
REPORT OF CABINET

(SPECIAL) MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2008

Chairman: * Councillor David Ashton

Councillors: * Marilyn Ashton * Barry Macleod-Cullinane
 * Miss Christine Bednell * Chris Mote
 * Tony Ferrari * Paul Osborn
 * Susan Hall * Mrs Anjana Patel

* Denotes Member present

[Note: Councillors Paul Scott and Bill Stephenson also attended this meeting to speak on the item indicated at Minute 426 below. Councillors Husain Akhtar and Mitzi Green also attended this meeting to speak on the item indicated at Minute 427 below].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

421. Declarations of Interest:

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

Agenda items 9/10 – Future Organisation of West Lodge First School and West Lodge Middle School/Harrow's Vision for Education and the Primary Capital Programme

- (i) Councillor Husain Akhtar, who was not a Member of Cabinet, declared a personal interest in that he was a governor of Bentley Wood School.
- (ii) Councillor Miss Christine Bednell declared personal interests arising from the fact that she was a governor of Vaughan First and Middle School, a governor of Whitmore High School and a non-LEA representative of Stanmore College.
- (iii) Councillor Robert Benson, who was not a Member of Cabinet, declared a personal interest in that he was a governor of Cedars Manor School.
- (iv) Councillor Mitzi Green, who was not a Member of Cabinet, declared a personal interest in that she was a governor of Kenmore Park First and Middle School.
- (v) Councillor Susan Hall declared a personal interest in that she was a governor of Priestmead First School.
- (vi) Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane declared personal interests in that he was a governor of Canons High School and that his sister was a teacher at Hatch End High School.
- (vii) Councillor Julia Merison, who was not a Member of Cabinet, declared a personal interest in that she was a governor of Newton Farm First and Middle School.
- (viii) Councillor Janet Mote, who was not a Member of Cabinet, declared a personal interest in that he she was a governor of St. John Fisher First & Middle School.
- (ix) Councillor Chris Mote declared a personal interest in that he had friends at West Lodge School.
- (x) Councillor Mrs Anjana Patel declared a personal interest in that she was a governor of St Dominic's College.
- (xi) Councillor Bill Stephenson, who was not a Member of Cabinet, declared a personal interest in that he was a governor of Hatch End High School and Marlborough First and Middle School.

Accordingly, they would all remain in the room to listen to the debate, take part in the discussion and decision-making, as appropriate, on these items.

422. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2008 be deferred until the next ordinary Cabinet meeting.

423. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

The Leader of the Council stated that in light of the public attendance at the meeting, he would re-order the agenda and take item 9 - Future Organisation of West Lodge First and Middle School and West Lodge Middle School and item 11 - Development of Cedars Hall Site, Uxbridge Road, Harrow, after item 6 - Councillor Questions. For clarity business is recorded in the order set out on the agenda.

The Leader added that due to the large number of questions received, supplemental questions would not be answered at the meeting but that the questioners would be sent written responses.

It was noted that there was no exempt report at item 13 - Development of Cedars Hall, Uxbridge Road, Harrow.

The Leader explained the reasons behind the need to suspend Executive Procedure Rule 8.2.2 and it was

RESOLVED: That (1) all items be considered with the press and public present with the exception of the following item for the reason set out below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
14. Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative	This report was exempt from publication under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in that it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

(2) Executive Procedure Rule 8.2.2 be suspended to allow the submission of petitions and the asking and answering of public and Councillor questions;

(3) that supplemental questions be answered in writing rather than at the meeting.

424. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following petitions had been received and were considered alongside the relevant reports on the agenda.

1. Mr Brian Stoker presented a petition, signed by two people, concerning the Cedars Hall site proposed development. He read out the terms of the petition to the meeting, which were as follows:-

"We request that the paper on the proposed development be deferred and revised on the grounds that:

- This paper requires a yes/no decision; you are not being given the promised choice to explore options, as declared in Cabinet and residents' meetings.
- The residential development is contrary to your UDP; the previous residential planning application for the site was withdrawn before it could be rejected for this reason.
- The land forms part of Cedars Open Space which the Council is committed to protect.
- A residential development will require the Council to break the trust vested in it by the LCC covenant to maintain use for community purposes.
- Breaking the covenant opens the whole green open space of 9 acres to residential development. The covenant is actually for the benefit of the community, not the Council.

- Residential housing at Cedars is not to the benefit of the community.
- The option from residents' meeting, to return to open space, is not put forward.
- Other credible alternative options available (eg children's charity) are not addressed at all.
- The report has been 6 months in production, missed the Cabinet deadlines for this meeting (9th May final report, 13th May for Agenda) and was published Friday 16th May, only hours before the public questions deadline for this meeting.
- The unilaterally imposed deadlines for a WTRA proposed are unrealistic and will result in bringing residential build foremost as the only option.
- Correspondence from the public to your Democratic Services and Mr Trehern was promised to be presented to you: it is not seen.
- You are being asked to approve a legalistic document which has factual errors.

We request that the contents of this petition be recorded in the Minutes of this Cabinet meeting”.

2. Councillor Miss Christine Bednell presented a petition from teaching and non-teaching staff of West Lodge Middle School. The petition contained 24 signatures. She read out the terms of the petition, which were as follows:-

“We, the undersigned, of West Lodge Middle School, once again write to you to express our support of the Middle School Governing Body decision not to amalgamate with West Lodge First School”.

425. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following public questions had been received:

1.

Questioner: Mr Lee Choules, Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association

Asked of: Councillor Chris Mote, Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services

Question: Weald TRA warmly and unreservedly welcomes the decision of Cabinet to support our wish to submit a formal proposal for the development and management of the Cedars Hall site, as a “community hall” and we understand that our draft proposals must clearly demonstrate that there is reasonable prospect of the necessary capital funding of between £500,000 and £750,000 being secured no later than 30 November 2008.

Towards this objective, will the Council undertake the following, as its partnership commitment in helping to develop what will remain a Council owned asset, to draft, manage and develop in consultation with Weald TRA the proposed legal documentation, including an Options Agreement that gives us the legal right to seek the necessary capital and revenue funding, noting that the Options Agreement is needed immediately, the architectural plans, building control, planning environmental applications, an application or partner in an application, to the European Social Fund and/or to allocate any existing funds under its management from the ESF to the maximum value of £400,000, that may be needed as part of any formal applications that may be submitted?

Pending a positive answer to the above issues, Weald TRA on behalf of the local community are confident that by 30 November 2008, we would be able to confirm to the Council that we have secured all necessary capital and revenue resources to enable comprehensive refurbishment of cedars hall site (internal and external) to enable it to be brought into use as a "community hall".

Answer:

Mr Choules, I would firstly like to thank you and the members of Weald TRA, for the work you have undertaken to date, to take forward your vision and plans for Cedars Hall, as a centre for the Harrow Weald community.

The Officer recommendation which Cabinet will consider this evening, actually requires Weald TRA to 'clearly demonstrate that there is reasonable prospect of the necessary capital funding of between £500,000 and £750,000 being secured', by 30 June 2008.

As you note in the final part of your question, the November date requires Weald TRA, to confirm to the Council that you have actually secured the necessary money - the funding.

What the Council is looking for in June, is simply confirmation of the funding sources that you intend to approach, together with an indication from these sources that the relevant funding scheme is available, and that the Cedars Community Hall project, meets the criteria for any application for a grant to be considered.

The Council's intention in respect of the development of a community hall option, is for Cedars Hall to remain in Council ownership. Once necessary funds and planning permission have been secured by Weald TRA, and the legal process completed, Weald TRA would be required to enter into a lease with the Council, to take over the development and management of the Cedars Community Centre.

The Terms of the Agreement (legal documentation) between Weald TRA and the Council have yet to be negotiated and it would not be appropriate to give a specific undertaking in respect of this in my reply to your question.

However, you have my absolute assurance that Council Officers, will work with you, to ensure that Weald TRA's bids to grant funding organisations or other financial institutions, include all necessary Council support in respect of the property agreement to be completed between us. This is one of the reasons why the Officers have targeted agreement of the legal terms, including the lease, by 31 July 2008.

The Council will provide you with copies of existing plans of the site, but cannot undertake any design of the new facility. We will of course be able to offer advice for example in respect of environmental and sustainability matters, access for all, health and safety, secured by design, and all other things that go with that.

The Council has already offered to provide planning advice, to ensure that your planning application can be compliant with all relevant policies.

You or your architect will be required to submit plans to the Council's Planning Department, including the Building Control Service, and to ensure that all design and building work is undertaken in accordance with relevant regulations.

Assuming that the Council officers are able to advise you that your long term business plan is viable and sustainable, and that your approach to funding organisations is compliant with the relevant Council policies, the Council will, following this evening's Cabinet decision on the matter, wholeheartedly support Weald TRA's application for funding from appropriate funding organisations.

However, the Council cannot commit any resources directly to this project.

I confirm that I am personally very keen to see what you put forward and that the Weald TRA's innovative plans for this site coming to fruition.

Supplemental Question:

I'd like to ask that seeing as there are going to be no resources available, we are a voluntary organisation. I know in the report pack it says we have £4,000 in our account, we don't have £400. I'm just wondering where the Council expects us to find in the region of about £40,000 prior to receiving grants to engage an architect to actually draw up the plans which will enable proper costings of the refurbishment of Cedars Hall.

Answer:

A written response would be provided.

2.

Questioner:

Dr Alan Bender

Asked of:

Councillor Chris Mote, Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services

Question:

Andrew Trehern's paper for Cabinet on 21 May titled "Development of the Cedars Hall site, Uxbridge Road, Harrow" is based very heavily on one assumption that the Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association acts as the lead group for all current interest in the Cedars Hall site.

This is a false assumption and the Council and the Association have not properly assessed the views of residents that live much closer to the site than most of the Association members. In addition, Andrew Trehern has repeatedly failed to communicate with all such residents within timescales that give adequate time for consideration, reasoned response and preparation of constructive submissions to Cabinet.

As a result, his paper is an inadequate analysis of the possible approaches to a solution that will be acceptable to the Council and the local residents.

Therefore, in order to produce a better balanced and reasoned paper, would Cabinet agree to a three month period for further and proper consultation and consideration of options?

Answer:

The future of the Cedars Hall site, has effectively been subject to public debate, since 9 November 2006, when Cabinet first considered its future use, following the closure of the Wembley Rugby Club.

Following a public meeting at Kingsley High School on 3 October 2007, the proposal for an emergency accommodation hostel, was not taken forward.

Residents' views were being clearly heard by this administration.

On 20 February 2008, that is 12 weeks ago, officers presented various options for the development of the Cedars Hall site, at a meeting with local residents.

Clearly the preferred course of action indicated by residents at this meeting, was to return the site to open space.

Council Officers advise that there is no requirement to do this, given the sufficiency of open space in the surrounding area.

I understand that the community hall option was discussed in some detail at the meeting on 20 February, and was the only other option supported by residents at that meeting.

Following the meeting on 20 February, the Weald TRA began work to develop their vision and plans for Cedars Hall.

This approach could have been adopted by any other resident or group of residents in the area but was not. There has been an approach from a charitable enterprise, to develop a nursery on the site, and this enterprise has been referred to the Weald TRA.

The options to be considered by Cabinet this evening are substantially the same as those presented on 20 February.

Approximately 80 residents attended the second meeting on Wednesday 7 May, where a copy of the report as presented this evening, save for the inclusion of the Weald TRA proposal at appendix 4, and the notes of the meeting at appendix 3, was available to residents.

The views of the residents have clearly been heard, this administration listened to the views of residents last year, we have listened over the past 12 weeks and we will make a reasonable decision tonight.

Supplemental Question:

There have been many delays, all on the Council's part, and lack of an appropriate wide distribution of consultation requests. Cabinet of 13 December 2007 was petitioned that the promised consultation be started. The first public meeting was only two months' later on 20 February, with just 4 days' notice and with limited publicity. The next meeting on 2 April was changed 3 days' later to 7 May with the Council reason being given information not available and the report delayed from 2 April, to 7 May and then to 14 May, so why is the time allowed for consideration of the issues all one sided towards the Council with the public being given short shrift and why are things not being done in a more equitable and democratic fashion?

Answer: A written response would be provided.

3.

Questioner: Brian Stoker

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Finance

Question: In the matter of Cedars Hall future, I refer to my question to the previous Council Leader at the Cabinet meeting of 10 April regarding lack of opportunity for the public to comment to the Cabinet on the officers' report, we were assured there was sufficient time. However, as of the 16 May the report is not in the published Cabinet papers placed on the Council website in the statutory notice period for the 21 May meeting, and your deadline for questions on it is today, Friday 16 May! So we must assume it is not being considered at Cabinet.

A paper copy was given to a few individuals who happened to be present at the last Cabinet meeting, and a few individuals were e-mailed a version, but we await its formal publication. Factual errors in it, including the notes of the 7 May public meeting, need correcting.

This paper was referred to by the Leader in the minutes of the 8 November 2007 Cabinet meeting, some 6 months ago, so why 6 months to produce, and no days for comments by the public?

Answer: I am sorry that the Cedars Hall report was not published on the Council website by the scheduled date.

Council Officers are expected to meet reporting deadlines and on this occasion failed to meet the scheduled date of Tuesday 13 May, which is not acceptable to this administration. However I am advised that the report was published on the Council website

last Thursday 15 May at 5.00 pm.

The report author, was in fact responsible for leading the Council's response to the very serious and most tragic incident which occurred in Stanley Road, South Harrow, following the Harrow Weald residents' meeting on Wednesday 7 May.

100 copies of the Cedars Hall report were taken to the residents meeting on 7 May. At the end of the meeting only 19 copies of the papers were left. I suggest therefore that there was good attendance at the meeting by local residents.

The report contained within this evening's Cabinet papers is virtually identical to the papers presented at the resident meeting, the exceptions being appendix 3, the notes of the meeting, and Appendix 4 The Weald TRA draft proposal.

The notes of the 7 May residents meeting have been published as drafted 'independently' by our Committee Services staff. Any comments in respect of factual accuracies can be addressed to Hugh Peart, Director of Legal & Governance Services who will ensure that any necessary amendments are made as appropriate.

The timing of the consideration of this matter by Cabinet has in part been determined to ensure sufficient time for local residents to advise the Council of their views.

Cabinet will be considering the Officers' report this evening and will make a decision regarding the future development and use of this important site.

Supplemental Question:

Why are you actually considering this paper now when it was not available to the public in time when it contravenes your own Constitution Access to Information Procedure Rules, Rule 5.1, as it was on the published agenda, not added later, but the paper was not on the Council website until Friday 16 May? It also contains factual errors which will need to be corrected before you can approve a legalistic document.

Answer:

A written response would be provided.

4.

Questioner:

Frances Pickersgill

Asked of:

Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Finance

Question:

In his response to a public question at the Cabinet meeting on 15 May, Mr Ashton said that the Council would be discussing the future of Cedars Hall with the Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association. This, he said is the recognized organization representing the local community. Since when has the WTRA been 'recognised' in this way when there are other organisations eager to use the hall but are not included in the proposal?

Answer:

The Council is recognising Weald TRA in respect of the development of the Cedars Community Hall option for two reasons:

1. The Weald TRA have proactively embraced the opportunity formally to submit high-level proposals for the development of the Harrow Weald site as a community hall.
2. And secondly the Council is willing to recognise the Weald TRA as it is a properly constituted local community group.

Supplemental Question: Why has the Council not explored whether other not for profit, voluntary and charitable organisations with which it has links or even contracts, would be interested in bidding to use the Cedars facilities?

Answer: A written response would be provided.

5.

Questioner: Catherine Kittredge MBE

Asked of: Councillor Christine Bednell, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Question: The recent ballot of stakeholders can be said to have upheld the original decision of West Lodge Middle School Governors because that result indicates that the majority of West Lodge Middle School Parents, Staff and Governors are in favour of remaining as a separate school.

We therefore ask for an explanation as to why the Local Authority is doing its best to prevent the appointment of a Headteacher, when all members of the recent interview panel attempting to make such an appointment, Local Authority members included, considered the candidate to be experienced and very well qualified for the position.

Answer: The local authority has advised the governing body of their responsibilities to manage the school budget in accordance with Financial Regulations. Making an appointment to a post that may be deleted would potentially incur redundancy costs and be contrary to good management of public funds.

The local authority, with the Governing Body has made further interim arrangements for an acting headteacher to be in post until December 2008.

Through the appointment process an appropriate candidate was interviewed and the Governing Body has offered the post to the candidate, subject to the outcome of the Cabinet Decision.

Supplemental Question: It is our opinion that the local authority appears to be acting on two different levels here. It would appear that within the same timeframe as the West Lodge Schools' consultation period, another school in the Borough voted against amalgamation. That was accepted by the local authority on the proviso that the headteacher be appointed by a given date. Why then is the local authority applying a different standard to West Lodge Middle School, where but for the interventions of the local authority an experienced headteacher could have been appointed for the start of the academic year 2008/2009 and still could be for the start of January 2009?

Answer: A written response would be provided.

6.

Questioner: Pamela Fitzpatrick

Asked of: Councillor Christine Bednell, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Question: Cabinet has stated that it intended to conduct a fair and transparent consultation which would be in the hands of the stakeholders. Why is it then that the Local Authority appointed Steering Group charged with the responsibility of conducting a stage one consultation under the statutory guidance made no new investigations into how an amalgamation would affect two very successful schools.

Answer: The Steering Group agreed a consultation process to gather views

of the stakeholders of the two schools. The Steering Group were satisfied that they had sufficient information necessary to undertake the consultation. The information was included in a suite of papers sent to Stakeholders which included the consultation paper, an Executive Summary of the Feasibility Study and the Feasibility Study.

Supplemental Question: Why did the local authority allow an officer of the Council to write the feasibility report and send it to parents before it was seen, or even signed off, by members of the steering committee?

Answer: A written response would be provided.

7.

Questioner: Julie Browne

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Finance

Question: How can Cabinet believe that they are getting best benefit for the community by not considering all of the available options? (relating to Cedars Hall).

Answer: I am aware of your Kids Can Achieve enterprise interest in the Cedars Hall site.

I understand that you have discussed your interest with Andrew Trehern and that he provided you with contact details for the Weald TRA.

The Cedars Hall site is a substantial property and the Council believes that the success of the community enterprise may be best achieved by more than one organisation working together, so that in particular the costs associated with development, management and operation of this substantial site can be shared, thereby increasing opportunities for the financial and operational sustainability.

I would therefore encourage you to consider how you may be able to work with the Weald TRA.

Supplemental Question: There are other organisations, and not just mine, who desperately need this facility and we feel we are being denied the opportunity to express an interest or bid for the use of this facility. Could we be considered?

Answer: A written response would be provided.

[Notes: (1) In accordance with Executive procedure Rule 34.1, Cabinet suspended Committee Procedure Rule 16.2 – Time limit for Questions – to allow all questions to be put to the meeting. Answers to supplemental questions would be provided in writing;

(2) The Leader of the Council stated that questions received from members of the public after the deadline for receipt of questions would be responded in writing;

(3) The Leader of the Council explained that in order to meet the requirements of the Constitution for the publication of the minutes, it was not possible to transcribe supplemental questions and answers. A full transcript of the supplemental questions and answers would appear on the Council's website as soon as possible].

426. **Councillor Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note the following Councillor Questions had been received:

1.

Questioner: Councillor Bill Stephenson

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: At the Cabinet meeting on February 14, I asked your predecessor Councillor Camilla Bath to state how many of Harrow's major housing estates (and out of what total) have been fully externally decorated in the last (i) seven years, (ii) nine years, and (iii) eleven years. In a supplementary question I made it clear I was interested in the major blocks of flats and, asked when the major blocks of flats in the Kingsfield Estate in my ward, would be externally re-decorated as the last time was eleven years ago. In her reply Councillor Bath said this information was 'necessary' and 'would take 14 days to collate' and Councillor Chris Mote said that 'as soon it was we would have chat about it and look at all areas that do need doing.' Since then I have heard absolutely nothing.

Can you provide me with the response promised by your predecessor and confirm the promise made to one of my constituents in writing that the Kingsfield estate will be externally re-decorated in this financial year?

Answer: At 31 March 2008 the Council owned 5068 tenanted homes and managed 1106 leaseholds.

In the seven year period to March 2008 records indicate that 3184 properties were included on the external decoration programme. Records are not available for earlier periods.

Allerford Court, Apsley Close and Holsworth Close on the Kingsfield Estate are programmed to be externally redecorated this year and instructions for that work to take place have been issued.

Supplemental Question: I welcome that. Could I ask Councillor Macleod-Cullinane to make sure leaseholders are contacted well in advance about costs of what their share will be.

Answer: Yes.
(A written response would be provided).

2.

Questioner: Councillor Bill Stephenson

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: When external re-decoration or major repairs are carried out on Council tenanted homes and managed leases only Kiers can quote for the work with no competitive tendering and the price which they quote has to be paid by leaseholders pro rata irrespective. Several leaseholders have stated to me that despite what the Council says that they have never agreed to such a one-sided system and that the prices quoted are excessive. Would you provide me with the documentation to show that all the leaseholders were fully and thoroughly consulted about this matter and agreed to the current system which replaced the previous system of competitive tendering? In addition can you tell us how leaseholders can be sure that they are not being overcharged and having to pay excessive prices.

Answer: When the Council re-tendered the contract for minor and major works to Council Homes in 2006, a public notice was published in the Official Journal of the European Union inviting such tenders. A Section 20 Consultation Notice was sent to all leaseholders informing them of this on 17 July 2006 and inviting their comments. Competitive tenders were received by Harrow Council. Leaseholder representatives were part of the panel that selected Kier Building Maintenance. On 14 March 2007, a Section 20 Consultation Notice was sent to all Leaseholders informing them that Harrow would now enter into a contract with Kier Building Maintenance for all maintenance works. The minor works contract is effective for five years and the major works contract for four

years with effect from 1 July 2007. The process for that the Council applied provided opportunity for necessary competition and met the requirements of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2004.

When the Council wishes to appoint Kier, as the major works contract partner, to undertake specified work, a Section 20 Notice is always issued. That notice provides a description of the work, an explanation about why the work is necessary, an estimate of the likely cost and an invitation to all leaseholders to make comments within 30 days.

Further with the service charge demand all leaseholders are advised that they have the right to ask a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT) to determine whether any costs that Harrow Council intend charging are reasonable. Leaseholders are advised that they may ask the LVT to make the determination before or after the cost has become payable.

Supplemental Question: Thank you for his comment in saying precisely what happened but having talked to leaseholders, none of them seem to understand the system. Would the Council begin to learn how to communicate and communicate more clearly to leaseholders who clearly misunderstand this and still feel that they're being charged excessive prices which is very difficult for them to overturn other than going through a Leasehold Variation Tribunal.

Answer: A written response would be provided.

3.

Questioner: Councillor Bill Stephenson

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: When external re-decoration or major repairs are carried out on leases managed by the Council, the leaseholders have to pay a 20% administrative charge to the Housing Department. This was recently raised from 10% and according to the minutes of the Council supported Leaseholders' Support Group will possibly rise to 37%. Could you justify in detail this extremely high charge to leaseholders and can you assure them that there are absolutely no proposals to further increase this charge?

Answer: A review of the cost of providing leasehold services in 2006 indicated that the cost of providing these services significantly exceeded the annual charge to leaseholders. The financial information to confirm this was submitted to the Leaseholder Support Group and discussed at the Forum. The administration charge was increased from 10% to 20% of the actual costs. At the time of the review the Leaseholder Support Group was provided with information that confirmed that the administration charge would need to increase to 37% of costs in order to ensure that the Housing Revenue Account recovered from leaseholders the cost of providing the services those leaseholders. This administration charge is reviewed annually and at the present time there are no proposals to increase that charge.

Supplemental Question: I welcome that assurance. Can I just give an example of a case in my own ward where the roofing is being replaced at Atherton Place, a cost of £160,000. 20% of that is £32,000. Wouldn't Councillor Macleod-Cullinane say for that you could employ a lower level member of staff with on-costs for perhaps the whole year, a higher level member of staff for half a year. What is the justification for such a high charge for just putting the roof on one building and would he look at this again as to how we do charge leaseholders to make sure we're doing it fairly.

Answer: A written response would be provided.

4.

Questioner: Councillor Bill Stephenson

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: As there is no mention of this in the Cabinet's Forward Plan could you give an outline of the timetable for the determination of the future of Wiseworks including the proposals to fully and thoroughly consult all stakeholders.

Answer: Members will recall that the Council entered into a Section 75 Agreement with Central and North West London Foundation NHS Trust to deliver an integrated Mental Health Service. At the point of transfer the decision was taken to exclude Wiseworks from this, pending clarity about the future of that service. CNWL have now requested that Wiseworks be included in the Section 75 Agreement. Proposals (including a timetable for implementation) are currently being developed prior to consultation with service users, carers, stakeholders and staff. It is anticipated that a report on this matter will be submitted to Cabinet in October later this year.

This will be linked with the work being currently undertaken through the Mental Health Partnership Board to develop vocational strategy for people with mental health illnesses and health issues. This work is being led by users and carers supported by the Council, PCT and CNWL, and staff from Wise Works have contributed to this process. The development of a vocational strategy is a work stream within your future, our future, and the adult and housing training programme plan was approved by Cabinet last week.

5.

Questioner: Councillor Paul Scott

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Finance

Question: In answer to a question put to you by John Feldman last Thursday, you gave assurances that your administration will not build on any park, including Cedars Open Space. Can you inform us of the status of Cedars Youth Centre as regards this question? Is it, like Cedars Hall, considered separate from Cedars Open Space and therefore a potential site for future development?

Answer: Cedars Youth Centre does not form part of Cedars open space. However the Council has no current plans for development on this site.

6.

Questioner: Councillor Paul Scott

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Finance

Question: Why, when both the Weald TRA (the Council's supposed partner), and an established local charity that is interested in the Cedars Hall site, have stated publicly that the timescale set out in the officer report cannot be met, is Cabinet still considering a recommendation which seems to require much more work than has yet been done and in its present form seems likely to lead to a residential development on the site – the one option that all local residents are united against?

Answer: Firstly there is no assumption on the part of myself or this administration which is based on a housing development on the Cedars Hall site being our preferred option.

Our position in respect of this matter will become clear once we have considered and decided upon the Officers report in respect of this matter.

The Officers report sets down a clear timescale for the development option based on a community use hall. The timescale is challenging, and rightly so, but Officer advice is that the timescale remains realistic, particularly given the progress that has already been made by the Weald TRA.

This view now seems to be supported by Mr Choules given the wording of the question.

Supplemental Question: Why have Cabinet spent 18 months considering, proposing, withdrawing, reconsidering and reproposing plans for this site? Are you now apparently unwilling to grant further time, particularly in response to Kids Can Achieve, in order to reach a result that will enhance facilities for the area?

Answer: A written response would be provided.

[Notes: (1) In accordance with Executive procedure Rule 34.1, Cabinet suspended paragraph 2 of Committee Procedure Rule 17.1 – Questions with Notice – to allow all questions to be put to the meeting. Answers to supplemental questions would be provided in writing;

(2) Questioners 4 and 5 did not ask supplemental questions;

(3) The Leader of the Council explained that in order to meet the requirements of the Constitution for the publication of the minutes, it was not possible to transcribe supplemental questions and answers. A full transcript of the supplemental questions and answers would appear on the Council's website as soon as possible].

427. **Review of Cultural Services - Beacon Centre Case Study:**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services, responding to the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group that had investigated the operation of the Beacon Centre in Rayners Lane.

The Chairman of the Review Group stated that the case study on the Beacon Centre was the final element of the review of cultural services undertaken during 2007. She stated that the Cultural Strategy Review Group had visited the Beacon Centre in 2007 and, as the Centre had just opened at that time, it had been agreed that the study would be carried out in six months' time in order to allow a 'true' assessment of its impact.

The Chairman of the Review Group stated that the development of the Beacon Centre was very welcome and the facilities provided were of a very high standard. She stated that some of the evidence presented to the Group during the review had shown tensions between Home Group and the local community over access to the Centre and participation in its activities. Amongst the recommendations set out in the report of the Review Group, she drew particular attention to recommendation 6, which requested that the Council convene a 'Summit' to set out a new strategic vision for the Beacon Centre. She thanked those involved, in particular Home Group and Harrow College, for their contributions, and the scrutiny officer for his work on the report.

Another Member of the Review Group also addressed Cabinet and explained that the remit of the Review Group was specific to the operation of the Beacon Centre. The wider relationships with the Rayners Lane Estate, including housing and regeneration issues, had not been part of its remit. He added that the Beacon Centre was an excellent and valuable resource for Harrow and that the Review Group had looked to ascertain whether the provision was compatible with the needs of residents. The focus had been on the users and therefore the evidence base had been limited to that area only. Whilst there might not have been anything wrong with the provisions at the Beacon Centre, evidence had shown that so far it did not fully meet with the aspirations of local residents.

The Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development speaking in her capacity as the former Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services during which the Review Group had met, stated that whilst the Council had a role to play in this matter, the Beacon Centre was actually owned and run by Home Group. She added that the

£330k had been a one-off capital investment at the Beacon Centre with no commitments to any ongoing capital or revenue support. She acknowledged that there had been teething problems but that the residents, Home Group and the Council needed to move forward on this matter with the Council acting as a mediator.

The Director of Community and Cultural Services outlined the actions that had been taken since the report of the Review Group. He was working together with colleagues in housing services on the recommendations of the Review Group, which had helped to improve co-ordination. A closer liaison with the Arts Centre had also evolved helping the Beacon Centre learn from best practice. It was intended to hold a 'Summit' for Home Group and Council departments in the first instance, and to develop a cultural strategy for Rayners Lane by late 2008. It was noted that the Beacon Centre Management Committee would also be considering the report of the Review Group in detail at its meeting on 29 May 2008.

The Leader of the Council stated that this was an excellent example of scrutiny working as a 'critical' friend in challenging areas. He stated that the Administration intended to ensure a positive relationship with scrutiny. He thanked the Chairman and the Member of the Review Group for their contributions at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That (1) the content and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group's report be noted and it be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services to inform future cultural services provision;

(2) the Council work to support the Home Group and partners to help develop appropriate services at the Beacon Centre, which reflected local needs.

Reasons for Decision: (1) In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet shall consider reports produced by the Committee;

(2) to address the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group.

428. **Key Decision - Revenue Income Optimisation:**

The Corporate Director of Finance introduced the report, which set out progress on the Revenue Income Optimisation (RIO) project and recommended changes to fees and charges in 2008-09. She added that a framework for charging had been approved by Cabinet in February 2008, and that the RIO was a major piece of work, which would generate income for the Council. Future such reports would be submitted to Cabinet in due course, and Business Cases for some short to medium term projects would also be developed.

The Corporate Director referred to the 'top down' analysis that would be conducted to compare charges with other boroughs and identify why Harrow's income was lower than those of its neighbours. It would help identify discrepancies.

The Leader of the Council stated that the RIO was a long term programme and would entail the consideration of 'rolling' reports by Cabinet.

RESOLVED: That the proposals in relation to fees and charges, set out in Appendix 1 to the officer report, be agreed.

Reason for Decision: To maximise income opportunities.

429. **Key Decision - Future Organisation of West Lodge First School and West Lodge Middle School:**

Cabinet received a report of the Director of Schools and Children's Development, which set out the outcome of the statutory consultation about the future organisation of West Lodge First School and West Lodge Middle School, and the recommendations of the Future Organisation of West Lodge Schools' Steering Group.

Prior to the consideration of the report, the Leader of the Council asked if an outstanding complaint under stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints procedure, which had alleged procedural improprieties and had requested the Council to stop any amalgamation process, impacted on any decision to be taken by Cabinet that evening.

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services who had dealt with this matter under her previous portfolio remit of Schools and Children's Development during 2007/08, responded to the Leader's question as follows:-

- Council was currently investigating a complaint under Stage 2 of the Corporate Complaints procedure which alleged procedural improprieties and requested the Council to stop any amalgamation process.
- The investigation had not been concluded in time to report to this Cabinet. The complaint was confidential to the complainant and disclosure of this would lead to a possibility of identification.
- The decision for Cabinet that evening regarding the future of two successful schools in Harrow was very important, and the Cabinet had considered this whole situation in detail prior to this Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet had concluded that it should not delay making a decision about whether to publish statutory notices because further uncertainty was not in the best interests of the children or the schools.
- The statutory notices, if published, would return to Cabinet for a decision in September 2008. Any relevant recommendations arising from the complaint could be looked at then.

The Portfolio Holder made the following statement in relation to the report submitted to Cabinet:-

"In January 2008, Cabinet decided:-

- o *to consult to gather views of stakeholders; and*
- o *that these views would be reported back to Cabinet.*

The decision that the local authority would conduct a consultation was made only after all avenues had been explored with the governing bodies of the two schools to find a way forward, on which they were unable to agree. The report today was about the outcome of the consultation, and Cabinet now needed to decide on the future organisation it proposed for the two schools.

I would like to start by saying that I am most impressed by the response to the consultation from stakeholders, and by the extensive range of comments received. Over half of the consultation response forms that were returned contained comments for us to consider. This was most helpful, and reflected the strong level of interest and commitment among all associated with the schools.

I am also most grateful for the work of the Steering Group that was established to conduct the consultation, and for the recommendations that it had made, and I will say more about this work in a moment.

Cabinet considered the organisational and educational reasons for amalgamation in October 2007 when it decided its Strategic Approach to School Organisation and agreed its new Amalgamation Policy. The consideration of amalgamation in this instance was in the context of two successful schools. The educational reasons for and against amalgamation have been covered by the Steering Group in the consultation papers, and are contained in the responses to the consultation.

The educational reasons for amalgamation include:

- *Organisational structure was aligned with the National Curriculum Key Stages, and enables planning as a coherent whole for the primary phase and provides greater flexibility across and between Key Stages.*
- *Reducing the number of changes for children in a school system strengthens continuity and progression for children and families in the primary phase, both in terms of the curriculum and pastoral experience.*
- *For younger children the presence of older children would provide aspirational role models and also mentoring support.*
- *Teachers and classroom staff would have access to the whole primary curriculum. This would support and inform whole school planning, assessment, pastoral systems, etc., and provide opportunities for wider staff development and experience across the full primary phase.*

The educational reasons against amalgamation include:

- *It would be hard to sustain a primary ethos and there would be a danger of the school becoming impersonal.*
- *The larger size of a combined school would raise issues about the changed role of the headteacher who would become more remote.*
- *The larger size of a combined school would create challenges for the younger children and potential scope for bullying by older children.*
- *Educational benefits could be achieved by effective communication and working together of staff and governing bodies in separate schools.*

I am very mindful of the difference of views among stakeholders that is very clear from the consultation responses, and has been apparent for some time prior to this consultation.

The range and difference of views expressed during the consultation was captured in full in the background papers for Cabinet to see.

I have also met with West Lodge Middle School staff and governors at their invitation to hear their views first hand, and I have been able to inform Cabinet colleagues about these views.

When reading the responses to the consultation, I have been struck by the many comments made about the need to resolve the issue one way or the other and without further delay. The second recommendation of the Steering Group reflected this, and it emphasised the need for support to the schools in moving forward. This support would be needed whatever decision Cabinet made in order to help the schools to put behind them all that has happened and to be able to move forward.

It was very clear to me that the decision Cabinet makes must be in the best interests of the children.

Following the decision made by Cabinet in January 2008, the local authority set up a fair, open and transparent process for the consultation.

A Steering Group was established to undertake the consultation, which had equal numbers of representatives from each school and from the local authority.

The Steering Group met five times, and maintained a clear focus only on the best interests of the children at both schools. It had:-

- o *conducted a consultation of the school communities and of all interested parties.*
- o *kept the school communities informed about their work.*
- o *worked hard on the feasibility study and on the other documents that were distributed.*
- o *It conducted three consultation meetings for parents and staff from the two schools.*
- o *analysed the responses from parents, staff and governors to the consultation response forms.*
- o *made recommendations for Cabinet to consider today.*

Cabinet needed to consider the recommendations of the Steering Group, which is that West Lodge First School and West Lodge Middle School become a combined First and Middle School.

Cabinet then needed to decide:

- o *whether to publish statutory notices that was the next step towards combining the two schools*
- o *or whether to leave the schools as separate First and Middle schools.*

I said at the Overview and Scrutiny Call-in Sub-Committee (Education) meeting on 30 January 2008 that the local authority would accept the view of the majority of those

consulted, and, before I give my recommendation to Cabinet, I would like to highlight some key points from the consultation responses.

I am aware that the Middle School Governing Body engaged Electoral Reform Services to conduct a ballot about the future organisation of West Lodge Middle School. This was the initiative of the Middle School Governing Body alone, and did not form part of the local authority's consultation.

The local authority did not conduct a ballot, but rather it invited the key stakeholders of both schools to state their views and to make comments they would wish to have considered. This afforded us the benefit of a wider range of information on which to make a decision.

All the views and comments received are available to Cabinet.

Annexe A of the Cabinet report and the Appendices give information about the analysis of the consultation response forms, and give a helpful overview of all the responses.

579 consultation response forms were distributed.

291 completed consultation response forms were received, which is an overall response rate of just over 50%.

A key point for me is that 75% of families who expressed a view are in support of combining the two schools. Also, almost 60% of staff and governors who expressed a view were in support of combining the two schools. I recognise that there were differences contained with the responses, and I have given much thought to the views expressed by Middle School staff and governors, the majority of whom are not in support of the proposals. I am also mindful that many responses asked that a decision be made quickly one way or the other, and be upheld by all whatever the outcome so things can move on.

The Steering Group has recommended that the two schools should amalgamate. The next step towards a decision on amalgamation is the publication of statutory notices. This will lead to a further period of formal representations and those outcomes will be reported to Cabinet in September 2008 for decision.

I propose that Cabinet decide to publish statutory notices for these reasons:

- This listens to the views of stakeholders as expressed during the consultation, and is the clear view of the majority of families of children attending the schools.*
- I made it clear when it was decided to conduct a consultation that the local authority would give great weight to the view of the majority of those consulted.*
- There are strong educational reasons for combining the schools and I consider important points have been made about the benefits to children of a combined school in relation to transition issues and the benefits of curriculum continuity.*
- The schools need to move forward, and to be supported in doing so.*
- It is in the best interests of the children that a decision is made as quickly as possible so that the uncertainty is removed."*

The Leader of the Council stated that the Steering Group had planned and conducted the consultation from 17 March 2008 until 4 April 2008.

The Portfolio Holder having moved a recommendation, which was duly seconded, it was

RESOLVED: That having considered the consultation responses and outcomes, and the recommendations of the Steering Group, and based on the reasons provided by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, statutory notices proposing (1) to close West Lodge Middle School with effect from 31 December 2008 (2) to extend the age range of West Lodge First School with effect from January 2009 be published.

Reason for Decision: (1) To consider the outcome of the consultation undertaken by the Future Organisation of West Lodge Schools' Steering Group;

(2) to exercise the local authority's statutory responsibility in relation to school organisation and consider whether to publish statutory notices to effect the change.

(See also Minute 421 and 424(2))

430. **Key Decision - Harrow's Vision for Education and the Primary Capital Programme:**

Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Schools and Children's Development, which presented Harrow's Vision for Education. The report also provided an outline of the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Primary Capital Programme and proposed principles to identify schools to receive capital funding.

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services stated that the report was seeking approval of two important issues for Children's Services and Schools in Harrow – the vision for education in Harrow and the primary strategy for change. It was recognised that Harrow's schools were a success, and that the views of all stakeholders had been gathered to influence and inform Harrow's vision.

The Portfolio Holder made the following statement:

"Vision for Education

- *The Harrow Vision for Education was an important statement about how the community of schools and partners see education in Harrow and where our aspirations are. It brought together all the key elements that contributed to making schools successful in Harrow.*
- *It was relevant to all phases of education in Harrow, including Early Years and pre-school provision, special schools, community and voluntary aided schools and partners.*
- *The vision recognised the wide ranging partnerships and their contributions. The view of stakeholders, including headteachers, governors and young people, had been gathered to influence and inform the vision.*
- *Realising the vision was central to guiding and influencing all strategies and developments within schools. In particular, this vision would be central to submissions made to the Department for Children, Schools and Families for strategic funding including primary Capital Programme and Building Schools for the Future.*

Primary Capital Programme

- *The government's Primary Capital programme was a long term investment strategy. It was about transforming primary schools and achieving the government's target for the programme of 50% of all primary schools and in particular schools in the worst condition serving areas of deprivation. The local authority was required to prepare a Primary Strategy for Change and submission to the DCSF to secure Primary Capital Programme funding.*
- *Funding was available from April 2009 and Harrow had been allocated approximately £9m in the first two years of this programme. Harrow was expected to receive approximately £45m over the fourteen years of the programme.*
- *The Strategy for Change would be based on the Vision for Education and would include the identification of schools to receive funding in the first four years. Guiding principles had been proposed, and set criteria to identify schools once these had been agreed by Cabinet would be applied to Harrow's schools to identify those which would receive funding in the first wave."*

The Portfolio Holder added that the report brought together the vision for education as the driver to inform investment and would enable the completion of the Primary Capital Programme submission, as well as future submissions to the DCSF. It was noted that the submission had to be made by 16 June 2008. In addition, the recent meeting with the headteachers and governors of schools to discuss this report had been productive.

The Leader of the Council stated that the figures quoted by the Portfolio Holder above were small in terms of the requirements for Harrow schools.

RESOLVED: That (1) Harrow's Vision for Education, set out at Annexe 1 to the officer report, be agreed;

(2) the general principles for identifying schools to receive capital funding through the DCSF Primary Capital Programme, set out in Part B of the officer report, be agreed;

(3) authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Schools and Children's Development to agree the final submission to the DCSF for Primary Capital Programme and the Primary Strategy for Change.

Reasons for Decision: (1) To realise the Vision for Education. Realising this vision was central to guiding and influencing all strategies and developments within schools. In particular, this vision would be central to submissions made to the DCSF for strategic funding, including Primary Capital Programme and Building Schools for the Future;

(2) the Local Authority was required to prepare a Primary Strategy for Change submission to the DCSF to secure Primary Capital Programme funding. The Strategy for Change would be based on the vision and would include the identification of schools, using the proposed criteria, to receive Primary Capital Programme funding. Funding was available from April 2009 and was subject to DCSF approval. The report/decision would enable the completion of the submission.

(See also Minute 421)

431. **Key Decision - Development of the Cedars Hall Site, Uxbridge Road, Harrow:**
Cabinet considered the report of the Corporate Director of Community and Environment, which set out the options available to the Council in respect of the development of the Cedars Hall site.

The Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services stated that the report was comprehensive and explained the reasons why the Council had gone out to consultation in regard to this site. The Portfolio Holder added that Cedars Hall site had remained vacant since 2006 and that the building was in disrepair and an eyesore. He outlined matters that the Council was responsible for as a 'guardian' and spoke in support of Recommendation 3. He added that officer support would be provided to the Weald Tenants' and Residents' Association (TRA) in this regard. However, should the Weald TRA not be able to realise the requirements set out under option 3, then option 2, subject to Cabinet's agreement that evening, would be pursued.

The Portfolio Holder suggested that the representative from 'Kids Can Achieve' who was present at the meeting and had expressed an interest in bidding for this site should liaise with the TRA with a view to working jointly on option 3.

RESOLVED: (1) That the action below be agreed:-

Option 3 – Community Use hall –

- a) The Weald Tenants and Residents' Association (Weald TRA), acting as the lead group for all current "Community Use" interest in the Cedars Hall site, submit a formal proposal for the development and management of the Cedars Hall site, as a "Community Hall". The proposal document must clearly demonstrate that there was reasonable prospect of the necessary capital funding of between £500,00 and £750,000, being secured.

The Weald TRA proposal to be submitted to the Council (Corporate Director, Community and Environment Services) no later than 30 June 2008.

- b) The Weald TRA to agree, with the Council's Estates Manager and Legal Department, the terms and form of the proposed legal documentation, including lease agreement – noting that the Council would require a commercial rent to be realised from the property.

The terms and form of the proposed legal documentation, including lease agreement, to be agreed with the Council no later than 31 July 2008.

- c) The Weald TRA to submit to the Council (Corporate Director, Community and Environment) for independent audit and validation, a comprehensive and long-

term business plan (10 years), which clearly demonstrated that the "Community Hall" enterprise, could be financially viable and commercially successful over the long term, without any reliance on support, financial or otherwise, from the Council.

The Weald TRA business plan to be submitted to the Council no later than 31 July 2008.

- d) The Weald TRA to confirm, to the Council, no later than 30 November 2008, that they have secured all necessary capital resources, to enable the comprehensive refurbishment of the Cedars Hall site (internal and external), to enable it to be brought into use as a "Community Hall".
- e) The Weald TRA to submit a full planning application to the Council for the development of the Cedars Hall site no later than 30 November 2008.

(2) That, if any of the above requirements were not realised, it be agreed that the Community Use hall option be abandoned; this decision being taken by the Corporate Director, Community and Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Community and Cultural Services.

(3) That, in event of resolution (2) above, the following be agreed:

Option 2 – Build houses – private housing

- (a) Authorise the Corporate Director, Community and Environment, to conclude disposal of the Cedars Hall site for residential development at best consideration, including placing all necessary advertisements; and
- (b) authorise the Corporate Director, Community and Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Community and Cultural Services to invest up to £100,000 from the sale proceeds, to improve local community facilities.

Reason for Decision: To enable the development of the derelict Cedars Hall site.

(See also Minute 424(1))

432. **Key Decision - Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document and Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Sustainability Appraisal:**

Cabinet received a report of the Corporate Director of Community and Environment, which related to the final drafts of the Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document and the Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Sustainability Appraisal.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise drew Members' attention to the recommendation in the report, and commended the extensive piece of work in relation to the Harrow on the Hill Conservation Area. It was recognised that conducting such pieces of work on a geographical basis was a positive change in policy, and that the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), once adopted, would assist the Council's case at any future planning appeals. She added that the next piece of work would be for Pinner.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communication and Corporate Services congratulated all for this piece of work and, as Ward Councillor, looked forward to the SPD for Pinner.

RESOLVED: That the Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document and the Harrow on the Hill Conservation Areas Sustainability Appraisal be adopted following the recommendation of the Local Development Framework Panel of 9 April 2008.

Reasons for Decision: (1) To enable the Supplementary Planning Document, together with its supporting documents, to have greater weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications both at planning committees and at appeals.

(2) To provide useful guidance to applicants, planning consultants and relevant Council departments when dealing with issues relating to Harrow on the Hill conservation areas.

433. **Key Decision - Street Light Private Finance Initiative:**

The Portfolio Holder for Major Contracts and Property introduced the revised confidential report of the Corporate Director of Community and Environment, which sought various approvals in this regard. The revised report had been circulated with the supplemental agenda.

The Leader of the Council stated that this area would involve a great deal of work which the Council would need to carry out.

RESOLVED: That (1) an increased bid to Department of Transport for PFI credits for the sum set out in the officer report, subject to confirmation, be approved;

(2) an additional procurement budget for the sum set out in the officer report be approved:

(3) the funding of the revised base case affordability gap for the sum per annum (2010/11prices), set out in the officer report, be approved for the duration of the contract term and as set out within the Council's Outline Business Case.

Reason for Decision: Following a request by PRG for Harrow to resubmit its PFI proposal, the Council had been advised by DfT of their willingness to consider an increased bid to cover likely increases in lighting column connection charges. As a result, the base case affordability gap had been amended due to the increased bid, and PRG had recommended a review of the procurement budget.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.03 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR DAVID ASHTON
Chairman