve' without any explanation of how the improvements would be achieved. He noted that the Corporate Plan lacked reference to the voluntary sector.

In response, the Portfolio Holder stated that he did not wish to diminish the achievements of the Member's administration in terms of privatisation of the libraries which the residents of Harrow had overwhelmingly rejected. He also mentioned the IT Contract as another example.

The Leader of the Council stated that she was proud to commend the adoption of the Corporate Plan 2014/15, with its Vision based on a Cleaner, Safer and Fairer Harrow which would make Harrow a proud place to live and work.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That the Corporate Plan be adopted.

Reason for Recommendation: To update the Council's Policy Framework and set out the Council's direction of travel for the year ahead.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: None.

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