

# CABINET MINUTES

## 15 DECEMBER 2010

<b>Chairman:</b>	* Councillor Bill Stephenson	
<b>Councillors:</b>	* Bob Currie	* Graham Henson
	* Margaret Davine	* Thaya Idaikkadar
	* Keith Ferry	* Phillip O'Dell
	* Brian Gate	† Mrs Rekha Shah
	* Mitzi Green	
<b>In attendance: (Councillors)</b>	Susan Hall	Minute 101
	Paul Osborn	Minute 101
	Anthony Seymour	Minute 101

- \* Denotes Member present
- † Denotes apologies received

### 97. **Declarations of Interest**

**RESOLVED:** To note that the following personal interests were declared:

#### Agenda Item 15 – IT Service

Councillor Paul Osborn declared that he had been in receipt of hospitality from Capita. He would remain in the room to listen to the discussion on the report.

#### Agenda Item 19 – Future Organisation of Elmgrove Infant School and Elmgrove Junior School

The following Cabinet Members and Members observing the meeting from the public gallery declared that they had been or were governors of various schools. They all would remain in the room to participate in the decision-making or listen to the discussion on the report, as appropriate:

Councillors Christine Bednell, Brian Gate, Thaya Idaikkadar, Jerry Miles, Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Bill Stephenson, Anthony Seymour and Krishna Suresh.

**98. Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2010, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**99. Petitions**

**RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were submitted.

**100. Public Questions**

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

**101. Councillor Questions**

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

1.

**Questioner:** Councillor Susan Hall

**Asked of:** Councillor Phillip O'Dell, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety

**Question:** Can you provide us with an update on the number of Harrow properties that have received SmartWater property marking kits?

**Answer:** At present, it is estimated that 13,000 kits have been installed.

**Supplemental Question:** You are aware that each SmartWater file is unique to each household. Can you therefore explain, why you allowed a press release to go out encouraging people to mark their presents for Christmas that are clearly going to be given to other people and end up in other houses, with the SmartWater system? I had to retract the press release, as it was inaccurate.

**Supplemental Answer:** I am aware it is only suitable for identical properties.

2.

**Questioner:** Councillor Susan Hall

**Asked of:** Councillor Phillip O'Dell, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety

**Question** How much grit does the Council have left in stock?

**Answer:** As of Monday 13 December 2010, we have 1988 tonnes of salt in stock.

**Supplemental Question:** In January 2010, after the harshest winter in 30 years, the Leader said:

“What people want is for the pavements and side roads to be gritted”.

During the recent snowfall Harrow’s side roads and pavements clearly were not gritted, which I completely understand because it is quite impossible. Have you therefore failed in your duties or were the comments of the Leader unreasonable?

**Supplemental Answer:** I would agree that probably the Leader’s aspirations were too great.

3.

**Questioner:** Councillor Anthony Seymour

**Asked of:** Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation

**Question:** Can you provide a breakdown of all the costs associated with 'Let's Talk', including but not limited to printing, advertising, poster production and any design work?

**Answer:** Thank you for asking about the success of our Let’s Talk campaign and for clarification on the good investment that the administration is making in engaging local residents in new and exciting ways.

The total cost of the Let’s Talk campaign to date is £12,923, which includes £4,000 on the surveys, £3,200 on campaign materials such as a gazebo and banners, which the Council will be able to use again in other campaigns. It has all been fully covered in the Communication’s budget set by the previous administration.

This money is very well spent, and it is less than the full £15,000 the previous Communication’s Plan earmarked for the Have You Heard campaign.

The Let’s Talk campaign now is part of the administration’s long term policy of consulting local residents about what the Council’s priorities should be

to help us with the difficult decisions that we are going to have to make. I believe it represents excellent value for money.

Through the Let's Talk programme, residents have been able to tell us exactly what their concerns and aspirations are, and they have been involved in a dialogue that is not possible through surveys alone.

The response from residents has been impressive. So far, more than 1,000 people have returned the survey and more than 700 residents have had a conversation with a Councillor, be they a Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat or Independent Councillor, or a senior officer during the Roadshows and Open Days.

Many residents are pleased that the Council is listening to them.

**Supplemental Question:** Why did you not include a 'box' to allow for a comment by residents on the level of Council Tax?

**Supplemental Answer:** This is because it is known that every Council around the country would be setting a council tax increase of zero. As a result of the government's proposal, if a Council sets a council tax of less than 2.5%, it will receive money equal to that which would be received by a 2.5% increase in Council Tax. Therefore, it did not seem to be a very relevant question in the circumstances.

4.

**Questioner:** Councillor Paul Osborn

**Asked of:** Councillor Bill Stephenson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation

**Question:** What is the current level of the Council's reserves, and what is the effect of and the reason for changing the reserves policy, as shown in paragraphs 55-57 of the Draft Revenue Budget?

**Answer:** The Council's general balances were £6.3m at 31 March 2010. This was within the recommended minimum level of £5m-£7m. The report on tonight's agenda on the draft revenue budget proposes a minor change to the reserves policy. This change is designed to give slightly more flexibility at year end, recognising the importance of the Transformation Programme and the need to balance future budgets. For instance, it may be felt that it is better to set aside part of any surplus for

Transformation projects rather than add it to reserves, provided the Council are above the recommended minimum.

I do not believe that the policy that we are recommending is essentially different from the previous policy except unlike the previous policy, it does make direct reference to the risk assessment dictating the minimum level of reserves.

**Supplemental Question:** Could tell me what authority Cabinet has to change a decision of Council?

**Supplemental Answer:** The Cabinet, of course, has no authority to do that. This will be a matter for Council. This is a draft revenue budget.

It will come into effect when it is agreed by Council, so it is a draft recommendation to go to Council. When Council agrees it, it will come into effect.

5.

**Questioner:** Councillor Paul Osborn

**Asked of:** Councillor Mitzi Green, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

**Question:** Given the importance we all attach to child protection, what steps have been taken to get NI 60 and the new indicator replacing NI 59 back on track?

**Answer:** Whilst there was a deterioration in performance for these two assessment timescale indicators in the first half of 2010, these were as a result of the following factors:

- continued high level of referrals and child protection work;
- temporarily reduced workforce in Referral and Assessment due to maternity and vacancies;
- reconfiguration of the Referral and Assessment team following the Government 'Working Together' guidance, which stated best practice of qualified social workers completing initial assessments.

The drop in performance was identified during the first quarter of the year and management action was taken to address the workforce issues and to increase monitoring of activity. It has taken a number of months

to turn the performance round but significant improvements have been achieved in October and November. If current performance is maintained the target for core assessments should be met and the performance on the new initial assessment 10 day timescale is likely to rise to around 85%.

It is also worth noting that, in November, Ofsted visited for their second unannounced inspection of referral and assessment which involved tracking a sample of child safeguarding cases through the system. Ofsted identified significant number of strengths and no priority actions for Harrow, which is a strong result.

In addition, benchmarking information for assessments has been published by DfE during December which shows that average performance on assessments in England has dropped significantly due to pressures on the social care system and tighter reporting requirements. However, Harrow's performance is well above London and statistical neighbour averages.

Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance was published in March 2010 following the Laming Review. The Director of Children's Services immediately put changes in place to ensure that Harrow's safeguarding service was compliant. This meant that the effect of the reconfiguration fell into the beginning of the current financial year. Ofsted inspectors were initially satisfied with the Referral and Assessment set up in December 2009 and have concluded positively on the changes that were put in place following Working Together when they re-inspected in November 2010. The changes were not forced by an inspection but were proactive, in response to new guidance.

**Supplemental Question:** I welcome the improvement in the figures.

Could you give me a personal assurance that you will keep an eye on those particular indicators, especially given there was a slight improvement after Q1 that then fell back as Q2 developed?

I am concerned that the situation might happen again. There might be an initial improvement after Q2 figures which then falls back as the Council moves towards the end of Q3.

**Supplemental Answer:** I will of course keep an eye on this one.

6.

**Questioner:** Councillor Susan Hall

**Asked of:** Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah, Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services

**Question:** Has the independent person reviewing the Grants Appeals been appointed yet and, if so, when were they appointed?

**Answer:** (a) Yes the independent person has been appointed, and  
**(Provided by Cllr Stephenson)**

(b) the assignment started on 9 December 2010.

**Supplemental Question:** What is the criteria that was used for selecting the independent reviewer?

**Cllr Stephenson:** The criteria of the appointment will be sent to you.

7.

**Questioner:** Councillor Anthony Seymour

**Asked of:** Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar

**Question:** What is the current income from lettings of Council-owned buildings?

**Answer:** The Council's property investment portfolio produces roughly about £1.85m per year. That does not include housing revenue and one off licence for site compounds.

**Supplemental Question:** What steps have you taken, having regard to your manifesto commitment on page 15, to maximise the rental income for all Council owned premises which are empty or not fully occupied when not used by the Council?

**Supplemental Answer:** This has to be looked at in the light of all my disposal programmes. Some of the Council owned properties are in a very bad state of repair and are not producing an income. These are to be disposed of and with regard to other properties, the Council is doing its best to get the highest possible rent.

## 102. Forward Plan December 2010 - March 2011

The Leader of the Council advised as follows:

- the Forward Plan items on the Future Operating Model for School Improvement and the Draft Capital Programme had been deferred;
- Reducing Domestic Energy Consumption item on the Forward Plan was referenced as Delivering Warmer Homes on the Cabinet agenda at item 21;
- item 10 on the Cabinet agenda was considered to be Key, but was not listed on the December Forward Plan. Cabinet would be taking a decision on this matter in accordance with Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution.

### **103. Progress on Scrutiny Projects**

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

## **RECOMMENDED ITEMS**

### **104. Key Decision - Single Equalities Scheme**

Cabinet received a joint report from the Corporate Director Adults and Housing and Assistant Chief Executive, providing an update on the draft Single Equalities Scheme (SES) and the public consultation which had informed the Scheme.

Cabinet noted that the SES covered the Council's approach to taking forward the protected characteristics, such as age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex and sexual orientation under the Equality Act 2010. It was intended to work towards the excellent level of the new Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) with a view of achieving the excellent accreditation by March 2012. The Council's approach to equalities was to ensure that equality considerations were embedded in all aspects of service development and decision-making so as to improve services and the overall customer experience.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services identified the key changes to the SES, the responses received including those suggestions that had been taken on board, and the benefits of achieving excellence in this area. He referred to the action plan set out in the report, which would help embed the SES.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services welcomed Shelly Choudhury from the Harrow Equality Centre, to the meeting. Ms Choudhury welcomed the SES and commended the partnership working on the SES to ensure that the needs of the communities in Harrow were met. She added that following endorsement by Council in 2011, work in implementing the SES and meeting expectations would need to be progressed.



**Resolved to RECOMMEND:** (to Council)

That the Single Equalities Scheme (SES) be approved.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the changes made to the consultation draft as a result of the comments received be approved, including the Executive Summary attached at Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) the Council's commitment to working towards achieving the excellent accreditation under the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) by March 2012 be re-affirmed.

**Reason for Recommendation:** To ensure that equalities were key to service development and decision-making and those services were fair and equitable. To improve services, increase customer satisfaction and comply with the Council's obligations under the Equalities legislation and Public Equality Duties.

## **RESOLVED ITEMS**

### **105. Capital Programme**

Cabinet received a report of the Chief Executive, advising of an overspend in the Children's Services Capital Programme. The report also summarised how the overspend had arisen and the steps taken to avoid any repetition. It was noted that an independent financial investigation had been undertaken by Rita Greenwood, Independent Financial Consultant and formerly Director of Finance, London Borough of Havering, and Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) in this regard.

The Chief Executive invited Ms Greenwood to address the meeting in respect of her investigation into the financial management of the projects and the capital programme. Ms Greenwood stated that the investigation had related to two flagship projects and that, together with PwC, she had been appointed to ensure a transparent and open approach to the investigation. She had interviewed a number of officers and reviewed numerous documents as part of her investigation. A number of recommendations had been made and that the Council had shown a commitment to implementing the recommendations and to ensure that the whole of the organisation learnt from this experience.

The Chief Executive apologised to residents and Councillors for the mistakes of a small number of staff and assured Members that all the recommendations made by the investigation would be taken on board. He added that the Council's Governance, Audit and Risk Management Committee would be charged with reviewing progress made in relation to the recommendations and that Internal Audit would monitor compliance in six months' time. He proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to carry out work on how projects were monitored.

The Chief Executive stated that there would be no impact on the services provided to residents or the Council Tax levied; as a result of this overspend.

The Leader of the Council also apologised to residents and stated that they, and the Councillors and staff had been badly let down. He reiterated that the overspend would not impact on front-line services or Council Tax. The investigations had been open and transparent.

The Leader added that he had kept the Chairmen of the Governance, Audit and Risk Management and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, including the Leader of the Opposition, fully informed throughout. He did not want to score party political points about this matter. However, in case anyone did want to, for the record, these problems had not occurred on his 'watch'. The Leader stated that the Council needed to learn from its mistakes to ensure that such a situation never occurred again.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the report and the actions already being taken be noted;
- (2) the Governance, Audit and Risk Management Committee be requested to monitor and report on the implementation of the recommendations within agreed timescales;
- (3) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee carry out development work on how the Council monitored its projects.

**Reason for Decision:** To understand the issues in the Council's Capital Programme and their impact going forward.

## **106. Annual Audit Letter**

Cabinet received the Annual Audit Letter on the 2010 Audit, which summarised the work carried out by the Council's external auditor, Deloitte LLP, in relation to the 2009/10 accounts.

The Corporate Director Finance stated that a detailed report had been presented to the September meeting of the Governance Audit and Risk Management Committee, and that due to the investigation into the overspend report earlier, there had been a small delay in signing the accounts. She added that considerable assessment work had been carried out in the Use of Resources; however it was disappointing that the scores had not been published in light of the discontinuation of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime.

**RESOLVED:** That the Annual Audit Letter for 2009/10 be noted.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure awareness of the content of the annual audit letter.

*[Call-in does not apply to this decision.]*

**107. Key Decision - Revenue and Capital Monitoring for Quarter 2 - as at 30 September 2010**

In accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, additional papers in relation to Appendix 2 to the main report were not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. Members were requested to consider these papers setting out the detailed schedule of movements on the capital programme, as a matter of urgency, in order to approve the revised capital programme as per recommendation (d) in the report.

The Corporate Director Finance introduced the report, which set out Council's revenue and capital monitoring position as at 30 September 2010. She corrected a typographical error on the projected outturn which should have read £174.495m.

The Corporate Director identified the overspend across Directorates and areas where there was an underspend, including some key aspects of the report such as debt management and the capital investment reported on earlier. She added that a further virement was necessary in respect of an urgent project which related to the replacement of a key component of the CCTV enforcement system as this was no longer supported by the manufacturer. She added that the cost of the project was £125k and the investment was essential to maintain the income from enforcement. Cabinet was informed that the Community and Environment Directorate were proposing to fund this by transferring money over from the street lighting capital budget.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the revenue and capital forecast outturn position for 2010/11 be noted;
- (2) the virements set out below to fund various corporate pressures be approved;

<b>Description</b>	<b>From £000</b>	<b>To £000</b>
Transformation Programme Professional Fees		97
Transformation Programme Adults Consultation Cost Pay Award	177	80
Cost of carrying out asbestos surveys in Schools and Corporate Accommodation following Health and Safety Executive improvement notice Pay Award	247	247
Capital Investigation cost (see paragraph 18)		150
Audit fees (see paragraph 18)	150	
CCTV Enforcement System		125
Street Lighting Capital Budget	125	
<b>Total</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>699</b>

- (3) the contribution to earmarked reserves for Local Housing Allowance, at paragraph 16 of the report be approved;
- (4) the amendments to the Capital Programme at appendix 2 be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** To present the forecast financial position and actions required to be taken.

#### **108. Half Year 2010/11 Treasury Management Activity**

The Corporate Director Finance introduced the report, which set out a half-year summary of Treasury Management activities for 2010/11. It was noted that the overall objective of Treasury Management was to manage the Council's cash flow, borrowing and investments and to control the associated risks so as to maintain security, liquidity, maximise return on investments and minimise changes on loan debt with minimal risk to the Council's assets.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the half-year treasury management activity for 2010/11 be noted;
- (2) the Governance, Audit and Risk Management Committee be recommended to review the report.

**Reason for Decision:** To promote effective financial management and comply with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2003 and other relevant guidance. To be informed of Treasury Management activities and performance.

#### **109. Key Decision - Draft Revenue Budget 2011/12 to 2015/16**

Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director Finance detailing the Draft Revenue Budget 2011/12 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2011/12 to 2015/16. It was noted that key stakeholders would be consulted on the draft budget through the coming months prior to the budget being set by Council in February 2011. In addition, the Council would be taking into account the outcomes from the Let's Talk campaign.

The Leader of the Council stressed that this was a draft budget and that the final budget, including the amended reserves policy, would be submitted to the February 2011 meetings of Cabinet and Council. He stated that the budget process was challenging partly due to the recession, the cuts imposed by the coalition government resulting in in-year cuts in Directorates and the grant settlement received; the latter of which was only announced on 13 December and its true impact unknown and currently being worked on.

The Leader stated that whilst Harrow's grant settlement might be less severe than that of other London boroughs, its impact would still have an adverse impact. The Council had already made savings of £45m and would now have to make a further £50m cuts over the next three years equating to nearly a third of the controllable budget. For the next financial year, a saving of £19m was likely. The Better Deal for Residents Programme had resulted in some

savings and the administration would be looking at proposals for further savings and re-examining growth pressures. Fees and Charges would be reviewed in the New Year together with the Capital Programme. The Council was aiming for a 0% increase in Council Tax with a possibility that, in subsequent years, there would be rises in the region of 2.5%.

The Corporate Director Finance confirmed that the impact on Harrow of the grant settlement announced on 13 December was currently being worked on.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Draft Revenue Budget 2011/12 and the Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 to 2015/16 be approved;
- (2) the Planned Investment In Services and Efficiency Programme be noted;
- (3) the Revised Reserves Policy detailed at paragraph 56 of the report be approved.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure that the Draft Budget 2011/12 was published.

**110. Key Decision - Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget 2011/12 to 2015/16**

Cabinet received a joint report of the Corporate Director Finance and the Divisional Director Housing, setting out the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2011/12 - 2015/16, which was subject to the annual HRA subsidy determination and agreement of income maximisation options.

The Leader of the Council stated that in looking at the draft HRA budget, the wider housing strategy set out in the Housing Ambition Plan and its ambitions had to be taken into account. The current budget was unsustainable, HRA balances were declining and there was a need to ensure that the HRA was viable in the longer term. The Leader added that to help increase the revenue stream, it was proposed to delete the revenue contribution to capital outlay (RCCO) of £500k and to fund it by borrowing. He mentioned that various ways of rectifying the situation were being examined and consultation would be undertaken with the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum. These included:

- a review of rent strategy possibly bringing forward rent increases;
- fully recovering facility charges from tenants and leaseholders as well as ensuring that leaseholders pay in full for repairs and maintenance work;
- reviewing charges for garages and community halls to ensure full cost recovery.

Should these proposals be accepted, they would go a considerable way to increasing the revenue to the HRA budget.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the draft HRA budget 2011/12 - 2015/16, set out at appendix 1 to the report, be noted and be referred to the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum in January 2011;
- (2) tenants be consulted on the options on the revised Rent Strategy;
- (3) officers be authorised to consider further options to maximise income to the HRA and report back to Cabinet in February 2011 to enable the 2011/12 rent increase to be approved following consultation;
- (4) the Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) be deleted and the programme be funded by borrowing.

**Reason for Decision:** To publish the draft budget.

#### **111. Key Decision - Calculation of Tax Base for 2011/12**

The Corporate Director Finance introduced a report, which explained that the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Local Government Act 2003) required the Council to formally calculate the Council Tax Base for 2011/12 and to pass this information to precepting authorities by 31 January 2011. She added that the Council Tax base had to be set between 1 December 2010 and 31 January 2011. She added that an assumed collection rate of 98.25% in Council Tax had been factored in the draft revenue budget.

**RESOLVED:** That the following information given in the report be agreed:

- (a) the Band D equivalent number of taxable properties was calculated as shown in accordance with the Government Regulations;
- (b) the provision for uncollectable amounts of Council Tax for 2011/12 was agreed at 1.75% producing an expected collection rate of 98.25%;
- (c) subject to resolutions (a) and (b) above, a Council Tax Base for 2011-2012 of 87,148 Band D equivalent properties (being 88,700 x 98.25%) be approved, allowing for payment in lieu of Ministry of Defence properties.

**Reason for Decision:** To fulfil Council's statutory obligation to set the Council Tax Base for 2011/12.

#### **112. IT Service**

Cabinet received a report of the Corporate Director Finance, setting out the position following the transfer of the IT service to Capita on 24 November 2010.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services commended the Corporate Director Finance and Director of Customer Services and Business Transformation for their work in ensuring a successful transition through some challenging negotiations which had been achieved with the support of Eversheds and Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC). The new contract would help move forward the Transformation Programme.

The Leader of the Council also thanked the Director of Customer Services and Business Transformation, Head of Information Technology, Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services and the Portfolio Holder Assistant for their work in this area.

**RESOLVED:** To note that the transfer of the IT service had been effected.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure awareness of the final stages of the project.

*[Call-in does not apply to this decision.]*

### **113. Strategic Performance Report (Q2)**

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services introduced the report, which summarised Council and service performance against key measures, including areas where further action was required.

The Portfolio Holder was pleased that performance had remained strong during Quarter 2, the period from July - September 2010, with some notable achievements during a period of cuts. Going forward, the Council would continue to face many challenges.

The Portfolio Holder was proud that the Council had been nominated for the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) 'Most Improved Council' for the second year running and that the management team in Adults and Housing had been nominated for the LGC Management Team of the Year. He highlighted some of the key achievements in each of the Council's Directorate, details of which were set out in the report. Corporately, sickness absence continued to improve but the challenge going forward would be to maintain the current levels with the scale of change the Council would have to go through. In addition, the Better Deal for Residents Programme had made significant progress and that the completion of the IT outsourcing would be a key driver to its continued success.

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder stated that given the grant settlement announced on 13 December, the in-year cuts that the Council has to had to make due to government proposals and the increased difficulties that residents have had to endure due to the recession, many challenging decisions lay ahead.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted and Portfolio Holders continue working with officers to achieve improvement against identified key challenges.

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

#### **114. Health Inequalities Strategy**

Cabinet received an information report of Dr Andrew Howe, Director of Public Health, NHS Harrow, setting out the strategic framework to reduce health inequalities in Harrow. The report also set out changes to the Public Health function as a result of the NHS and Public Health White Papers.

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, introduced Dr Andrew Howe to the meeting and remarked on the relationship between the Council and NHS Harrow (formerly Harrow Primary Care Trust - PCT) moving forward. It was noted that the responsibilities for health improvements would transfer from the PCT to local authorities from April 2013 and that Councils would need to employ a Director of Public Health.

Dr Andrew Howe referred to the daily government guidance being issued in this area with a move towards encouraging people to improve their own health. New national strategies were expected in areas such as tobacco control, obesity, pandemic flu and health protection. Partnership working would be a key aspect to ensuring success of the three domains of public health:

- health improvement - including tackling health inequalities through addressing the determinants of health such as housing, education;
- health and social care services - supporting efficiency and clinical effectiveness;
- health protection - working on infectious diseases, emergency response and environmental health hazards.

Dr Howe informed Cabinet that local authorities would have to establish Health and Well-Being Boards to ensure co-ordination of the commissioning of local NHS services, social care and health improvement. Active engagement with General Practitioner commissioners would be required. He added that the local Director of Public Health would be responsible for a ring-fenced which would be allocated to the borough relative to population need. In conclusion he offered to keep Cabinet informed of changes.

The Chief Executive referred to a discussion at the meeting of the Harrow Partnership Board meeting held on 14 December on the financial position of the PCT. He informed Cabinet that he had personally written to the Chief Executive of the PCT expressing concern about the reduction in the public health budget. In view of the reduction, the PCT had a moral obligation to protect public health budgets.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.



**Reason for Decision:** To ensure awareness of the proposals to reduce health inequalities.

*[Call-in does not apply to this decision.]*

#### **115. Key Decision - Future Organisation of Elmgrove Infant School and Elmgrove Junior School**

The Portfolio Holder for Schools and Colleges introduced the report, which informed Cabinet of the statutory proposals published in October 2010 to effect the amalgamation of Elmgrove Infant School and Elmgrove Junior School. The Portfolio Holder added that no objections had been received during the representation period and he commended the report to Cabinet to enable the two schools to combine in September 2011 that would help improve education standards.

**RESOLVED:** That, having approved the statutory proposals, Elmgrove Junior School and Elmgrove Infant School be amalgamated in September 2011, namely to:

- extend the age range of Elmgrove Infant School and Nursery to establish a primary school with an age range of 4 years (Reception) to 11 years (Year 6) with attached nursery class from 1 September 2011;
- expand the capacity of Elmgrove Infant School and Nursery from 1 September 2011;
- close Elmgrove Junior School on 31 August 2011.

**Reason for Decision:** To combine the two schools and to give an opportunity to further improve educational standards by enabling planning as a coherent whole across the primary phase of the national curriculum and provide greater flexibility across and between key stages.

To comply with the statutory duty to determine the proposals within two months from the end of the representation period, which ended on 15 November 2010, rather than refer the matter to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for determination.

#### **116. Key Decision - Progress Report - The Carbon Reduction Commitment Scheme**

The Corporate Director Community and Environment introduced the report, which set out the progress made on registering for the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) Scheme and the actions needed to ensure compliance and good performance in the Scheme. The Corporate Director explained the key drivers of the Scheme and the benefits of taking forward the action plan.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the progress made to date on registering and preparing for the CRC scheme be noted;
- (2) the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan outlining the necessary actions and responsibilities to deal with the CRC at a corporate level, a draft of which was set out at Appendix A to the report, be agreed;
- (3) the Corporate Director Community and Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety, be authorised to progress the actions in the Plan, including the setting up of a steering group;
- (4) further investigations into the RE:FIT programme be undertaken with a view to a report being submitted to Cabinet by March 2011.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure participation in the CRC, which was a statutory requirement. To note that the CRC carried potentially significant costs with an overall aim of reducing the amount of energy being used.

To ensure a co-ordinated response from the whole Council towards reducing energy use. The actions set out above needed corporate and political endorsement to enable them to be delivered from the whole Council. To ensure that the RE:FIT programme provided the capital necessary to deliver the required energy efficiency programme.

**117. Key Decision - Delivering Warmer Homes**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety introduced a report setting out the progress on implementing the Council's Climate Change Strategy - Domestic Energy, and the development of the Harrow Strategic Partnership's (HSP's) Affordable Warmth/Fuel Poverty Strategy. He identified the two proposals that would involve negotiations with the utility companies to ensure benefit for residents.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the draft Affordable Warmth/Fuel Poverty Strategy be noted and submitted to the Harrow Strategic Partnership for consideration and further public consultation;
- (2) officers be authorised to explore external partnerships under the Community Energy Saving Programme to retrofit homes in the borough's seven Super Output Areas identified as fuel-poor;
- (3) officers be authorised to explore partnership options to install solar PV on the roofs of Council housing;
- (4) a report back on resolutions 2 and 3 above be submitted to Cabinet by March 2011.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure continued progress in the delivery of the Climate Change Strategy. To ensure that energy consumption within the borough continued to reduce and the borough and its residents were equipped to deal with predicted future increases in energy prices.

#### **118. Key Decision - Draft Transport Local Implementation Plan 2**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety introduced the report, which set out the plan for transport improvements in the borough included in the draft second Local Implementation Plan (LIP2) and sought authority to undertake public consultation on its content. He added that LIP2 was a statutory document that would require approval from the Mayor of London following a recommendation from the Transport for London (TfL). Consultation on the LIP2 would end in February 2011.

The Corporate Director Community and Environment stated that all work on the LIP2 was reliant on funding from TfL and not from Council resources.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the draft LIP2 be approved for the purposes of public consultation;
- (2) officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety, be authorised to agree changes and updates to the final consultation draft LIP2.

**Reason for Decision:** The LIP2 was a statutory document requiring London authorities to prepare under the Greater London Authority (GLA) Act 1999 and required the approval by the Mayor of London. To consult on the draft LIP2 which was also a statutory requirement.

#### **119. Key Decision - Annual Monitoring Report**

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise introduced the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010. The AMR indicated the performance of Harrow Council against a set of nationally and locally defined indicators designed to monitor the implementation of planning policies.

In reaching the decision, Cabinet also considered a recommendation from the Local Development Framework Panel held on 14 December, which was tabled at the meeting and had not been available previously due to the close proximity of meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the Annual Monitoring Report 2009/10, at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved for submission to the Secretary of State;
- (2) the Divisional Director Planning be authorised to make non-material amendments to the Annual Monitoring Report 2009/10 prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.

**Reason for Decision:** To comply with the requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for submission of the Annual Monitoring Report before the deadline of 31 December 2010.

## 120. Key Decision - Residential Design Guide SPD

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise introduced the report, which sought the adoption of the Draft Residential Design Guide SPD (2010) at Appendix A to the report. It was noted that the SPD would form part of the Harrow Local Development Framework and, upon its adoption, would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for development that resulted in the creation of new homes, extensions or conversions to dwellings.

In reaching the decision, Cabinet also considered a recommendation from the Local Development Framework Panel held on 14 December, which was tabled at the meeting and had not been available previously due to the close proximity of meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (1) subject to the incorporation of the amendments recommended made by the Local Development Framework Panel on 14 December, the Residential Design Guide SPD (2010), at Appendix A, be adopted;
- (2) the Divisional Director Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enterprise, be authorised to make any typographical corrections, illustrative insertions and any other non-material changes to the SPD that may become necessary prior to final publication of the SPD and to permit its effective use online.

**Reason for Decision:** To ensure that the SPD was a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for residential development, conversions and householder alterations/extensions.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.49 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR BILL STEPHENSON  
Chairman