

2003 – 2004
February 2004 Volume 9



**CABINET
AND
COUNCIL
MINUTES**

CABINET AND COUNCIL MINUTE BOOK

VOLUME 9: FEBRUARY 2004

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(* **Note:** Meetings of the Joint Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the scrutiny of the future of Mount Vernon Hospital, established under the statutory provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2001: Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002.)

COUNCIL
AND
COUNCIL
COMMITTEES

JOINT OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of the Mount Vernon Issue

Minutes of Meeting – 15th December 2003

County Hall, Bedford

Present:

Cllr David Horne	- London Borough of Hillingdon (Chair)
Cllr Duncan Ross	- Bedfordshire County Council
Cllr Victor Lee	- Bedfordshire County Council (substitute for Cllr Reedman)
Cllr Jennifer Woolveridge	- Representing Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Mary O'Connor	- London Borough of Hillingdon
Cllr Eric Silver	- London Borough of Harrow
Cllr Ken Coleman	- Hertfordshire County Council
Cllr Gideon Fiegel	- London Borough of Brent

Also Present:

Simon Wood	- Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority
Steve Peacock	- North West London Strategic Health Authority
Geoff Bocutt	- Luton Borough Council
Bill Hamilton	- Bedfordshire County Council
Clare Kaye	- Hertfordshire County Council
Guy Fieghan	- London Borough of Hillingdon
Alan King	- London Borough of Hillingdon
Roger Edwards	- Buckinghamshire County Council
Heather Smith	- London Borough of Harrow
Katherine Peddie	- Bedfordshire County Council (Minutes)

1) Apologies:

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Marie-Louise Nolan	- London Borough of Harrow
Cllr Pauline Wilkinson	- Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Sian Timoney	- Luton Borough Council
Cllr Anna Pedersen	- Luton Borough Council
Cllr David Reedman	- Bedfordshire County Council
Cllr Duncan Ross	- Bedfordshire County Council needed to leave early
Cllr Roma Mills	- Hertfordshire County Council

2) Declaration of Whip

No member of the Committee declared a whip on any of the items on the agenda before them.

3) Disclosure of interests

No member of the Committee declared a pecuniary or non pecuniary interest in any of the items on the agenda before them.

4) Minutes of the last meeting

It was noted that a further council member from the London Borough of Hillingdon present at the meeting was Cllr Mike Gettlestone and not Cllr Mike Gatherer as stated in the previous minutes. Subject to this amendment, the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

5) Correspondence

The Committee agreed to include a further item on the agenda, namely the dissolution of the Committee.

The correspondence was noted.

6) Response of the Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) to the Joint Committee report on Mount Vernon

Members were concerned that the response included with the minutes had no reference to the response of the Thames Valley Strategic Health Authority. The

Committee **AGREED** that Simon Wood should forward the information to Bill Hamilton to forward on to the members of the Committee with the minutes of this meeting.

Members asked who was responsible for making the final decisions; was it the PCTs or the Strategic Health Authorities?

In the case of North West London SHA, the PCTs made the decisions which were ratified by the SHA. Following this, a meeting was arranged with representatives from each of the PCTs and the SHA to formalise the decisions.

In the case of Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire SHA, the PCTs conferred delegated powers on representatives to make decisions at a specially convened meeting of the PCTs and the SHA. That Joint Committee took decisions relating to Investing in your Health proposals and not outcomes for individual bodies.

The Committee **AGREED** that the Department of Health should be asked to clarify respective decision making responsibilities of the SHAs and PCTs when the consultation involves local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees from a number of authorities.

Bill Hamilton explained that as the SHAs had taken on board all of the recommendations of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, there would be no grounds to refer to the Secretary of State. However, there were specific local issues arising from the commitments given in response to the consultation that concerned members and officers. The Committee **AGREED** that Bill Hamilton would act as a liaison between the Committee and the SHAs and that he should enter into dialogue with Simon Wood and Steve Peacock to ascertain the impact of the decisions on each authority. Bill Hamilton would then contact each authority via the support officers detailing in a position statement prepared by the SHA the impacts to them.

Roger Edwards was concerned that should the SHAs consult or send the conclusions to the Thames Valley SHA the information would not be passed on to the Buckinghamshire Health O&S Committee. It was **AGREED** that Roger Edwards should contact Steve Peacock from the North West London SHA directly.

The representatives from the SHA suggested that it may be beneficial to set up a central communications and information centre strategy between the SHA and authorities so that specific individual questions may be addressed. The Committee **AGREED** that this should be taken forward by the SHAs and that local authorities should be given a central contact who can provide information on the decisions made.

Further concerns were raised about the provision of health services in North West London as it was felt that a number of services were being moved to Hertfordshire. However Mr Peacock assured the committee that this was not the case and that two major treatment centres had already been established in North West London and that the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital had chosen the option of rebuilding its services in situ and not relocating.

It was noted that there were two major but separate issues, the first being the transfer of funding back to the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire SHA so that the SHA could develop its own cancer services. The second was that in taking the decisions forward from the consultation on Mount Vernon, the North West London SHA would be producing a strategy early in the new year to consult on the future of Cancer Services in North West London.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Joint Committee would encourage and welcome the Strategic Health Authority's commitment to produce the strategy for North West London and consult on it. The proposed publication of the Cancer Strategy for North West London should specifically address the role of Mount Vernon and other hospitals within that strategy and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the affected local authorities would be consulted.

7) Response of the DoH, LGA, ALG to the recommendations of the Joint Committee in respect of the establishment and operation of the joint health scrutiny committees.

Bill Hamilton reported that he was going to meet with the Department of Health, on the 22nd January 2004 and representatives from the LGA, NHS Confederation, ALG, Centre for Public Scrutiny, Democratic Health Network. It was understood that the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee on Cleft Palette services in the North West of England would also be sending a representative. Bill had drafted a note on the problems arising through the Joint Health Scrutiny process and possible solutions to those problems.

In preparing for the Joint Committee meeting it had become apparent that there was a major omission in the Direction of the Secretary of State in that a Joint Committee had the ability to scrutinise, the ability to request information and the ability to request the attendance of NHS officers to their meetings. However, the right to reference back an issue to the Secretary of State (regulation 4.7) reference seems to fall back on the individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees from individual authorities and not the Joint Committee. This matter would be taken up in the meeting with the DoH.

One of the major issues associated with working jointly was that in order to reduce the burden on the NHS, widespread consultation with local authorities potential resulted in a large and therefore cumbersome committee. Simon Wood suggested that at the meeting on the 22nd January, Bill Hamilton could suggest that the regulations could be changed to say that where there is local agreement between the NHS and local authorities that more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee may be beneficial, this could be allowed. It was also suggested by Bill Hamilton that the wording of the Direction could simply be changed from "shall" to "may" to give more flexibility.

It was **AGREED** that each authority could add to the report that Bill Hamilton had drafted with their comments for the appendices. Bill would then present this paper to the meeting on the 22nd January and suggest the amendment to the Direction:

*"Where a local NHS body consults more than one overview and scrutiny committee pursuant to regulation 4 of the Regulations on any proposal it has under consideration for a substantial development of the health service or a substantial variation in the provision of such service, the local authorities of those overview and scrutiny committees **MAY** appoint a joint overview and scrutiny committee for the purposes of the consultation"*

8) Meeting the costs of the joint committee

Bill Hamilton circulated a paper outlining the basis for assessing the marginal cost of convening and operating the Joint Committee and the basis for charging each of the authorities involved in the Joint Committee.

The committee **AGREED** that this was a fair charge and that in view of the work involved, each of the authorities had received more than value for money. It was also **AGREED** that once the final figures from Hillingdon had been received that they should be incorporated into the report and invoices be sent out to the participating authorities including the London Borough of Brent. Furthermore it was **AGREED** that Bill Hamilton should use this paper to highlight to the Department of Health the costs of running a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

9) Additional Item – Dissolution of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

The Joint Committee noted that the main purpose of establishing the committee, to respond to the consultation of the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire and North West London SHAs on the funding for the future role of Mount Vernon in light of the plan to provide new Cancer Services in Hertfordshire had been undertaken. The report had been written and the SHAs had taken on board as their own the recommendations of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

Lessons had been learnt by the Joint Committee which were to be passed on to the Department of Health and other bodies to make recommendations as to the improvement of the process. It was agreed that Bill Hamilton would forward details on to each authority of the outcomes of the meeting on the 22nd January.

The work of this committee had now completed. Attention now needed to be focused on the proposed North West London SHA consultation on its strategy for cancer services in North West London in the new year. It was agreed that Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Luton should not be influencing the outcome of that consultation and that therefore there would be no further need for this particular committee to continue to meet.

It was **RESOLVED** that this committee be dissolved and that thanks should be passed on to all officers supporting the committee and in particular to Bill Hamilton and his team.

OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE

REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Jean Lammiman

Councillors: * Blann * Mary John (3)
 * Currie (3) * Myra Michael (1)
 * Gate (1) * Osborn
 * Mitzi Green * Pinkus
 * Ingram * Thammaiah

* Denotes Member present
 (1) and (3) Denote category of Reserve Member

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL
PART II - MINUTES
130. Attendance by Reserve Members:

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Ann Groves
 Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan
 Councillor Seymour
 Councillor Versallion

Reserve Member

Councillor Currie
 Councillor Gate
 Councillor Myra Michael
 Councillor Mary John

131. Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Currie declared a personal interest in agenda item 9(b), "Housing Revenue Account 2004/05", by virtue of being a member of the Shadow Board of the ALMO, and also in agenda item 9(a), "Budget 2004-2005 and Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy for Consultation".

Councillor Jean Lammiman declared a personal interest in agenda item 12, "Consultation on the Draft Community Strategy for Harrow", by virtue of being a Member of the Board of the Harrow Strategic Partnership. She stood down from the chair for that item.

Councillor Mitzi Green declared a personal interest in agenda item 13, "Review of Housing Benefit Administration", by virtue of having a relative in receipt of Housing Benefit.

RESOLVED: To note the declarations of interest made by Councillor Currie, in respect of agenda items 9(a) and 9(b), by Councillor Jean Lammiman, in respect of agenda item 12, and by Councillor Mitzi Green, in respect of agenda item 13, and that the Members participated in the discussions and decisions on those items.

132. Arrangement of Agenda:

There was a desire for the Finance and Human Resources and Performance Management Portfolio Holder, who was in attendance at the meeting for agenda item 9(a), to also be in attendance for the Committee's consideration of agenda item 10, "Progress Report on the Draft HR Strategy". The Portfolio Holder needed to leave the meeting immediately following agenda item 9(a), however, in order to attend another budget consultation meeting. In light of this, it was agreed to defer consideration of agenda item 10 to the next meeting of the Committee, which would be a Special meeting on 2 March 2004.

RESOLVED: That (1) agenda item 10, Progress Report on the Draft HR Strategy, be deferred until the Special meeting of the Committee on 2 March 2004;

(2) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda items be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
14(b) Review of the New Harrow Project: Tabled Scoping report	The scoping report was only agreed by the Review Group at its meeting on 30 January 2004. The scoping report needs to be approved in order that the review can proceed.
17. Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value Performance Indicators	The Chair requested that this be added to the agenda after the dispatch of the main agenda. The Committee needs to consider the report at this meeting if it is to make any comments on the proposals for changes to Best Value Performance Plans before the close of the consultation.

(3) all items be considered with the press and public present.

133. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

134. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

135. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

136. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

137. **Budget 2004-2005 and Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy for Consultation:**

The Committee received a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Executive Director (Business Connections) which had been submitted to Cabinet in December, and which set out a proposed base budget for consultation. The Committee also received some officer amendments and a revised Appendix A which had been tabled at the Cabinet meeting, and the relevant recommendation and minute of the Cabinet meeting. The Cabinet had approved the base budget – which would result in a 3.87% Council Tax increase - for consultation. It had also agreed to consult on nine budget options.

At the meeting, the Executive Director (Business Connections) reported that, since the December Cabinet meeting, the Council had received its final settlement from the Government, and there was no change to the level of government funding from the provisional settlement. Nor was there any change in the amount to be passported to schools, although there was a minor change in the Formula Spending Share (FSS) for the Council. This would not impact on the proposed budget. However, Cabinet had agreed at its January meeting to offer Council taxpayers who pay by direct debit the option of paying in 12 monthly instalments; this, together with other changes to the budget following further work and announcements since that time, would marginally alter the Council Tax increase from the proposed budget prior to consultation options.

The various ways in which the budget was being consulted upon, and the number of responses received so far, were outlined. In response to Members' queries, further information was provided on the budget consultation meetings and, in particular, on the issues raised at those meetings.

It was noted that the budget included a significant level of procurement and efficiency savings. Members queried why the savings had arisen this year and whether they resulted from changes in working practices. There was also concern about the achievability of the projected procurement savings, which totalled more than £6m overall for 2004/05 and 2005/06.

The Finance and Human Resources and Performance Management Portfolio Holder, who was present, advised Members that this was the first year that the Council had had a fully staffed procurement unit. The Executive Director (Business Connections) added

that the unit had already achieved some savings but 2004/05 was the first year that the full-year effect of these would be seen. The areas to which the procurement savings related were outlined, and it was advised that there was an action plan underpinning the savings which could be provided to Members if they wished. It was also confirmed that some of the efficiency savings resulted from new ways of working using IT.

The Committee agreed that it should receive a report back on procurement, and it was suggested that the procurement update report which would be submitted to the Best Value Advisory Panel the following week be circulated to Members. This was agreed.

Noting that the budget included a reduction in staff costs as a result of the NHP restructure, a Member felt there was a public perception that the NHP had added layers of management rather than reduced staff costs, and queried where these savings would arise from. It was reported that the Council had commissioned a piece of work to look at the structure of the Directorates beneath the top management teams, and that this would be working up proposals in the next six weeks. The Portfolio Holder added that the NHP had not resulted in additional layers of management but in the Council taking on more frontline staff; the aim of the reorganisation was to reduce layers of management and to focus resources on service delivery. The Member remained concerned that these figures were included in the budget, but stated that he would await the outcome of the piece of work with interest.

It was also noted that the December Cabinet meeting had been advised that figures in relation to possible redundancies and pension implications arising from the review of middle managers were not yet available. It was advised that this remained the case. The Chair requested that the Committee receive early notification of these figures.

Assurance was sought that the efficiency savings had been allocated against individual budget heads, in order that there could be some accountability for achieving them. It was confirmed that this had been done for all the efficiency savings with the exception of the savings arising from the reduction in sickness absence and the NHP restructure; these would, however, be allocated before 1 April 2004. There was also concern that the efficiency savings would be lost sight of in future years as the budget was rolled forward; it was suggested that this was a presentational issue which could be looked at, perhaps as part of the scrutiny review of budget processes.

A Member felt that the level of reserves which the Council was seeking to accumulate should be reduced and any surplus spent on new initiatives. The Executive Director (Business Connections) advised, however, that he had a duty as the Section 151 officer to advise the Council on the level of reserves. The consequences of not having sufficient reserves, if something untoward should happen, were explained. It was also pointed out that the level of reserves was a decision of Council. The risk management process currently being carried out across the Council was highlighted.

In response to queries from Members, clarification was provided with regard to the inclusion in the budget of both budget reduction and growth items relating to special educational needs. Further information was also given on some of the growth items, and on the items of additional inflation. A Member suggested that the majority of the latter items were outside the Council's control; it was confirmed that while this was currently the case, the Council was looking at developing new procurement methods to generate improved value for money. Members also received assurances that all growth items had been subject to an officer challenge process.

It having been noted that the Council would be drawing up its business continuity plan in 2004/05, there was concern that the growth bid for a business continuity officer was only included in the budget for 2005/06. It was advised, however, that the additional resource was for the implementation of the plan; there was already sufficient expertise within the Council to draw up the plan. It was noted that business continuity planning was regularly raised at meetings of the Committee, and the Chair suggested that a regular update on this be received on the information circular.

A Member wished to raise some issues relating to education matters but in light of the requirement for church and parent governor co-optees to be present for discussions on such matters, it was agreed that these queries be put to officers in writing. The meeting was assured, however, that the education budget had been thoroughly scrutinised by the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee. Whether the Council would continue to receive funding for the Gatsby Project was also queried; the Executive Director (Business Connections) undertook to provide a written response on this.

Upon assurance being sought that concerns about home care charges were being

responded to appropriately, the way in which the Council was responding to individuals and organisations was explained. It was noted that the Social Services Portfolio Holder would be holding a meeting with relevant organisations to hear their concerns; the Chair requested that the Committee be advised whether this meeting was open to other Members. There was also concern about the wording of the letter sent to clients about the proposals. The meeting was reminded that the Council had a statutory duty to consult clients on this, but it was confirmed that the wording of the letter could be reviewed. The Chair requested that it be done as a matter of priority, as this had also been an issue previously.

In response to queries from the Chair, ways in which risk to the budget had been minimised, and the major areas of risk, were outlined. On being asked to assess the overall level of risk to the budget, the Executive Director (Business Connections) felt that this was low to medium. The Finance and Human Resources and Performance Management Portfolio Holder agreed; the budget-setting process had been much more rigorous this year, and given the greater level of analysis, he felt that the risk to the budget was lower than in previous years. On being asked to assess the level of risk to the budget for 2005/06, the Portfolio Holder stated that a lot of the savings in the budget for 2005/06 would be the development of work done in 2004/05; he therefore felt that the risk to the 2005/06 budget would be slightly, but not significantly, higher.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(See also Minute 131).

138. **Housing Revenue Account 2004/05:**

The Committee considered a report on the Housing Revenue Account for 2004/05 which had been submitted to Cabinet in January, together with an addendum and revised appendices which had been produced following the receipt of the final HRA subsidy determination, and which had also been submitted to Cabinet. The Committee additionally received the recommendation to Cabinet from the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum, and the Cabinet's recommendation to Council. The Cabinet had agreed a 2.7% increase in rents, fees and charges.

At the meeting, it was reported that the HRA position had changed since the production of Appendix F to the report. The report should therefore be treated as a rent increase report and Appendix F used for illustrative purposes only; a further report on the HRA would be submitted to Cabinet in February. In addition, it was advised that, in light of difficulties with the tenant consultation process due to the late notification of the HRA subsidy, officers would be looking at revising this process for next year.

It was noted that Appendix F to the report did not provide a very detailed breakdown of the HRA. It was advised that Appendix F met the statutory requirements in terms of the information that the Council was required to produce. There would be a review of the HRA later in the year, however, which would go into more detail. In addition, officers were seeking to tie the HRA in more closely with the General Fund and the Medium Term Budget Strategy, and there was also a need to develop a 3-year HRA; presentational issues could be looked at in the course of both these pieces of work. A Member also felt it would be helpful to see how the annual figures tied in with the 30-year HRA Business Plan; it was suggested that this could be done as part of the review of the HRA.

The Chair highlighted that there was a need to determine how the HRA would be built into scrutiny's consideration of the budget in future. She suggested that this be considered as part of the scrutiny review of budget processes which was currently ongoing. The Lead Member for the review undertook to take this on board.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) the Scrutiny Review Group on budget processes consider how the HRA would be built into scrutiny's consideration of the budget in future.

(See also Minute 131).

139. **Review of Housing Benefit Administration:**

The Committee received the final report of the review of Housing Benefit Administration.

The Lead Member for the review, Councillor Ingram, stated that there had been a dramatic improvement in the performance of the Housing Benefit service during the period in which the review had been carried out. Staff were to be commended on this, as it had only been achieved through radical action and radical cultural change. As a result, however, the recommendations arising from the review were relatively minor

issues, mainly relating to vulnerable claimants. The Lead Member for the review was confident that these could be addressed.

Officers welcomed the review report and the level of interest shown by scrutiny in this matter. All the recommendations were being taken on board, and the way in which they were being addressed was outlined. This included the production of a regular “traffic light” monitor of the key housing benefits performance indicators for both the Corporate Management Team and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report would include a brief summary of the issues facing the service, and a mechanism to trigger exception reports. Information was also provided on actions being taken in relation to risk management, and it was confirmed that a lunchtime seminar on the lessons from Project Phoenix would be built into the programme of management seminars for the year.

In response to a query from a Member, details were provided of the percentage of claims submitted without all the necessary information. The Member believed that the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) was receiving an increased number of complaints about Housing Benefits. It was advised that officers had regular meetings with the CAB, but it was acknowledged that the service still needed to improve.

In response to further questions, actions currently being taken to support vulnerable claimants were outlined. New ways to further support such claimants, which the service would be seeking to introduce in future, were also outlined, including community surgeries, working from the offices of Registered Social Landlords and carrying out remote assessments in claimants' own homes.

It having been noted that the service was currently implementing a new IT system, there was concern that this might undo the improvements which had been achieved in the performance of the service. It was advised, however, that at the time at which the review report had been written, there had been a number of performance issues with the new system; officers had since seen how these had been addressed in other authorities. In addition, there had been significant testing of the system. All staff had received training on the new system, and extra temporary staff had also been taken on to help out during this period.

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be endorsed and a watching brief be maintained on the performance of the department via the “traffic light” indicators;

(2) the report and recommendations be referred to the Portfolio Holder for consideration.

(See also Minute 131).

140.

Corporate Plan:

Members considered a draft of the Corporate Plan.

Members raised a number of issues which they felt were lacking from the priorities and outcomes set out in the draft Plan. A Member was concerned that there was no mention of Neighbourhood Watch under priority 2C, developing stronger partnerships with other service providers. It was advised, however, that this would fall under priority 2B, reducing anti-social behaviour and making Harrow safer. It was also explained that if items were not explicitly mentioned, this did not mean that they would be ignored; Members needed to make a judgement on the level of detail required in the plan.

It was suggested that not enough priority had been given to arts and sports and in particular the provision of facilities, for example in parks. It was advised that this was addressed by priority 1C, improving parks and open spaces, but that it would also be addressed in the community strategy; a significant percentage of the responses to the consultation on the community strategy related to the provision of services for young people.

Upon it being noted that the plan did not refer to the Council giving priority to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians, Members' attention was drawn to the outcome under priority 1D relating to less reliance on car use. In addition, it was suggested that this could be followed up at the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee. Members also felt that reference should be made under priority 4B, improving the health of residents, to raising the fitness level of the population and, in particular, that of young people. Officers undertook to look at this.

With regard to references made in the CPA/IDeA Improvement Plan, which was

appended to the Corporate Plan, to Members acting as ambassadors for the Council and selling and explaining decisions, a Member felt that this was a role for Cabinet Members only and that it was inappropriate to expect other Members to do this. It was advised, however, that scrutiny members should be acting as ambassadors for scrutiny. In response to a further comment about the reference to scrutiny under priority 5 of the Improvement Plan, it was stated that scrutiny itself had to be subject to scrutiny, and there would be a review of scrutiny in the next few months. A Member suggested that the Committee should examine its effectiveness prior to the review, but the Chair stated that this was under consideration by the scrutiny Chairs, who had met recently. The Chair also reported that she and the Sub-Committee Chairs had been interviewed as part of the re-inspection by the IDeA peer review team; the outcome of that inspection, like all external inspections, would be reported to scrutiny in due course.

Noting that one of the outcomes under priority 1D was better public transport, the way in which this would be achieved was queried. It was stated that this was a question for the relevant Portfolio Holder or Executive Director, but the Council would probably seek to achieve this through work with relevant partners. It was stressed, however, that the purpose of the Corporate Plan was to outline the long-term direction for the Council; the detail of how the priorities would be achieved would be set out in relevant service plans.

Members remained unsure as to the usefulness of the document without links to relevant key performance indicators and LPSA targets and without a period of delivery attached to the outcomes. How success against the Plan would be measured was queried. It was confirmed that many of the outcomes were based on key performance indicators and LPSA targets; earlier versions had included relevant indicators and timescales, but it had been considered that these versions went into too much detail. It was reiterated that the purpose of the Plan was to set out what the Council wanted to achieve; the way in which it would do this would need to follow in other plans.

The Chair suggested that it would be helpful to have a map or diagram which showed links to performance indicators and targets. Members also felt that where possible reference should be made to specific plans with precise recommendations, as had been done under priority 3E, improving the Borough's library provision, with the reference to the Library Position Statement.

RESOLVED: That the draft Corporate Plan be noted, and the Committee's comments forwarded to the Cabinet.

141. **Extensions of the Meeting:**

At 9.57 pm, during discussion of the above item, and subsequently at 10.27 pm, during discussion of the Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value Performance Indicators, the Chair drew the attention of the meeting to the time.

RESOLVED: That, under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6.7(ii)(b), the meeting be extended to 10.30 pm and 10.35 pm respectively.

142. **Consultation on the Draft Community Strategy For Harrow:**

(Note: Councillor Jean Lammiman declared a personal interest in this item and therefore stood down from the chair. The Vice Chair, Councillor Mitzi Green, took the chair.)

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development) which provided an update on the process of consultation on the draft community strategy for Harrow, and the main issues raised through the public consultation undertaken up to December 2003.

A Member who had been present at one of the focus group meetings expressed concern at the level of attendance at the meeting. In response, the way in which the meetings had been extensively publicised was outlined. Consideration was being given, however, to carrying out a further consultation event in the town centre on a Saturday. It was also confirmed, in response to a query from a Member, that tenant representatives had been invited to participate in the consultation.

A Member questioned the extent of balance between the issues emerging from the community strategy and the resources needed to address them. It was advised that the member organisations of the Strategic Partnership would be identifying actions that they would be taking in the next two to three years which would address some of the issues, and this would highlight the issues which would not otherwise be addressed. In the light of competing priorities, however, the Council was not obliged to deliver on every desire which had been expressed.

It was noted that the second draft of the community strategy would be submitted to the

Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 30 March 2004, and that the Chair of the Sub-Committee had agreed that any members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee wishing to backbench at that meeting were welcome to do so. Members were also urged to attend the Member seminar on the community strategy and the annual report of the Director of Public Health, which would take place at 6.30 pm on 18 February 2004.

RESOLVED: That the consultation process so far, and the early results received, be noted.

(Note: Following the conclusion of this item, Councillor Jean Lammiman resumed the chair).

(See also Minute 131).

143. **Progress Reports on Reviews - Members' Verbal Updates:**

(i) **Review of Budget Processes**

The scoping report for this review had been approved by Urgent Action since the last meeting of the Committee, and circulated on the current information circular. The Lead Member for this review, Councillor Ingram, confirmed that the review would consider how the HRA would be built into scrutiny's consideration of the budget in future, as agreed during the earlier discussion on the HRA (Minute 138 refers), and advised that there was nothing further to report.

(ii) **Review of the New Harrow Project**

The Committee considered a draft scoping report for this review, which had been tabled. This was agreed.

It was stated that the input of any other Members wishing to get involved in this review would be welcomed. The dates of the Review Group meetings would be circulated to all Members and Reserve Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That (1) the scoping report for the review of the New Harrow Project be agreed;

(2) the verbal updates be noted.

144. **Urgent Action:**

RESOLVED: To note, and insofar as is necessary, to confirm the following Urgent Action taken with the approval of the Nominated Members since the last Ordinary meeting of the Committee:-

Scrutiny Review of Budget Processes

Approval was given to the scope for the Scrutiny Review of Budget Processes.

145. **Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value Performance Indicators:**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development) which set out the ODPM's proposals for Best Value Performance Plans (BVPPs) and Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) for 2004/05 onwards, and a draft response to the proposals, both of which had been tabled. It was advised that the deadline for submission of responses to the ODPM was the day following the meeting.

A Member was unhappy at being asked to endorse a draft response which he had not had sufficient time to consider. Another Member felt, however, that since the Committee was being given the opportunity to comment on the response, it should do so.

It was noted that the draft response commented on which elements of the BVPP were considered useful or not, and it suggested that the inclusion in the BVPP of key performance indicators (KPIs) for the last three years was not useful. Members disagreed with this suggestion; while it was acknowledged that the KPIs changed frequently, it was felt that where a trend could be established, this was helpful. Officers were therefore requested to remove this paragraph from the response.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

146. **Issues Relating to Forthcoming Meetings of the Committee:**

The Chair, having raised this as an item of any other business, reminded Members that the next ordinary meeting of the Committee would be held on 27 April 2004. It was suggested that the Leader and the Chief Executive be invited to this meeting as part of their regular attendances and also to brief the Committee of forthcoming key work areas and challenges for use in formulating the 2004/05 scrutiny work programme. This was agreed. It was also agreed that there would be a planning session to prepare for the meeting, to which all Members and Reserve Members of the Committee would be invited.

Members were also reminded that there would be a Special meeting of the Committee on 2 March 2004 to consider the Medium Term Capital Budget Strategy, and that if there were any items on the Information Circular which they would like brought onto the agenda, they should contact the Committee Secretary.

RESOLVED: That the Leader and the Chief Executive be invited to attend the next ordinary meeting of the Committee on 27 April 2004.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.31 pm, closed at 10.31 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JEAN LAMMIMAN
Chair

SCRUTINY
SUB-COMMITTEES

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**8 DECEMBER 2003**

- Chair: * Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan
- Councillors: * Ann Groves * Anjana Patel
 * Lavingia * Silver
 * Myra Michael * Thammaiah
- Advisor (non-voting): * Dr S Ahmad

[Note: Councillor Jean Lammiman also attended this meeting in a participating role].

* Denotes Member present

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**105. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

106. **Declarations of Interest:**

Councillor Myra Michael declared a personal interest in agenda item 16, 'Mount Vernon Hospital – Update', by virtue of her husband's position as a former Executive at the Gray Laboratory.

RESOLVED: To note the declaration of interest made by Councillor Myra Michael in respect of agenda item 16, and that the Member participated in the discussion and decision on that item.

107. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency listed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
14. Review of Delayed Transfers of Care – Refined Scoping Report	Consultations on the refined scope have only just been completed. The Sub-Committee needs to endorse the changes to the scope of the review before the review proceeds further. The next meeting of the Sub-Committee is due to take place on 23 March 2004, by which time the review is scheduled to be completed.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

108. **Minutes:**

In light of the relevant signed Minute Volume not being available, it was

RESOLVED: That the signing of the minutes of the Special meeting held on 24 July 2003, of the joint meeting of the Health and Social Care and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 17 September 2003, and of the ordinary meeting held on 18 September 2003, be deferred to the next meeting.

109. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

110. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

111. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

112. **Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital - Diagnostic and Treatment Centre:**

The Sub-Committee received a presentation on the proposals for the redevelopment of the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH) in Stanmore from Andrew Woodhead, Chief Executive of the RNOH, and Tessa Litherland, Project Director for the Independent Sector Treatment Centre.

Mr Woodhead outlined the type of work currently undertaken at the RNOH, and why there was a need for the RNOH to be redeveloped. The hospital was expected to treat an increasing number of patients and to reduce the waiting times for treatment, yet the hospital buildings were old and physically separated, and the layout of the site did not lend itself to modern service delivery. The redevelopment would take 5 to 6 years and would result in modern buildings with lower estate costs, better physical adjacencies, and the development of new ways of working. However, there would be a need for additional capacity in the medium term and this would be addressed by the creation of the Independent Sector Treatment Centre, due to open in September 2004.

Ms Litherland explained the background to the Treatment Centre and detailed the type and amount of work which it would undertake. Although it would be run by OR International, an independent sector provider, it would treat NHS patients, whose care would be paid for by their Primary Care Trust (PCT). The Centre would treat straightforward day and short stay cases, and would carry out approximately 4,500 procedures. Some of this capacity would be taken up by cases from the RNOH's current workload while the rest of it would be taken up by patients from the local economy to reduce waiting times. The way in which the service would be run, together with the next steps in the development of the Treatment Centre, were outlined.

In response to Members' questions, further information about OR International, the cost and the funding of the Treatment Centre, was provided. The Department of Health was funding some set-up costs, but PCTs would fund all the additional cases treated. PCTs had long waiting lists for orthopaedic operations, so the creation of the Treatment Centre would enable them to buy more capacity. OR International viewed the Treatment Centre as an opportunity to start working in this country with the NHS, while for the NHS this was the only way to achieve such an increase in capacity in the timescale. Whether the Treatment Centre would continue once the redevelopment of the RNOH was completed would depend on the performance of the independent sector provider, but options were currently being kept open.

There was some discussion about where the staff who would work at the centre would be recruited from, and the impact of this on the local economy. It was advised that OR International were required to find new staff - they were not allowed to poach staff from the RNOH - and they would therefore be bringing in staff from Europe and the United States. Consequently, the employment opportunities at the Treatment Centre would not be for Harrow residents in the first instance, but the people coming to work at the Centre would live in the area. It was also confirmed that there were strict rules and procedures laid down for the recruitment of staff for whom English was not their first language.

A Member noted that patients treated at the Centre would be discharged within no more than a few days, and expressed concern about aftercare arrangements. It was confirmed that patients would be discharged quicker because they would be receiving intensive therapy; this would enable patients to be discharged at day 4 with the same mobility as they would have had at day 8. In addition, referral and discharge criteria were being developed and consideration was being given to the whole patient pathway. With regard to the increased numbers of local patients who would be treated, concern was also expressed about the impact of this on services provided by the Local Authority. It was confirmed that it would create a bigger demand for these services, although by treating patients sooner the demand on their carers and community based care would be reduced. The same concern had also been raised by PCTs, so this would be monitored. Officers stated, however, that the Council would need figures for the expected through-put of Harrow patients in order that it could manage its budget and resources for these services. Mr Woodhead agreed to take this away as a point of action.

A Member was concerned about the continuation of care for RNOH patients who were treated at the Treatment Centre. It was advised, however, that some RNOH clinicians would also be working in the Centre and they, not the OR International consultants, would treat the RNOH patients. Patients would not be handed over from one clinical team to another.

Noting that the new facility was due to open in September 2004, the Chair highlighted that the required protocols and pathways would need to be developed very soon. It was confirmed that work to develop these was already under way, and consultation had been undertaken with Barnet and Hertfordshire PCTs and with GPs, although no consultation had as yet been undertaken with Local Authorities. Members were concerned that the Harrow PCT had not been included in this consultation. It was explained, however, that although the RNOH was in Harrow, it was in a different health authority area to Harrow PCT, and Harrow PCT had other facilities for the treatment of orthopaedic cases: the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust was the prime provider for Harrow patients. The percentage of Harrow patients treated at the RNOH was less than the number from Barnet and Hertfordshire, although this percentage was expected to rise as the RNOH undertook more routine work. Mr Woodhead nevertheless accepted Members' view that Harrow PCT should be included in consultations.

On behalf of the Sub-Committee, the Chair thanked Mr Woodhead and Ms Litherland for coming, and stated that Members looked forward to visiting the Treatment Centre in due course.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

113. **Harrow PCT's NHS Performance Rating and Performance Improvement Plan:**
Sue McLellen, Chief Executive of the Harrow Primary Care Trust, introduced the PCT's Performance Improvement Plan, which had been prepared in response to the Trust's 'no star' NHS performance rating for 2002/3.

The results of the 2002/3 performance rating were summarised and the way in which the Performance Improvement Plan had been developed was explained. This had included examining the rationale behind each of the indicators, and undertaking a risk assessment for all 46 indicators to identify the risk of not achieving them in the 2003/4 performance rating. The process had resulted in an action plan focusing on key areas including performance management, the three 'failed' key performance indicators in 2002/3, leadership development and clinical governance, and some of the work required in these areas was detailed. The way in which the Performance Improvement Plan was now being taken forward, including the arrangements for reporting and monitoring progress against the Plan, was outlined.

Ms McLellen also reported on the arrangements for the performance rating for 2003/4. It was hoped that the indicators against which Trusts would be measured would be known in January 2004, although it was assumed that these were to be broadly similar to those measured in 2002/3. Current projections were that the PCT would achieve the two primary care access targets, and the PCT had an action plan in place for single telephone access. The indicators which it would be most difficult to achieve would be total time in Accident and Emergency, smoking cessation, and financial management. With regard to the latter, there were significant financial pressures on continuing care and prescribing.

Members asked a number of detailed questions on issues such as the reconfiguration of NHS Direct, the new GP contract and the progress of the GP appraisal system. Additionally, in response to questions from Members, further information was provided on initiatives relating to smoking cessation. The meeting was advised that the smoking cessation service, which had formerly been provided by Brent PCT, had been brought back in-house in the light of concerns about its performance. The PCT had now implemented a pharmacy-led smoking cessation scheme, and the lead officer on this had been very active in getting community pharmacies engaged in the service. Performance on smoking cessation at the end of the second quarter this year had exceeded performance for all three quarters against which the PCT was measured last year, so it was hoped that there would be significant improvement against this indicator this year.

Concern was expressed about both the overspend on and the quality of prescribing, in response to which initiatives being undertaken in this area were outlined. These included the introduction of 28-day prescribing to reduce wastage, and the development, via the Professional Executive Committee and community pharmacists, of better links between pharmacists and GPs, in order that pharmacists could advise and challenge GPs on their prescribing practices.

Concern was also expressed about the number of indicators for which the PCT had not provided data, or had provided invalid data, and it was acknowledged that this had been a problem last year. In some cases, there had been a general lack of understanding among staff of the significance of this information, but responsibilities for inputting data had now been clearly defined. In addition, it was reported that the Trust had appointed a performance manager, and had identified a director to lead on each of the indicators.

On behalf of the Sub-Committee, the Chair thanked Ms McLellen for attending.

RESOLVED: That the PCT's Performance Improvement Plan be noted.

114. **The North West London Hospitals NHS Trust Performance Improvement Plan 2003/04:**

Mike Thompson, Head of Performance and Development at the North West London Hospitals NHS Trust, introduced the Trust's Performance Improvement Plan for 2003/04.

The performance of the Trust in 2002/03 was reviewed and the Trust's 2 star NHS performance rating for 2002/03 was highlighted. The national and local frameworks against the backdrop of which the Performance Improvement had been produced were outlined. The Performance Improvement Plan had identified 8 key areas for improvement and for each of these areas progress towards achieving the relevant indicator in the 2003/04 NHS performance ratings was summarised.

It was reported that a number of the key indicators for the North West London Hospitals Trust were also key indicators for Brent and Harrow PCTs. In light of the deficit in the local health service economy, the targets were not sustainable. New ways of working therefore needed to be found, and a number of examples of joint working between the Trust and the PCTs were given.

Members and Council officers were particularly concerned about the quality of the Trust's data, as this had an impact not only on the Trust's indicators but also on those of the PCT. Some of this data also fed into returns which Social Services were required to produce. The meeting was advised that the quality of data had already been improved, and all submissions for 2003/04 should include the improved data. It was also agreed that regular links be established between Social Services and the Trust to liaise on data required for returns.

There was concern that the performance rating system encouraged the Trust to focus on the areas on which performance was measured, to the detriment of areas where it was not. How the Trust reconciled health outcomes with the outcomes it was measured on was queried. In response it was advised that, although those areas where performance was measured were prioritised, the Trust continued to provide a vast range of services on which it was not measured. In addition, if the Trust achieved a 3-star rating, this would result in it having greater freedom and flexibility to plan services for local need.

The Chair thanked Mr Thompson for coming to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Trust's Performance Improvement Plan be noted.

115. **SSI Annual Review of Performance Letter:**

Members considered a report of the Director of Children's Services, which referred the SSI Annual Review of Performance Letter to the Sub-Committee for consideration, and reported on the star rating received by the Authority.

The Letter identified areas of improving performance and areas of concern, and also commented on capacity for improvement. The Authority had again received a one-star rating, although there had been significant improvements in children's services. The Letter had been reported to Cabinet, which had agreed that remedial actions to achieve improvements be incorporated into the People First business plans.

In response to Members' questions, further information was provided on a number of issues raised in the Letter, including the work on-going to integrate older people's services with the PCT and the implementation of the National Service Framework for Older People, and the implementation of new IT systems. In addition, following a query from a Member, officers were requested to circulate information on the number of people currently on the waiting list for the Asian home meals service to all members of the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

116. **Published Tables of the Personal Social Services Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) Indicators:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of People First Strategy which advised of the Council's performance as reported in the Department of Health's publication of the national results of Personal Social Services Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) Indicators for 2002-2003. In addition, some mid-year figures and the 2003-2004 projected out-turn for the PAF indicators were tabled at the meeting.

Discussion focused on the need for a new IT system to address problems with data collection and calculation, and the Chair reminded Members that the Sub-Committee had made a reference to Cabinet on this issue last year. It was advised that resources for a new IT system had been identified, but there was not yet agreement across the Council as to the most cost effective and low risk solution. Discussions on this were on-going, however, and it was hoped that a decision on the way forward would be made within the next month.

RESOLVED: That the publication of the Personal Social Services Performance Assessment Framework Indicators for 2002-2003 be noted.

117. **Extensions of the Meeting:**

At 10pm, during discussion of the above item, and subsequently at 10.15pm, following discussion of agenda item 13, "Scrutiny Review of Support to Carers – Action Plan" the Chair drew the attention of the meeting to the time.

RESOLVED: That, under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6.7(ii)(b), the meeting be extended to 10.15 pm and 10.20 pm respectively.

118. **Scrutiny Review of Support to Carers - Action Plan:**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Head of Community Care, which set out an action plan drawn up in response to the recommendations of the Sub-Committee's review of support to carers.

Members welcomed the action being taken, in particular the appointment of a Young Carers' Development Worker in recognition of the needs of young carers, and the work being done on exploring other options for transport to day care services. It was suggested that progress against the action plan be reviewed again at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That (1) the action plan be noted;

(2) progress against the action plan be reviewed again at a future meeting.

119. **Review of Delayed Transfer of Care - Refined Scoping Report:**

The Sub-Committee received a refined scoping report for the scrutiny review of delayed transfers of care.

RESOLVED: That the refined scope for the review of Delayed Transfers of Care be approved.

120. **Progress Reports on Reviews - Members' Verbal Updates:**

(a) **Review of Travel Concessions**

The Chair gave a verbal update on this review, further work on which had been postponed. She reported that a corporate project on transport was now being undertaken which would comprehensively review this whole area, including concessionary fares, taxicards and blue badges. It was therefore suggested that an interim report on the project be made to the Sub-Committee at its March meeting, in order to enable the Sub-Committee to formally decide whether to continue or close its review.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Chair's verbal update be noted;

(2) an interim report on the corporate project on transport be submitted to the Sub-Committee in March.

121. **Mount Vernon Hospital - Update:**

The Chair reminded Members that information had been circulated on reaction of the North West London Strategic Health Authority to the outcome of the consultation, and on the option which had ultimately been selected by the Beds and Herts Strategic Health Authority, which was that of a new hospital in Hatfield.

She advised that a further meeting of the Joint (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee for the Scrutiny of the Future of Mount Vernon Hospital would be held in Bedford at 6.00 pm on Monday 15 December.

RESOLVED: That the Chair's verbal update be noted.

122. **Special Meeting of the Sub-Committee:**

The Chair, having raised this as an item of any other business, highlighted the number of items on the work programme for the next scheduled meeting of the Sub-Committee on 23 March 2004, and stated that if all these items were submitted to the next meeting it would not be possible to consider them in as much depth as would be liked. She therefore suggested that an additional meeting of the Sub-Committee be held in January in order to deal with some of those items. Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That a Special meeting of the Sub-Committee be held on 28 January 2004.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.24 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair

LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)**11 DECEMBER 2003**

Chair:	* Councillor Mitzi Green	
Councillors:	* Mrs Bath (4) * Miss Bednell * Gate * Ismail * Mary John	* Lent * Janet Mote * Marie-Louise Nolan * Osborn (2)
Voting Co-opted:	(Voluntary Aided) † Mrs J Rammelt † Reverend P Reece	(Parent Governors) * Mr H Epie † Mr R Sutcliffe

* Denotes Member present
(2) and (4) Denote category of Reserve Member
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES****102. Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Jean Lammiman
Councillor John Nickolay

Reserve Member

Councillor Osborn
Councillor Mrs Bath

103. Declarations of Interest:

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

104. Arrangement of Agenda:

RESOLVED: That (1) item 10 'Review of the Recruitment and Retention Process for School Governors' be discussed informally at the rise of this meeting;

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present;

(3) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency listed below: -

Agenda Item:

9. Proposed Schools Budget for 2004/2005

Special Circumstances/ Grounds for Urgency:

The information contained within the report was not available at the time of printing the main agenda.

To allow Members of the Sub-Committee to comment on the proposed schools budget and make references (if any) to the meeting of Cabinet on 16 December 2003, where a decision on the proposed schools budget would be made.

105. Minutes:

RESOLVED: That (1) the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read;

(2) authority be given to the Chair to sign the minutes as a correct record following the meeting.

106. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

107. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

108. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

109. **References from Council and Other Committees/Panels:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no references received from Council and / or other Committees.

110. **Proposed Schools Budget for 2004 / 2005:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Executive Director (People First) which Members of the Sub-Committee, along with Members of the Education Consultative Forum and the Schools Forum, had received a presentation on the evening before from the Education Financial Services Manager. The report outlined proposals for the Schools Budget 2004 / 2005, which the Authority is under an obligation to agree and notify to the Secretary of State by 31 December 2003.

A Member of the Sub-Committee commented that a handout of the presentation notes would have been useful. The Member also stated that the Education Financial Services Manager advised that aspects of the budget allocation were difficult to understand and the Member requested that they be drafted in more straightforward terms if this was the case. The Chair sympathised with both Members and officers in relation to the complexity of the education budget and requested that Members be sent a copy of the notes of the presentation for information.

Members discussed the following areas for concern in relation to the proposed Schools Budget for 2004 / 2005: -

- (i) that although Harrow's Schools Budget for 2004 / 2005, consistent with passing on the increase in school funding, is £103,770,000.00 (an increase of £6,311,000.00 - 6%), Members agreed that this was still insufficient. A Member stated that the increase did not address the fact that Harrow has been underfunded for many years and Harrow's baseline has always been low, which suggests that Harrow is being penalised for having successful schools.
- (ii) that Harrow's headteachers have advised that an increase of 8-9% is required to retain the status quo alone. The Sub-Committee agreed that it is important for Members of the Council to make strong representations to the Government and use political pressure to ensure that the Government and not Harrow's taxpayers support this deficit in finance.
- (iii) that the Government's indication that there will only be funding for one third of teachers moving on the upper pay spine to UPS 3. Members agreed that this was a cause for concern, as this will negatively impact on teacher recruitment and retention, particularly in high schools. A Member stated that this policy is at cross-purposes with delivering excellence in education.

Another Member of the Sub-Committee suggested that Members examine the financial burden on schools as a result of the remodelling of the school workforce, which forms part of the Government's Remodelling Agenda to meet the National Agreement on Teachers' Pay and Conditions. The Member referred the Sub-Committee to the Outturn Statement for 2002 / 2003, which highlighted ten schools that had £15,000.000 or less in their end of year balances and queried how they would cope with the remodelling.

Members requested information relating to the Outturn Statements for 2002 / 2003 and those projected for 2003 / 2004. Members were advised that the current detail of projected balances for 2003 / 2004 would not be available except in cases where schools had provided information as part of detailed work with the Education Finance Service. The Chair also requested that Members be provided with information on schools' identified use of their 2002 / 2003 balances committed for specific projects: how many of these there were and how the proposed budget would influence the

outcome of these projects (i.e. which projects would not now be completed).

The Sub-Committee agreed that Cabinet be requested to consider how schools that experienced financial difficulty, as a result of this budget, would be supported in terms of officer / adviser assistance to manage their budgetary position. Members agreed that it was important for the Authority to have support mechanisms in place before these schools were in real financial difficulty.

Members further discussed the four main cost pressures on the Schools Budget that were not included within the Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy (Appendix 1 of the report). The Sub-Committee agreed that Cabinet be requested to respond as to how each of the cost pressures would be met by the £2,900,000.00 available, particularly the UPS 3 cost pressure.

Members discussed the three methods of support for schools in financial difficulty outlined in the report from the Department for Education and Skills guidance (DfES) "Supporting Schools in Financial Difficulty" and noted that one option was not available to the Authority and that the other two options were not satisfactory. A Member of the Sub-Committee stated that withdrawing funds from schools that had been managing their budgets well to give to schools with low cash reserves was not an appropriate remedy. Neither was asking for next year's budget early, as it would only intensify problems in relation to next year's budgetary provision. The Sub-Committee agreed that it was important to emphasise to Cabinet the inherent dangers in these methods of support.

RESOLVED: That (1) Cabinet be

- (i) requested to respond as to how each of the cost pressures outlined in the report would be met by the £2,900,000.00 available, particularly the UPS 3 cost pressure;
- (ii) requested to consider how schools that experienced financial difficulty, as a result of this budget, would be supported in terms of officer / adviser assistance to manage their budgetary position;
- (iii) made aware of the inherent dangers within the methods of support outlined in the DfES guidance document "Supporting Schools in Financial Difficulty".

(2) Members be sent a copy of the notes of the presentation by the Education Financial Services Manager for information;

(3) Members receive information available on the Outturn Statements for 2002 / 2003 and those projected for 2003 / 2004, specifically in relation to schools which have low reserves;

(4) Members be provided with information in relation to how many special projects were identified in the Outturn Statement for 2002 / 2003 and how this new budget would influence the outcome of these projects.

111. **Review of Recruitment and Retention Process for School Governors:**

RESOLVED: That this item be discussed informally at the rise of the meeting (see Minute 104).

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.34 pm, closed at 8.15 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MITZI GREEN
Chair

LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**20 JANUARY 2004**

Chair:	* Councillor Mitzi Green	
Councillors:	* Miss Bednell * Gate * Ismail * Mary John * Jean Lammiman	* Lent * Janet Mote * John Nickolay * Marie-Louise Nolan
Voting Co-opted:	(Voluntary Aided)	(Parent Governors)
	† Mrs J Rammelt † Reverend P Reece	* Mr H Epie † Mr R Sutcliffe

* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

[Note: It was noted that Reverend Reece was absent, as he was engaged in urgent duties of his Ministry].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 (To Council) - Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2004-06**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Executive Director (People First) which outlined the Early Years and Childcare Strategy for 2004-06. Members were informed that all local authorities were required to have such a strategy, designed to build on the 2001-04 Early Years and Childcare Strategy. Members were asked to note that the strategy was now based over a two-year period, in contrast to the previous strategy, which had a four-year duration. The Early Years and Childcare Services Manager set out the targets which had been achieved within the strategy to date and listed targets for 2004-06. Members were directed to the draft strategy itself and asked for feedback and comments on any aspect of the report.

The Vice Chair drew Members attention to a statement contained within the report which advised that the participation rate as a percentage of the three year-old population would be 75% in 2005-06, and queried what would happen in terms of funding if this estimation was not realised. Responding, the Education Financial Services Manager advised that funding currently received from central government was not dependant on the Council meeting this target of 75%, hence there would be no retraction of funds.

The funding from government was currently based on the provision of funds for 85% of the three-year old population, which is the government's estimate of universal provision. Members were informed that it was likely that the government would replace this funding for universal provision with the actual percentage of the three-year old population in receipt of a place in due course. This may lead to reduced funding in future years if the Council does not meet the government's target of 85%.

The Chair directed Members to the report of the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan Working Party, received at the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 21 January 2003, which examined the Early Years Development and Childcare Plan 2001-04 in detail. The report set out the Working Group's findings and recommendations, which were subsequently endorsed by the Sub-Committee and forwarded to Cabinet in Municipal Year 2002-03. With reference to Recommendation (ii) of this report, the Chair enquired about the publicity campaign that the Sub-Committee had requested to advertise nursery places.

The Early Years and Childcare Services Manager advised that Harrow People, the local press and the web site had been used to publicise the availability of places for three-year olds. Members were informed that children from ethnic minorities were specifically targeted via work with the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and focus groups (recently held at Stag Lane and Stanmore First and Middle Schools), which emphasised the benefits of early years care and education. The Sub-Committee was also informed that the Early Years and Childcare Service had been working with ethnic minority group leaders and had visited Mosques and met refugee leaders to inform of the childcare provision options available.

A Co-opted Member questioned why some ethnic groups were underrepresented in nurseries. In response, the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager advised that

this was due to the perception of early years and childcare within some ethnic minority cultures. Members were informed that some cultures may hold the view that a three-year old should be cared for and educated within the home, as they view it to be more beneficial for the child.

A Member felt that this view should be respected and that it was important for parents not to feel pressurised into sending their child into an early years and childcare establishment before they are ready to. The Early Years and Childcare Services Manager agreed that it was important for parents to exercise their choice in how best to care for their child but that the role of the Early Years and Childcare Service was to ensure that parents were made aware of the value in pre-school settings and various options in relation to childcare provision, e.g. taking up childcare places two or three times a week instead of five.

The Sub-Committee was informed that childcare provision has been advertised in all Harrow libraries and on the Council's web site, and that the Marketing and Information Manager sought to ensure that all information on the web site is up to date and revised at regular intervals. A Member of the Sub-Committee advised that any articles on childcare provision would be welcome in Harrow People.

The Early Years and Childcare Services Manager gave Members details of the Parents as First Teachers Programme, which is being held at the Hillview Centre and is currently over-subscribed. Members were informed that officers were currently seeking to expand this programme in light of the demand from parents.

A Member queried how special educational needs (SEN) provision tied in with early years and childcare provision. The Early Years and Childcare Services Manager advised that the Council would soon be publishing a booklet aimed at accessing these services for children with such needs. Members were informed that Area SENCOS had been appointed and this has led to excellent outcomes for children with special educational needs and that the transition into statutory schooling has become much smoother for many pupils, largely due to the pre-schooling facilities now in place.

In relation to a query from a Member with regard to the Parent Partnership Unit, the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager advised that the Area SENCOS would normally meet with families and facilitate communication between the parents and the early years and childcare provider, and that the Parent Partnership Unit would normally support those families going through the statementing process.

A Member congratulated the Early Years and Childcare Service's partnership with the Job Centre and hoped that the relationship would develop and flourish. The Member also queried whether the service was fully staffed. The Early Years and Childcare Services Manager advised that there was only one vacancy at present, for a Senior Childcare Development Officer, and that there should be no problems in filling this vacancy based on the response rate for previous vacancies.

In response to a question from a Member, the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager advised that transport issues for children with special educational needs were dealt with by the Manager (Assessment and Provision) and the Children Services Manager. Members were informed that the Early Years and Childcare Services aimed to place children as close to their local childcare provider as possible.

The Chair queried whether the backlog of childminder applications had been cleared, as identified in the Recommendation (i) of the Working Group's report (January 2003). Responding, the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager confirmed that there are no longer any delays and that an application currently takes six weeks from start to finish, which is on target, and that since last year OFSTED have visited the Council and held Criminal Record Checks Surgeries, which has sped up the process.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the report be noted and comments referred to Council for consideration.

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That Council be requested to note the Sub-Committee's comments on the Early Years Development and Childcare Strategy 2004-06.

Reason for Recommendation: To meet the timescale for consultation for Council to agree an Early Years and Childcare Strategy for 2004-06.

[Note: See also Minute 119].

PART II - MINUTES112. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

113. **Declarations of Interest:**

During the discussion of Item 11 'Progress Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy', Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan declared a personal interest in the item by virtue of being a Governor of Whitefriars First and Middle School. In addition, Councillor Jean Lammiman declared personal interests by virtue of being a Hatch End Ward Councillor and a member on the Board of Harrow Arts College.

RESOLVED: To note the declarations of interest made by Councillors Marie-Louise Nolan and Jean Lammiman in respect of Item 11, and that the Members participated in the discussion and decision on that item.

114. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following items be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency listed below: -

Agenda Item	Special Circumstances / Grounds for Urgency
9. Education Budget 2004 – 2005	Appendix C to this report was not available in the correct format at the time of printing the main agenda. Members are requested to consider Appendix C in conjunction with the officer report and appendices A, B and D, in order to formulate recommendations on the budget to Council.
12. Progress Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy	This report was not available at the time of printing the main agenda. Members are requested to consider the report in order to note the progress on the implementation of the Cultural Strategy.
13. Review of the Recruitment and Retention of School Governors	This report was not available at the time of printing the main agenda. Members are requested to consider the report and make amendments (if any), in order for the final report of the review to be drafted in accordance with the agreed timescale.

(2) Item 11 be taken in advance of Item 9;

(3) all items be considered with the press and public present.

115. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That (1) the minutes of the Special meeting held on 11 December 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read; and

(2) authority be given to the Chair to sign the minutes as a correct record following the meeting.

116. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at the meeting.

117. **Petitions:**

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

118. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting.

119. **Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2004-06:**

Further to Recommendation 1, the Sub-Committee also discussed the following issues.

The Vice Chair commented that, in future, it would be helpful to have a one-page synopsis of the report in future, highlighting the key issues and developments, as it would make the document more user-friendly.

A Member of the Sub-Committee requested details on the number of ethnic minority children in nursery places. It was agreed that the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager would send Members a breakdown of ethnicity figures for children in nursery places.

The Chair commended the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager on a very detailed and comprehensive report and requested that a further update report be received at the respective meeting of the Sub-Committee next year.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Early Years and Childcare Services Manager send Members a breakdown of ethnicity figures for children in nursery places;

(2) a further update report be received at the respective meeting of the Sub-Committee next year;

(3) the report of the Executive Director (People First) be noted.

120. **Education Budget 2004 / 2005:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Executive Director (People First) and the Executive Director (Business Connections), which outlined the Education Service components of the People First Directorate Budget for 2004-05, currently out for consultation. The Chair introduced and welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning and the recently appointed Director of Learning and Community Development to the meeting. Both the Portfolio Holder and the Director had been invited to the meeting to discuss and receive questions in relation to the Education Budget 2004-05.

The Education Financial Services Manager reported that the Schools' Budget, which the Sub-Committee had previously commented on, was included within the report in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the budget. In addition, Members were given details of the proposed changes to the 2003-4 Education Budget. The Sub-Committee was informed that corporate efficiency savings could be withdrawn from the proposed budget but that figures for these savings were unknown at present.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to the teachers' pay award and London weighting, the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning advised that London weighting would be abolished from 1 April 2004 and replaced with an Outer London scale. When asked by a Member whether this new scale was competitive, the Portfolio Holder commented that it was not competitive compared with other similar Boroughs, such as Ealing, and that it remained a major issue, as it would produce a negative impact on the recruitment and retention rate of teachers in the Borough. It was agreed that the Sub-Committee would receive information on any changes to these arrangements.

The Chair drew the Portfolio Holder's attention to the final review report on the Distribution of SEN Statements in Mainstream Schools, specifically the recommendations contained therein, which were endorsed by the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 8 April 2003 and forwarded to the Portfolio Holder for decision. The Chair asked firstly why Recommendation 1 (iii), which requested that officers look into the possibility of increasing the number of Parent-Partnership Coordinators; with a view to increasing by at least 20 hours per week (to be considered in the budget for the next financial year), did not appear in the proposed Education Budget for 2004-05 and secondly why the reason for this exclusion had not been forwarded to the Sub-Committee.

The Portfolio Holder apologised for not reporting back to the Sub-Committee on this matter. He informed Members that, following a subsequent examination into the issue by officers, it was felt that the Parent Partnership Unit was relatively well staffed compared to similar units in neighbouring Boroughs. The Portfolio Holder advised that the Unit had already moved to the Family Centre and was part of the LIFT Project, which provides a greater range of services for parents and will complement and support the Unit's work. In addition, there was financial backing from the Children's Fund for parental support groups and a growth item within the People First Directorate in relation to advocacy, which will also increase the level of support to parents.

A Member expressed concern that the site referred to by the Portfolio Holder was scheduled to be demolished and reconstructed. Members sought clarification on the timescale for these works. It was agreed that there was a need for interim support mechanisms to be put in place. The Portfolio Holder agreed to provide a written response to Members on these matters at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

A Member informed the Sub-Committee that Recommendation 1(iii) had been made because many parents, currently going through the SEN statementing process, had expressed their concern to Members and perceived that there were insufficient levels of support at present. The Vice Chair agreed and added that both herself and the Chair had visited officers in the Unit as part of the review who felt that they were overstretched with their current workloads. It was agreed that this matter be re-examined by the Sub-Committee in six months time.

In response to a question from a Member in relation to Youth and Community Services, the Portfolio Holder advised that a meeting had been held earlier that day to discuss an underspend in this area. The Portfolio Holder advised that it was more a case of the government encouraging the Council to put more funding into this service, as opposed to the government retracting funding allocated to this area. Members were informed that the Council would need to tackle this issue and that there may be an impact on the medium-term budget strategy as a result.

The Vice Chair questioned the robustness of assumptions in relation to price inflation and queried whether it was an average figure. In response, the Education Financial Services Manager advised that the rate of inflation used in the Education Budget was the same rate that the Council was using across the board. The Vice Chair also questioned the figures on page 10 of the supplemental agenda, in relation to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Services, and queried whether the SEN Consortium would provide services for the cost quoted. Responding, the Education Financial Services Manager advised that she was confident that the SEN Consortium would.

The Sub-Committee agreed that, following discussion on this item, the Portfolio Holder could remain at the meeting and take place in discussions thereafter with the consent of the Chair.

RESOLVED: That (1) Cabinet be requested to note the Sub-Committee's comments on the Education Budget 2004-05;

(2) the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning provide a written response to the issues raised in relation to Recommendation 1 (iii) of the Review of the Distribution of SEN Statements in Mainstream Schools at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 22 April 2004;

(3) the levels of parental support received from the Parent Partnership Unit and various new initiatives be re-examined by the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 26 June 2004;

(4) the report of the Executive Director (People First) and the Executive Director (Business Connections) be noted.

121. **Report Back on the Meeting Between Members of the Sub-Committee and Parents and Teachers from Shaftesbury High School:**

The Sub-Committee received a verbal update on this matter from the Vice Chair, who advised Members that she had spoken with the Headteacher of Shaftesbury High School and it was clear that he was perfectly satisfied with the current SEN transport arrangements and that there was no longer a need for Members to visit the school to discuss the issue.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee note the verbal update from the Vice Chair and regard this matter as closed.

122. **Progress Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy:**

At the meeting of the Sub-Committee on 10 February 2003, it was agreed that Members would be provided with an annual update on the Cultural Strategy Action Plan 2003-08. The Interim Cultural Strategy Manager highlighted the key areas of progress in relation to the Action Plan, which were: -

- (i) The setting-up of the Cultural Strategy Forum.
- (ii) The organisation of culturally diverse events, including Harrow Arts Festival, Black History Month and the Borough's 50th Anniversary Celebrations.
- (iii) The submission of the "Building Schools for the Future" bid and the partnership application to the Football Foundation.

Potential areas for further development were also noted: -

- (i) The feasibility study of theatre / performance space in the Harrow Town Centre Development and Art in Public Places Policy.
- (ii) The development of the Harrow Arts and Sports Academies.
- (iii) Plans for the diverse heritage of Harrow.
- (iv) The signing of the Leisure Management Contract.

The Interim Cultural Strategy Manager advised that the repositioning of the Council's Arts and Leisure Services into the new People First Directorate had impacted on the progress of the Cultural Strategy Action Plan; however, he felt that staff within these services had coped well with these organisational changes and had progressed many issues within the Action Plan. The Sub-Committee was informed of the excellent multi-agency and cross-directorate communication that had taken place to move the strategy forward.

A Member referred the Sub-Committee to Paragraph 1 of Appendix 1 to the report, which gave details of the following action: "Completion of NOF development of school sites for sport and PE for school and community use". The Member expressed concern that this action was not being completed as stated and gave the example of Whitefriars First and Middle School, which had submitted a bid two years ago for the building of tennis courts and the refurbishment of changing room facilities at the school site.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the process thus far has taken two years and had been overseen by consultants, yet the results were not pleasing; the tennis courts will be built to expectation but the proposed refurbishment of the changing room facilities was below the quality of the original plan, which would have undoubtedly have a negative impact on the promotion of the facilities to the community.

The Member felt the need to alert the Sub-Committee to this situation in case it was reflected in other schools within the Borough. It was agreed that the Interim Cultural Strategy Manager would provide Members with a written update on this situation.

Another Member also felt the need to highlight a similar issue in relation to the refurbishment of Hatch End Swimming Pool and raise awareness of wider issues relating to the Leisure Management Contract. The Member commented that Hatch End Swimming Pool served many different sections of the community; for example, swimming clubs, disabled swimmers, ethnic minority groups; and that the refurbishment of the pool and changing areas was unsatisfactory. The Sub-Committee requested that the Interim Cultural Strategy Manager provide Members with a written update on the situation.

With reference to the Leisure Management Contract, the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning informed Members that he had overall control of the development of the Cultural Strategy and was closely monitoring the situation in relation to the contract, which was currently being considered by Legal Services. The Senior Solicitor (Education and Employment) agreed to make enquiries with colleagues in Legal Services and provide a report back on the situation to Members. The Portfolio Holder reported that he would ensure that all parties, including Harrow Sports Council, were properly consulted throughout the process. The Sub-Committee was informed that the launch of the Leisure Card would now coincide with the launch of the Borough's 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

The Director of Learning and Community Development advised that the nature of the report encouraged questions from Members in relation to each aspect of the Action Plan but that officers were not in the position to provide answers to each of these questions in detail at the meeting, as they involved matters which were cross cutting with the Urban Living Directorate.

In light of this, the Chair requested that the Leisure Management Contract issue be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, as it was a cross-directorate issue. The Chair also requested that consideration be given to establishing a Working Group to consider aspects of the Action Plan in detail and that this be added to the Work Programme for 2004-05. The Work Programme for 2004-05 would be considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on 22 April 2004.

The Chair queried whether the Co-opted Members of the Sub-Committee would be able to attend the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the Leisure Management Contract. The Senior Solicitor undertook to establish whether there was provision in the Council's Constitution to allow their attendance in a participatory role.

A Member stated that the Harrow Arts College required greater promotion in the local community as a centre of excellence. The Member requested information on how all arts and sports colleges within the Borough were currently promoted. The Interim Cultural Strategy Manager clarified that the Academies for Sports and Art were different to Harrow Arts College, and that the academies would complement the college and other service providers to young people between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one. It was envisaged that the Academies would assist young people back into education and learning and would operate outside of college/school hours.

Another Member requested information in relation to the Grant Centre 'After School' Club, as she was concerned as to what would happen to current provision during the re-development of the centre, as there was apparently no room for the club at Premier House. The Interim Cultural Strategy Manager agreed to provide Members with a written update on this situation.

The Sub-Committee discussed the Cultural Strategy Forum and how the meetings had been useful in moving forward issues within the Action Plan. The Interim Cultural Strategy Manager advised that he was responsible for planning meetings of the Forum. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that the forthcoming meeting of the Forum was being held for those individuals and organisations involved in arts and leisure, and that there was not an open invitation to all.

A Member requested that the Working Group, when it was established, examine the way in which the pavilions in West Harrow Park were currently used, with a view to providing greater public access to users of the park. The Member congratulated the Council on its involvement in the refurbishment of Bannister's Sports Stadium and commented that athletes' performances had been improving as a result of the enhanced facilities.

The Sub-Committee also discussed the feasibility study of theatre / performance space for Harrow Town Centre and Art in Public Places Policy. Members considered using such facilities for educational purposes and community projects, in order to get the best possible usage from the site.

The Chair commented that she was pleased that reading groups within the Borough's libraries had increased and that this was a positive outcome for the Action Plan.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Interim Cultural Strategy Manager provide Members with written updates on the following issues: -

- (i) The building of tennis courts and the refurbishment of changing facilities at Whitefriars First and Middle School.
- (ii) The refurbishment of Hatch End Swimming Pool and changing facilities.
- (iii) The re-development of the Grant Centre and re-allocation of the 'After School' Club.

(2) the Senior Solicitor provide Members with a report detailing issues relating to the Leisure Management Contract will be resolved;

(3) consideration be given, at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee, to establishing a Working Group to examine aspects of the Cultural Strategy Action Plan in detail and that this be added to Work Programme for 2004-05;

(4) the Leisure Management Contract issue be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration;

(5) the Senior Solicitor establish whether the Co-opted Members of the Sub-Committee could attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in a participatory role;

(6) the report of the Director of Learning and Community Development be noted.

123.

Review of the Recruitment and Retention of School Governors:

The Sub-Committee received the draft report of the Review Group which outlined key findings and recommendations in relation to the Review of the Recruitment and Retention of School Governors. The Principal Adviser reported that the report did not include all the issues raised at the open meeting and that the collection of data on governor ethnicity and the results of the governor survey were still being compiled. The Principal Adviser also highlighted issues such as resources for governor training, which still needed to be addressed.

The Chair questioned whether officers could provide a copy of the Council's policy in

relation to time off for employees to carry out their duties as governors. The Principal Adviser reported that the Council's policy on this matter was to allow employees time off to carry out their public duties and that no specific limit on this time was stated, as it was at the discretion of management. The Chair requested that this policy be circulated to Members.

A Member felt that management should encourage employees to take time off to carry out public duties effectively and that this should be supported by officers at the highest level and incorporated into the Council's employment policies. Members agreed that this point should be reflected in the report and requested that it be added as a recommendation.

The Sub-Committee discussed the reported statement of the representative from Harrow's Council for Racial Equality (HCRE) relating to the involvement of ethnic minority groups in voluntary work. It was felt that the statement may have been misinterpreted and that the HCRE Representative's statement was intended to highlight the need to encourage ethnic minority groups to carry out voluntary work in the wider community, as well as work within their own communities. It was agreed that the report should be appropriately amended.

The Chair informed Members that the Review Group's recommendations mirrored those of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), which had conducted a similar review. The Principal Adviser advised that he had been working closely with the consultant who had been carrying out the review for the DfES, and had fed some of the Review Group's findings into this national study. The Chair requested that the report by the DfES be circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee.

Members discussed a possible Mayor's Reception for School Governors. It was agreed that a letter from the Director of Learning and Community Development be added to the welcome pack for new governors and that governors be invited to a reception on a rotation basis, in order to ensure that each governor was invited to the event during their term of office.

The Chair and Vice Chair, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, thanked all those who had taken an active part in the review and requested that letters be sent to those individuals who had directly contributed.

The Sub-Committee agreed the recommendations, as amended, and requested clarification as to where they should now be referred. The report, as drafted, proposed the recommendations be sent to the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning for consideration. The Senior Solicitor (Education and Employment) advised, having previously consulted with the Education Financial Services Manager during the meeting, that the recommendations arising from the report needed to be costed appropriately. The Education Financial Services Manager had informed the Senior Solicitor that the recommendations were inconsistent with the current or prospective budget frameworks.

The Senior Solicitor proposed two courses of action were proposed to the Sub-Committee to assist them to refer this report to Cabinet within the terms of the Council's Constitution; that the report recommendations be identified as a budget pressure and form part of the response to the consultation exercise on the Education Budget or; that the report be identified as being outside of the current policy and/or budget framework. Members were informed that the consequence of these two courses of action would result in the matter being referred to both Cabinet and Council.

The Chair stated that neither route was appropriate and Members felt that a costing exercise would delay the findings of their review being considered by Cabinet. The Sub-Committee therefore agreed to refer the report to Cabinet for consideration with no explanation in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4F of the Constitution). One member commented that the Senior Solicitor's interpretation of the rule was too literal and that the Sub-Committee would never be able to refer reports to Cabinet. In response, the Senior Solicitor further advised that Cabinet could decline to consider the report and that this was a possible consequence of the Sub-Committee's actions.

Members requested that it be noted that the Sub-Committee had departed from the advice of the Senior Solicitor and agreed that the report and its recommendations be referred to Cabinet for consideration. It was further agreed that the Scrutiny Unit liaise with the Communications Unit to ensure that the report of the Review Group was available on the Council's web site and that an appropriate press release be issued. The Chair requested that an update on the recruitment and retention issues relating to school governors be added to the Work Programme for 2004-05.

RESOLVED: That (1) Cabinet be requested to consider the recommendations, as amended, arising from the Sub-Committee's Review of the Recruitment and Retention of School Governors: -

- (i) The LEA should encourage Governing Bodies to adopt flexible arrangements in relation to the timing of meetings and input into meetings.
- (ii) The LEA should publicise the availability of the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Governors' Helpline Service to all Governing Bodies.
- (iii) The LEA should publicise to community groups the availability of speakers to talk to them about the role of a governor.
- (iv) Governing Bodies should be encouraged to establish mentoring schemes for new governors and the LEA consider establishing a pool of mentors for Chairs of Governing Bodies and members with specific responsibility for finance issues.
- (vi) The clerking course should continue to be run on a regular basis, as required. The LEA should encourage Governing Bodies to take advantage of this facility. (Some sharing of the course cost (£75 per person) had taken place where a clerk serviced a number of bodies).
- (vii) The LEA should establish initiatives to recognise the valuable work being done by school governors. Options include: -
 - The Mayor be requested to consider holding a reception each year for school governors, with governors being invited on a rotating basis at least once in their terms of office, and appropriate directorial attendance and press publicity also being arranged.
 - Sending a card or letter to recognise 10 years' service.
 - Sending special letters of thanks for long serving retiring governors.
 - Recommendation for honours for long public service.
- (viii) The LEA should provide Governing Bodies with an annual 'forward plan' of forthcoming consultations/major issues. Where complex information is to be disseminated to parents, the communication should come directly from the LEA.
- (ix) The LEA consider the production of a simple LBH leaflet, promoting the role of school governors for distribution with admission letters to parents of rising fives and those transferring to High School.
- (x) Council employees be encouraged to undertake public duties, in roles such as school governors. Also, for Council employees' requests to take time off to carry out these roles be considered favourably in light of the Council's employment policy.

(2) the Publications Advisory Panel be requested to consider establishing a separate web page and message board for school governors;

(3) the Publications Advisory Panel be requested to explore the promotion of governors' role on the web site and in 'Harrow People' and to consider the provision of some of the web site information in ethnic minority languages;

(4) the statement of the HCRE Representative in the review report be appropriately amended;

(5) the Council's policy in relation to time off for employees to carry out public duties be circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee;

(6) the report by the DfES on school governors be circulated to Members;

(7) letters of thanks be sent to those who had actively contributed to the review;

(8) the Scrutiny Unit liaise with the Communications Unit to ensure that the report of the Review Group was available on the Council's web site and that an appropriate press release be issued;

(9) an update on the recruitment and retention issues relating to school governors be added to the Work Programme for 2004-05;

(10) the report of the Review Group be noted.

124. **Members' Verbal Progress Reports on Reviews:**
Review of Statutory Assessments and Statements of Special Educational Need (SEN)

The Chair informed the Sub-Committee that in relation to the Review of the Statutory Assessments and Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN), the Review Group had undertaken a desktop research session of information available on SEN and had held two meetings to discuss issues so far. The Chair commented that the meeting with SENCOS had been poorly attended and would be re-scheduled but that the meeting with parents of children with special educational needs had been very positive.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update from the Chair be noted.

125. **Termination of the Meeting:**
In accordance with Paragraph 22.2 of the Executive Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution, it was

RESOLVED: (1) At 10.00 pm to continue until 10.15 pm;

(2) at 10:15 pm to continue to 10:20 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.32 pm, closed at 10.16 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MITZI GREEN
Chair

**ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY
SUB-COMMITTEE****17 DECEMBER 2003**

Chair: * Councillor Blann

Councillors: * Billson (2)
* Ismail (1)
* Mrs Kinnear* Lavingia
* Miles
* John Nickolay (3)* Denotes Member present
(1), (2) and (3) Denote category of Reserve Member**PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL****PART II - MINUTES**62. **Attendance by Reserve Members:****RESOLVED:** To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:Ordinary MemberCouncillor Lent
Councillor Janet Mote
Councillor SeymourReserve MemberCouncillor Ismail
Councillor John Nickolay
Councillor Billson63. **Declarations of Interest:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.64. **Arrangement of Agenda:****RESOLVED:** (1) That all items be considered with the press and public present;

(2) That 'Any Other Urgent Business' be added to the agenda.

65. **Minutes:****RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.66. **Public Questions:****RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.67. **Petitions:****RESOLVED:** To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.68. **Deputations:****RESOLVED:** To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.69. **Private Sector Housing Renewal Grants Policy:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Chief Environmental Health Officer which outlined grants and loans available to homeowners and tenants.

Officers informed the meeting that the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 had removed many of the detailed provisions that governed the way authorities carried out private sector housing renewal. This meant that local authorities now had wider powers to provide assistance to repair and improve private sector homes. As a result, Harrow has developed its own Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant Policy, which was approved by Cabinet on 15th July 2003 and had been widely published.

Those who had already applied for grants would be dealt with under the old rules while

only new applicants would be assessed under the new policy. Therefore, Officers proposed that they would report back to the Sub-Committee in a year's time, when a number of applicants would have been through the new system.

The Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant Policy was designed to achieve good quality, secure and affordable housing. The report listed the priorities for provision of grant aid in order of importance. The top priority was the provision of mandatory disabled facilities grants to those who qualify.

Officers explained that Home Repair Grants were available for minor repairs of up to £5,000 and was non-repayable if the occupant did not move. The equity release scheme was designed so that it was acceptable to all of the Muslim community and was an essential supplement that would lever in private sector money.

The Housing Renewal Assistance Grant was available to enable a dwelling to be made fit for habitation and was repayable upon sale of the property. There was £1 million available for these grants and this money would begin to be recycled over a 6/7 year period as homes were sold and grants repaid. Home Safety Grants was targeted at the victims of domestic violence or to help vulnerable people prevent burglaries. Officers were currently attempting to arrange a direct referral scheme with the Police.

Officers explained that nomination rights to properties could be granted to the Council as part of the conditions of the Empty Properties Grants and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Grants. Disabled Facilities Grants operated under rules set by central government, and the amount of the grant was repayable upon disposal of the property.

The policy would be reviewed in the future and the effectiveness of the strategy would be assessed. The policy had a direct effect on CPA and Best Value indicators and any reduction in the budget would have a knock on effect.

In response to a question from a Member, officers explained that disabled applicants for grants could be referred by organisations such as Age Concern, although the majority were direct applications.

Following questions regarding staffing levels, officers commented that although it had previously been a problem, staffing was now at an adequate level, although failure to successfully retain staff could lead to difficulties. In response to further questions, officers estimated that 10p in every £1 of grant money was spent on delivery, which was relatively cheap.

Officers explained that while the use of loans and grants did not directly provide properties with cheaper rent, it did increase the volume of stock available. Officers commented that they tried to get as many dilapidated homes back into use, such as disused flats above shops. Several of the dilapidated properties around Harrow were owed as part of property portfolios, with one individual owning up to 25 dilapidated properties. Officers were investigating the use of CPO's (Compulsory Purchase Orders), but these took a long time to implement. However, overall the empty homes strategy had been very successful, with 639 homes back in use since 1997.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Private Sector Housing Renewal Grant Policy and the contents of the report be noted;

(2) a further report be submitted to the Sub-Committee in one year's time.

70. **Arms Length Management Organisation for Management of Council Housing Stock:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Executive Director, Urban Living which had originally been submitted to Cabinet in November, updating the meeting on the development of the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO).

The foundations for the creation of ALMO's was laid in 2000 when the Government introduced the Decent Homes standard. This introduced a basic level of amenity all homes were expected to reach by 2008. In response, the majority of local authorities appraised their situation and assessed the condition of their housing stock. Harrow were aware of their stock condition following a survey in 1995, indicating that their stock was in good order, but there was a funding gap for improving their condition. Officers identified that the majority of the funding gap was on the Rayners Lane Estate. Following consideration by Cabinet, the Rayners Lane Estate was transferred to Warden Housing, while the rest of the housing stock would be transferred to the ALMO. Officers confirmed that the ALMO would act as a private company, owned by the local authority. The scheme had received a number of approvals from Cabinet and work had

begun on creating the ALMO.

The attraction of the ALMO was that it could generate funds for the improvement of the housing stock. If the ALMO received a two star rating from inspectors the Council would receive funds for improving the housing stock. The authority had a bid for £12 million approved, and would receive £5 million over the next two years to improve the condition of the housing stock to help reach the decent homes standard by 2008.

The original go live date was 1 April 2004, although that date was now currently under review. Officers had decided that it was important to carry out a 100% postal survey to ensure that the scheme had the full support of residents, an element which would be key to gaining the two star rating. A telephone survey was currently being undertaken, to ensure that tenants understood the implications of the ALMO.

In response to a question from a Member, Officers explained that some early surveys had received relatively low response rates as little information was then available. There was evidence that 'Homing In' was read by an estimated 70% of tenants, and this had carried information on the ALMO. There had been meetings to inform residents, but turnout had been low. There was an independent tenants' advisor whose contact details had been distributed to tenants, who could give impartial advice. In response to further questions, officers commented that they had come across little opposition yet, although apathy from residents was a problem.

During discussion of the potential improvements to Council stock, Officers commented they were aware of the concerns of leaseholders over the potential to be saddled with large bills for works. Consultation would take place with leaseholders to try and resolve this.

In response to further questions, Officers confirmed that they were happy with the agreements made so far, as they acted as a statement of intent for a long-term relationship between the Council and the ALMO. However, some of the detail of the delegations was still to be resolved. One area still for determination was the management of the Housing Revenue Account. Rents would be collected by the ALMO, but it was still to be decided whether the Council would retain management of the account, with the associated staff costs, or whether its management would be delegated to the ALMO.

RESOLVED: That (1) a report on the ALMO be submitted to the Sub-Committee three months after the 'go live' date;

(2) the report be noted.

71. **Briefing Note on the Council's Relationship with Local Transport Providers:**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Head of Professional Services (Urban Living) which outlined the influence the Council had over local transport providers.

Officers explained that there were three main areas of influence with transport providers: formal/statutory consultation; liaison meetings; and informal officer-level contacts. Statutory and formal consultation worked both ways, with the Council required to consult transport providers on certain issues. Liaison meetings included Members, Officers, user groups and senior representatives of transport providers. These meetings were very credible and had an important influence. Officers explained that the authority had no direct control over transport providers, but did have influence. Results were achieved through dialogue and consultation.

A Member commented that the report did not recognise the effective work of Harrow Public Transport Users Association (HPTUA) and its chairman. Members also noted how important it was that Officers continued to maintain successful relationships with transport providers.

Members noted that it often felt as if they were just lobbying transport providers and that TfL often had an alternative agenda. Members suggested that they would like boroughs to have more influence.

RESOLVED That (1) the important work carried out by the liaison meetings be noted; and

(2) the report be noted.

72. **Review of Waste Strategy (1999 - 2005):**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Area Director (Urban Living) which updated Members on the review of the Council's Waste Management Strategy and

Recycling Plan.

Officers explained the main elements of the Council's Waste Management Strategy and Recycling Plan, which had begun in 1999. The report outlined the progress made in attaining the targets set out in the plan, such as the expansion of the Green Box scheme.

Officers highlighted that the 1999 Strategy had not set any targets for recycling at the Civic Amenity Site as at the time, emphasis for recycling had been on kerbside collections. However, a lot of work has been done at the Civic Amenity Site and it was hoped that at least 50% of the waste delivered to the site could be diverted from landfill, through increased separation of waste on-site and additional processing of the residue, off-site.

In discussion of the Sub-Committee's Review of Waste Management Strategy, an Officer commented that the final version of the Mayor's Waste Management Strategy still had not been published and anticipated aspects of the strategy were expected to be altered.

Officers informed the meeting that the new concept of Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) had been introduced, allowing landfill allowances to be traded between authorities. The Chair and Officers agreed that this would make a big difference to waste management policy. It was explained that the Mayor's strategy document would outline what was expected of authorities, and authorities would need to respond with Implementation Plans to achieve the targets set in the Mayor's strategy. West London Waste Authority (WLWA) had already employed consultants to consult with member boroughs on a potential joint waste management strategy with a view to enabling all WLWA members to meet their statutory targets. Officers commented that investment and commitment from the boroughs would be required, as would a regard for public opinion.

The Chair suggested that it would be important for the Sub-Committee to look at the situation when more information was available. He proposed that the Portfolio Holder's attention should be brought to the fact that no sites had been identified for Waste Management Sites in the latest draft of the UDP. A Member commented that waste planning sites often suffered from a 'not in my backyard' attitude from residents, although it was a nettle that needed to be grasped.

In response to a comment from the Chair, Officers commented that several different methods had been used to ascertain why households were not participating in the Green Box scheme. He added that there were some problems with boxes disappearing. The possibility of putting barcodes on Green Boxes was to be investigated, and Officers commented that this would allow prizes to be used as incentives for recycling.

The Chair noted that the strategy had met its targets to date, but commented that the target for 2005/6 was double the present level.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Portfolio Holder be urged to take all necessary action to ensure the borough achieves its targets;

(2) the Portfolio Holder and the Chief Executive be made fully aware of the possible consequences of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) on the borough's finances;

(3) the work done by Community Recycling Officers be recognised, but the Portfolio Holder be requested to intensify efforts to encourage participation in the Green Box scheme, to help enable the Council to meet its targets;

(4) in light of changing waste management policy, the Review of Waste Management Strategy be ongoing until the full realisation of the impact of LATS, WLWA and the borough's revised policy are known.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 9.27 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR ALAN BLANN
Chair

ACCOUNTS APPROVAL SUB-COMMITTEE

18 DECEMBER 2003

Chair: * Councillor Ingram

Councillors: * Blann * Pinkus
* Osborn (1) * Thammaiah

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**1. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: To note the appointment at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 November 2003 of Councillor Mark Ingram as Chair of the Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year 2003/04.

2. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Versallion	Councillor Osborn

3. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business to be transacted at this meeting.

4. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Grounds for Urgency</u>
10. Report of the Auditor under SAS 610 on Statement of Accounts 2002-2003	The External Auditors have only just substantially completed their field work. A number of pieces of information and explanations from officers were only provided recently. The Auditors were therefore not in a position to complete the report in time for dispatch with the main agenda.

The Sub-Committee needs to consider and deal with the External Auditors' report to enable the accounts to be approved and published before the statutory deadline of 31 December 2003.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

5. **Terms of Reference:**

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee, as agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 November 2003, be noted.

6. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: To note that there was no predecessor body to this Sub-Committee from which to receive minutes.

7. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

8. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

9. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

10. **Report of the Auditor under SAS 610 on Statement of Accounts 2002-2003:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the external auditors on the Statement of Accounts 2002-2003, which had been tabled.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) reminded Members of the new requirement under audit regulations for a Committee of the Council to receive and consider the external auditors' report. He outlined the background to the production of the report, and advised that consideration would be given in the new year to ways in which this process could be streamlined for future years. He also highlighted that the deadline for the conclusion of the audit, and the publication of the accounts, would be brought forward in future years.

Nigel Johnson and Jackie McCarthy of Deloitte and Touche, who were in attendance, were welcomed to the meeting. Mr Johnson introduced the report, which summarised the principle matters arising from the audit of the accounts for 2002/03. It also set out the external auditors' audit approach, and highlighted significant weaknesses in general computer controls which had been set out in a separate report to management. It was confirmed that the auditors would be issuing an unqualified opinion on the accounts of both the Council and the Council's pension scheme. Mr Johnson thanked the officer team, including the officers of Internal Audit, for their support and assistance during the year.

In response to questions from Members, clarification was given of the auditors' assessment of materiality, and further information was provided on a number of issues arising from the audit. In particular, it was confirmed, in response to Members' concerns, that resolution of the issues raised in relation to capital financing and S117 of the Mental Health Act 1983 liabilities would not affect the consolidated revenue account. In addition, some of the actions which would be taken in response to issues raised were outlined; these included looking at the reclassification of some of the insurance provisions as earmarked reserves, seeking a legal opinion on the issues surrounding commuted car parking gifts, and checking that new housing benefits software had better arrangements than the current software for reporting on private tenant housing benefit overpayments.

Members were very concerned, with regard to the other matters discussed with management, that the Council had not retained key legal documents accounting for the Rayners Lane housing transfer. It was advised that this issue would be brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer, and Internal Audit would also be asked to look at the relevant internal control systems for this.

In response to Members' questions, it was advised that officers had been aware of some, but not all, of the system weaknesses identified in the report. Key issues would, however, be followed up by Internal Audit. The external auditors advised that the significant weaknesses in general computer controls had been highlighted because they had not received action plans for these items, and they urged officers to draw up action plans to address these issues as soon as possible. Members expressed concern about some of the weaknesses identified, and requested that the action plans for addressing these issues be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There was also some concern as to whether the Sub-Committee was the appropriate body to which this report should be submitted. Officers noted this concern, and advised that a report would be submitted to Council in the new year, which would make proposals to clarify the arrangements for dealing with the report in future years. The Chair suggested that the body to which this was delegated should also be involved in the planning of the audit of the accounts.

RESOLVED: That (1) officers submit the action plans drawn up to address the significant weaknesses in general computer controls to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and

(2) the report of the external auditors be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.31 pm, closed at 8.47 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARK INGRAM
Chair

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
SUB-COMMITTEE****2 FEBRUARY 2004**

Chair: * Councillor Thammaiah

Councillors: * Janet Cowan * Ismail
* Currie * Vina Mithani
* Ann Groves * Seymour

* Denotes Member present

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**76. **Attendance by Reserve Members:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.77. **Declarations of Interest:****RESOLVED:** To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>
10.	Councillor Ann Groves	The Member indicated a Personal Interest as she was a magistrate on the Bench at Harrow Magistrates' Court. The Member remained in the room whilst the matter was considered and took part in the discussion relating to item 10.
12.	Councillor Currie	Declared a Personal Interest in that he is a member of the Shadow Board of the ALMO. The Member remained in the room whilst the matter was considered and took part in the discussion relating to item 12.

78. **Arrangement of Agenda:****RESOLVED:** That all items be considered with press and public present.79. **Minutes:****RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.80. **Public Questions:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no public questions put at the meeting under the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.81. **Petitions:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no petitions received at the meeting under the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.82. **Deputations:****RESOLVED:** To note that there were no deputations received at the meeting under the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.83. **A Presentation regarding Harrow Citizens Advice Bureau:**

The Sub-Committee received a presentation by Kris Fryer, Manager of Harrow Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB), regarding the Bureau's work and plans for the future.

Members were informed that CAB was established after the Second World War by a group of women volunteers; their intentions were to help isolated people in need. In comparison, Harrow CAB's aims and principles still encapsulated the founders' initial intentions in that CAB wished to ensure that individuals did not suffer through lack of knowledge of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available to them, and to exercise a responsible influence on the development of social policies and services both locally and nationally.

Harrow CAB was established twenty years' ago. In 2002-2003 Harrow CAB dealt with 11,000 clients and had received 17,000 enquiries related to housing, employment, legal matters and social, welfare rights. Members noted that there were two CAB sites on the Civic Centre grounds, one dealt with issues related to housing and the other dealt with all other matters.

Kris Fryer explained that there was a plan to receive a new IT system that would enable staff access to online Government departments and create a new computerised case recording system. It was also advised that Harrow CAB had been awarded the Community Legal Service Quality Mark in connection to their legal advice.

Members were alerted to the areas that hampered progress at Harrow CAB, such as funding and accommodation. It was emphasised that Harrow CAB when compared to partners across London was poorly funded by the council; although funding was appreciated, it was thought that additional money would enable recruitment of more staff to supply the current demand for help and would enable expansion of projects and initiatives. It was also mentioned that accommodation on the two sites was inadequate, in respect of interview rooms and waiting areas, which affected the amounts of clients that could be seen due to health and safety reasons. It was also highlighted that people on occasions had queued outside the CAB buildings sometimes two hours before the opening time to ensure they were seen by an adviser. It was also mentioned that a reception area would be very helpful to advise people at the first instance whether they were in the right place and to offer initial advice.

A Member queried the legal training of advisers. Kris Fryer explained that legal advisers undertake a modular training programme that lasts eighteen months, after successful completion, they receive a National Association Certificate in Legal Services. It was also mentioned that there was a franchise community service which people could be referred to if advisers at Harrow CAB could not deal with a matter.

A Member asked what the solution would be to Harrow CAB's accommodation problem, bearing in mind the CAB was located in close proximity to council departments and the town centre. Kris Fryer responded that it was important that Harrow CAB be based at the heart of the community but it was equally important that the Bureau meets the growing demand of its clients, which ultimately means bigger accommodation. It was also indicated that if Harrow CAB were to move it would be faced with paying higher rent, which needed great consideration due to present resource difficulties. It was indicated that a questionnaire would be undertaken in the future with clients to ascertain how they travel to the CAB office, which would indicate whether it would be necessary to be based in the centre of town.

A Member queried whether Harrow CAB was successful in acquiring homes for people. Kris Fryer responded by saying the Bureau did not specifically allocate homes, however, they had built up a number of collaborative relations with partners in the borough who could assist people in acquiring accommodation.

In closing, the Chair and Members thanked Kris Fryer and her team for the work they do at Harrow CAB.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

84. **Proposed Management Change of the South Harrow Post Office:**

Jackie Ilesley, Head of Area, Simon Stoer, External Relations and Wayne Cowan, Network Development Manager of Post Office Ltd, attended the meeting to discuss the proposed changes to the Post Office at South Harrow.

Members were informed by Jackie Ilesley that a franchisee had expressed interest in entering into a partnership with Post Office Ltd in managing the South Harrow branch, and Post Office Ltd were allowing a two month feedback period so that members of the public were able to voice any concerns or issues they might have regarding the franchise partnership.

Benefits of the partnership were described to be: longer opening times on Saturday; a new bright, modern open plan Post Office, and a wider range of cards, stationery and gifts. It was also mentioned that the franchisee had intentions to utilise the space at the top of the Post Office and planning permission would be sought to extend the shop space.

Members were assured that the eight counter positions would be maintained. Six tills would be open plan, one fortress style and one combination. Members discussed the changes to the Edgware branch since its operation as a franchise. A number of concerns were raised related to circulation space within the shop. The Chair advised that elderly users had said that they did not feel as safe making financial transactions. Jackie Ilesley advised that in the Post Office Ltd's experience, removing screens led to a lower incidence of security issues.

It was emphasised that the franchise partnership would enable the Post Office to continue to serve customers in its traditional way but at a viable level. Members were made aware that Post Office Ltd faced severe financial pressures as a result of falling customer numbers and increased running costs. It was also emphasised that the Government supported franchise partnerships.

Wayne Cowan mentioned that there had been some negative press in a local paper regarding the franchisee and the proposed management change. Members were advised of the process involved in establishing a franchise partnership, which consisted of a series of intensive programmes designed to ensure partners met the standard and expectation of Post Office Ltd, which had been done in this instance. Post Office Ltd was therefore happy with the franchisee's proposals and was convinced the business would work.

It was mentioned that the initial franchise partnership would be for a seven-year period and providing Post Office Ltd had no concerns, the partner could continue or terminate the partnership after that time. The franchisee could not sell or relocate without Post Office Ltd's permission. If the Post Office Ltd had concerns, there was scope within the contract for the Post Office Ltd to take charge. It was also stated that throughout the partnership Post Office Ltd would monitor the business partnership and train new staff for the Post Office. It was stressed that existing Post Office staff at South Harrow branch were not pressurised to take redundancy and were offered the opportunity to relocate to other branches.

During discussion Members expressed the following concerns over the franchise partnership:

- The letter of 24th December addressed to the Chief Executive focussed upon franchisee rather than the quality of services that would be continued or compromised, which should be Post Office Ltd's primary focus, and that letter did not contain enough information to enable them to answer the concerns of their constituents;
- Important to maintain a post office service on the site;
- It would have been helpful to have a case study of Post Offices that had undergone franchise partnership to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages for staff and community;
- The level of Post Office experience of the proposed franchisee; and
- That the new open plan Post Office may present security issues for staff and customers, particularly elderly citizens and when talking about confidential business and making financial transactions.

In response to Members concerns Wayne Cowan re-emphasised the extensive planning that had already gone into the franchisee's business plan. It was felt that if planning permission was not granted the franchisee had a good contingency plan to attain Post Office Ltd's interest. In relation to experience, it was stated that the franchisee had a good business background and that his wife had retail experience that would prove useful in the partnership.

Simon Stoer explained the objective of Network Re-Invention that was mentioned by a Member, and admitted that there would be Post Offices closures across the London network. This was due to the problems already identified and the fact that benefits that form 40% of Post Offices workload would be paid into people's bank accounts, so closures were likely but, it was thought that South Harrow would not be apart of those

closures if the franchise partnership went ahead. Members noted that a meeting with Post Office Ltd, Harrow's MPs and Council would be carried out later on in the year to discuss that issue.

A Member asked why Post Office Ltd did not try to attract further franchise partnerships for other Post Offices rather than closing them. Jackie Ilesley responded by saying there were too many Post Offices that were the wrong size and in the wrong location, which was not attractive to investors.

Members asked what local residents of South Harrow felt about the proposed management change. Jackie Ilesley responded by saying there were two drop-in sessions for public to attend and ask questions in January '04, approximately 50 people attended across the two days. It was indicated that explanations were given about the change and plans were shown highlighting the new layout, it was felt that the majority of the people who attended those sessions supported the change.

Members questioned whether staff had been fully informed of what Post Office Ltd was planning. Jackie Ilesley responded by saying she had met with staff of the branch in December so they were aware of what was happening; it was also highlighted that unions were involved representing staff interests.

RESOLVED: That (1) a letter be sent to full Council and relevant Ward Councillors to create more awareness of the proposed management change; and

(2) the concerns expressed by Members be forwarded to the Chief Planning Officer for incorporation into the Council's response to Post Office Ltd.

85. **Consultation on the Draft Community Strategy for Harrow:**

A report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development) was presented by the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section. The Sub-Committee was informed of the developments that had so far taken place in the Harrow Strategic Partnership, particularly the creation of Harrow's Community Strategy.

Members were reminded that consultation on the draft Community Strategy was undertaken late last year with a number of stakeholders in the community to ascertain what they thought the Strategy should include. It was reported that the consultation process was divided into two phases and headed as Interactive and Public. The Interactive Consultation looked at the draft Strategy which included partnership priorities already identified from the initial data taken from the mapping of Harrow indicators derived from the Harrow Vitality Profile.

It was also emphasised that advertisements advertising the consultation was strategically placed at specific parts in the community to attract cultural diverse respondents. Members were advised of the consultation mechanisms used to acquire priorities.

The Public part of the consultation would include comments derived from the first phase in the second draft and would be despatched to communal areas, such as libraries and to people who had requested to see the second draft. It was also mentioned that even at the second draft stage comments upon the priorities featured in the draft Strategy would still be sought.

It was also stressed that the way the Community Strategy was put together, particularly the way the Council had consulted with people in the community was likely to be scrutinised by future external inspections, therefore it was important that the Strategy was devised correctly.

Members also noted that a Members' Seminar had been arranged on 18 February 2004 at 6:30 pm to discuss the priorities identified through public consultation.

RESOLVED: That the consultation process and the early results received so far be noted.

86. **Harrow Magistrates' Court - Update Report:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Borough Solicitor, which was presented by Councillor Ann Groves.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Council had lodged their appeal in November '03 to the Department of Constitutional Affairs against the Greater London Magistrates' Court Authority's (GLMCA) decision to close Harrow Magistrates' Court. Members were reminded that full Council and stakeholders in the community had

received copies of the appeal document shortly after submission hence the non inclusion with the officer report, it was however mentioned that the document could be viewed on Harrow Council's website.

It was also reported by Councillor Ann Groves that the GLMCA had responded to Harrow's appeal document and was attached to the officer report as Appendix C. Members noted that the general feeling amongst officers and magistrates on Harrow Bench was that Harrow had a strong case.

RESOLVED: To note the position.

(See also Minute 77).

87. **Reference from the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee:**

The Sub-Committee received a Reference from the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee regarding selecting action points to monitor from the Your Home, Your Needs Improvement Plan.

Members requested further information on the review and requested that a Housing officer attend the next meeting to discuss the various improvement plans.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee's request to monitor Your Home, Your Needs Improvement Plan be deferred; and

(2) a Housing officer attend the next meeting with up to date information upon the developments that had so far taken place in respect of:

Strategy and Enabling Performance Improvement Plan;
Antisocial Behaviour and Nuisance – Performance Improvement Plan;
Domestic Violence Performance Improvement Plan; and
Racial Harassment Improvement Plan

(See also Minute 77).

88. **Members' Verbal Progress Report on Review(s):**

Refer to Minute 89.

89. **Scrutiny Review of Post Office Reconfiguration - Scoping Report:**

The Sub-Committee received the report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development), which was presented by the Scrutiny Officer, who outlined the scope and the objective for undertaking the Post Office Reconfiguration review.

RESOLVED: That the scope and membership of the review be approved.

90. **Current Work Programme for Strengthening Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2003/04:**

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.10 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEEKIRA THAMMAIAH
Chair

DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL
COMMITTEE

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Anne Whitehead

Councillors: * Marilyn Ashton * Knowles
 * Mrs Bath * Miles
 * Choudhury * Mrs Joyce Nickolay
 * Idaikkadar * Ray (5)
 * Kara * Thornton

* Denotes Member present
 (5) Denotes category of Reserve Member

[Note: Councillors Anjana Patel and Navin Shah also attended this meeting in a participating role. See Minute 495].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL
PART II - MINUTES
494. Attendance by Reserve Members:

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Bluston

Councillor Ray

495. Right of Members to Speak:

RESOLVED: That, in accordance with Committee Procedure Rule 4.1, Councillors Anjana Patel and Navin Shah, who are not Members of the Committee, be allowed to speak on Item 2/01.

496. Declarations of Interest:

RESOLVED: To note the following declarations of interests arising from the business to be transacted at this meeting:

(i) Item 2/01 – Site of Timbers, 41 Brookshill, Harrow Weald (P/2677/03/CVA/GM)

Councillor Marilyn Ashton declared a personal interest in the above application arising from the fact that she knew a resident who lived near the above property. Accordingly she remained and took part in the voting and discussion on this item.

(ii) Item 2/06 - 73 Imperial Drive, North Harrow (P/9/04/CFU/GM)

Councillor Idaikkadar declared an interest in the above application arising from the fact that his GP would be practising from the above premises should the Committee be minded to grant planning permission. Accordingly, he left the room and took no part in the discussion or voting on this item.

(iii) Item 2/19 – White Cottage, 2 Whitehall Road, Harrow (P/246/03/CFU/GM)

Councillor Knowles declared a personal interest in the above application arising from the fact that the above property was situated in a Neighbourhood Watch area which was run/co-ordinated by his partner. Accordingly, he remained and took part in the voting and discussion on this item.

(iv) Item 3/02 – 7 Rickmansworth Road, Pinner (P/2582/03/CFU/TEM)

The Chair, Councillor Anne Whitehead, stated that she would have declared an interest in the above application had it not been withdrawn by the applicant.

497. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: (1) That in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following items/information be admitted to the agenda by reason of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency stated:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Special Circumstances/Reasons for Urgency</u>
Addendum (including Item 26)	This contained information relating to various items on the agenda and was based on information received after the agenda's dispatch. It was admitted to the agenda in order to enable Members to consider all information relevant to the items before them for decision. Additionally, item 26 – Any Other Business – Salvation Army Hall, 15 Roxeth Hill, Harrow, was also admitted to the agenda because appeals had been lodged against the refusals of planning permission and Conservation Area Consent and that a nominated member was required as the recommendation of the Chief Planning Officer had been for approval.
Item 10a – Planning Application Received – The Grove, 31 Warren Lane, Stanmore (P/2527/03/COU/GM)	This report was omitted in error from the agenda but a decision was required urgently in view of the pending appeal against non-determination.

(2) That all items be considered with the press and public present;

(3) that it be noted that the following applications would not be considered that evening for the reasons set out in the Addendum report:

- (i) 375 – 379 Uxbridge Road, Hatch End – The Railway Hotel PH (Item 1/02) (P/2815/03/CFU/GM)
- (ii) 378/380 Rayners Lane (Item 2/05) (P/2650/03/CFU/JH)
- (iii) Randalls Boarding House, 38 Grove Hill, Harrow (Item 2/25) (P/2718/03/CFU/JH)
- (iv) 45 Whitchurch Gardens, Edgware (Item 3/01) (P/2518/03/CFU/TW)
- (v) 7 Rickmansworth Road, Pinner (Item 3/02) (P/2582/03/CFU/TEM)

[Note: That whilst the order of the agenda was varied, business is recorded in the order set out in the agenda for ease of reference.]

498. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That it be agreed that, having been circulated, the Chair be given authority to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2004 as a correct record once they have been printed in the Council Bound Minute Volume.

499. **Matters Arising:**

51 Abercorn Crescent, South Harrow (Application No. P/2400/03/CFU)

Councillor Marilyn Ashton reminded Members that the site visit to the above premises had not taken place and that it ought to take place soon.

(See also Minute 519 (iii)).

500. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 18 (Part 4B of the Constitution).

501. **Petitions:**
RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were presented at the meeting.
502. **Deputations:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 16 (Part 4B of the Constitution).
503. **References from Council and other Committees/Panels:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no references from Council or other Committees or Panels to be received at this meeting.
504. **Representations on Planning Applications:**
RESOLVED: That, in accordance with the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 17 (Part 4B of the Constitution), representations be received in respect of items 2/01 and 2/02 on the list of planning applications.
505. **Planning Applications Received:**
RESOLVED: That authority be given to the Chief Planning Officer to issue the decision notices in respect of the applications considered, as set out in the schedule attached to these minutes.
506. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 'Merrick', 'The Site' and 'Timbers', Mount Park Road, Harrow on the Hill:**
RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 682, Mount Park Road (No. 7), Harrow on the Hill, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 171, Mount Park Road, (No. 3), Harrow on the Hill be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]
507. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 80 The Highway, Stanmore Park:**
RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 694, The Highway (No. 2), Stanmore Park, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 155, The Highway, (No. 1), Stanmore, be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]
508. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re St. Lawrence Close, Edgware:**
RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 693, St Lawrence Close (No. 2), Edgware, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 53, St Lawrence's Rectory, Whitchurch Lane, Edgware, be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

509. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re the land at rear of 'The Grail', Waxwell Lane and The Dell, Pinner:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 692, The Dell (No. 3), Pinner, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 10 Area 9 be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

510. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 1, 1A The Dell and 71, 73, 73A, 73B, 73C, 75 Waxwell Lane, Pinner:**

RESOLVED: That (1) the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 691, Waxwell Lane (No. 5), Pinner, made pursuant to sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 10 Area 10 be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

511. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 2, 4, 6, 8 The Squirrels, 2, 4, 6, Wakehams Hill and 185, 187, 189, 191, 193, 195, 197, 199, 201, 203 Moss Lane, Pinner:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 690, Moss Lane (No. 13), Pinner, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above TPO and also of TPO 689, Wakehams Hill (No. 6), Pinner; TPO 10 Area 14 and TPO 82 Nower Hill (No. 2) Pinner, be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

512. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 1-30 The Squirrels (excluding numbers 2,4,6,8) and 8-68 Wakehams Hill, Pinner:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 689, Wakehams Hill (No. 6), Pinner, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above TPO and also of TPO 690 Moss Lane (No. 13), Pinner; TPO 69 Nower Hill (No. 1) Pinner, TPO 82 Nower Hill (No. 2) Pinner and TPO 103 Nower Hill (No. 3) Pinner, be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

513. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 1, Eastglade, 180 Moss Lane, 10 Beechen Grove, Pinner:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 688, Moss Lane (No. 12), Pinner, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 10 Area 13 be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

514. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re 132, 134, 136 Waxwell Lane, Pinner:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 687, Waxwell Lane (No. 4), Pinner, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 307, Waxwell Lane (No. 1), Pinner, be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

515. **Tree Preservation Order (TPO) re Kelvin Crescent and Charlwood Close, Harrow Weald:**

RESOLVED: (1) That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make a new TPO to be known as TPO 683, Kelvin Crescent (No. 1), Harrow Weald, pursuant to Sections 198 and 201 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect those trees identified on the map and schedule attached to the officer's report;

(2) that on confirmation of the above; TPO 23, The Paddocks, Elms Road, Harrow Weald, be revoked.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To accord with the current policy set out in paragraph 6.2 of the officer's report.]

516. **44 Torbay Road, Harrow - Breach of Planning Control:**

RESOLVED: That subject to his being satisfied as to the evidence, the Borough Solicitor be authorised to:

(1) issue an Enforcement Notice pursuant to Section 172 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requiring demolition of the conservatory and the permanent removal of its constituent elements from the land within a period of three months from the date on which the Notice takes effect;

(2) institute legal proceedings in event of failure to:

(i) supply the information required by the Borough Solicitor through the issue of Notices under Section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990;

and/or

(ii) comply with the Enforcement Notice.

[REASON FOR DECISION: To safeguard the amenity and character of the locality.]

517. **Planning Appeals Update:**

The Committee received a report of the Chief Planning Officer which listed those appeals being dealt with and those awaiting decision.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

518. **Enforcement Notices Awaiting Compliance:**

The Committee noted that a full report on 4 Elm Park, requested at the previous meeting, would be submitted to the March 2004 Development Control Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

519. **Any Other Business:**

(i) Salvation Army Hall, 15 Roxeth Hill, Harrow – Nomination of a Member to assist officers with an appeal

It was advised that appeals had been lodged against the decisions to refuse planning permission and Conservation Area consent in respect of the above site and that a hearing date was to be arranged. It was explained that a Nominated Member was required to assist officers with the appeal as the Chief

Planning Officer had recommended that the application be granted. It was agreed that Councillor Marilyn Ashton would be nominated.

RESOLVED: That the action outlined above be agreed.

- (ii) Site of Timbers, 41 Brookshill, Harrow Weald (Item 2/01 in the schedule attached to the Minutes also refers) (P/2677/03/CVA/GM)

Following consideration and determination of the above application, Members were advised that an appeal had been lodged against the decision to refuse the previous application for the above site (P/1362/03/CVA) and that this was due to be heard by way of a 'hearing'. It was explained that a Nominated Member was required to agree the Statement for the Council. It was agreed that Councillor Marilyn Ashton would be nominated.

RESOLVED: That the action outlined above be agreed.

- (iii) Members' Site Visits to 51 Abercorn Crescent, South Harrow and Grange First and Middle School, Welbeck Road, Harrow

Following discussion, it was agreed that Members' Site Visits to 51 Abercorn Crescent (Minute 499 also refers) and Grange First and Middle School (Item 2/13 in the schedule attached to the minutes also refers) would take place on Saturday 6 March 2004 at 10.00 am. It was further agreed that a mini bus would not be required and that Members would meet at one of the two sites and then walk to the other. Members asked officers to advise them of which site they ought to visit first.

520. **Extension and Termination of the Meeting:**

In accordance with the provisions of Committee Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4B of the Constitution), it was

RESOLVED: At 10.00 pm to continue until 10.30 pm.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.24 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR ANNE WHITEHEAD
Chair

SECTION 1 – MAJOR APPLICATIONS

LIST NO: 1/01 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2561/03/CFU
LOCATION: 66 & 68 Marsh Road, Pinner
APPLICANT: Wilbraham Associates Ltd for Mr H Kasin
PROPOSAL: Redevelopment: Detached 3 Storey Building with Accommodation in Roofspace to provide 15 Flats with Access and Parking.
DECISION: REFUSED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans for the reasons and informatives reported.
[Note: The Committee wished it to be recorded that they were unanimous in agreeing to refuse the above application.]

LIST NO: 1/02 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2815/03/CFU
LOCATION: 375-379 Uxbridge Road, The Railway Hotel Public House, Hatch End
APPLICANT: N P Taylor for Gladheath Ltd
PROPOSAL: Redevelopment: 4 Storey Building to Provide Retail on Ground Floor with 12 Flats above and 10 x 3 Storey Terraced Houses with Access and Parking.
DECISION: WITHDRAWN by the applicant.

LIST NO: 1/03 **APPLICATION NO:** P/1955/03/CFU
LOCATION: 389, 393, 397 & 401 Rayners Lane, Harrow
APPLICANT: Modlux plc for Polaris Ventures Ltd
PROPOSAL: Conversion of Upper Floors to Provide 12 Self-Contained Flats with Rear Dormers, Rooflights at Front and External Stairs at Rear (Resident Permit Restricted).
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to:
(i) Plan Nos. 05 and 07 being replaced by 05A and 07A;
(ii) the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 1/04 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2319/03/CFU
LOCATION: Safeway Superstore, 299 Uxbridge Road, Hatch End
APPLICANT: Ripleys for Safeway Stores plc
PROPOSAL: Extension to Store to Provide Additional 1,382 sq.m of Retail Floorspace with changes to Layout of Car Park.
DECISION: GRANTED permission in accordance with the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to the conditions and informatives reported and the following:
(i) amendments to conditions 7 and 8 as reported in the addendum and set out below:
Condition 7 – Delete first two lines and substitute with ‘The retail premises hereby granted planning permission shall not be open to customers outside the following times ...’;
Condition 8 – add ‘... as set out in Condition 7’;

- (ii) an additional condition 9 (and reason) as reported in the addendum and set out below:

Condition 9 – Standard Condition – Disabled Access - Building

- (iii) an additional Condition 10 (and reason) as reported in the addendum and set out below:

Condition 10 – Notwithstanding the details indicated on drawing no. 33354 – PL – 04H, further details of disabled parking provision shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

- (iv) additional informatives 5, 6 and 7 as reported in the addendum and set out below:

Informative 5 – Standard Informative – Access for All

Informative 6 – The applicant is advised that the Council would wish to see the provision of adequate levels of illumination on both the existing and proposed forecourt areas.

Informative 7 - Committee notes the fact that the opening hours of the store are at variance with the approved hours of opening and would wish to see this situation regularised with the submission of an application.

- (v) an additional informative 8 to be included for reasons of safety in respect of the crossing facility from the store entrance into the car park, the exact wording of which be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer following a visit to the site and his assessment of the situation.

Informative 8 is as follows: The Council would strongly recommend that the crossing facility from the store entrance into the car park be reconstructed on a raised platform to further slow vehicular traffic in the interest of highway safety, and in particular for the safety of people with disabilities.]

[Note: During consideration of this application, a Member raised concerns about poor visibility for drivers when approaching the roundabout on Uxbridge Road (near Safeway Stores plc) and that this raised an issue of safety. He referred to the representations he had received from the Hatch End Association. It was agreed that the matter be referred to Harrow's Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel for consideration.]

LIST NO:	1/05	APPLICATION NO:	P/2527/03/COU
LOCATION:	The Grove, 31 Warren Lane, Stanmore		
APPLICANT:	ATIS Real Weatheralls for BAE Systems Properties Ltd		
PROPOSAL:	Use of site for Residential Purposes (Outline Application)		
DECISION:	That had the applicant not appealed against the failure of the local planning authority to determine the application within the statutory period, the Council would have refused the application for the reasons and informatives reported.		
	(See also Minute 497 – Arrangement of Agenda).		

SECTION 2 – OTHER APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR GRANT

LIST NO: 2/01 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2677/03/CVA
LOCATION: Site of Timbers, 41 Brookshill, Harrow Weald
APPLICANT: Derek & Alan Nash for Mahavir Foundation Ltd
PROPOSAL: Single Storey Replacement Building for Use as Place of Worship and Religious Instruction (Revised)
DECISION: GRANTED variation(s) in accordance with the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to the conditions and informatives reported and the following additional conditions:

Condition 4 – Meetings shall only take place within the building and no use shall be made of the landscaped grounds as shown on plan no. 703/10 for purposes of worship of religious instruction or for any festivals or ceremonies.

Reason 4 - To safeguard the appearance and character of the area and the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Condition 5 – Standard Condition LAND_APPR (Landscaping to be Approved)

Condition 6 – Standard Condition LAND_IMPL (Landscaping to be Approved)

Condition 7 – Standard Condition MAT_APPR_M(a)(b) (Materials to be Approved)

Condition 8 – The use of the building hereby approved shall only be in accordance with the following times:

08.00 to 20.00 hrs, Mon – Sun inclusive without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority

Reason 8 - To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents.

[Notes: (1) Prior to discussing the above application, the Committee received representations from an objector and the applicant's representative.

The objector, who spoke on behalf of 300 local residents living in close proximity of the proposal, argued that the proposed development was not in keeping with the special character of the area, that it infringed the guidelines for development in a green belt area and that it contravened policy E8 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan. He urged Members to refuse the application. He added that there were restrictive covenants in place and that residents would pursue any breaches, if necessary. He also compared the site with the Watford temple.

The representative of the applicant, in response, stated that the proposal before Members that evening had been considerably altered in appearance when compared with the scheme that had been recently refused and that the ornamentation had been changed. He explained that the comparison with the temple in Watford was unfair because the temple there was also the home of the devotees. He added that the proposal before Members would not allow a large number of worshippers to gather there as the premises were very small.

Members did not ask any questions of the objector or the applicant's representative.

(2) During consideration of this item, it was moved and seconded that the application be refused on the grounds that the proposed ornamentation, would give rise to a loss of visual amenity to the neighbouring properties to the detriment of the area of Special Character located within the Green Belt. Upon being put to a vote, this was not carried.

(3) Councillors Marilyn Ashton, Mrs Bath, Knowles, Mrs Joyce Nickolay and Thornton wished to be recorded as having voted against the decision reached];

(4) Following consideration and determination of the above planning application, Members nominated Councillor Marilyn Ashton as the 'Nominated Member' who was required to agree the Statement for the Council for the appeal that had been lodged against the decision to refuse the previous application for the above site (minute 519(ii) also refers).

(See also Minute 496(i)).

LIST NO:	2/02	APPLICATION NO:	P/2918/03/COU
LOCATION:	131-133 Whitchurch Lane, Edgware		
APPLICANT:	Gillett Macleod Partnership for London & District Housing Ltd		
PROPOSAL:	Outline: Redevelopment to Provide 8 Flats in Two 2 Storey Blocks with Access and Parking		
DECISION:	REFUSED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans for the following reasons:		

Reason 1 - This proposal would be detrimental to the residential amenities of Nos. 129 and 135 Whitchurch Lane by reason of noise and disturbance from traffic and activity generated by the use of the access road.

Reason 2 - The character and the building line of the row of semi-detached houses would be abruptly interrupted by the gap caused in the street scene by the demolition of two semi-detached houses to the detriment of the character of this section of Whitchurch Lane.

[Notes: (1) Prior to discussing the above application, the Committee received representations from two objectors and the applicant's agent.

The first objector stated that the siting of the rubbish bins was inappropriate and would be only 30m from the rear of her property and only 1m for other properties in the area. She added that there was a dispute regarding the boundary and she read out the communication received from the land registry. She felt that the proposal would devalue her property.

The second objector who had not previously registered his right to speak at the meeting was allowed to address the meeting with the Committee's approval. He objected to the proposal on the grounds that

- it would lead to an increase in noise and traffic pollution;
- it would overlook onto adjoining properties and that, as a result, he would not be able to build a swimming pool in his own garden because there would be no privacy;
- that the proposal would devalue the properties in the area;
- that the use of heavy machinery would lead to disruption.

The applicant's agent addressed the meeting and stated that the report before the Committee addressed all planning matters and that the objections were not based on planning grounds.

Members did not ask any questions of the objector or the applicant's agent.

(2) During the debate which followed, it was moved and seconded that consideration of the above application be deferred to allow Members to visit the site on the grounds that the proposal was essentially a backland development and that a site visit would allow Members to see the distances between properties and assess the impact of the proposal on the amenity of neighbouring properties. Upon a vote this was not carried.

It was further moved and seconded that the application be refused on the grounds that

- (1) This proposal would be detrimental to the residential amenities of Nos 129 and 135 Whitchurch Lane by reason of noise and disturbance from traffic and activity generated by the use of the access road.
- (2) The character and the building line of the row of semi-detached houses would be abruptly interrupted by the gap caused in the street scene by the demolition of two semi-detached houses to the detriment of the character of this section of Whitchurch Lane.

Upon being put to a vote this was carried.]

LIST NO:	2/03	APPLICATION NO:	P/2812/03/CCO
LOCATION:	60 Harrow View, Harrow		
APPLICANT:	Robin Bretherick Associates for Mr F G Fallon		
PROPOSAL:	Continued Use of Property as 3 Self Contained Flats.		
DECISION:	GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to the informatives reported.		

LIST NO:	2/04	APPLICATION NO:	P/2598/03/CVA
LOCATION:	Anmer Lodge, 2 Coverdale Close, Stanmore (Forge)		
APPLICANT:	Novas-Ouvertures Group Ltd		
PROPOSAL:	Variation of Condition 2 of Planning Permission EAST/809/99/FUL to allow Hostel Use to Continue to 1/2/07.		
DECISION:	GRANTED variation for the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to the conditions and informative reported and the addition of a 'Reason' in relation to Condition 1 as set out in the Addendum report and reproduced below:		

Reason 1 – To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents and to permit reconsideration in the light of circumstances thus preventing.

[Notes: (1) During consideration of this application, it was moved and seconded that the application be granted for a period of 18 months only rather than the 3 years (until 1 February 2007) applied for in order to allow Members to review the situation after 18 months and to keep the Council's options open. Upon a vote this was not carried.

(2) Councillors Marilyn Ashton, Mrs Bath and Kara wished to be recorded as having voted against the proposal to grant the application for a period of 3 years.

(3) To note the Statement received from the Housing Services Division as set out in the Addendum report.]

LIST NO:	2/05	APPLICATION NO:	P/2650/03/CFU
LOCATION:	378/380 Rayners Lane, Harrow		
APPLICANT:	Kanpara Design Consultants for Mr T Premathasan		
PROPOSAL:	Basement and Ground Floor Rear Extension to Shop, Rear Staircase		
DECISION:	DEFERRED at the request of the Chief Planning Officer for additional notification of premises at rear of the site.		

- LIST NO:** 2/06 **APPLICATION NO:** P/9/04/CFU
- LOCATION:** 73 Imperial Drive, North Harrow
- APPLICANT:** James Stewart for Dr J Lloyd & Partners
- PROPOSAL:** Change of Use: Residential (Class C3) to Offices Ancillary to Doctors Surgery (Class D1).
- DECISION:** (1) That the applicant be informed that the proposal is acceptable subject to the completion of a deed of variation to the legal agreement relating to 71 Imperial Drive (The Ridgeway Surgery) within six months (or such period as the Council may determine) of the date of the Committee decision on the application in relation to:
- (i) the numbers of practitioners and other staff employed at any one time across both nos. 71 and 73 Imperial Drive and the patient unit size shall not increase above the levels set out in the previous legal agreement for no. 71 Imperial Drive.
- (2) That a formal decision notice will be issued
- (i) only upon completion of the aforementioned legal agreement;
 - (ii) subject to the Conditions and Informatives reported, the amendment of Condition 5 and additional Conditions 8 and 9 reported in the Addendum report and reproduced below:
- Condition 5 – amend hours to read
- (a) 08.00 hours to 18.30 hours, Monday to Friday inclusive
08.00 hours to 13.00 hours, Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays except in the case of emergencies or with the prior written permission of the local planning authority.
- [Note: The amended hours – Condition 5 – has been agreed with the applicant].
- Condition 8 – The rear of the site shall be retained as a garden/amenity area and shall not at any time be used for parking.
- Reason 8 – To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents and the character of the locality.
- Condition 9 – Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no additional hard surfacing shall be carried out of the front garden of the site and no widening of the vehicle crossover without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.
- Reason 9 – To safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents and the character of the locality.

(See also Minute 496(ii)).

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- LIST NO:** 2/07 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2747/03/CFU
- LOCATION:** 388 Northolt Road, South Harrow
- APPLICANT:** The Drawing Room for St Gabriels Social Club
- PROPOSAL:** Change of Use: Retail (Class A1) to Social Club (Class A3 with Single Storey Rear Extension).

DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to

- (i) revised plan no. 02A replacing plan no. 02 correcting the rooflight details
- (ii) the conditions and informatives reported.

[Note: To note that a 'study' of the traffic/parking situation in the area had been conducted and was out for consultation].

LIST NO: 2/08 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2977/03/CFU

LOCATION: 14 Headstone Drive, Harrow

APPLICANT: Threshold Land & Estates

PROPOSAL: Change of Use: A1 to A3 (Retail to Food and Drink)

DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/09 **APPLICATION NO:** P/1554/03/CFU

LOCATION: 88-90 High Street, Harrow on the Hill

APPLICANT: Gurjinder K Rooprai

PROPOSAL: Change of Use: Office (Class B1) to Dental Practice (Class D1)

DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans subject to the condition and informatives reported.

[Notes: (1) During consideration of this application it was moved and seconded that the application be refused on the grounds of over intensification of use, insufficient parking provision and that it was detrimental to the character of the area. Upon being put to a vote this was not carried.

(2) Councillors Marilyn Ashton, Mrs Bath, Knowles and Thornton wished to be recorded as having voted against the decision.]

LIST NO: 2/10 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2528/02/CFU

LOCATION: 192 Alexandra Avenue, South Harrow

APPLICANT: Roy Thomson for Mr E Ghookassian

PROPOSAL: Change of Use: Class A1 (Retail) to A3 (Food and Drink) and Single Storey Rear Extension.

DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/11 **APPLICATION NO:** EAST/1451/02/FUL

LOCATION: 1 Kenmore Gardens, Edgware

APPLICANT: Mr H Patel for Mr T Omisore

PROPOSAL: 2 storey side extension to form house and conversion of existing house to 2 Self-Contained Dwellings with Parking at Front and Side (as amended at the meeting).

DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development which was amended to read "2 storey side extension to form house and conversion of existing house to 2 Self-Contained Dwellings with Parking at Front and Side" described in the application and submitted plans subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/15 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2201/03/CFU
LOCATION: Highfield, 31 South View Road, Pinner
APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs Simmons
PROPOSAL: Replacement Hardsurfacing to Front and Rear
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the condition and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/16 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2480/03/CFU
LOCATION: Bankhead, South View Road, Pinner
APPLICANT: Bradshaw Rowse Harker for B Byrne & F Sweeney
PROPOSAL: Works to Facilitate Use of Integral Garage as Habitable Room
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/17 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2414/03/CFU
LOCATION: 12 Waldron Road, Harrow
APPLICANT: Kenneth W Reed & Associates for Mr N Henderson
PROPOSAL: Roof Light in Rear Roof
DECISION: GRANTED permission in accordance with the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the condition and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/18 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2460/03/CFU
LOCATION: 28 Woodhall Gate, Pinner
APPLICANT: Mr J R Mason
PROPOSAL: Detached Workshop Building in Rear Garden.
DECISION: GRANTED permission in accordance with the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

[Notes: (1) To note that there was a typographical error in paragraph 1, page 80, line 3 which should read "... to measure 3.3 in x 5.5m sq ...(? ?)".

(2) During consideration of this application, it was moved and seconded that the application be refused on the grounds that the development, by reason of excessive bulk, would be visually obtrusive and would be out of character with neighbouring properties to the detriment of the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area. Upon being put to a vote this was not carried.

(3) Councillors Marilyn Ashton and Mrs Bath wished to be recorded as having voted against the decision reached].

LIST NO: 2/19 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2446/03/CFU
LOCATION: White Cottage, 2 Whitehall Road, Harrow
APPLICANT: David R Yeaman & Associates for Mrs P Buchanan
PROPOSAL: Detached Garage, Conversion of Existing Garage to Habitable Room, New Front Wall and Gates
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.
(See also minute 496(iii)).

LIST NO: 2/20 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2818/03/CFU
LOCATION: 141/143 Marsh Road, Pinner
APPLICANT: Manmohan Nandhra for Pinner Tandoori Restaurant
PROPOSAL: Single Storey Rear Extension to Restaurant with External Stairs and Balustrading.
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.
[Note: During consideration of the application, it was agreed that the attention of the Council's Environmental Health Officer be drawn to the fact that the site is presently in a state of neglect and covered with refuse as reported under the paragraph on 'Site Description'.]

LIST NO: 2/21 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2559/03/CFU
LOCATION: 19 West Towers, Pinner
APPLICANT: Anthony J Blyth & Co for Mr & Mrs R Parmar
PROPOSAL: Single Storey Side and Rear Extension.
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/22 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2775/03/CFU
LOCATION: 9 Marsworth Avenue, Pinner
APPLICANT: Home Plans for Mr & Mrs Horsley
PROPOSAL: Two Rear Dormers and Rooflights in Side.
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.

LIST NO: 2/23 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2978/03/CFU
LOCATION: 15 Evelyn Drive, Pinner
APPLICANT: Anthony J Blyth & Co for Mr & Mrs E Parpotta
PROPOSAL: Single Storey Rear Extension
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to
(i) the conditions and informatives reported
(ii) condition 2 being amended to read as refused in the Addendum report and reproduced below:

Condition 2 – The development hereby permitted shall not commence until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces noted below have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority:

- (a) the extension building(s)
The development shall be complied in accordance with the approved details which shall include a cast iron downpipe and shall thereafter be retained.
- (iii) an additional Condition 3

Condition 3 – Standard Condition – No balcony.

LIST NO:	2/24	APPLICATION NO:	P/1716/03/CFU
LOCATION:	Land Next to 23 Cecil Road, Wealdstone British Rail Yard 1589 North West		
APPLICANT:	Alan Cox Associates for McGovern Brothers Haulage Ltd		
PROPOSAL:	Creation of New Vehicular Access		
DECISION:	GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.		

LIST NO:	2/25	APPLICATION NO:	P/2718/03/CFU
LOCATION:	Rendalls Boarding House, 38 Grove Hill, Harrow		
APPLICANT:	Malcolm Bonner for Harrow School General Fund		
PROPOSAL:	Reinstatement of Railings on Top of Dwarf Brick Wall Fronting Grove Hill		
DECISION:	DEFERRED at the request of the Chief Planning Officer in order to await receipt of amended plans.		

LIST NO:	2/26	APPLICATION NO:	P/1598/03/CCO
LOCATION:	Cross Stone, 13 Orley Farm Road, Harrow		
APPLICANT:	Mr R Pankhania		
PROPOSAL:	Single Storey Side Extension		
DECISION:	GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.		

LIST NO:	2/27	APPLICATION NO:	P/1795/03/CFU
LOCATION:	2 Dukes Avenue, Edgware		
APPLICANT:	Nesbitt & Mire for M Goldberger		
PROPOSAL:	Two Rear Dormers and Side Rooflights, Alterations to Single Storey Rear Roof and to Front Elevation.		
DECISION:	GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the conditions and informatives reported.		

LIST NO: 2/28 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2441/03/CFU
LOCATION: Pine House, 15 Warren Lane, Stanmore
APPLICANT: High Durbin Designs for Mr P Mitra
PROPOSAL: Conservatory at Rear
DECISION: GRANTED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans, subject to the condition and informatives reported.

SECTION 3 – OTHER APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL

LIST NO: 3/01 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2518/03/CFU
LOCATION: 45 Whitchurch Gardens, Edgware
APPLICANT: D R Joyner for Mr & Mrs Jhunhunwala
PROPOSAL: Change of Use: Residential to Pre-School Nursery (Class C3 to D1) on Part of Ground Floor and Conversion of Integral Garage to Habitable Room.
DECISION: DEFERRED at the request of the Chief Planning Officer for renotification and further consideration of the applicant's amendment to reduce the number of children from 19 to 9 (with 2 staff).

LIST NO: 3/02 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2582/03/CFU
LOCATION: 7 Rickmansworth Road, Pinner
APPLICANT: Aylett Investments for Rylex Investments Ltd
PROPOSAL: Replacement Part 2 Part 3 Storey Building to Provide 6 Flats with Parking at Rear.
DECISION: WITHDRAWN on 10 February 2004 by the applicant.
(See also Minute 496(iv)).

LIST NO: 3/03 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2631/03/CFU
LOCATION: 18 St Ann's Road, Harrow
APPLICANT: Mr R Rowe for Chelsea Building Society
PROPOSAL: Change of Use from Class A1 to Class A1/A2 (Retail/Financial and Professional Services)
DECISION: REFUSED permission for the development described in the application and submitted plans for the reason and informative reported.

SECTION 4 – CONSULTATIONS FROM NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITIES

LIST NO: 4/01 **APPLICATION NO:** P/2865/03/CNA
LOCATION: Delivering a New Wembley Land Adjacent to Wembley and Empire Way, Wembley
APPLICANT: Brent Council
PROPOSAL: Redevelopment to Provide 500,000 Square Metres of Mixed Use Floor Space.
DECISION: RAISED OBJECTION to the development set out in the application for the reason, as amended in the Addendum report and set out below, and informative reported:

Reason – The Council is concerned that the development may have a negative impact on neighbouring town centres in Harrow in view of the scale of the retail development included in the scheme.

[Note: To note that this scheme was unlikely to proceed].

COUNCIL



MINUTES
of the
COUNCIL TAX MEETING
of the
COUNCIL
of the
LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW
held on
THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2004

Present: **The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Mano Dharmarajah)**
 The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Lurline Champagne)

Councillors:

R. Arnold
 Nana Asante-Twumasi
 David Ashton
 Mrs Marilyn Ashton
 Mrs Camilla Bath
 Miss C A Bednell
 F. Billson
 Alan Blann
 H. Bluston
 J. Branch
 K. Burchell
 M. Choudhury
 Mrs Janet Cowan
 John Cowan
 Bob Currie
 Margaret Davine
 Sanjay Dighé
 A.T. Foulds
 Brian Gate
 Mitzi Green
 Ann Groves

C. Harrison
 C. Harriss
 T. Idaikkadar
 M. Ingram
 N. Ismail
 Mary John
 M. Kara
 Mrs E.M. Kinnear
 M. Kinsey
 A.C. Knowles
 Jean Lammiman
 D. Lavingia
 A. Lent
 Miss Paddy Lyne
 Myra Michael
 Jerry J. Miles
 Vina Mithani
 Chris Mote
 Mrs Janet Mote
 J.W. Nickolay

Mrs Joyce Nickolay
 Marie-Louise Nolan
 Phillip O'Dell
 A. Omar
 P. Osborn
 Anjana Patel
 A. Pinkus
 R. Ray
 R.D. Romain
 Anthony Seymour
 Navin Shah
 Mrs Rajeshri Shah
 E. Silver
 Bill Stephenson
 Keekira Thammaiah
 S. Thornton
 Keith Toms
 M. Versallion
 A.E. Whitehead
 G.G.V. Williams

A **OPENING PROCEEDINGS****168.** **PRAYERS:**

The Mayor's Chaplain, Deacon Tony Martin, addressed the Council and then led the Meeting in formal opening prayers.

169. **OPENING ADDRESS FROM THE CHAIR:**

The Mayor made a statement welcoming the public to the Meeting and advising of the manner in which it was intended to conduct the Revenue Budget and Council Tax debate. He also advised that the Council would not be adjourning for a break at 9.00 pm as was customary but sitting in continuous session until the close of the Meeting.

B **PROCEDURAL MATTERS****170.** **COUNCIL MINUTES:****RESOLVED:**

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2004 AND OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2004, HAVING BEEN CIRCULATED, BE TAKEN AS READ AND SIGNED AS CORRECT RECORDS.

171. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL:**

The Mayor invited appropriate declarations of interest by Members of Council, with particular reference to the Cabinet Recommendation in relation to the Revenue Budget and the setting of the Council Tax 2004/2005.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST MADE BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED AT THIS MEETING BE DULY RECEIVED AND RECORDED (AS SET OUT AT APPENDIX I).

172. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:****RESOLVED:**

THAT THE COUNCIL RECEIVE AND NOTE THE REPORT OF HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR, AS TABLED, UPON HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES, TOGETHER WITH THE OCCASIONS ON WHICH HE HAD BEEN REPRESENTED BY THE DEPUTY MAYOR, SINCE THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING.

173. **PROCEDURAL MOTION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 15.2:**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Foulds, moved and the Leader of the Conservative Group, Councillor C. Mote, seconded a procedural motion for an Urgent Motion relating to the closure of the South Harrow Post Office to be admitted to the business to be transacted at this Council Meeting.

The Council noted that the proposed Urgent Motion had met the requirements of the Council Procedure Rule, having been received prior to the deadline for the receipt of such Motions and having provided reasons for urgency.

The proposal received the general assent of the Council.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE PROCEDURAL MOTION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 15.2 RELATING TO THE ADMISSION OF AN URGENT MOTION BE AGREED, AND THAT THE URGENT MOTION BE CONSIDERED FOLLOWING ITEM 11 ON THE SUMMONS.

(See Resolution 182).

174. PROCEDURAL MOTION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 26.1:

His Worship the Mayor proposed from the Chair that, in line with the practice in previous years, the rules of debate be varied to reflect the importance of the Revenue Budget as a subject matter. A note reflecting the consensus among the political groups on the procedures which would apply for the purposes of the revenue budget debate had been tabled.

The proposal received the general assent of the Council.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE PARTIAL SUSPENSION OF THE RELEVANT COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES REGARDING THE MOVING OF A RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE AND THE RULES OF DEBATE (INCLUDING EXTENDED TIME FOR OPENING AND CLOSING SPEECHES), AS SET OUT IN THE TABLED NOTE, BE APPROVED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE REVENUE BUDGET DEBATE.

C PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**175. PETITIONS:**

(1) The following petitions were submitted by Members of Council:

- (i) Submitted by Councillor Mary John, containing 233 signatures of local residents opposing the application for planning permission to build a block of 8 flats at 14A Thornton Grove, Hatch End.

[Note: The petition stood referred to the Development Control Committee].

- (ii) Submitted by Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan, containing 145 signatures of local residents, parents, staff and governors at Whitefriars School calling upon the Council to implement traffic-calming measures outside the school.

[Note: The petition stood referred to the Traffic Advisory Panel].

- (iii) Submitted by Councillor Janet Mote, containing 99 signatures of local residents requesting that the Council take enforcement action in respect of a breach of planning control at 201-203 Headstone Lane, Harrow.

[Note: The petition stood referred to the Development Control Committee].

(2) A petition was submitted by a member of the public, as follows:

Submitted by Mr S Sheinwald, signed by some 24,000 local residents calling upon the Council to take immediate action to ensure that any increase in Council Tax in 2004/5 be no higher than the rate of inflation, and that the standard of services improve.

[Note: The petition was formally received and taken into account for the purposes of the Revenue Budget and Council Tax decision (see Resolution 177 below)].

176. PUBLIC QUESTIONS:

Further to Item 6 on the Summons, the following six questions were submitted by members of the public, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.3:

<u>QUESTION BY</u>	<u>QUESTION OF</u>	<u>TEXT OF QUESTION</u>
Mr D A Stanley	Planning, Development, Housing and Best Value Portfolio Holder (Councillor Burchell)	"The Residents of Edgware Ward have been writing letters to you and your two associate Councillors for this ward on the deterioration of Edgware and its lack of Council services for the last two years.

An improvement has been noticed in the last three months since the Harrow

		<p>Council Tax Protest Group was formed and put a voice to the residents many complaints.</p> <p>Can we assume that these improvements will continue in the years 2004/5 or will the Council, after introducing the new Council Tax, revert back to its previous uncaring attitude?"</p>
Mr B Daver	The Deputy Leader of the Council (Councillor N Shah)	<p>"Figures just released by the Office for National Statistics show that post-tax real wages are now 1.5% lower than in April 2002. However in the last two years residents have been hit with a rise in excess of 25%.</p> <p>Are you not ashamed of the hardship you have caused and do you not agree that after six consecutive years of rises in excess of inflation that this year any increase should be NO MORE THAN the RATE OF RPI OR 2.5%?"</p>
Mr J Mitchell	The Leader of the Council (Councillor Foulds)	<p>"Will you give an undertaking that, in the event of the Conservatives taking over the Council following tonight's vote on the Budget, the Labour Group will co-operate fully in Committee to deliver all elements of the Budget in the interests of residents?"</p>
Mr S Sheinwald	The Leader of the Council (Councillor Foulds)	<p>"In a Feature in the Harrow Observer regarding Council Tax 2004/5 you said that an inflation-limited council tax budget was undeliverable. Are you now prepared to accept that you were wrong and will you tonight support the 2.21% increase Budget option which not only includes the extra amount that you wished to give to schools but also protects some of the most vulnerable in our community by restricting Home Care charges?"</p>
Mr P Seedher	The Deputy Leader of the Council (Councillor N Shah)	<p>"Tonight there are two Budgets available to the Full Council – one will result in a Council Tax rise of 2.5% and the other 3.8%. Councillors have a duty to place the People of Harrow first and vote in accordance with their desire for a tax rise of inflation or less.</p> <p>Can Councillor Shah confirm that he will lay aside any political scruples and acting in the best interests of the people he will vote for the alternative Budget resulting in the lower tax rise of 2.5% which maintains core services, generates savings, provides additional funds and has been vetted by Council Officers?"</p> <p>[Note: In asking this question, reference was made to the revised figures in the budget amendments].</p>

Mr M Fitzgerald	Social Services Portfolio Holder (Councillor Margaret Davine)	<p>“For the last six years, you have voted in favour of Council Tax increases which have forced pensioners’ to hand over to you even more than they themselves have actually received in increases from private or state schemes.</p> <p>How much of the basic pension increase in April will your vote tonight allow them to keep to pay for necessities?”</p>
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[Note: Oral answers were provided to the above questions and under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 12.4, and other than in respect of the fifth question, supplementary questions were asked, which were additionally answered].

D RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

177. REVENUE BUDGET 2004 - 2005 AND INITIAL MEDIUM TERM REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2004 - 2005 TO 2006 - 2007 (COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION):

At Item 7 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation I of the Cabinet meeting of 17 February 2004 in this matter.

Further to the decision outlined at Resolution 174 above, the Mayor moved Recommendation I for the purposes of opening the debate. (No precedent was intended by this arrangement for this occasion). The Political Groups each tabled an amendment to Recommendation I, and the three amendments were debated jointly.

- (i) Councillor Foulds moved, and Councillor Dighé seconded, a detailed amendment including specific proposals for the Authority’s budget for 2004/05 and a revised model Council Tax resolution on the basis of those proposals, which would result in a Council Tax increase of 3.27%.
- (ii) Councillor D Ashton moved, and Councillor John Cowan seconded, a detailed amendment including specific proposals for the 2004/05 budget and a revised model Council Tax resolution on the basis of those proposals, which would result in a Council Tax increase of 2.21%.
- (iii) Councillor Miss Lyne moved, and Councillor Thornton seconded, a detailed amendment including specific proposals for the Authority’s budget for 2004/05 and a revised model Council Tax resolution on the basis of those proposals, which would result in a Council Tax increase of 2.52%.
- (iv) Following a lengthy debate, each amendment was voted on separately.
- (v) Upon a vote, the amendment outlined at (iii) above was not carried.
- (vi) On the amendment outlined at (ii) above being voted upon, this was also not carried.
- (vii) Upon a further vote, the amendment outlined at (i) above was carried.
- (viii) The Meeting then moved to a vote on the substantive Recommendation, as amended; this was carried and adopted.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE SUBSTANTIVE RECOMMENDATION, AS AMENDED, BE ADOPTED IN THE FOLLOWING FORM:

- (1) That Council consider the budget options and approve a budget to enable the Council Tax for 2004-2005 to be set;
- (2) that the model Council Tax Resolution set out below be approved;

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

- (A) To note that at its meeting on 22 January 2004 the Council calculated the amount of 83,652 as its Council Tax Base for the year 2004-2005 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (B) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2004-2005, in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;

- | | | |
|-------|--|--------------|
| (i) | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act. (Gross expenditure) | £445,112,540 |
| (ii) | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act. (Gross income including use of reserves) | £202,579,400 |
| (iii) | Being the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year. | £242,533,140 |
| (iv) | Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, reduced by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its General Fund to its Collection Fund in accordance with Section 97 (4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Collection Fund Deficit). | £156,045,853 |
| (v) | Being the amount to be raised from Council Taxes calculated at (B) (iii) above less the amount at (B) (iv) above. | £86,487,287 |
| (vi) | Being the amount at (v) divided by the Council Tax Base, calculated by the Council at its meeting on 22 January 2004 in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. (The average Band D Council Tax) | £1,033.89 |
| (vii) | Valuation Bands | |

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	689.26	804.14	919.01	1,033.89	1,263.64	1,493.40	1,723.15	2,067.78

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (vi) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (C) That it be noted that for 2004-05 the Greater London Authority stated the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of

dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	160.89	187.70	214.52	241.33	294.96	348.59	402.22	482.66

- (D) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (B) (vi) and (C) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2004-05 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	850.15	991.84	1,133.53	1,275.22	1,558.60	1,841.99	2,125.37	2,550.44

Scheme of Virement

- (E) That the Council agree that until the review of Financial Regulations is completed there should be no change to the Virement Rules as set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Rules approved by the Council on the 28 May 2002.

(3) that an initial Medium Term Budget Strategy to cover the period 2004-2005 to 2006-2007 based on the approved budget for 2004-2005, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved;

(4) that the Council maintain a minimum level of unallocated General Fund Reserves of £4m at the end of each financial year;

(5) that the optimal level of unallocated General Fund Reserves is £7m;

(6) that the Council aims to achieve the optimal level of reserves over the medium to long term by taking opportunities to increase reserves by sound in-year financial management;

(7) that until the review of Financial Regulations was completed there should be no change to the Virement Rules set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules approved by the Council on 28 May 2002;

(8) that the Council amends the current Scheme for Members' Allowances

- (a) to create two new bands of Allowances for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and that for the Municipal Years 2003-04 and 2004-05 these allowances be set at £9500 for the Mayor and £2000 for the Deputy Mayor;
- (b) to make these allowances retrospective to the start of the present Municipal Year and be paid to the current incumbents of these posts as well as future incumbents;
- (c) to create a new level of special responsibility allowance of £250 to be paid to the members of the quasi-judicial bodies of the Council being the bodies set out on page 26 of the supporting papers to the Summons;
- (d) to maintain the remainder of the Members' Allowances at their current (2003-04) rates for 2004-05;

and notes that the cost of these changes in 2003-04 can be met from existing budgets and that the cost effect in 2004-05 is neutral".

Reason for Decision: To meet the agreed budget timetable to prepare a 2004-05 budget and set a balanced budget and a Council Tax within the statutory deadline.

[Notes: (1) the budget summary (referred to in the above Recommendation as Appendix 1) is enclosed as Appendix II at the end of the Minutes for this Meeting;

(2) the schedule of specific proposals for growth and budget reductions required to restrict the Council Tax to a 3.27% increase, submitted as part of the amendment outlined at (i) above, together with the summary MTBS, are attached as Appendix III to these Minutes;

(3) further to the Meeting being in continuous session, at 9.47 pm, during discussion of the above item, the Mayor stood down from the chair temporarily and the Deputy Mayor took the chair, the Mayor then resuming the chair at 9.54 pm;

(4) Councillors Arnold, D Ashton, Mrs Ashton, Mrs Bath, Miss Bednell, Billson, Mrs Champagnie, John Cowan, Janet Cowan, Harriss, Mary John, Kara, Mrs Kinnear, Knowles, Jean Lammiman, Myra Michael, Vina Mithani, C Mote, Janet Mote, John Nickolay, Joyce Nickolay, Osborn, Anjana Patel, Pinkus, Romain, Seymour, Silver and Versallion wished to be recorded as having voted against the Recommendation above].

178. MEDIUM TERM CAPITAL BUDGET STRATEGY AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN:

Further to Item 8 on the Summons, the Council received Recommendation II from the Cabinet meeting of 17 February 2004 in this matter.

The Recommendation was adopted as printed.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE 'PRUDENTIAL BORROWING' INDICATORS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 1 TO THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS OF URBAN LIVING AND BUSINESS CONNECTIONS BE APPROVED.

Reason for Decision: To improve the management and delivery of the Capital Programme whilst operating under the new 'Prudential Borrowing' Indicators.

E OTHER REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

179. SPECIAL URGENCY DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE:

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, Council received a report of the Borough Solicitor which set out details of decisions taken as a matter of urgency on behalf of the Executive (that is as individually authorised by Portfolio Holders).

RESOLVED:

THAT THE URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS NOW REPORTED BE NOTED.

F QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13

180. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE (COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 13):

Further to Item 10 on the Summons, the following questions had been submitted by a Member of the Council, notice of which had been duly given under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13.2.

<u>QUESTION BY</u>	<u>QUESTION OF</u>	<u>TEXT OF QUESTION</u>
Councillor Knowles	Education and Lifelong Learning Portfolio Holder (Councillor Stephenson)	"Would the Portfolio Holder please comment on the quality of post-11 education in Harrow".
Councillor Knowles	Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder (Councillor O'Dell)	"Are our parking attendants and charges, both on Sundays, used merely to raise revenue for the Council?"

Councillor Knowles Leader of the Council
(Councillor Foulds)

“How many calls has the “free”
Council Tax 2004/05 hotline
received and what has been the
cost of this “phonenumber”?”

[Notes: (1) In moving the first of the above questions, Councillor Knowles sought leave of the Council to correct the remit of the question from that shown on the Summons, which was consented to by the Council, and that correction is reflected in the above text;

(2) oral answers were provided to the above questions and, under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 13.5, supplementary questions to each of the above questions were asked and were additionally answered].

G MOTIONS UNDER COMMITTEE PROCEDURE RULE 15

181. MOTION AT ITEM 11 OF THE SUMMONS:

- (i) Councillor Knowles moved and Councillor C. Mote seconded the following Motion appearing at Item 11 of the Summons:

“This Council notes the chaos that ensued from the awarding of contracts to install double-glazing and doors on the Eastcote Lane Estate, as was evidenced at the Tenants’ and Leaseholders’ Consultative Forum meeting held on Wednesday 21 January 2004.

This Council also notes the lack of consultation with affected Tenants and Leaseholders.

This Council further notes the lack of on-site monitoring of the contractors and the work carried out.

This Council deplores the Portfolio Holder’s lack of courtesy in not attending the TLCF (Special) meeting on Wednesday 21 January 2004, his lack of apology for not attending the meeting and for his gross rudeness to both the Tenants and Leaseholders and to the Council in not sending a reserve in his place.

Accordingly, this Council resolves to express its lack of confidence in the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Housing and demands his resignation from this Portfolio forthwith.”

- (ii) Upon a vote, the Motion was not carried.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MOTION, AS SET OUT AT (i) ABOVE, BE NOT ADOPTED.

[Note: At 11.15 pm, during the course of the debate on the above Motion, Councillor Toms moved under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 17.10 (d) “that the question now be put”. This received the general assent of the Council and the Meeting moved to a vote on the Motion].

182. URGENT MOTION:

- (i) Further to the decision outlined at Resolution 173 above, Councillor Foulds moved and Councillor C. Mote seconded the following Motion:

“This Council is seriously concerned about the current proposal to sell the premises of the South Harrow Crown Post Office to a company which plans to convert the premises to a card and gift shop and significantly reduce the space available for the provision of PO services.

The Council deplores the fact that:

- There has been no genuine consultation about the principle of the sale and conversion
- No information is available about the accommodation to be retained for PO

services

- All the informal meetings have been scheduled for day time, only 2 hours on each day, 4 hours in total, thereby excluding many interested residents
- The employment of long-serving, experienced staff in the branch will be terminated
- There is no long-term guarantee of the continuation of all services at present provided.

The loss of Crown PO means residents would be forced to travel unacceptable distances to access one at either Harrow, Pinner, Eastcote or Northolt.

Harrow deplores the total lack of any meaningful consultation. The Council believes the proposal will be prejudicial to the viability of South Harrow and the convenience of local residents and determines to convey its concern to the PO, K.P. Retail Ltd. and the local MP".

- (ii) The Motion was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

THAT THE MOTION, AS SET OUT AT (i) ABOVE, BE ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY.

[Note: At 11.21 pm, during the course of the debate on the above Motion, Councillor Gate moved under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 17.10 (d) "that the question now be put". This received the general assent of the Council and the Meeting moved to a determination on the Motion as recorded above].

H MISCELLANEOUS

183. PROCEDURE FOR THE TERMINATION OF THE MEETING:

At various times during the course of the Meeting the Council considered the requirement to extend the proceedings beyond the formal guillotine time of 10.30 pm under the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 10.2(ii) as follows:

- (i) at 10.28 pm, during consideration of the Revenue Budget 2004-2005 and Initial Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy 2004-2005 to 2006-2007, the Mayor proposed an extension of 30 minutes, which was agreed by general consent;
- (ii) at 10.57 pm, during the Questions with Notice at Item 10, the Mayor proposed an extension of 15 minutes, which was agreed by general consent;
- (iii) at 11.14 pm, during the Motion at Item 11, the Mayor proposed a further extension of 15 minutes, which was also agreed by general consent.

RESOLVED:

THAT, UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2(ii), THE MEETING BE EXTENDED TO 11.00 PM, 11.15 PM AND 11.30 PM RESPECTIVELY.

(CLOSE OF MEETING: All business having been completed, the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 11.22 pm).

APPENDIX I**COUNCIL (COUNCIL TAX) MEETING – 26 FEBRUARY 2004****DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor Ray Arnold	<u>Personal Interest</u> Harrow Citizens' Advice Bureau (Management Committee)
Councillor Nana Asante-Twumasi	No interests declared.
Councillor David Ashton	<u>Personal Interests</u> Harrow East and West Conservative Associations
Councillor Marilyn Ashton	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Elmgrove School and Bentley Wood High School
Councillor Camilla Bath	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Whitchurch First and Nursery School and Harrow High School Council appointee to the Management Committee of Bentley Priory Nature Reserve Council appointee to the Sir John Wolstenholme Charity
Councillor Christine Bednell	<u>Personal Interests</u> Related to a person in receipt of domiciliary care Patron of HYM Governor of Whitmore High School and Vaughan First and Middle School Governor of Stanmore College Director Area Properties Member of the Conservative Party Member of the Association of Conservative Councillors
Councillor Don Billson	No interests declared.
Councillor Alan Blann	<u>Personal Interests</u> Spouse is an employee of LBH Appointed representative to: West London Waste Authority, Bentley Priory Nature Reserve and Harrow Nature Conservation Forum Individual member of H.I.E. Secretary of Organisation which has concessionary letting of LBH premises
Councillor Howard Bluston	<u>Personal Interests</u> Daughter is a Learning Support Assistant in a Harrow school Director of Harrow in Business Member of Harrow Sports Council Prospective Director ALMO Governor, Moriah Jewish Day School

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor John Branch	No interests declared.
Councillor Keith Burchell	<u>Personal Interests</u> Spouse employed in Local Authority maintained school Tenant of London Borough of Harrow allotment plot LEA appointed Governor of Cedars First and Middle Schools Member of Harrow East Labour Party Director of West House and Heath Robinson Trust (appointed by the Council) Director of Prince Edward Playing Field Trust (appointed by the Council)
Councillor L Champagne	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Hatch End High School Council appointee to the Deputy Lord Lieutenant's Committee Member of the Pinner Association Member of the Hatch End Association Member of the Conservative Party European Union of Women Royal College of Nursing
Councillor Mrinal Choudhury	<u>Personal Interests</u> Council Representative to HAVS Governor for Elmgrove Middle School
Councillor Janet Cowan	<u>Personal Interests</u> LEA rep Belmont First and Middle Schools LEA rep North London Collegiate School Member of Friends of Canons Park Steering Group Member of the Executive of Harrow in Europe Volunteer with Victim Support Holder of Freedom Pass Member of Conservative Party
Councillor John Cowan	<u>Personal Interests</u> LEA rep Aylward Schools Member of the Executive of Harrow in Europe Director, Secretary/Trustee Surplus Lands (Canons) Limited Holder of Freedom Pass Member of Conservative Party
Councillor Bob Currie	<u>Personal Interests</u> Two sons have an agreement for tenancy of Council garages One son working for L.B. Harrow (in the Print Unit) Pensions from L.B.H. Life Member Unison Member British Legion Member H.A.D. Member Eastcote Lane Tenants and Residents Association Rayners Lane Steering Group Harrow Federation of Tenants & Leaseholders 51 Kings Road (Residence) Labour Party Member
Councillor Margaret Davine	<u>Personal Interest</u> The Women's Centre

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor Mano Dharmarajah	No interests declared.
Councillor Sanjay Dighé	<u>Personal Interests</u> Father of children at Harrow schools Father of child attending 9 th Kenton Scout Group Non-Executive Director of CNWL Mental Health NHS Trust Member of Labour Party
Councillor Archie Foulds	<u>Personal Interest</u> Employee SC Further Education College
Councillor B Gate	<u>Personal Interests</u> RAF Northolt Community Consultative Committee Member St Dominic's 6th Form College Governing Body Local Authority representative CAB
Councillor Mitzi Green	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Vaughan First and Middle School
Councillor Ann Groves	<u>Personal Interests</u> Council Representative on HAD, Age Concern and Relate LEA appointed Governor of Marlborough School President of Harrow/Hillingdon Alzheimers Association (Social Services funded) Trustee of Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance Member of HCRE
Councillor Cyril Harrison	<u>Personal Interests</u> Harrow & Wealdstone Swimming Club Harrow Youth Football League Harrow East Labour Party Harrow Society of Football Referees Institute of Advanced Motorists Institute of Barristers Clerks Wealdstone Labour Hall Ltd
Councillor Clive Harriss	No interests declared.
Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar	<u>Personal Interests</u> Parents living in Harrow Council sheltered accommodation Parents in possession of a taxicard Parents in receipt of home help Governor of Earlsmead First and Middle Schools and of Weldon Park Middle School Member of ALG Reserve Member of RAF Liaison Committee

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor Mark Ingram	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Leasehold of 306 Alexandra Avenue, freehold owned by LBH Freehold of 134 Pinner View, in LBH Child at Local Authority school Child in receipt of Nursery School Grant Membership of Rayners Lane Estate Committee LEA appointed Governor of Rooks Heath High School and Newton Farm First and Middle School Director and Shareholder: FME Training Co. Secretary: Icebox Films Ltd Member: Harrow Fabian Society Member: Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament</p>
Councillor Nizam Ismail	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> LEA appointed Governor of Whitchurch Middle School Member of the Executive Committee of HCRE Secretary of the Overseas Sri Lankan Muslim Educational Trust (OSMET) Member of the Labour Party</p>
Councillor Mary John	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Representative for Harrow Council in Management of:- - Harrow Association of Voluntary Service - League of Friends, Northwick Park Hospital - Harrow Association of Disabled People Volunteer in Management of:- - Princess Royal Trust Harrow Centre for Carers Governor of Woodlands School Member: Conservative Political Party Member of Harrow West Conservative Association Member of Harrow East Conservative Association Harrow in Europe</p>
Councillor Manji Kara	No interests declared.
Councillor Eileen Kinnear	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Council appointee to Harrow on the Hill Forum Council appointee to the RAF Northolt Community Consultative Group School Governor of Roxeth First and Middle School</p>
Councillor Mike Kinsey	No interests declared.
Councillor Adrian Knowles	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> (Reserve) Member Refugees into Jobs (NW London Forum) (appointed by Council) Member, Harrow West Conservative Association</p>
Councillor Jean Lammiman	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Council appointee to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate Central Middlesex (Board of Trustees) • Harrow School for Young Musicians (Managing Body) • Harrow in Europe Committee • Harrow Strategic Partnership Board • Multi-Agency Forum on Racial Harassment • LEA Governor, Nower Hill High School

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor Dhirajlal Lavingia	No interests declared.
Councillor Adam Lent	<u>Personal Interest</u> Director and Shareholder: Think Enterprise Limited
Councillor Paddy Lyne	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor, Cedars First and Middle School Harrow Weald Common Conservators Princess Royal Trust Carers Citizens Advice Bureau Blue Badge Holder Harrow Young Musicians Shadow Board of ALMO
Councillor Myra Michael	No interests declared.
Councillor Jerry Miles	<u>Personal Interests</u> Father receives meals-on-wheels service LEA Governor at a High School (Rooks Heath)
Councillor Vina Mithani	<u>Personal Interests</u> Councillor Governor at Glebe First and Middle School ALMO Shadow Board Member Member of Conservative Party Member of Harrow East Conservative Association
Councillor Chris Mote	<u>Personal Interests</u> Member of Harrow West Conservatives Harrow and Wealdstone Swimming Club (Vice President) Chair of SSAFA (Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families' Association) LB Harrow representative on the Sports Council
Councillor Janet Mote	<u>Personal Interests</u> Council representative on the Harrow Heritage Trust Executive Committee Governor of St John Fisher First and Middle School
Councillor John Nickolay	<u>Personal Interests</u> Joint ownership of 200 Malvern Avenue, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9HE Church Warden of St Andrew's Church, Malvern Avenue, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9ER Member of Harrow West Conservative Association, 10 Village Way, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 5AF Member of Harrow Borough Football Club, Earlsmead, South Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 8SS Member of Old Gaytonians Association, South Vale, Sudbury, Middlesex Vice-Chairman, Anglo African Youth Association Council Representative, Harrow Council for Racial Equality Holder of Freedom Pass (for free travel on London Buses, LUL and other railways) Member of Harrow in Europe LEA Governor at Welldon Park First School and Welldon Park Middle School

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor Joyce Nickolay	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Member and employee of the Harrow West Conservative Association, 10 Village Way, Pinner, Middlesex, HA5 5AF Member of St Andrew's Church, Malvern Avenue, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9ER Holder of Freedom Pass (for underground bus and some railways) Member of Harrow in Europe LEA Governor at Newton Farm First and Middle School</p>
Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> LEA rep and Chair of Governors at Whitefriars First and Middle School LEA rep at Salvatorian College</p>
Councillor Phillip O'Dell	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Appointment of Harrow Heritage Trust Appointment to Bentley Priory Open Space Committee Member of Elmgrove First and Elmgrove Middle School Governing Bodies</p>
Councillor Asad Omar	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Chairperson of Harrow Council for Racial Equality (HCRE) LEA Governor of Nower Hill High School</p>
Councillor Paul Osborn	No interests declared.
Councillor Anjana Patel	<p><u>Personal Interest</u> Governor – Vaughan First and Middle School</p>
Councillor Adrian Pinkus	No interests declared.
Councillor Raj Ray	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Chair, Rayners Lane & Headstone North Labour Party Member, Co-op Party Member, Society of Black Lawyers Member, Anti Racist Alliance Co-ordinating Secretary, National Convention of Black Teacher (NCBT) Member, Harrow Fabian Society Member, Black Londoners Forum Executive Member, London Kalibari Member: National Autistic Society, Harrow (NASH) Fundraiser: The Children Society, Relate, Help the Aged, UNICEF, IFAW + NASH Governor: Kingsley High School Member: HCRE Member: Action for South Africa (ACTSA) Wife: Teacher in Rooks Heath High School Joint owner of a property in Wealdstone which is leased out for three years to Frays Charitable Housing Association</p>
Councillor Richard Romain	<p><u>Personal Interests</u> Child at a Voluntary-Aided School Child in receipt of additional educational services</p>

MEMBER	<u>INTEREST</u>
Councillor Anthony Seymour	<u>Personal Interests</u> Mother receives domiciliary care/Harrow Care at Home Sister receives Social Security and Housing Benefit, as a private sector tenant
Councillor Navin Shah	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Glebe School Trustee of Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance
Councillor Rekha Shah	<u>Personal Interests</u> Parent Governor of Harrow High School Member of the Executive Committee of Harrow Anti-Racist Alliance
Councillor Eric Silver	<u>Personal Interests</u> Any matter to do with pharmacy Councillor representative on HAD Councillor representative on Corporate Parenting Board Member HUMHS
Councillor Bill Stephenson	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Marlborough First and Middle Schools, Hatch End High School and Harrow College
Councillor Keekira Thammaiah	<u>Personal Interests</u> Governor of Park High School and Stag Lane Junior School
Councillor Stephen Thornton	No interests declared.
Councillor Keith Toms	<u>Personal Interests</u> Son works for the Authority Wife receives a small pension from the Authority Lifetime Member of NUT Board Member of the London Pensioners' Finance Authority
Councillor Mark Versallion	<u>Personal Interests</u> Appointed as Reserve on RAF Northolt Community Consultative Group Councillor representative on Harrow on the Hill Forum Councillor representative on Harrow Heritage Trust Executive Committee Chairman, Community Relations Committee, The Harrow Hill Trust Member, Royal United Services Institute
Councillor Anne Whitehead	<u>Personal Interest</u> Mother of son at West Lodge Middle School Governor of West Lodge First and Middle School Council appointee to Harrow Heritage Trust Executive Committee and Harrow Weald Common Board of Conservators
Councillor Gordon Williams	No interests declared.

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW
BUDGET REVIEW 2003-2004 TO 2004-2005**

APPENDIX II

	2003-2004 Original Budget	2003-2004 Forecast Budget	2004-2005 Original Budget
	£	£	Base Position £
Local Demand - Borough Services			
Corporate	0	0	3,123,700
Business Connections	15,799,480	15,951,330	8,716,200
Organisational Development	1,172,000	1,561,000	1,918,170
Chief Executive's Office	1,091,000	1,033,000	1,045,630
People First	189,673,920	189,413,000	203,994,510
Urban Living	43,799,930	43,666,000	45,647,720
Corporate Savings	0	-1,621,000	0
Total Directorate Budgets	251,536,330	250,003,330	264,445,930
Capital Financing adjustments	-16,534,370	-16,534,370	-17,498,790
Interest on Balances	-3,788,000	-3,901,000	-4,188,000
Contributions to Earmarked reserves	0	500,000	630,000
Total - Baseline	231,213,960	230,067,960	243,389,140
Capitalisation	-1,338,000	-1,338,000	-856,000
Adjustment to Balances	-105,000	1,041,000	
Total Net Expenditure	229,770,960	229,770,960	242,533,140
Contribution re Collection Fund Deficit b/f	321,000	321,000	17,424
National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR)	-60,892,560	-60,892,560	-59,119,277
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	-86,161,181	-86,161,181	-96,944,000
Other Grants			
Local Demand on Collection Fund	83,038,219	83,038,219	86,487,287
<u>Funds / Balances</u>			0
Balances Brought Forward	4,651,560	5,273,000	6,314,000
Adjustment to Balances	-105,000	1,041,000	
Balances Carried Forward	4,546,560	6,314,000	6,314,000
<u>Council Tax for Band D Equivalent</u>			
Harrow (£)	1001.16	1001.16	1033.89
<u>Increase</u>			
Harrow (%)			3.27%
<u>Taxbase</u>	<u>82,942</u>	<u>82,942</u>	<u>83,652</u>

Table of Labour amendments to the updated Consultation Budget increase of 3.77%

£'000

Area	04-05	05-06	06-07	Percentage impact of proposed amendment for 2004/2005	Explanation
People First					
Education – Schools Budget	+1200	0	0	+1.43%	Reflects the Schools increase proposals from the budget consultation.
Meals on Wheels	-34	0	0	-0.04%	Reflects the charging proposals in the budget consultation
Total People First	+1166	0	0	+1.39%	
Urban Living					
Pest Control Charges	-77	0	0	-0.09%	Reflects the charging proposals in the budget consultation
Clean and Green Programme	-760	+325	+435	-0.91%	Delay existing roll out programme – to commence later in 2004-05
Charge salaries to capital	-215	0	0	-0.26%	Some salaries for technical staff within Urban Living can be legitimately charged to capital as they are involved in the delivery of the capital programme.
Area	04-05	05-06	06-07	Percentage impact of proposed amendment for 2004/2005	Notes/Explanation

Minor Road Safety Improvements	-60	0	0	-0.07%	Currently within the revenue MTBS, this expenditure can be legitimately charged to the capital programme.
Total Urban Living	-1112	+325	+435	-1.33%	
Business Connections					
Housing Benefits	-75	0	-400	-0.09%	Additional Housing Benefit subsidy receivable from the government following most recent announcements.
ICT	-200	0	0	-0.24%	Capitalise £200K of ICT growth on an ongoing basis
Total Business Connections	-275	0	-400	-0.33%	
Organisational Development					
Equalities Training	-50	0	0	-0.06%	To be funded from one-off monies
Total Org Development	-50	0	0	-0.06%	
Area	04-05	05-06	06-07	Percentage impact of proposed amendment for 2004/2005	Notes/Explanation
Corporate					
Increased Interest	-150	0	0	-0.18%	Recalculation of estimated interest on cash flow/balances following latest interest rate rise & predictions
Total Corporate	-150	0	0	-0.18%	
Grand Total	-421	+325	+35	-0.5%	

Consultation Budget increase in Council Tax for 2004/05 3.77%

Less: Labour Amendments -0.5%

Proposed Labour Budget increase in Council Tax for 2004/05 **3.27%**

Labour Group Amendments

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW
MTBS 2004-2005 to 2006-2007

	2004-2005		2005-2006		2006-2007		Change	
	Budget £m	Council Tax £	Budget £m	Council Tax £	Budget £m	Council Tax £	Budget £m	Council Tax £
			Change %	Change %	Change %	Change %	Change %	Change %
Base Budget	230.092	1001.16	242.533	1033.89	253.379	1071.25	1071.25	
Less Collection Fund Deficit 2003-2004	-0.321	-3.84	-0.017	-0.20				
Change in Council tax base		-8.50	-0.85%					
Non Recurring items	-0.434	-5.19	0.175	2.09	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Repriced Base Budget	229.337	983.63	-1.75%	1035.78	253.379	1071.25	1071.25	0.00%
Base budget Changes	-0.377	-4.51	0.055	0.66	0.055	0.66	0.66	0.06%
Basic Inflation	7.265	86.85	7.719	92.28	7.951	95.05	95.05	8.87%
Additional Inflation	2.457	29.37	1.805	21.58	1.967	23.51	23.51	2.20%
Transfers of functions & specific grants	-2.227	-26.62	-0.500	-5.98	-0.400	-4.78	-4.78	-0.45%
Transfers to/from capital	0.267	3.19	0.566	6.77	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00%
RSG/Grant changes		-107.49		-92.30		-133.67	-133.67	-12.48%
Total Base Position	236.722	964.43	-3.67%	1058.78	262.952	1052.02	1052.02	-1.80%
Budgeted Growth:								
Effect of Existing Policy Decisions	7.829	93.59	4.346	51.95	3.658	43.73	43.73	4.08%
Legislative Change	0.583	6.97	0.635	7.59	0.100	1.20	1.20	0.11%
Demographic/demand change	0.966	11.55	0.607	7.26	1.662	19.87	19.87	1.85%
Local Public Service Agreement	0.578	6.91	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Other	1.923	22.99	0.741	8.86	1.244	14.87	14.87	1.39%
Procurement Savings	-0.515	-6.16	-0.500	-5.98	-0.500	-5.98	-5.98	-0.56%
NHP efficiency savings	-1.900	-22.71	-1.900	-22.71	-1.900	-22.71	-22.71	-2.12%
Existing MTBS following full reprice	246.186	1077.56	7.63%	1105.75	267.216	1102.99	1102.99	2.96%
NHP procurement savings	-3.670	-43.87	-2.886	-34.50	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.00%
MTBS including procurement savings	242.516	1033.69	3.25%	1071.25	267.216	1102.99	1102.99	2.96%
Collection Fund Deficit 2004-2005	0.017	0.20						
MTBS Total	242.533	1033.89	3.27%	1071.25	267.216	1102.99	1102.99	2.96%

THE CABINET,
CABINET ADVISORY PANELS
AND
CONSULTATIVE FORUMS

CABINET

REPORT OF CABINET

MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Foulds

Councillors: * D Ashton † C Mote
 * Burchell * O'Dell
 * Margaret Davine * N Shah
 * Dighé * Stephenson
 * Miss Lyne

* Denotes Member present
 † Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATION I - Key Decision - Revenue Budget 2004-2005 and Initial Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy 2004-2005 to 2006-7

The Executive Director (Business Connections) introduced his report which detailed the proposed Revenue Budget for 2004-2005 and the Three Year Medium Term Budget Strategy for 2004-2005 to 2006-2007.

The Chair indicated that his Group would be submitting detailed amendments direct to Council on 26 February 2004. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and Performance Management indicated that the amendments would be made available to the other Groups prior to Council.

Members noted that the Conservative Group would make their detailed budget proposals available on 23 February 2004.

In response to a question in relation to the anticipated increase in Members' Allowances and the £20,000 cost highlighted in the report elsewhere on the agenda on the recruitment and retention of School Governors, the Chair indicated that a number of issues required consideration and requested a further discussion with Members. On the advice of the Borough Solicitor, the Chair proposed an amendment to the recommendation to Council in respect of Members' Allowances.

Cabinet considered and noted the various consultation minutes, references and recommendations attached as appendices to the report of the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Business Connections).

Cabinet, having noted the responses to the consultation, agreed the Budget and Council Tax Resolutions, authorised the Executive Director (Business Connections) to report directly to Council on any changes required to the Greater London Authority precept

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

- (1) That Council consider the budget options and approve a budget to enable the Council Tax for 2004-2005 to be set;
- (2) that the model Council Tax Resolution set out below be approved;

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS

- (A) To note that at its meeting on 22 January 2004 the Council calculated the amount of 83,652 as its Council Tax Base for the year 2004-2005 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (B) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2004-2005, in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992;

- (i) Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act. **(Gross expenditure)** £445,197,540
- (ii) Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act. **(Gross income including use of reserves)** £202,243,400
- (iii) Being the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, **as its budget requirement for the year.** £242,954,140
- (iv) Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, reduced by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its General Fund to its Collection Fund in accordance with Section 97 (4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Collection Fund Deficit). £156,045,853
- (v) Being **the amount to be raised from Council Taxes** calculated at (B) (iii) above less the amount at (B) (iv) above. £86,908,287
- (vi) Being the amount at (v) divided by the Council Tax Base, calculated by the Council at its meeting on 22 January 2004 in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. **(The average Band D Council Tax)** £1,038.93
- (vii) Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	692.62	808.06	923.49	1,038.93	1,269.80	1,500.68	1,731.55	2,077.86

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (vi) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (C) That it be noted that for 2004-05 the Greater London Authority stated the following amount in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	160.89	187.70	214.52	241.33	294.96	348.59	402.22	482.66

- (D) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (B) (vi) and (C) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2004-05 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	853.51	995.76	1,138.01	1,280.26	1,564.76	1,849.27	2,133.77	2,560.52

Scheme of Virement

- (E) That the Council agree that until the review of Financial Regulations is completed there should be no change to the Virement Rules as set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Rules approved by the Council on the 28 May 2002.

(3) that an initial Medium Term Budget Strategy to cover the period 2004-2005 to 2006-2007 based on the approved budget for 2004-2005, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved;

(4) that the Council maintain a minimum level of unallocated General Fund Reserves of £4m at the end of each financial year;

(5) that the optimal level of unallocated General Fund Reserves is £7m;

(6) that the Council aims to achieve the optimal level of reserves over the medium to long term by taking opportunities to increase reserves by sound in-year financial management;

(7) that until the review of Financial Regulations was completed there should be no change to the Virement Rules set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules approved by the Council on 28 May 2002;

(8) that Council make a decision on Members' Allowances as set out in Appendix 7 to the report of the Chief Executive and Executive Director (Business Connections).

(See also Minute 428).

RECOMMENDATION II - Key Decision - Medium Term Capital Budget Strategy and Capital Investment Plan

Members considered the report of the Executive Directors of Urban Living and Business Connections, which sought approval to make changes in management of the capital programme to confirm fixed elements of this year's programme and the 'Prudential Borrowing' Indicators.

The Interim Director of Finance reported that, throughout the year, the new 'Prudential Borrowing' Indicators had emerged from the Government. Members noted that from these, the Council must integrate as far as possible, its capital and revenue spending plans. The Interim Director of Finance reported that the Government, in consultation with CIPFA, had changed the way the Council dealt with capital financing. The new requirements meant that the Council needed to look at its overall borrowing levels. The current level of external debt was £163m but did not have to start to be repaid until 2006.

Cabinet, having agreed recommendations in relation to capital programme management, delegations, the fixed capital programme and requested Member training on 'Prudential Borrowing' Indicators,

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That the 'Prudential Borrowing' Indicators set out in Appendix 1 to the report of the Executive Directors of Urban Living and Business Connections be approved.

Reason for Recommendation: To improve the management and delivery of the Capital Programme whilst operating under the new 'Prudential Borrowing' Indicators.

(See also minute 434)

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW
BUDGET REVIEW 2003-2004 TO 2004-2005

APPENDIX 1

	2003-2004 Original Budget	2003-2004 Forecast Budget	2004-2005 Original Budget
	£	£	Base Position £
Local Demand - Borough Services			
Corporate	0	0	3,123,700
Business Connections	15,799,480	15,951,330	8,991,200
Organisational Development	1,172,000	1,561,000	1,968,170
Chief Executive's Office	1,091,000	1,033,000	1,045,630
People First	189,673,920	189,413,000	202,828,510
Urban Living	43,799,930	43,666,000	46,759,720
Corporate Savings	0	-1,621,000	0
Total Directorate Budgets	251,536,330	250,003,330	264,716,930
Capital Financing adjustments	-16,534,370	-16,534,370	-17,498,790
Interest on Balances	-3,788,000	-3,901,000	-4,038,000
Contributions to Earmarked reserves	0	500,000	630,000
Total - Baseline	231,213,960	230,067,960	243,810,140
Capitalisation	-1,338,000	-1,338,000	-856,000
Adjustment to Balances	-105,000	1,041,000	
Total Net Expenditure	229,770,960	229,770,960	242,954,140
Contribution re Collection Fund Deficit b/f	321,000	321,000	17,424
National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR)	-60,892,560	-60,892,560	-59,119,000
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	-86,161,181	-86,161,181	-96,944,000
Other Grants			
Local Demand on Collection Fund	83,038,219	83,038,219	86,908,564
Funds / Balances		0	
Balances Brought Forward	4,651,560	5,273,000	6,314,000
Adjustment to Balances	-105,000	1,041,000	
Balances Carried Forward	4,546,560	6,314,000	6,314,000
Council Tax for Band D Equivalent			
Harrow (£)	1001.16	1001.16	1038.93
Increase Harrow (%)			3.77%
Taxbase	82,942	82,942	83,652

PART II - MINUTES

422. **Declarations of Interest:**
The Borough Solicitor circulated details of Cabinet Members declared personal interests in the Budget. Councillor Lyne declared that she had a personal interest in that she was a shadow board Member of the Arms Length Management Organisation
- RESOLVED:** To note the interests declared and circulated and that Members would remain in the room whilst all matters were considered and voted upon.
423. **Minutes:**
- RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2004, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
424. **Arrangement of Agenda:**
A Member expressed concern at the number of late items and supplemental agendas. This was not acceptable and caused confusion.
- The Chair indicated that he would vary the order of business so that the items of particular public interest, namely the Annual Audit and Relationship Managers Letters 2002-03 and the Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy 2004/7 and Revenue Budget 2004/5, be considered after Public Question Time.
- RESOLVED:** That all business be considered with the press and public present.
425. **Petitions:**
Councillor Dighé presented a petition containing 130 signatures from residents of Kenton Park Avenue. Councillor Dighé read the terms of the petition to the meeting which were as follows:-
- “Re: Traffic Control on - Kenton Park Avenue - Kenton Park Road:
I the undersigned resident of Kenton Park Road have received the above mentioned letter dated 24 November 2003 (copy enclosed). I fully support proposal D (erecting a barrier at the junction of Kenton Park Avenue and Kenton Park Road as per enclosed diagram) and to have a filter traffic light to turn right from Kenton Road on to Kenton Lane.”
- RESOLVED:** That the petition be received and forwarded to the relevant officers.
426. **Public Questions:**
The Chair indicated that, in accordance with Executive Procedure Rule 15.1, a question submitted by Mr Daver was not permissible as it related to an individual case and details of which were included in the confidential report circulated on the Cabinet Information Circular.
- Members noted that the time limit on public questions would not be applied.
- RESOLVED:** To note the following public questions had been received:-
- 1.
- Questioner:** Mr John Mitchell
- Asked of:** Councillor Archie Foulds (The Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet)
- Question:** “HCTC has gathered 23,000 signatures from residents, with their names and addresses, demanding that the 2004/5 increase be no more than inflation.
- Harrow Council will have concluded the process of a ‘council tax consultation 2004/5’ via the ‘Harrow People’. I have discovered many roads have not received the ‘Harrow People’ including my own road.
- Please will you tell me how many ‘Harrow People’ were printed and how many were sent out to residents?
- What was the cost of this consultation including the cost of ‘freepost’? “

2.

Questioner: Mr Stanley Sheinwald**Asked of:** Councillor Archie Foulds (The Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet)**Question:** "Can you please tell me if you consider that it is your money or residents money which has been spent by your Council on funding pet projects".

3.

Questioner: Mr Pravin Seedher**Asked of:** Councillor Navin Shah (Portfolio Holder for Partnership and Property)**Question:** "In answer to my last question Cllr Shah indicated his concern for the plight of Harrow residents facing ever increasing council tax demands. As actions speak louder than words - I would like to know what action he has taken in the past to protect Harrow Residents from steep tax rises - specifically which of the inflation busting council tax rises in the past has he voted against? "

4.

Questioner: Susan M Hall**Asked of:** Councillor Archie Foulds (The Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet)**Question:** "Your group has subjected residents to six successive years of Council Tax increases above inflation and are collecting an extra £50 million from us this year -you have also used up millions from the Reserves. Under your stewardship we are again facing further increases around THREE times the rate of inflation. Have you given any consideration to making way for someone who could produce better results for us?"

[Note: Oral answers were provided to the above questions and, under the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 15.4, each questioner asked one supplementary question which was additionally answered.]

427.

Annual Audit and Relationship Manager Letters 2002-3:

Nigel Johnson, of Deloitte and Touche, the Council's External Auditors, introduced the Annual Audit Letter which covered their first year of work. He reported that the main findings were set out in the Executive Summary to the Letter. He highlighted that the Council had made improvements in relation to financial planning. A clear opinion had been given on the Council's accounts for 2002, and had been reported to a sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2003. Members noted from the Relationship Manager's letter that the qualitative assessment had moved the Council from weak to fair, indicating that the Council was moving in the right direction.

Mr Johnson reported that the Council had improved its data collection arrangements in respect of performance indicators and that the External Auditors intended to examine performance management arrangements in 2004. Mr Johnson reported that there were some issues in relation to internal control but acknowledged that the Council was working to put improved systems in place in relation to risk management.

The Executive Director (Organisational Development) introduced the Relationship Manager's Letter which had been received in lieu of a corporate re-assessment.

RESOLVED: (1) That the contents of the Annual Audit and Relationship Manager Letters be noted and that the proposed Action Plan, set out in Appendix 1 to the Audit Letter, to meet the recommendations within those letters be endorsed;

(2) To note that the letters would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their next meeting.

Reason for Decision: To meet the statutory requirement for the Executive to consider the contents of the Annual Audit and Relationship Manager letters.

428. **Key Decision - Revenue Budget 2004-2005 and Initial Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy 2004-2005 to 2006-2007:**
(See also Recommendation I).

The Executive Director (Business Connections) introduced the report which aimed to facilitate the Cabinet's recommendation to full Council about its revenue budget for 2004-2005 and a three year Medium Term Budget Strategy for 2004-2005 to 2006-2007.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) outlined the content of his report. He advised that the Greater London Authority (GLA) would be meeting on 18 February 2004 to consider the Mayor for London's 2004/5 consolidated budget requirement of £2.813m. He therefore sought Cabinet authority to report direct to Council, as part of the summons, on any changes to the GLA precept.

In response to a Member's proposed amendment, Cabinet agreed that alternative methods of consultation for next year's budget were required.

Cabinet, having made recommendations to Council in relation to the budget and Model Council Tax Resolution, the Initial Medium Term Budget Strategy, the General Fund Reserves, Virement Rules and Members' Allowances,

RESOLVED: (1) That the budget and Council Tax resolutions be agreed and that the Executive Director (Business Connections) be authorised to report directly to Council, as part of the Summons for Council, any changes required to the Greater London Authority precept when the latter was notified to the Council;

(2) that Cabinet notes the responses to the consultation and thanks the stakeholders and members of the public who had responded to the consultation on the budget whose views had been valuable in shaping the Council's budget and the Medium Term Budget Strategy;

(3) that, for next year, consideration be given to alternative methods of public consultation, including a statistically representative sample method.

Reason for Decision: To meet the agreed budget timetable to prepare a 2004-05 budget and set a balanced budget and a Council Tax within the statutory deadline.

429. **Fees and Charges Review:**

The Executive Director (Business Connections) introduced the report which set out the fees and charges collected by the service departments for the current year together with the proposed charges for 2004-2005. He drew Members' attention to the recommendations from the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel in relation to charges for business parking permits.

In response to a Member's question in relation to the increase in playscheme charges, the Executive Director (People First) reported that the lead officer had examined the playscheme market in the context of a need for equity. He reported that other local authorities charged £11.00 – £12.00 a day and therefore the proposed charges were in line with the charges elsewhere. The Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning indicated that, in light of comments made, the possibility of phasing in increased charges for playschemes would be considered.

The Executive Director (Urban Living) explained, in response to a Member's question in relation to charges for disposal of trade waste at the Civic Amenity Site, that the Council had to recover all of its costs

In respect of the recommendation from the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel, a Member sought clarification on the zones D, E and F.

RESOLVED: (1) That the recommended charges for 2004-2005 set out in Appendices B, C, D and E to the report of the Chief Executive and the Executive Director (Business Connections) be approved;

(2) that subject to the checking of zones D, E and F, the charge for on-street business parking permits be set at £300 pa to apply to all controlled parking zones in the borough, except Harrow Town Centre (defined for this purpose as Zones D, E and F and the area abounded by D, E and F) set out in Appendix E of the report of the Interim Head of Environment and Transport considered by the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel on 3 December 2003 be approved, where adequate off-street parking space was available for

businesses;

(3) that proposals to phase the increase in charges for playschemes be investigated.

Reason for Decision: To enable the revised charges to be implemented and in the case of parking to manage traffic.

430. **Harrow Vitality Profile:**

Cabinet received a presentation on the Harrow Vitality Profile from the Interim Director of Strategy (Urban Living) and the Funding Officer (Urban Living).

The Funding Officer reported that the Harrow Vitality Profile gave a dynamic electronic picture of Harrow and its' people. He reported on the possible uses of the profiles and indicated that they would assist in determining future areas for the New Harrow Project roll-out as well as being useful for the development of the Community Strategy.

The Funding Officer reported that the vitality profiles would be published shortly and that ward maps and detailed information would be made available to Members.

The Chair thanked the officers for their presentation and requested that Cabinet's congratulations be conveyed to all officers involved in the production of the Harrow Vitality Profiles.

431. **Forward Plan 1 February - 31 May 2004:**

The Chief Executive advised, in response to a Member's query, that she had requested Executive Directors to consider whether there were any key decisions beyond March 2004 for inclusion in the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED: To note the Forward Plan for the period 1 February 2004 – 31 May 2004.

432. **Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committees - Review of the Recruitment and Retention of School Governors:**

Members received a report from the Executive Director (People First) in relation to a reference from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the Scrutiny Review of Recruitment and Retention of School Governors.

The Chair indicated that as there was currently no provision within the Medium Term Revenue Budget Strategy to implement the recommendations of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee, the matter be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning for consideration who would then report back to Cabinet on his findings.

RESOLVED: (1) That the reference from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee in relation to the Review of Recruitment and Retention of School Governors be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning for consideration;

(2) that the Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of Cabinet, once his investigation was complete.

Reason for Decision: To respond to the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee on its recommendations.

433. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2003-4 to 2006-7:**

The Executive Director (Business Connections) introduced the report which set out revisions to the report considered by Cabinet on 13 January 2004 in order to comply with the requirement of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to produce a balanced budget. This followed changes to information available at the meeting on 13 January 2004. He also drew Members' attention to the addendum report circulated on the supplemental agenda.

RESOLVED: (1) That the revised HRA budget for 2003-2004 be approved;

(2) that the 2004-2005 HRA budget be approved;

(3) that the 3 year HRA budget projections be approved;

(4) that the proposed level of working balance at 2.0% minimum and 3.05 optimum of gross expenditure be approved and be achieved over the life of the current Medium Term Budget Strategy;

(5) that the revised capital financing strategy be approved, in accordance with prudential guidelines;

(6) that the usage of the additional subsidy, as set out in paragraph 5.20 of the report of the Executive Director (Business Connections) be approved;

(7) that the inclusion of estimates on a possible Arms Length Management Organisation be noted;

(8) that the IT development be approved, subject to compliance with the overall Corporate IT Strategy;

(9) that the increase in Sheltered Accommodation charges for those not eligible for financial support by 71p per week to £25.88 as set out in paragraph 5.21 of the report of the Executive Director (Business Connections) be approved;

(10) that the proposals set out in paragraph 5.25 of the report of the Executive Director (Business Connections) on future action be endorsed;

(11) that the rent increase approved by Cabinet and Council on 13 and 22 January 2004 respectively be confirmed.

Reason for Decision: To comply with the requirement of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and produce a balanced budget for 2004-2005.

434. **Medium Term Capital Budget Strategy and Capital Investment Plan:**
(See also Recommendation II)

The Interim Director of Strategy (Urban Living) introduced the report, which sought approval to make changes in management of the Capital Programme to confirm fixed elements of this year's programme. He advised Members of the omitted paragraph 6.2 of the report indicating that a project plan would be prepared for the Corporate Management Team in March.

The Interim Director of Strategy (Urban Living) reported that advice was awaited in relation to the Disabled Facilities Grants and Improvement Grants and would be reported to Cabinet in March 2004.

In response to a question about the delegations detailed at recommendations 2.2. of the report, the Executive Director (Business Connections) advised that the delegations should be either to the Portfolio Holder or the Executive Director. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and Performance Management indicated that he would consult the other Groups but urged Cabinet to agree the proposed recommendation, subject to a minor wording addition to the recommendation on Small Project/New Innovations Fund.

Cabinet having made a recommendation to Council in relation to the 'Prudential Borrowing' indicators and requested Member training on this topic,

RESOLVED: (1) That the improvements to capital programme management set out in paragraph 6.1(a) to (c) of the report of the Executive Directors of Urban Living and Business Connections be approved;

(2) that the following delegations be approved:-

6.1 c(ii) Invest to Save Fund – Executive Director (Business Connections) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and Performance Management;

6.1c(iii) Small Projects/New Innovations Fund – Executive Director (Business Connections) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and Performance Management.

(3) that the development of the project plan set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report of the Executive Directors (Urban Living) and (Business Connections) be approved;

(4) that the fixed capital programme set out in paragraph 6.3 of the report of the Executive Directors of Urban Living and Business Connections be confirmed.

Reason for Decision: To improve the management and delivery of the Capital Programme whilst operating under the new 'Prudential Borrowing' indicators.

435. **Key Decision - Local Management of Schools - Changes to the Funding Formula 2004-2005:**

The Executive Director (People First) introduced the report which proposed options to change the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools for 2004-2005.

The Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning proposed an amendment in relation to SEN Phase 3 Delegation and it was

RESOLVED: (1) That the changes to the Fair Funding Formula and Scheme for Financing Schools for 2004-2005 as outlined in the report of the Executive Director (People First) be approved;

(2) that the section of the report dealing with Special Educational Needs (SEN) Phase 3 delegations and the need for further work be noted;

(3) that a paper on SEN Phase 3 delegations be prepared for submission to Cabinet, containing more detailed proposals, taking on board concerns expressed by various parties, with a view to a wide consultation with schools, governors, parents and other relevant stakeholders.

Reason for Decision: To meet the requirement to distribute school budget shares before 31 March 2004.

436. **Revenue Budget Monitoring 2003-2004 as at 31 December 2003:**

The Executive Director (Business Connection) introduced the report which set out the estimated overall financial position for the Council as at 31 December 2003. He reported that the Appendices to the report provided monitoring details for those services reporting budget issues arising from 1 April – 31 December 2003.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) reported that table 1 of his report excluded the further savings on National Non Domestic Rates (- £0.186m) on the depot and car parks and the additional reduction in the provision for the cost of implementation of single status in the current year (- £0.300m), taken to balances.

In response to a question in relation to bad debt provision, the Executive Director (Business Connections) advised that it was proposed to increase it to the level recommended by the External Auditor.

RESOLVED: (1) That the current revenue budget position be noted;

(2) that the transfer of the additional NNDR rebate and reduction in Single Status to General Fund Reserves be approved;

(3) that the virements set out in table 2 of the report of the Executive Director (Business Connections) be approved;

(4) that the management action proposed to bring the budget into line in the current year be noted;

(5) that, where an overspend remains, Directors be instructed to identify savings as a first priority to bring the budget into line within 2003-2004, and that if at year end an overspend remains, this be carried forward to the relevant directorate budget for 2004-2005.

Reason for Decision: To effectively monitor the Council's budget.

437. **Capital Investment Monitoring 2003-4:**

The Executive Director (Business Connections) introduced the report which provided an update on the current Capital Programme and sought approval to some additional items. The report also detailed a forecast of the Capital Expenditure for 2003-2004 and future years.

RESOLVED: That the addition to the Capital Investment Plan of the schemes itemised in paragraph 6.3 of the report of the Executive Director (Business Connections) totalling £1.56m for which either additional funding was available or could be met from re-phasing in the current year be approved.

Reason for Decision: To develop and manage the Council's Capital Investment Plan.

438. **Further funding bid for the collection of Organic Waste from households:**
The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report which set out the proposal to bid for an additional £1.368m funding from the London Recycling Fund to enable Harrow to continue to make progress towards meeting its statutory recycling target of 25.2%.
- The Executive Director (Urban Living) reported a correction to paragraph 1.1 of his report that a second round serving an additional 12,000 householders had also been funded by the London Recycling Fund and to paragraph 8.1 in that if the bid were successful, there would need to be a supplementary estimate to the current Medium Term Budget Strategy proposals.
- In response to a question relating to the employment of two additional recycling officers, the Executive Director (Urban Living) reported that if funding were no longer available those officers would seek to improve recycling, education and promotion. The current proposal would mean that these two additional officers would be retained but that their position would be reviewed depending on recycling performance. He added that if the Council achieved its target, there would be a significant grant available.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That the Area Director (Urban Living) be authorised to submit a bid to the London Recycling Fund to provide a scheme for the separate collection of organic waste to cover the remainder of the Borough;
- (2) that two additional recycling officers be employed to promote the council's waste policies should the bid to the London Recycling Fund prove successful.
- Reason for decision:** To allow the Council to make progress in meeting its statutory recycling targets.
439. **Compulsory Purchase Order - 8 Carlton Avenue, Kenton:**
The Executive Director (Urban Living) introduced the report which sought approval for the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order pursuant to Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 to bring back into use 8 Carlton Avenue, Kenton, a long term empty property. Members noted that authority was also sought for the Borough Solicitor to proceed with requisitions for information under Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 for empty properties where it was believed that pursuing Compulsory Purchase Order action was the only option available to officers.
- RESOLVED:** (1) That a Compulsory Purchase Order under Sections 17(1)(b) and 578 of the Housing Act 1985 be authorised;
- (2) that the reasons for making the Order be its long term empty status, its condition, and the Council's intention to bring it back into residential use, and such other ancillary case as the Borough Solicitor considers appropriate;
- (3) that the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make and seal the Order, serve notice of it, submit it for confirmation, deal with any objections including a Public Inquiry, and upon confirmation as he considers appropriate, either seal a General Vesting Declaration and take all steps in connection there with or serve notices to treat and of entry;
- (4) that all other action considered necessary by the Borough Solicitor be authorised, including the service of notices requiring information under Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and prosecution in the event of failure to reply to such a notice or give false information;
- (5) to delegate to the Borough Solicitor authority in any other empty property cases, where the Council or Officers are considering compulsory purchase, the powers to serve notices requiring information under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and to prosecute for failure to reply to such a notice or give false information.
- Reason for Decision:** In line with the Council's Empty Homes Strategy, this action was being sought as a last resort to bring this property back into beneficial use, following protracted attempts at negotiations and numerous complaints from local residents.
440. **Key Decision - Local Authority Gold Resolution:**
The Chief Executive informed Cabinet of the decision of the Association of London Government's Leaders' Committee to recommend that all London Boroughs, the City of Westminster and Corporation of London adopt a resolution on Local Authority Gold Command and Control in the event of catastrophic incident.

The Chief Executive reported that the proposed resolution would only become operative

when the Government had declared a catastrophic incident. She added that, since the preparation of the report, her name had been included on the rota of Local Authority "Gold".

RESOLVED: (1) That the resolution prepared by the Association of London Government attached as Appendix A be approved;

(2) that the Chief Executive inform the Association of London Government of the Council's adoption of the Local Authority Gold Resolution.

Reason for Decision: To ensure satisfactory contingency arrangements for any catastrophe which occurs.

441. **Twining Arrangements:**

The Chief Executive introduced the report which outlined the procedure for entering into a new twinning arrangement with the town of Bhuj in the Gujerat. She reported that the Council might be eligible for EU funding and that if the Council were to enter into twinning arrangements, clear objectives would be required.

The Portfolio Holder for Partnership and Property introduced his report, which formed an appendix to the officer report. He reported that his visit to Bhuj had been useful and that the local municipality had publicly given its support to the twinning. He added that he would forward the comments and decision of Cabinet onto the relevant individuals in Bhuj.

A Member expressed the view that it was necessary to be clear on the strategy for twinning and what the Council would hope to achieve from any twinning arrangements. He added that it would be useful to seek comparisons with other boroughs.

RESOLVED: To note the report and to encourage co-operation between the Council and the organisation being established by the signatories to the letter reported to Cabinet on 13 January 2004 to further the necessary preliminary arrangements for twinning.

Reason for Decision: Working with the local voluntary organisation is the best means of achieving a successful twinning arrangement.

442. **Membership of the Budget Review Working Group:**

RESOLVED: That Councillor John Branch be appointed as second reserve on the Budget Review Working Group.

443. **Termination of Meeting:**

In accordance with the provisions of Executive Procedure Rule 22.2 (Part 4(d) of the Constitution), it was

RESOLVED: At (1) 9.58 pm to continue until 10.20 pm; (2) at 10.18 pm to continue until 10.30 pm.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.26 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR A T FOULDS
Chair

Circular Page 2



APPENDIX A

CATASTROPHIC INCIDENT IN GREATER LONDON: DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS

Resolutions to be passed by each London Borough and Common Council of the City of London ("the Councils")

1. This resolution is made in accordance with section 138 Local Government Act 1972, section 101 Local Government Act 1972, section 155 Local Government and Housing Act 1989, section 19 Local Government Act 2000 Regulations 7 and 10 Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000 and all other enabling powers.
2. As from the date of this resolution the Council's functions under section 138(1) Local Government Act 1972 (Powers of principal councils with respect to emergencies or disasters) are delegated to the Head of Paid Service as defined in paragraph 3 below in the circumstances set out in paragraphs 4-7 below.
3. The Head of Paid Service is the person appointed by one of the Councils under section 4 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 who, at the date of declaration of a Catastrophic Incident as defined in paragraph 4 below, has agreed to discharge the functions under section 138(1) Local Government Act 1972 ("the functions") on behalf of the Councils.
4. A Catastrophic Incident is an incident declared as such by the Minister of State for London Resilience ("the Minister") where destruction of or danger to life or property in Greater London has occurred, or, in the reasonable opinion of the Minister, such destruction or danger is imminent, or the Minister has reasonable grounds for apprehending such destruction or danger.
5. The functions hereby delegated to the Head of Paid Service shall not be exercised until resolutions delegating the functions to the Head of Paid Service have been made by all the Councils.
6. The powers hereby delegated to the Head of Paid Service shall not include any power to incur expenditure or to make grants or loans to any person unless the Head of Paid Service has received confirmation from the Minister that expenditure reasonably incurred by the Head of Paid Service in taking immediate action to safeguard life or property or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience will be reimbursed by HM Government.
7. In discharging the functions, the Head of Paid Service shall, insofar as reasonably practicable, consult with and inform any Council whose area is affected by the Catastrophic Incident regarding any action proposed to be taken in that Council's area.

CABINET
ADVISORY
PANELS

WEALDSTONE REGENERATION ADVISORY PANEL

15 JANUARY 2004

Chair:	* Councillor Burchell	
Councillors:	* Marilyn Ashton	* Vina Mithani
	* Billson	* Marie-Louise Nolan
	Harrison	
Co-opted Member:	* Councillor Miss Lyne	
Advisers:	* Mr S Addy	Harrow Association of Disabled People
	* Dr O Amele	Wealdstone Traders Association
	* Mr T Arens	Heriot Catering
	Mr M Garratt	Kodak
	* Ms S Hall	Wealdstone Traders Association
	* Mrs B Harvey	Wealdstone Active Community
	† Mr R Page	North West London Chamber of Commerce
	* Ms J Skidmore	Wealdstone Active Community
	* Mr A Wood	Harrow Public Transport Users' Association

* Denotes Member present

† Denotes apologies received

[NB Attendance at this meeting by guests and representatives of the Local Authority is recorded at Appendix 1].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS- NIL

PART II- MINUTES

111. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note (1) that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting; and

(2) apologies received from Mr Rudi Page, a representative of North West London Chamber of Commerce and an adviser to the Panel, and the attendance, in Mr Page's absence, of Mr Amin Lalljee, a representative of North West London Chamber of Commerce, as a guest of the Panel.

112. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interests made by Members of the Panel arising from the business transacted at this meeting.

113. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

114. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- (i) The revision of the record of attendance to indicate the attendance of Mrs Brenda Harvey, adviser to the Panel, at the meeting
- (ii) That additional reference be made within Minute 105 regarding the New Harrow Project to the following 'A WAC adviser to the Panel expressed the opinion that party politics should not enter into the Panel's work as all Panel Members shared the common aim of regenerating Wealdstone'.

115. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**

One of the advisers to the Panel who represented Wealdstone Active Community reported that she had previously requested information regarding the cost of the rising bollards scheme which had been implemented in the High Street and the possibility of seeking compensation from the manufacturer for the continuing difficulties experienced in its operation.

She also requested that the front sheet of the agenda be amended to indicate that she was now an adviser to the Panel rather than a reserve adviser.

The representative of Harrow Public Transport Users Association subsequently informed the Panel that he understood that the difficulties experienced were due to inconsistent installation of the transponders by a particular bus company and the use of buses of an incompatible design, and the fault could therefore not be blamed on the manufacturer.

The Chair suggested that the rising bollards system could be put to good use in another location.

RESOLVED: That (1) officers be requested to supply Mrs Brenda Harvey with information regarding the cost of the rising bollards scheme and the possibility of seeking compensation from the manufacturer for the continuing difficulties experienced in its operation; and

(2) the agenda front sheet be amended to indicate Mrs Brenda Harvey's position as an adviser to the Panel.

116. **Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there no public questions, petitions or deputations have been submitted to this meeting, under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rules 15, 13 and 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution) respectively.

117. **References from Council and Other Committees/Panels:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no references from Council or other Committees or Panels to be received at this meeting.

118. **Appointment of Advisers to the Panel 2003/2004:**

The Panel received a report of the Borough Solicitor which advised that Harrow Association of Disabled People had recently confirmed their nomination of Mr Stephen Addy to succeed Mr Mike Lazar as the organisation's representative on the Panel. Mr Lazar had resigned from the Panel in September 2002.

The report further advised that Mr Jeff Evans, who had been appointed as a non-voting adviser to the Panel in his capacity as the Chair of the Wealdstone Traders' Association, had recently confirmed that he had now had stood down as Chair of the Association and Susan Hall of Enhance Salon had been elected as the new Chair. It was noted that Ms Hall currently served as an adviser to the Panel as a representative of local business.

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 3, Mr Stephen Addy, a representative of Harrow Association of Disabled People, be appointed as a non-voting adviser to the Panel for the remainder of the 2003./2004; and

(2) Mr Jeff Evans resignation as Chair of the Wealdstone Traders' Association and Ms Susan Hall's appointment as the new Chair be noted.

119. **Community Safety and Public Realm Maintenance:**

The Area Director (Urban Living) addressed the Panel regarding the New Harrow Project. He explained that, partly in response to the Government's 'Liveability Agenda', which aimed to strengthen communities, make streets safer, cleaner and better maintained and to provide high quality spaces, but also in accordance with the Council's own vision and priorities for the Borough, the Council had launched the New Harrow Project which marked a change in approach to the provision of services in the Borough.

As part of this change in approach, the Council had reviewed its own organisational arrangements to ensure that they could meet the challenge of delivering the liveability agenda, and arising out of this a new department called 'Community Safety and Maintenance Services' had been created within the Urban Living Directorate. This department was tasked with responsibility for not only a number of the traditional environmental services, such as waste management, refuse collection, street cleansing and highways maintenance, but also for community safety services such as crime reduction, street wardens, highways enforcement, environmental health and licensing, in recognition of the fact that to provide solutions to the root causes of problems a

'joined up' approach was essential.

The Area Director advised that the Panel would now receive an oral presentation from a number of the key officers of the new department and a guest speaker, Inspector Roberts of the Metropolitan Police Services, who, together, would provide information on community safety in Harrow, an update on the roll-out of the New Harrow Project to the Central Harrow area, and feedback on action taken to meet the concerns previously raised by the Panel

1. Community Safety In Harrow

(1) Tour of the CCTV Control Room

The CCTV Manager guided the Panel on a tour of the CCTV Control Room, which was located within the Civic Centre. He explained that the Control Room had been constructed using Home Office funding. A subsequent successful bid had recently enabled the Council to purchase more cameras, including a number of 'dome' cameras with a 360 degree field of vision, and to upgrade the recording equipment to digital format. He advised that in total approximately 27 cameras around the Borough now beamed footage back to the Control Room and demonstrated the position of the cameras in Harrow and Wealdstone Town Centres. The footage was continually monitored during the day by operators who had been trained in crime management and relevant legislation, such as the Data Protection Act. A further resource was the mobile control room van which was equipped with four cameras, three mobile cameras and a link to the Police national computer which held vehicle registration data.

The CCTV Manager stressed the benefits of manning cameras rather than merely historically viewing CCTV footage. The Council had successfully piloted a partnership approach to the use of CCTV, with operators continually coordinating and sharing information with major shops represented in the town centre, local transport providers, the Council's Street Wardens and the Police. This information sharing was facilitated by a radio link with the street wardens, the Police and major retailers. The CCTV Manager explained that the Council hoped to obtain funding for cameras to be placed outside South Harrow and Rayners Lane Underground Stations to extend the scope of this initiative.

It was noted that when targeting resources regard was also had to police data which identified crime trends and hotspots in the Borough. In Harrow Town Centre these had been identified as the two shopping centres and the bus station. The CCTV Manager further advised that he attended meetings of the Police Borough weekly Tasking Group which, conversely, allowed the Authority to influence the targeting of Police resources to any new problem areas identified by the CCTV operators.

The success of the CCTV scheme as a whole was illustrated by the fact that CCTV had contributed to approximately 700 arrests in Harrow in the previous year. It was hoped that the extra camera equipment to be funded and installed in the Borough by Transport for London later in the year would allow officers to build on that success. The cameras would be used by Transport for London personnel for bus lane monitoring for a proportion of the day but would be available for the CCTV operators to use for community safety purposes for the remainder.

Finally, the CCTV Manager referred to the Authority's responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. He informed the Panel that, for a small fee, members of the public were entitled to view footage of themselves on/in a given time, date and location and the Authority provided a special room for this purpose, thereby ensuring the continued anonymity of the CCTV operators.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Members asked a number of questions relating to, inter alia, details of the bus lane monitoring scheme and the provision of further cameras in Wealdstone, outside Barclays Bank. In response to the latter the CCTV Manager indicated that, in the short term, this was unlikely to be possible as Home Office funding relied on demonstrating high crime figures which this area did not have. However, it was hoped to upgrade the lens on the existing, nearby camera to improve its capabilities.

(2) Presentation by Inspector Nigel Roberts of the Metropolitan Police Service

Inspector Roberts explained that he had served in the Metropolitan Police Services for twenty years and for most of that twenty years had also been a Harrow resident. He had been an inspector in Harrow for 2 years and had taken up his current post, as a Community and Problem Solving Inspector, in November

2003.

Inspector Roberts briefly outlined the priorities of the Harrow Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, the crime trends in the area and the current arrangements for community policing. He explained that the Metropolitan Police Service as a whole had been under strength for some time and community policing had suffered as a result. However, numbers of recruits were now climbing and it was therefore possible for a renewed focus on community policing. As a result, a move towards Ward policing, driven both by central government and the Mayor for London, was to be implemented across London, marking a major cultural and organisational change. Each Ward would have its own dedicated team consisting of one sergeant, two Police Constables and three Police Community Safety Officers and foot patrolling of the community would be re-established to provide the reassurance and visible police presence. This was particularly significant in Harrow as, it was noted, fear of crime in the area was disproportionately high.

The three pilot Wards for the Harrow scheme would be Greenhill, Marlborough and Wealdstone, with Wealdstone being the first of these to receive the officers. The scheme would then be rolled out to the other wards over the space of the following three years. It was anticipated that the first new recruits would arrive in April and they would free up more experienced officers who would take their place on the Wards. Inspector Roberts reported that the Government had made assurances that the officers would be 'ringfenced' and would not be diverted locally to other duties or to special Central London duties.

As well as these centrally driven changes, a strategic review of community policing in Harrow had also been initiated within the Borough and this would result in a change to the way community policing was organised locally. A Safer Communities Team would be established to bring together all the community policing teams under one roof and would adopt a problem-solving approach to crime and disorder, working in partnership with the local community to address the root causes of crime and to reduce the fear of crime.

During the discussion which followed a number of questions were asked of inspector Roberts. A Member sought clarification on how the pilot wards had been chosen. In reply, Inspector Roberts and the Chief Environmental Health Officer advised that the wards had been chosen on the basis of need, as identified by crime-mapping of crime and social deprivation indices. A Member also noted that it had previously proved difficult to fill vacancies in Harrow Weald and queried whether this problem was likely to persist. Inspector Roberts advised that officers would be directed to Ward vacancies in the event that they proved difficult to fill. It was also asked whether the new Ward officers were likely to be diverted to local events such as the Pinner Fair. Inspector Roberts agreed to report back with clarification on this matter.

The discussion also turned to measures to combat the under-reporting of crime. Inspector Roberts advised that it was now possible to report incidents via the Internet. He added that he was also in favour of the establishment of regular ward surgeries for this purpose.

2. Update on the roll-out of the New Harrow Project to 'Central Harrow'

The Area Director (Urban Living) and the Divisional Manager, Operations provided an update on the roll-out of the New Harrow Project to the 'Central Harrow' Area, which consisted of the Greenhill, Marlborough and Wealdstone wards.

It was noted that the Project had now been operational in the Central Harrow area for three months, with the high usage areas settling into a schedule of being cleaned several times daily between 6am and 8pm, and residential areas being cleaned on a fortnightly basis. The areas around minor shops were cleaned twice daily.

The cleaning and maintenance programme included the provision of new litter bins in Wealdstone Town Centre, a concerted drive to remove all fly-posting in the area, the use of high pressure spraying equipment to remove graffiti, and the use of sweeping machines to scrub pavements. The latter were shortly to be employed to remove chewing gum from the pavements also. Officers advised that they were satisfied that the Project had made a good initial impact on the area but conceded that there were some problems with graffiti re-offending. To combat this officers were proposing an scheme of working with schools to promote a sense of ownership and pride in children in the state of their immediate environment. The initiative would be piloted in Kenmore Middle School.

The Area Director advised that some areas which needed a deep clean were being tackled through unofficial one day road closures which allowed officers to address a number of maintenance issues at one time, for example pruning trees, painting lampposts, removing large items of rubbish and fixing trip hazards. In South Harrow, which had been the pilot area for the New Harrow Project, it was noted that, as a result of concerted action taken to resolve hard maintenance defects, insurance claims against the Council in that area had had a zero success rate. The Chair observed that this had resulted in significant savings for the Council.

The Area Director emphasised the need for residents' cooperation for the above closures to be successful as, for example, the roads could not be thoroughly cleansed without the removal of all cars from the road.

Following the presentation, Members of the Panel sought clarification on a number of issues. In response to a question regarding trip hazards caused by tree roots pushing up paving stones, the Area Director advised that, where necessary and in consultation with arboriculture officers, tree roots were cut or trees were replaced with a more suitable species.

3. **Feedback on concerns previously raised by the Panel/Issues requiring attention identified by officers**

(1) **Enforcement against retailers obstructing the highway**

The Panel had previously raised concerns regarding retailers obstructing the highway and in particular had voiced concern about the behaviour of a greengrocer situated in Wealdstone High Street. The Area Director (Urban Living) confirmed that officers intended to tackle this problem but emphasised that the Council must take an even-handed approach to those obstructing the highway and other retailers creating an obstruction would also be approached. Advertising boards, for example, both impeded disabled pedestrians and made cleaning and maintenance of pavements more difficult.

(2) **Disposal of Commercial Waste**

It was noted that commercial waste was now collected daily using bin bags rather than wheelie bins. The Area Director stressed his intention to deal robustly with those traders who were not managing their waste in an effective way and meeting their responsibilities.

(3) **Fly-tipping**

At the previous meeting of the Panel a Member had requested clarification of the type of evidence needed to convict fly-tippers. In response the Area Director now advised that the Council must be supplied with the vehicle make, colour and registration; the number of people involved in the incident and their descriptions; the exact location, time and date of the incident; and a description of what had been dumped. He advised that video evidence was not required for successful prosecution but stressed that the witness must be prepared to testify in court.

(4) **Foul odours in Wealdstone High Street arising out of sewage problems**

The Panel had previously requested on a number of occasions that the foul odours in Wealdstone High Street be investigated. In response, the Chief Environmental Health Officer now explained that the odours emanated from Wealdstone Brook which was culverted and ran under Wealdstone High Street. Responsibility for the brook was shared – the Environment Agency were responsible for it as a waterway, Thames Water were responsible for sewage pumped into the brook, and the Environmental Health Section of the Council were responsible for connections to the brook which were used to dispose of waste. A survey was currently being carried out by Thames Water and was due to be completed in March, and it had, so far, identified 200 illegal connections to the brook. Some of these were quite significant, for example the connection of whole residential buildings, and it was thought that they were a major contributor to the odours. Thames Water would try to persuade those responsible for the illegal connections to redirect their waste, but, in the event that they were unsuccessful, Environmental Health could serve notices to order rectification of the situation or, as a last resort, could carry out the works themselves and bill the offending party accordingly. It was hoped that the works would be completed before the summer and the accompanying hot weather.

(5) **Pigeon deterrent**

In response to previous complaints regarding individuals attracting pigeons and

other vermin to the Wealdstone by setting out pigeon food, the Town Centre Manager advised that officers were currently drafting a strategy on combating the problem. She reported that the solution was likely to be a holistic approach involving several measures such as the proofing of buildings and the education of the public. She noted that one initiative which had proved effective in managing the problem elsewhere was to encourage feeding in a location chosen specifically for that purpose. Barking and Dagenham had adopted this strategy and had then built a pigeon loft in the feeding area and had removed eggs from the loft in order to control the pigeon population.

- (6) Anti-Social Behaviour in Herga Road
The Chief Environmental Health Officer (CEHO) referred to ongoing complaints regarding noise and disturbance in Herga Road, associated with the use of Kat. He advised that significant monitoring operations using noise monitoring equipment and the Street Wardens had been conducted but no evidence had been obtained and observed that the problem might have now dissipated. A member of the public addressed the meeting to advise that difficulties *were* still ongoing and the CEHO agreed to speak to her following the meeting to discuss the matter further.
- (7) Water leak repairs
The Area Director had previously undertaken to keep the Panel informed of the progress made by Thames Water in fixing the water leaks in Headstone Drive and Wealdstone High Street, however he advised that he had been unable to obtain an update from Thames Water. An Adviser to the Panel commented that she understood that the leaks had now been fixed.
- (8) WAC notice board
The Area Director confirmed that the WAC notice board was to be renovated shortly.
- (9) Flower planters behind Lloyds Bank.
The Area Director confirmed that the above planters were to be cleaned out in the near future.
- (10) Anti-slip coating on the mosaic tiles outside Holy Trinity Church
The Area Director advised that, further to the request of the Panel, an anti-slip coating had now been applied to the mosaic tiles outside Holy Trinity Church. An adviser informed the Panel that the coating was now flaking off. The Area Director agreed to investigate the matter further.
- (11) Review of Wealdstone Street furniture
It was explained that officers aimed to improve pedestrian flow and to reduce the cost of maintaining the street scene in Wealdstone by reviewing the street furniture in the area. The review would be carried out in phases due to cost.

Several advisers to the Panel requested that the lighting Headstone Drive be reviewed to improve the safety of that area and to better link Headstone Drive with the rest of the town centre. The Area Director assured the Panel that the money to do this had already and agreed to report back to the Panel regarding the likely timescale for the works to be carried out. A number of Members also suggested that Holy Trinity Church would also benefit from better lighting.

120. **Wealdstone Market:**

Further to the Panel's previous requests that officers investigate suitable sites on which a market could be held, the Panel now considered a report of the Director of Area Services (Urban Living) regarding this matter.

The report observed that regular markets or 'one off' specialist market events could improve the vitality and viability of an area, provided that they were complimentary to the local trading conditions and a suitable site could be found within the area, but concluded that there were currently no sites of suitable size or location for either and furthermore questioned whether any of the proposed market uses were complimentary to the local trading conditions in Wealdstone. Accordingly, the Panel was requested to consider whether, in light of this, officers should take any further action in the matter.

RESOLVED: That officers take no further action in the matter whilst the current position remains unchanged.

[REASON: To clarify the Panel's direction to officers in the light of the current position indicated in the officer report].

121. **Controlled Parking Zones - Business Permits:**

Further to the discussion on this matter at the Panel's previous meeting and in accordance with their request at that time, the Panel now received a report of the Interim Head of Environment and Transport which clarified the process and timetable for the introduction of business parking permits in Wealdstone.

During the discussion which followed the Panel noted that the permits would not be introduced until the next review of the Wealdstone Controlled Parking Zone, which was not scheduled to take place until 2005. Several Members expressed concern that this was some time away. Following further debate it was

RESOLVED: That the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel be requested to consider upgrading the review of the Wealdstone Controlled Parking Zone in the priority list to ensure the introduction of business parking permits in Wealdstone as soon as possible.

[REASON: To ensure the introduction of business parking permits in Wealdstone as soon as possible].

[Note: Councillor Marilyn Ashton wished to be recorded as having suggested the action outlined above].

122. **Wealdstone Survey - Should Wealdstone be Renamed Wealdstone Village:**

The Panel received a report of the Acting Director of Strategy regarding the suggestion that Wealdstone should be renamed 'Wealdstone Village'.

At the previous meeting of the Panel the response of local estate agents to the proposal had been reported and the Panel had agreed that consultation should be widened to other local businesses, but be kept to a minimal cost. The report now before the Panel set out the outcome of this widened consultation and made recommendations accordingly.

RESOLVED: That no further action be taken with regard to the above initiative.

[REASON: The majority of respondents were against the name change].

123. **Wealdstone Active Community:**

A representative of Wealdstone Active Community (WAC) updated the Panel on future activities to be organised by WAC.

It was advised that a Community Safety Day was to be held on 27th March between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm. The CCTV van and crime prevention trailer would be set up on the pedestrianised area of Headstone Drive outside Holy Trinity Church and the emergency services and Victim Support would also be taking part in the event. Free safety equipment, such as personal alarms, would be handed out.

It was also noted that an artist was currently being sought to assist with the project to paint a mural on the metal fence adjacent to the train station. It was hoped that the project would be completed by the end of July.

Finally, it was advised that the next issue of Wealdstone Live would be published in February.

RESOLVED: That the above update be noted.

124. **Any Other Business:**

RESOLVED: That the following be noted/agreed:

- **Update on the Community Premises Initiative**
A Member requested that a report/update on this matter be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel. She requested that it address the matter raised at a previous meeting regarding the relocation of the Grant Road after school club.
- **Part-pedestrianisation of Wealdstone High Street**
Arising out of the discussion on the agenda item relating to business parking permits, an adviser to the Panel advanced that helping businesses with their parking needs would be pointless without the re-introduction of through traffic to part of the High Street as without the passing trade this would bring businesses would increasingly cease to be viable. A second adviser stated that a survey of

members of the Traders Association had recently been conducted and 100% of those polled supported the re-introduction of through traffic.

It was noted that a petition regarding this matter was to be submitted to the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel (TARSAP) at its next meeting and the Chair suggested that Member's await their response. It was agreed that in the meantime the Chair of the Wealdstone Traders Panel would arrange to meet with the Chair and the Chair of TARSAP to visit the High Street and discuss to Traders' concerns. Councillor Marilyn Ashton requested to accompany the Chair on the visit also.

- Incident at the low bridge
An adviser to the Panel reported that there had recently been an incident where a bus had hit the low bridge in Wealdstone. It was noted that the bus driver had sustained slight injuries.

125. **Date of Next Meeting:**

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Panel be held at 6.30pm on Monday 22 March 2004.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 6.30 pm, closed at 9.12 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH BURCHELL
Chair

WEALDSTONE REGENERATION ADVISORY PANEL – 15 JANUARY 2004(1) **Guests:-**

Mr Amin Lalljee – North West London Chamber of Commerce
Inspector Nigel Roberts - Metropolitan Police Service

(2) **Officers of the Council:-**

Linda Arlidge –Town Centre Manager (Urban Living)
Dave Corby – Park Facilities Manager (Urban Living)
Jerry Hickman – Divisional Manager, Operations (Urban Living)
Graham Jones - Chief Planning Officer (Urban Living)
Gareth Llywelyn Roberts – Chief Environmental Health Officer
Roger Reeve – CCTV Manager (Urban Living)
Andrew Trehern – Area Director (Urban Living)

[Note: Apologies were received from Victoria Isaacs, Projects Officer (Urban Living)].

**EDUCATION ADMISSIONS AND AWARDS
ADVISORY PANEL**

20 JANUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Toms

Councillors: * Choudhury * Janet Cowan

Advisers: Mr D A Jones
(Vacancy)

* Denotes Member present

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATION 1: Admission to County Schools

On 20 January there were 9 children for whom the admissions staff could make no reasonable offer of a school place. The Education Admissions and Awards Advisory Panel was requested to authorise the admission of these pupils to a school where no place existed in the relevant year group.

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That an offer of admission to a school be made as follows:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Admitting School</u>
H71	10	Canons
H72	11	Harrow High
H73	9	Harrow High
H74	11	Harrow High
H75	11	Harrow High
H76	10	Canons
H77	11	Harrow High
H78	10	Rooks Heath
P3	6	Kenmore Park

PART II - MINUTES
172. Attendance by Reserve Members:

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

173. Declarations of Interest:

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

174. Arrangement of Agenda:

RESOLVED: That the item appearing in Part II of the agenda be considered with the Press and Public excluded on the grounds indicated below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
8. Admissions to County Schools	This item was considered to contain exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part I to Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 in that it contains information relating to any particular applicant for, or recipient of, any service provided by the Authority.

175. Minutes:

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2004 be deferred until printed in the next Council Bound Minute Volume.

176. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

177. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

178. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

179. **Admissions to County Schools:**

See Recommendation 1.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 5.55 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH TOMS
Chair

**EDUCATION ADMISSIONS AND AWARDS
ADVISORY PANEL**
3 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Toms

Councillors: * Choudhury † Janet Cowan

Advisers: † Mr D A Jones
(Vacancy)

* Denotes Member present
† Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS
RECOMMENDATION 1: Admission to County Schools

On 3 February there were 3 children for whom the admissions staff could make no reasonable offer of a school place. The Education Admissions and Awards Advisory Panel was requested to authorise the admission of these pupils to a school where no place existed in the relevant year group.

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That an offer of admission to a school be made as follows:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Admitting School</u>
H79	10	Bentley Wood
H80	10	Canons
H81	10	Canons

PART II - MINUTES
180. Attendance by Reserve Members:

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

181. Declarations of Interest:

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

182. Arrangement of Agenda:

RESOLVED: That the item appearing in Part II of the agenda be considered with the Press and Public excluded on the grounds indicated below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
8. Admissions to County Schools	This item was considered to contain exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part I to Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 in that it contains information relating to any particular applicant for, or recipient of, any service provided by the Authority.

183. Minutes:

RESOLVED: That the signing of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2004 be deferred until printed in the next Council Bound Minute Volume.

184. Public Questions:

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

185. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

186. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

187. **Admissions to County Schools:**

See Recommendation 1.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 5.45 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR KEITH TOMS
Chair

**NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATEPAYER
CONSULTATIVE PANEL**

5 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Choudhury

Councillors: * Idaikkadar * Myra Michael
* Kara

* Denotes Member present

Attendance by NNDR Representatives:-

Mr D Greenwood - Harrow and Hillingdon Branch, Federation of Small
Businesses
Susan Hall - Chair, Wealdstone Traders' Association
Jayn Lee Miller - Chair, Harrow and Hillingdon Branch, Federation of
Small Businesses

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

11. **Appointment of Chair:**

RESOLVED: To note the appointment of Councillor Choudhury as Chair of the Panel for the Municipal Year 2003/04.

12. **Attendance of Reserve Council Members:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no Reserve Members in attendance at this meeting.

13. **Apologies:**

RESOLVED: To note the following apology:

NNDR Representative: Apology was noted on behalf of Mr S Parsons, 'Harrow Music'.

14. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interest on behalf of Council Members present.

15. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

16. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

17. **Public Representations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions, deputations or public questions (Committee Procedure Rules 15, 16 and 18) submitted to this Panel meeting.

18. **Budget Options 2004/05 for Consultations:**

At the invitation of the Chair, the Council's Executive Director (Business Connections) provided the Panel meeting with an overview of the Authority's draft budget proposals for 2004/05. In the course of the presentation, the following elements were covered:

- the basic principles/considerations underlying the approach to setting the 2004/05 budget and that there had been no real change to the provisional financial settlement received from Central Government and therefore no major refinements

were necessary;

- an overview of the 2 stage consultation process, the different methods used to consult and that the consultation would end on 6 February 2004;
- an overview and make-up of the options for growth and savings encapsulated in the leaflet 'Your Money Your Choice', and the implications of these options on the level of Council Tax set;
- the charges made by Central Government in the funding of services such as housing benefit and the flood levy payments and the resultant benefits to Harrow;
- the Council Tax increase of around 3.9% (excluding the options) within the Medium Term Budget Strategy;
- the savings proposed and how these would be achieved.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) informed the Panel that Cabinet, at its meeting on 17 February 2004, would be provided with feedback from all the consultations carried out prior to making a recommendation to full Council meeting, which would approve the final Budget and set the Council Tax for 2004/05 on 26 February 2004.

The Executive Director (Business Connections) also briefed the Panel on the work being carried out by the Council with small business enterprises in Harrow.

He explained the work done by 'Harrow in Business' in supporting business to improve their viability and competitiveness and the support provided by the Council. The Executive Director (Business Connections) informed the Panel that the work done by 'Harrow In Business' was communicated through various channels and that any suggestions to improve further the line of communications would be welcomed. The Panel was informed that the Council had also streamlined its procurement strategy in order to allow local businesses to tender and that more work was being done in this area.

The Panel was also informed of the basis for the National Non-Domestic Rates and that the rates poundage was set nationally by the Government. It was explained that the Non-Domestic Rate, the means by which local businesses contribute to the cost of providing local authority services, was collected by Local Authorities and paid to the Government, which then redistributed the monies to Authorities depending on the number of residents each authority has. The Government had indicated that the rate in the pound for 2004-05 was likely to be 45.6p.

In addition, the Government was consulting on introducing

- 'Local Authority Business Growth' whereby local authorities would keep a small proportion of the business rate collected if there was an increase in the business rates in their area, the incentive being to increase growth and sustainability of businesses locally.

The Panel was also informed about the Council's new powers to create 'Business Improvement Districts' with a view to help tackle local issues identified by businesses as key to them. This would mean businesses in any such districts agreeing to a supplemental business rate which would be ringfenced for the purposes agreed with those businesses.

RESOLVED: (1) That the Budget Options and other relevant information be received and noted;

(2) That the timescales for the consultations and determining the Budget for 2004/05 be noted.

19. **Contributions/Comments from NNDR Representatives:**

Further to the presentation from the Executive Director (Business Connections) and discussion arising, the following contributions, issues and comments were raised by NNDR Representatives:

Options for Savings

An NNDR Representative was critical of the amount of money being wasted by the Council and stated that provision of Home Care and Meals on Wheels services ought

to be the responsibility (a core function) of local government and that these were not realistic options on which residents should have been asked to vote upon. The Representative was of the view that the option to increase charges and/or reduce these services would affect the disposable income of the recipients, which in turn would have a detrimental impact on local businesses.

Refurbishment Works – Civic Centre

An NNDR Representative was also critical of the expenditure on refurbishment works to the Civic Centre, particularly the improvements which were underway for Chief Officers. The Representative was informed that the cost of the refurbishment works was funded from the Capital budget through a combination of capital receipts and borrowing and not the Revenue budget and therefore did not have a direct impact on the Council Tax rate. The refurbishment was not solely for the purpose of Chief Officers and other staff would be relocated from other buildings which were costly and that the relocation would provide a net saving in the long term. This was the first part of a major refurbishment of the Civic Centre which would enable space to be used more effectively and promote better working between individual Units.

The NNDR Representatives were informed that, in addition, the works would improve staff morale and assist the Council's recruitment and retention policy. It was noted that all political parties had been involved in this process and that the costs of the overall works to the Civic Centre this year would be in the region of £400k, although that attributable to the new offices was significantly less than this figure.

Council's Management Structure/Council Workforce/Agency Staff/Consultancy Work

Some enquiries were made by an NNDR Representative regarding the cost of the new Management Structure and the total number of staff employed by the Council and whether any increases in the numbers could be justified.

The Representative was informed that the Council had restructured its top management structure in order to meet new challenges and to provide a customer focused service. The Representative was assured that the overall cost of the new structure would be no more expensive than the old structure.

It was agreed that information on the total number of Council employees would be provided in writing. The Representative was informed that staffing in Internal Audit had been increased in order to ensure that the Council managed its risks better and to meet issues raised by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) carried out by the Audit Commission.

Following further questions, the NNDR Representatives were advised that it was estimated that the NHP restructuring would lead to a saving of £370k per year over 3 years and that a review of the sickness absence scheme would lead to further savings of £200k per year over 3 years. It was further stated that the latter would lead to a reduction in the use of agency staff and payments made for overtime work.

The NNDR Representatives were informed that the Council did not hold budget(s) for agency staff; however should use of agency staff become necessary, the costs would have to be met from savings elsewhere in the budget.

The NNDR Representatives were also informed of the areas in which it was seen to be prudent to use the services of a Consultant, particularly when negotiating on Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) Contracts in order to ensure that the contractual arrangements were financially and legally viable and that the Council was not exposed to unnecessary risks.

Capital Funding/Boundary Roads

An NNDR Representative asked for details about the payments made to other boroughs.

The Representative was informed that the transfers between Harrow and adjoining boroughs related partly to payments made for the maintenance of boundary roads and costs incurred for the crematorium in Hillingdon which was used by Harrow.

Council Tax

The NNDR Representatives were critical of the burden placed on the ratepayer and stated that the increases in Council Tax could result in a revolt. They highlighted the

recent protests by pensioners whose incomes did not increase at the rate of increases in Council Tax. They called for a fairer system and were of the view that Councils ought to be more 'business like' and cut their costs when expenditure exceeded income.

An NNDR Representative pointed out that the joint initiatives between businesses and the Council from the previous year had led to mutual benefits and savings for the Council. The Representative sought assurances that the Council would not compete with local businesses in service delivery. The Representative added that local businesses would be keeping a close eye on the Council's activities in this area.

The NNDR Representatives were informed that the law allowed local authorities to compete with businesses in the provision of certain services and pointed out that Harrow Council did compete with local businesses in the collection of trade waste.

Consultation with Business Representatives

The Chair and other Council Members of the Panel were of the view that the consultation process with Business Representatives needed reviewing and that it was necessary to ensure that more Business Representatives attended the consultation meetings. It was suggested that perhaps more meetings/exhibitions between the NNDR Representatives and the Council would help to improve dialogue. It was also suggested that lead Members on Finance could be invited by Businesses to their meetings, if possible in a convenient business premises away from the Civic Centre. The NNDR Representatives were invited to write in with their suggestions.

Public Meeting

There was some criticism from Members of the Panel that the venue for the public meeting held on 27 January 2004 was unsuitable and had prevented many people from attending and that it was essential to ensure that in the future, such meetings were held in a central part of the Borough.

Wealdstone Town Centre

An NNDR Representative was of the view that Wealdstone Town Centre was 'dying' and called for the pedestrianised section of the road to be opened up. The Representative added that generally the Council appeared not to be listening and therefore the Business Community was not interested in attending meetings. The Representative pointed out that this was evident here by the apparent lack of attendance from other business representatives. The Chair mentioned that Wealdstone Town Centre matters should be raised and discussed with the Wealdstone Regeneration Advisory Panel.

The NNDR Representatives were informed that the Council was working with Acton Housing association on redeveloping the library site in Wealdstone with a view to energising that part of Wealdstone Town Centre. The Representatives were also informed that the relocation and refurbishment of the library would be financed by the sale of land to Acton Housing Association. An NNDR Representative sought details of the Section 106 Agreement and details of the project for which the money would be ring-fenced. The NNDR Representatives were concerned that concentration of large numbers of affordable housing could lead to an increase in crime in the area. They were also critical of such developments where there were no provisions made for a children's play area.

Environmental Issues

There was general concern about the amount of litter which in turn led to problems of infestation. It was essential that businesses and local residents were educated on this anti-social behaviour. The work done by street wardens to improve the situation was noted. An NNDR Representative felt that it was unfair that businesses had to pay for the anti-social behaviour of local residents.

An NNDR Representative enquired about the shortfall in the recycling income. The Representative was informed that the Council was required to meet Central Government targets on recycling and that Harrow had not met the target(s). It was therefore important that residents were encouraged to recycle more which would help to reduce the shortfall. The shortfall was also due to the need for greater participation by residents and the landfill levy that the Council was required to pay.

Traffic Issues

An NNDR Representative was of the view that Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ's) in residential areas had a knock-on effect on the 'corner' shops in the area. The Representative was informed that CPZs in residential areas had been introduced to stop the streets being clogged by commuters and assured that the Council was listening to the business community and, where practical, business permits and other traffic measures would be introduced to assist businesses.

Questions from an NNDR Representative

An NNDR Representative stated that he had a number of questions to ask and that these would be provided to officers in writing. The Executive Director (Business Connections) and the Director of Professional Services (Urban Living) agreed to respond to those questions and it was noted that a copy of the questions (when received) and answers provided would be sent to Council Members and NNDR representatives present at the meeting.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 2.40 pm, closed at 4.16 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MRINAL CHOUDHURY
Chair

PUBLICATIONS ADVISORY PANEL

12 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan

Councillors: * Branch * Jean Lammiman
* Burchell (2) * Stephenson
* Knowles

* Denotes Member present
(2) Denotes category of Reserve Member

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**106. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member

Reserve Member

Councillor Harrison

Councillor Burchell

107. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

108. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

109. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That, having been circulated, the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2003 and the minutes of the special meeting held on 9 December 2003 be taken as read and signed as correct records of those meetings.

110. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

111. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

112. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

113. **References from Council and Other Committees/Panels:**

A reference was received from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting of 20 January 2004, arising from that Committee's consideration of a report that reviewed the retention and recruitment of School Governors. It was agreed that the Panel would recommend the establishment of a separate web page and message board for school governors and the promotion of the governors' role on the web site and in Harrow People.

The Chair informed Members of the email network established by the Governors and requested that officers examine the possibility of interactivity between this network and the APLAWS project. Members also considered the possibility of a discussion forum on the web site especially for school governors.

RESOLVED: That (1) a separate web page and message board for schools governors be established;

(2) officers would explore ways of promoting the role of governors on the web site and in Harrow People.

114. **Spring Edition of Harrow People:**

A draft copy of the Spring Edition had not been seen by the Panel prior to the meeting and was therefore not discussed. However, the following items for the next edition of Harrow People were identified: -

- Information on Scrutiny
- The recruitment and retention of Governors
- The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder had requested an item on cycling and walking as an alternative method of transport. It was agreed that this could be linked to the article on the cycling proficiency test.
- Canons High School, Roxeth and Glebe Primary schools.
- Library opening hours on Wednesdays and Roxeth Library's 50th Anniversary.
- Jubilee Programme Update
- International two-day event in May
- Gold and silver anniversaries together in Harrow Museum.
- Harrow Arts Centre 100 years old
- Feature new Directors
- The New Directorates- structure and responsibilities
- List of who to contact in relation to particular issues - environmental health, abandoned cars etc.

115. **Council Noticeboards:**

The Head of Communications explained to the Panel that the issue had been raised due to the lack of a policy regarding community noticeboards. There were no guidelines on fees for advertising on the boards leading to inconsistent charges of the different advertisers. The Council currently had an agreement with Adshel stating that the company could advertise in return for supplying the boards. The contract was due to be renewed in Autumn 2004 and the Head of Communications asked the Members of the Panel to consider the contract and also the use, condition and siting of the boards.

RESOLVED: That (1) the verbal report of the Head of Communications be noted;

(2) the Head of Communications provide Members with a report on the Council noticeboards at the next meeting of the Panel.

116. **Council Website:**

The Communication and Publication Manager informed the Panel that the Council was to launch a new system in March where selected staff could upload information on the web site themselves instead of allocating it to the IT section as had been done previously. However, an adequate checking system would still be used to monitor the uploaded information. The scheme would involve both staff and voluntary organisations and the persons selected for the scheme would undergo relevant training in editorial skills and procedural safeguards. The officer also explained that the APLAWS system had been introduced by several other Councils. Members expressed some concerns regarding the monitoring of information being uploaded by staff within individual departments and whether sufficient checks would be made to ensure consistency of approach and content.

RESOLVED: That (1) the verbal report of the Communication and Publication Manager be noted;

(2) the Communication and Publication Manager provide Members with a report on the development of the Council web site via the APLAWS system.

117. **Area Newsletters:**

The Head of Communications explained that as part of the New Harrow Project, newsletters from different areas of Harrow would be produced and circulated. There were currently nine operational areas which would lead to a production of nine different newsletters sent out every two months in addition to Harrow People. The officer explained that this would be impossible with the current resources and, as an alternative, he would like the Panel to consider the proposal of one newsletter covering three areas and sending out a reduced edition of Harrow People with the area newsletters as inserts. Harrow People would be circulated six times a year with three different newsletters.

In addition to the proposal, the officer presented the Panel with three options to consider on printing and distributing Harrow People. Members were informed that one option was to maintain the relationship with the Harrow Observer, leaving the distribution and printing of the magazine to that newspaper with no additional costs involved. Another option would be to keep the current layout of the magazine and use an independent distributor incurring significant incremental costs. The third option for the Panel to consider would be a restructured Harrow People; a reduced copy of the magazine with an area newsletter included as an insert. The officer further explained to the Panel that the Council had made provisions in the budget for the production of certain statutory documents such as information on recycling, collection of refuse during Christmas and guides to primary schools. This information could be sent out under cover of Harrow People which in return would benefit from the funding set out for the production of this information. This would consequently reduce the costs of producing the magazine.

In the discussion that followed a Member of the Panel commented that some of the information to be sent out was too specific for general distribution. The Chair requested that the production costs of the magazine be more detailed in order to consider the options more carefully. Concerns were also raised that an increased frequency of Harrow People would lead to significant production and distribution capacity problems. The Chair suggested that Members of the Panel be provided with the printing schedule for Harrow People in order to provide officers with their comments well in advance of deadlines.

RESOLVED: That (1) the verbal report of the Head of Communication be noted;

(2) the Head of Communications provide Members of the Panel with a report detailing the three options for changing the format for Harrow People Magazine;

(3) the Communication and Publication Manager provide Members of the Panel with the printing schedule for Harrow People.

118. **Presentation on "Modern.Gov" Software System:**

The Panel received a presentation from a member of the Committee Services section of the committee information on the Intranet where all information relating to the Committee Section's work could be viewed. The officer informed the Members about the various search functions available such as searching for Portfolio Holders' Decisions and also explained that the search function related only to items from the Committee Section. This section of the site also displayed merged agendas and minutes from the various Committees and information on Members and their appointments to various Committees. The officer continued to explain how the services provided on the site would enable Members to create their own personal boxes to provide them with information from all Committees in which they had an interest. The Members could also access Part II documents for the Committees to which they had been appointed using a password and could furthermore submit their comments on minutes electronically.

Following the presentation, Members raised concerns that personal details published on the Internet could represent a security issue and it was suggested that positive permission from the Members should be sought prior to any publication of personal details on the Internet. The Democratic and Members Services Manager advised that officers were currently examining how information is held on Internet, especially in terms of how attendance of meetings is recorded, to maintain accuracy and consistency.

Members agreed there was a need for further IT training on Intra/Internet usage and Members requested that the Communication and Publication Manager inquire whether the Panel could participate in the IT workshop organised by the Finance Portfolio Holder to be held shortly.

The Panel thanked the Committee Administrator for her presentation of the "Modern.Gov" Committee system.

RESOLVED: That (1) the presentation of the Committee Administrator be noted;

(2) the Publication and Communication Manager ascertain whether the Panel could attend the IT workshop.

119. **Any Other Business:**(i) Harrow People last edition

The Head of Communications reported that following inaccuracies in the distribution of the last edition of Harrow People containing the budget consultation, the Harrow Observer had been asked to give an account of its distribution. It was reported that the Harrow Observer had carried out its usual checks and redelivered in the areas which had not received Harrow People. The Harrow Observer admitted to delays when using Solus as a distributor, but reported that it was due to an initial incorrect packaging of Harrow People.

Consideration was then given to other issues regarding the last edition.

A Member of the Panel was concerned that other methods of distribution such as through the Royal Mail had not been considered prior to publication.

Another Member commented that the 'Other languages' paragraph on the last page of the consultation form was unclear and ought to be changed.

In response to a question from the Chair regarding the leaflet on the New Harrow Project which contained the same article as appeared in Harrow People page 5, the Head of Communications explained that his department had been specifically asked to send out this leaflet by the Leader's office and that Harrow People was at that time already in production leading to the duplication of the information. The Chair requested that Members should receive details of the cost of the leaflet.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report of the Head of Communications be noted and Members would receive details of the cost of the leaflet inserted in Harrow People.

(ii) Agenda 21

The local environmental group had launched a website to promote the environment in Harrow. The Communication and Publication Manager informed the Members that the website had experienced some difficulties and consequently had not been linked to the Harrow Council's web site yet.

(iii) Special meeting

It was agreed that an additional meeting be held to discuss further the Spring Edition of Harrow People; the date for the meeting to be decided after consultation with the Communications Unit.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.05 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MARIE-LOUISE NOLAN
Chair

CONSULTATIVE
FORUMS

**TENANTS' AND LEASEHOLDERS'
CONSULTATIVE FORUM (SPECIAL)****21 JANUARY 2004**

Chair: Councillor Currie

Councillors: * Billson * Knowles (Vice Chair in the Chair)
Burchell * O'Dell (1)* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

[Note: Councillors Bluston, Dharmarajah and Ingram also attended this meeting in a participating role. See Recommendation 1].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 - Resident Consultation on the Installation of Replacement Windows on Eastcote Lane Estate**

The Forum received the report of the ALMO Project Director which responded to issues raised by Eastcote Lane Tenants' and Residents' Association (ELTRA) in regard to consultation on installation of replacement windows on the Eastcote Lane Estate.

Officers introduced the report and commented that it covered both the technical background of the replacement windows and tenant consultation on the windows. Officers commented that there appeared to be three issues with the window replacement; specification, standards/workmanship and consultation.

In response to a question from a Member, officers explained that the scheme was originally due to begin in April, but the tenders were eventually not received until August as the job was expanded. There had previously been an assortment of replacement windows installed in Harrow, so officers had the opportunity to assess what had worked best. A lot of work had been put into the specifications, which were forward thinking and designed to push forward partnership working. In response to further questions from Members, officers confirmed that there had been a six week period for statutory consultation with leaseholders. Officers added that it had not been policy or practice to consult with tenants during this period, but there was no reason this could not be done in future.

Officers explained to the meeting that the Clerk of Works would visit the site of a contract each day. He would ensure that contractors were complying with Health and Safety regulations and would inspect quality of finished work. Each week the Clerk would submit a report on each site. Officers explained that it was not possible for the Clerk to monitor all of a site as they just checked finished jobs. It was expected that contractors would act as their own quality control. In response to further questions, officers explained that the Clerk was not responsible for consulting tenants, and the normal route for any complaint about the standard of work from tenants would come via the Tenant Participation Officer.

Officers confirmed that contractors were responsible for any repairs required. The time taken to complete these repairs depended on the degree and type of damage. It was hoped that contractors would make repairs to properties as they went on. In response to a question from a Member regarding repairs to rendering, officers commented that it could take up to two weeks, not including any delays potentially caused by rain. A resident commented that she had windows installed in early December, but the cementing was not completed until mid-January.

Officers confirmed that a detailed survey of each property was not carried out, but that the contractor should visit each property before commencing work.

A Member of the Forum commented that residents appeared unhappy that the new windows did not have fanlights and enquired how this had happened when the Council had a policy of replacing like for like. Officers explained that two tenders had been run, one for windows with fanlights and one without. The result had been that windows with fanlights were far more expensive and officers had been instructed to accept the lowest tender.

Tenants commented that the first meeting they had been invited to regarding the windows had been in September where they were shown half a window and the contract had already been signed.

In response to photographs tabled by residents, officers commented that the contractors should not be removing insulation, and they should replace any insulation they may have damaged. Officers undertook to investigate the premises in Stiven Crescent.

Officers informed the meeting that the windows had been tendered through the London Housing Consortium (LHC), who carried out the majority of the assessment work. In response to questions from residents, officers informed the meeting that the contract was worth £901,810.82 for roughly 500 units, 125 of which would be installed on the Eastcote Lane Estate. Officers reiterated that contractors were liable for the costs of any repairs.

In response to comments from a Ward Member, officers commented that it had not been their intention to replace 'like for like' as this had previously led to some disastrous replacement programmes in the past. The priority was to meet the decent homes standard and install windows which were still modern in years to come. Officers explained that some of the regulations for the windows were statutory and others were advisory, such as the ability to clean the window from inside. Officers wanted the safest product that met all regulations and was a modern product. In summary, a Member commented that the windows chosen exceeded minimum safety parameters.

Officers stated that they did attempt to arrange a meeting with tenants to arrange a specification for the windows. It was not always desirable to set the specification at the lowest minimum standard, and officers did try to reach agreement with tenants on what the minimum specification should be. In discussion of sill heights for ground and first floor windows, Officers explained they selected the height they did for safety reasons.

A Ward Member for Roxbourne commented that many decisions on the specification of the windows had been taken without proper Member and tenant involvement. The new windows had changed the look of the whole estate, yet residents had not properly been involved. It appeared that the Housing Department had not been aware of the decisions being taken by Design and Build. Also, the solutions applied by the contractors to problems they faced had not been applied consistently across the estate. Officers confirmed that previously there had been poor communication between Housing and Build and Design, but steps were being taken to address this.

A Ward Member for Roxbourne informed the meeting that he had been able to open a window, when on it's 'night ventilation' setting with a biro from the outside. Officers explained that the lock was the security device and met with all safety standards. Also, trickle vents were installed to allow air to circulate. There were no safety standards for windows when partially open. Residents commented that many people were not aware that it was not secure to leave their windows partially open. Another resident commented that her children tried to climb out of the windows as they opened so wide. In response, officers explained that some windows opened so far because they were emergency egress windows. Also, more information would be put in newsletters about newly installed products, to ensure that they were being used properly.

In response to criticism of the size of the window frames, officers explained that modern windows tended to be bulkier, assisting better security and higher thermal ratings.

Following a comment from a Member, officers commented that a pilot window with a fanlight was installed, as requested in a sheltered housing block, but had not been popular with residents. It was important that the Council kept an eye on the future to fulfil their duties as landlords.

In response to a question from a resident, officers confirmed that they did accept the lowest tender for the works, although the specification set was very high. The specification was designed to ensure that the contract would give good value. Following further comments, officers stated that they clerk could only report back on what he had seen, and that the monitoring of contractors cost money. To date, the contractor in question had performed well on other contracts.

At the invitation of the Chair, residents commented on the specification of the windows. A resident commented that he had not seen windows that opened inward before, and he regarded these as unsafe. Officers commented that these were tilt-turn windows, which corresponded with all relevant safety legislation. The fact they opened inward allowed cleaning from inside. Some of the windows were limited by physical tolerances, resulting in some windows having a sub-sill. Residents with large windows were offered two net curtain solutions, either having curtain fixed to the window, or having two curtains, each side of the window.

A resident stated that she was registered disabled and required a fanlight. Officers stated that they were happy to meet special needs where they could, and Housing and Social Services would investigate.

In response to comments from residents, officers acknowledged that it was not correct that dialogue with the occupier was not held prior to installation and agreed to take this on board for future installations. Officers added that these types of windows were not uncommon, they just had not been seen before on this estate.

In discussion of the consultation procedures, officers commented that the details of the installations were clear with officers, but this information had not effectively been passed on to residents. Upon the completion of each contract, a satisfaction survey was sent round to all residents. The results of these surveys were fed back to Design and Build, for future information. So far, 58% had responded to the survey, with the majority positive responses.

In response to a comment from a resident, officers explained that any damage caused to the resident's bay window during installation would be rectified. The Chair requested that officers investigate this, and other complaints regarding the condition properties had been left in. Other complaints included the removal of insulation, failure to restore render to its original condition and the removal of draft and sound proofing. Officers stated that they would check the tolerances of the LHC contract, and request the contractor to refit any windows which fell outside these tolerances. In response to comments from residents, officers explained that the fitting of doors was a different contract, although it was the same contractor.

During discussion of the supervision of contractors, officers commented that they expected any problems to be brought to their attention either by the Clerk of Works or the Tenant Participation Officer. In addition, contractors were supposed to supervise themselves through a non-working foreman.

In response to comments from a Ward Councillor for Roxbourne, officers stated that the replacement of these windows had been on the work programme for four to five years. It was the most significant window replacement programme for some time, and would statutorily increase the thermal capacity of the windows. Consultation had begun in 2003 and a new approach had been taken. The Member commented that the process of consultation needed to be formalised, with consultation beginning when the scheme is first placed on the work programme. He also added that it was important to have an adequate replacement supply of pull cords for the windows, in case replacements went out of production.

Officers responded by informing the meeting that they had been revising procedures and were looking at a longer-term programme. They were considering formulating a four/five year plan following the stock condition survey. Officers explained that they were looking at methods to analyse the principle and details of a scheme, so that issues could be identified ahead of any work taking place. Officers commented that a working group would be established, of which ELTRA would be a welcome member.

Residents raised several complaints regarding the conduct of the contractor, including not bringing enough dust sheets and using toilets without permission. Officers commented that complaints of this nature should be taken to the contractors' tenant liaison officer. Officers commented that they should have made tenants more aware of this, as contractors were not often very good at follow-up liaison with tenants. The contractor was also liable for repairing any damage caused to landscaping during the course of their work.

In response to comments from residents, officers informed the meeting that the windows should not require maintenance and they were guaranteed for 10 years.

Officers acknowledged that the consultation on this contract had not been appropriate. Mistakes had been made and officers were attempting to draw out key points to improve future consultation. A working group was to be established which would assist in reviewing the borough-wide compact.

A representative of ELTRA commented that the contract for the windows had already been signed before any consultation with tenants. Many residents had accepted the windows as they did not realise they had any choice, but would have liked a fanlight.

During discussion of the recommendations proposed by a Member of the Forum, officers were informed that they could respond to the recommendations in an

accompanying report.

The Chair thanked all present for contributing to a constructive debate. He commented that this situation had been caused by a failure in consultation, for which the buck stopped with elected Members who were responsible for policy covering works, contacts and consultation. He added that it was a shame that the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development, Housing and Best Value could not be present at the meeting, where he could have given much valuable advice..

RESOLVED to Recommend: (To Cabinet)

That (1) all items on the capital programme have a consultation timetable drawn up that involves:

TRA / Federation
All interested tenants
Design & Build
Housing Department

to allow agreement on detailed specifications (particularly where these exceed legal requirements/prior to the letting of any contract, and that at a minimum these follow the Section 20 (leaseholder standards for tenants);

(2) all restrictors fitted should be replaced such that they cannot be opened externally without cutting the metal restrictor, and that this be a required clause in future contracts;

(3) Design & Build be required to draw up a report detailing areas of a contract that exceed legal minima and outline reasonable foreseeable consequences of such additional terms and that this report goes to consultation meetings under the timetable;

(4) the Council creates agreed criteria for successful tenant consultation procedures that recognise the importance of tenant choice;

(5) individual tenants be given a letter outlining the detail of what is to be done to their property at least 2 weeks prior to capital works being carried out.

PART II - MINUTES

125. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Currie	Councillor O'Dell

126. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that no declaration of interests were made.

127. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

128. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2004 be deferred until the next ordinary meeting.

129. **Resident Consultation on the Installation of Replacement Windows on Eastcote Lane Estate:**

(See Recommendation 1).

130. **Extension to the Termination of the Meeting:**

In accordance with the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 12 (Part 4E of the Constitution) it was

RESOLVED: That (1) at 10:00 pm the meeting be extended until 10:30 pm;

(2) at 10:30 pm the meeting be extended until 11:00 pm;

(3) at 10:45 pm the meeting be extended until 11:15 pm.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.38 pm, closed at 11.13 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR ADRIAN KNOWLES
Vice Chair (in the Chair)

EDUCATION CONSULTATIVE FORUM

3 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair:	* Councillor Stephenson	
Councillors:	* Mrs Bath * Miss Bednell Gate	* Ismail (1) * Janet Mote * Ray
Teachers' Constituency	Mr R Borman Ms H Cowgill * Ms C Gembala	* Mr P Large * Ms P Langdon
Governors' Constituency	* Ms H Henshaw * Mrs C Millard	* Mr N Rands * Ms H Solanki
Elected Parent Governor Representatives	* Mr Epie	* Mr Sutcliffe
Denominational Representatives	Rev P Reece	* Mrs Rammelt
Arts Culture Harrow Representatives	Mr K Parker	Mr D Pullinger

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS**RECOMMENDATION 1 - Education Budget 2004/05**

Having given consideration to the 2004/2005 Schools' Budget at their previous meeting, the Forum now received a joint report of the Director of Strategy and Education Financial Services Manager which outlined the total Education Budget for 2004/2005.

The report advised that details of the Authority's financial settlement from the Government had been received and the Council's Formula Grant had increased by 7.4% on the previous year. This compared favourably with the national average increase of 5.5%.

Within this settlement, the Education Formula Spending Share, which was made up of the Schools Formula Spending Share (known as the Schools Budget) had increased by £6.755 million. The report set out the detailed proposals for the allocation of these funds. It was confirmed that provision had been made for the Teachers' pay award, the APT & C pay award, the Local Government pension increase in employer's contributions and other price inflations.

It was further explained that the Authority's overall proposed base budget had been set at approximately £243 million and was now subject to public consultation. This was due to conclude on 6 February. Within the consultation, a number of savings and additional spending options were set out for residents to consider. It was noted that only one of these options – an additional £1.2 million of additional funding for schools- related to education.

The Forum was advised of minor correction to paragraph 6 of the report – it was noted that the meetings of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub Committee and the Education Consultative Forum at which the total Education budget was considered had taken place/were taking place on the 20 January and the 3 February respectively.

Following the officer presentation, the Forum turned to discussion of the report and clarification was sought on a number of issues. In response to a question from a Member of the Elected Parents Governor constituency relating to a saving identified in relation to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) contingency budget, the Education Financial Services Manager explained that this saving arose from the fact that contingency funds were now provided for within other budgets. She assured the Forum that special educational needs would continue to be provided for.

In response to a further query it was confirmed that it was proposed to allow £180,000 to assist the Authority in meeting the relevant LPSA government targets to attain the financial rewards attached to the achievements of those targets. It was noted that the first tranche of rewards would not be allocated until the 2006/07 financial year.

In response to a question from a Member of the Teachers' Constituency, the Education Financial Services Manager confirmed that she understood that any deficits reported were inclusive of deficits incurred in the previous financial year. However, she stressed that she could not guarantee that this was true of each individual school as it depended on how schools had calculated their figures.

In response to a comment made by a Member of the Teachers' Constituency, the Chair indicated that, whilst he supported the option of allocating schools an additional £1.2 million in funding, the Council was under pressure to keep Council Tax low, and the Government had given a clear indication that they would cap those Councils that irresponsibly increased the Council Tax without proof of solid support from the Community. He therefore stressed the importance of schools encouraging parents to respond to the consultation.

The Chair reported that the feedback he had received from Headteachers indicated that they recognised the constraints on the Council and on whole felt that the proposed funding would go some way to meet their needs. The Chair also pointed out to the members that surrounding local authorities were dealing with a much more difficult situation and that Harrow was in relatively good position in terms of its financial settlement.

A number of representatives expressed concern that the consultation document had not reach all areas of the Borough. The Chair assured the meeting that letters had been sent to Headteachers and Governors to make them aware of the consultation process and schools had also written to all parents. The Finance Portfolio Holder, who was also present at the meeting for the discussion on this item, informed the Forum that he was keen for feedback from any resident who had not received the consultation document, as it should have been circulated to all household in the Borough as an insert of Harrow People.

A member of the Teachers' Constituency voiced some concern regarding the wording of the consultation which the Chair explained had been formulated by the Council's cross-party Publications Panel. He felt that the wording implied that the additional funding of £1.2 million for schools, an option which formed part of the consultation, would leave schools in a position where they had excess funds rather than reflecting the true situation, that many schools would retain deficits, even with the extra funding. He also argued that the Forum should have been consulted on the wording of the document.

In response, the Chair advised that he did not consider that the text would create confusion among its readers.

The Finance Portfolio Holder also advised that it was not possible or appropriate for all Committees to be consulted before sending out the budget consultation documents and emphasised that the consultation referred to the entire budget and not just to education. He suggested that if someone was not happy with the content of the form there were other ways of conveying that opinion, such as the local press.

A Member of the Teachers' Constituency queried whether the consultation period could be extended. The Finance Portfolio Holder explained that this was not possible since the budget timetable was very tight. In response to a comment made by a member of the Governors' Constituency regarding the problem with central funding, the Chair asked the members to await the outcome of the Council's decision on Council Tax, but he agreed that it can sometimes create a problem when Central Government demand the Local Authority to introduce new procedures but do not provide the funding for it.

A number of representatives expressed concern that to truly address the funding difficulties the Authority faced, they needed to lobby the Government vigorously. The Chair pointed out that he had arranged a meeting with both Borough Members of Parliament the following month.

The Chair thanked the members of the Forum for their input.

Resolved to RECOMMEND:

That the contents of the proposed Education Budget 2004/2005 be noted and the comments of the Forum be forwarded for consideration by the Cabinet and Council.

REASON: To meet the budget timetable for consultation for Cabinet to recommend to Council a budget for 2004/2005

RECOMMENDATION 2 - School Term Dates 2005/06

The Forum Received a report from the Director of Strategy (People First) which advised that the working group, formed at the Education Consultative Forum meeting in September, had undertaken consultation on two issues with interested parties: Firstly to consult on term dates for 2005/06 and secondly on setting key principles to govern future decisions on school term dates as the ALG (Association of London Government) was looking to achieve a pan-London consistency on term dates.

There were three models to be considered containing different settings of the three school terms but all adding up to a total of 195 days. The results of the survey showed that Model 1 was the option preferred (58%) as opposed to Model 2, proposed by the ALG.

The interested parties had also been consulted on key principles to follow when setting the term dates such as the fixing of the spring break, length of school day break at Christmas and school year start dates. The analysis of the responses received was set out.

In the discussion that followed, concerns were expressed that the consultation would have had a different result had those consulted known that most other neighbouring Boroughs were considering the model proposed by the ALG. It was also suggested that the ALG should be lobbied to alter its preference of model.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Portfolio Holder)

That (1) It be agreed that School Term dates for 2005/06 be set in accordance with model 1;

(2) that before any decision is taken about setting future term dates, officers attain the position on this matter in neighbouring authorities and across London and;

(3) that the working group be reconvened to consider the information at 2 above and make recommendations to the next meeting of the Education Consultative Forum taking into account the concerns expressed by members and in the consultation about the desirability of having as much consistency in term dates with neighbouring boroughs and across London.

PART II - MINUTES

81. **Welcome:**
The Chair welcomed all Members of the Forum to the meeting and introduced the officers present, a number of whom it was noted were new to the Council.
82. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**
RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:
- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>Ordinary Member</u> | <u>Reserve Member</u> |
| Councillor Thammaiah | Councillor Ismail |
83. **Declarations of Interest:**
RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.
84. **Arrangement of Agenda:**
RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.
85. **Minutes:**
RESOLVED: That having been circulated, (1) the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September be taken as read and signed as a correct record of that meeting; and

(2) the minutes of the special meeting held on 10 December 2003 be taken as read and signed as a correct record of that meeting, subject to the following amendment:

Recommendation 1, 12th Paragraph. Amend final sentence to read: "A member of the Teachers' Constituency observed that a higher level of teacher assistants might be employed to avoid incremental drift and teacher's salary costs".

86. **Matters arising from consideration of the Minutes:**

School Workforce Remodelling Progress

Further to the circulation of an information item regarding this matter, the School Development Services Adviser provided the Forum with a verbal update on the above process which aimed to relieve teachers from administrative burdens and recruit support staff. The model was to be implemented in all schools eventually and provision had been made within the Schools Budget to assist with the costs of implementation. It was noted that so far 19 schools in Harrow were currently interested in the intensive training programme to introduce the remodelling.

In response to a question from the Teachers' Constituency regarding financing the reforms, the officer observed that some schools had been able to do part of the remodelling without extra costs.

A member of the Forum raised concerns about a "blue skies document", that had emerged recently and expressed concern that financial pressures would result in schools employing less fully qualified Teachers and more Higher Level Teaching Assistants, with HLTA's taking whole classes. Both the officers and the Chair assured the Members of the Forum that would not be encouraged in Harrow. It was suggested that the concerns be raised with Headteachers and Governors.

87. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no public questions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

88. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no petitions to be received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

89. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no deputations to be received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

90. **Education Budget - 2004/05:**

See Recommendation 1

91. **Items raised by the Governors:**

Update on Every Child Matters

The Director of Children's Services briefly outlined the background of the above Green Paper, proposals arising from which were expected to become law shortly. The Green Paper had been the Government's response on how to improve children's care following the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié. The inquiry had revealed a lack of coordination and a failure of relevant agencies to share information, together with an absence of clear lines of accountability. The main aim of the new proposals therefore were to encourage local authorities to reorganise management and departmental structures to ensure that they assisted rather than hampered service provision, that the child was placed at the centre of the process, and that accountability was improved. To this end, it was noted that it was likely that the local authorities would be required to appoint a Portfolio Holder for Children and a Director of Children's Services.

The Director of Children's Services explained that reorganisation in the Borough to meet the these proposals had already begun. Consultation with stakeholders was being undertaken. Following the presentation, Members sought clarification on a number of issues, including the reform of the Special needs statement process. In response to the latter, it was confirmed that this reform was part of the consultation. The Chair suggested that the Forum would benefit from a Seminar on the Structure of the People

First department at a future juncture.

The Borough's response to fining parents for unauthorised absence

The Principal Education Welfare Officer explained that the Government had introduced a number of measures to combat unauthorised absence of which fining parents was one element. The measures would come into force at the end of February and all local Education Authorities would be required to issue guidance to schools accordingly. Harrow was currently formulating such guidance and, once finalised, it was advised that it would be sent to all headteachers and chairs of governing bodies. It was noted that Harrow currently had a good record of low levels of unauthorised absence.

During the discussion which followed, officers confirmed, in response to a query that authority to issue penalties would lie with governing bodies rather than headteachers and representatives of the Governors constituency, the Parents Governor Constituency and the Teachers' Constituency all expressed concern at the welfare/health and safety/security issues that this scheme might give rise to and the conflict of roles for schools.

In response to a further query it was agreed that a letter would be sent to all headteachers and governors advising that guidance on these measures would be forthcoming and that schools be asked to await these rather than formulating their own guidelines.

92. **Update on the Post - Sixteen Consultation:**

The Director of Strategy informed the meeting that the deadline for the return of the surveys on school organisation and increased opportunities for students aged 14-19 was till the end of the week and that a final report would be submitted to Cabinet in March. Cabinet would then make a recommendation to the London West Learning and Skills Council which held the statutory responsibility and funding for making such organisational changes. The response to the survey had been varied but it had been noted that cluster school meetings was a good way of obtaining responses from parents.

The Chair thanked the Director of Strategy for his update.

93. **School Term Dates for 2005/06:**

See Recommendation 2.

94. **Date of the Next Meeting of the Forum:**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum was scheduled to take place on 24 March 2004.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.01 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR BILL STEPHENSON
Chair

EMPLOYEES' CONSULTATIVE FORUM

4 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair:	* Councillor Dighé	
Councillors:	* Mrs Bath	* Mrs Joyce Nickolay
	* Currie	* Osborn (3)
	* Lavingia (4)	* Toms
Representatives of HTCC:	(Currently no appointees)	
Representatives of UNISON:	Mr D Boyle	* Mr B Shewry
	† Ms K Bubenzer	* Mr R Thornton
	* Ms D Prasad	Ms W Williams
	† Mr J Rattray	

* Denotes Member present/Employee Representative present
 (4), (3) Denote category of Reserve Member
 † Denotes apologies received

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: Revenue Budget 2004-2005 for Consideration

A UNISON Member clarified that the consultations referred to in section 7.1 of the report, page 64 of the agenda, were taking place shortly between Business Connections. A Member from UNISON drew attention to the London Weighting dispute. The Member queried why no funds had been set aside for when the London Weighting dispute was finally resolved and a settlement agreed upon. The Interim Director of Finance noted that under provision of the Accountancy rules, any amount of money set aside must be a defined sum. It was added that if and when the London Weighting dispute is resolved, any costs would come from the Reserves.

A Member from UNISON raised the issue of the print room. The UNISON Member noted that he was pleased that a working party had been established to look at ways to resolve the problem for the benefit of everyone.

Resolved To RECOMMEND: (To Cabinet)

That the concerns and comments raised by UNISON be noted.

(See also Minute 83).

PART II - MINUTES

81. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Janet Cowan	Councillor Osborn
Councillor N Shah	Councillor Lavingia

82. **Mr B Shewry: Harrow UNISON Chairman:**

Members heard that Mr B Shewry, Chairman of the Harrow UNISON branch, was stepping down and that this was to be his last appearance at an Employees' Consultative Forum meeting. The Chair joined Members in thanking Mr Shewry for his valuable contribution to the Forum and wished him well in his new position. It was noted that UNISON would send a letter to the Interim Head of Personnel to confirm that Mr B Shewry is standing down as Chair of the Harrow branch of UNISON.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

83. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Declaration of Interest</u>
(i) Councillor Currie	Lifelong Member of UNISON
(ii) Councillor Toms	Lifelong Member of the NUT
(iii)	<u>Agenda Item 12:</u> During the discussion relating to the print room, Councillor Currie declared an interest in the above item and accordingly left the room and took no part in the discussion on this item.

84. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

85. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2003, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

86. **Matters Arising:**

The Forum received a report from the Interim Head of Personnel, which updated Members on the following matters arising from the meeting held on 21 October 2003: -

- (i) New Harrow Project - Protocol for Organisational Change: Minute 74 (iv): The Interim Head of Personnel informed Members that agreement had been reached with UNISON.
- (ii) Civic Centre Car Parking – Visitors Car Park: Minute 74 (v): Members were informed that work had begun on a pilot scheme in the visitors' short stay car park. It was noted that this scheme only accounts for 45 of the 650 car parking spaces at the Civic Centre. The objective of the scheme was to test how it would impact on the provision of parking at the Civic Centre. It was accepted that wider and more in-depth discussions were required on this issue and Members were further advised that a number of open meetings had been arranged, providing an opportunity for the public, staff and UNISON to raise their concerns. A Member of UNISON expressed disappointment that the work on the pilot scheme had begun before staff had had an opportunity to raise their concerns. The Chair emphasised that this was a limited pilot scheme, the purpose of which was to determine the impact upon parking arrangements at the Civic Centre. It was also noted that the pilot scheme was not an inevitable pre-cursor to an extended and permanent scheme. The Chair reiterated that the aim of the scheme was to allow visitors the best possible access to the Civic Centre.
- (iii) Full Year Health & Safety Performance Report: Minute 76: The Interim Head of Personnel noted that details of the Council's agreed policy on stress will be made available in the next Employee Relations staff newsletter.
- (iv) Housing Void (Electrical Near Fatalities): Minute 79: The Interim Head of Personnel advised the Forum that Harrow Council had engaged consultants to undertake a strategic review of the Council's Health and Safety provision, with particular focus on the structure of the service and its role within the organisation. The Forum was also informed that the Council is continuing to give its full co-operation to the ongoing HSE investigation. Members from UNISON noted that they were pleased with both the progress of the Health and Safety review and the consultants that had been engaged.

RESOLVED: That the matters arising from the meeting of the Forum held on 21 October 2003 be noted.

87. **Public Questions:**

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

88. **Petitions:**

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

89. **Deputations:**

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

90. **Half Year Equality Monitoring Report for Period 1 April 2003 to 30 September 2003:**

The Forum received a report from the Executive Director (Organisational Development), which detailed the Council's Equality Monitoring statistics from the period 1 April 2003 to 30 September 2003. The Forum was reminded that the findings in the report were based on performance under the old Council structure. The Principal Employee Relations Officer advised the Forum that 36% of all people appointed in the given period, were black and ethnic minority applicants. It was noted that this figure compares unfavourably with last year's performance and is below the Council's target of 42.7%. The Forum went on to hear that the success ratio of 0.4% for the period covered by the report was also lower than that achieved for the previous year and the Council's own target of 0.7%.

The Principal Employee Relations Officer drew Members attention to the continuing discrepancy between the number of ethnic minority and particularly Asian applicants to those selected for short listing and appointment. Members were referred to page 17 of the agenda, which outlined the work of the Asian Applicants Review Group, established by the Forum in January 2003. The Review Group is due to submit a full report to the Employees' Consultative Forum later in 2004. It was added that the percentage of black and ethnic minority employees for the period covered in the report was 28.2% of the total workforce. This figure represented an increase on the previous year's figure and is marginally below the Council's 2003/04 target of 30%.

Members attention was drawn to page 8 of the agenda, which outlined monitoring figures for disabled applicants. It was noted that in the period covered by the report 3% of the total workforce declared a disability. This confirmed that the Council had achieved its 2003/04 target of 3%. The Forum was advised that the Council is continuing work in this area to ensure an increase in the number of disabled applicants. It was reported that HAD had been contacted for this purpose. Members also noted that the Council had performed consistently well in the gender category particularly at senior levels of staff.

Members also heard that a Beacon exhibition was held last July for Councillors from other Local Authorities, which received a positive response. It was further noted that a framework had been developed for working through the RES in order to assist in the effective monitoring of the Council's policies on race equality.

A Member of UNISON expressed disappointment at the findings of the Equality Monitoring Report, particularly the apparent drop in ethnic minority applicants at the short listing and appointment stages. As an example attention was drawn to page 27 of the agenda, which highlighted a drop in success ratio in the former Social Services Department. UNISON members enquired as to what factors could explain the disappointing findings of the report. Whilst recognising that many appointments require specific qualifications, thus eliminating many applicants, it was suggested that the figures could be endemic of wider social trends. It was added that professional bodies could be approached to examine the pool of possible candidates. The Chair noted that part of the work of the Asian Applicants Review Group would be to look into areas of concern and to examine experiences from other organisations.

Attention turned to how the Council might improve performance in this area. A Member from UNISON noted that there was a lack of awareness in schools of the career opportunities offered by Local Government. Members agreed that the Council should endeavour to target young people in schools to galvanise interest among this group. It was suggested that the Council be represented not only at school open days but also Career's Fairs such as the Milk Round. It was also noted that the report has had a positive effect in that it has made the issue a major concern for all involved and has discouraged complacency. The Chair welcomed Members suggestions and highlighted the need to be proactive in their approach to solving the problem. Members also heard of the Bridge Centre, which helped people integrate back into work life and society. It was noted that two people had been placed with the Council through this scheme. A Member from UNISON added that attempts should be made to lower the age profile of the Council workforce. Targeting schools was identified as a crucial tool for achieving this aim. It was added that due to the demographic make-up of Harrow's schools, making strong representations at local schools would not only help lower the age profile of the Council workforce but would also improve the number of ethnic minority applicants, already identified as a major area of concern.

The Interim Head of Personnel was asked whether any themes had emerged from the workshop for people who had failed to get appointed. One finding was that interviewees felt the Council had failed to provide feedback as to why they were unsuccessful in gaining a post after interview. The Interim Head of Personnel advised the Forum that this issue had been raised at a CMT meeting and guidance notes had subsequently been issued to Chairs of appointment panels.

RESOLVED: That the Half Year Equality Monitoring Report for 1 April 2003 to 30 September 2003 be noted.

91. **Working Draft Improvement Plan in Response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and IDeA Peer Review - Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy):**

The Forum was advised that the report outlined progress against Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) of the Working Draft Improvement Plan, which had been agreed by Cabinet. Members were referred to page 35 of the agenda, which provided an update on the tasks that had been identified and the progress achieved.

Staff Survey

Members noted the Staff Survey, an Executive Summary of which had been tabled at the meeting. The Forum discussed a number of the positive results that emerged from the Staff Survey. Among the positive results that emerged from the survey was that the majority of staff are satisfied in their jobs. Further pleasing results were noted, including the sense of good teamwork among Council employees and that employees received good information on what is expected of them. The standard of line management was shown to be high across the authority. It was also noted that nearly two-thirds of employees thought the Council had demonstrated that it was an effective Equal Opportunities employer and the Staff Development Scheme was seen to be well received. The Interim Head of Personnel outlined areas for improvement identified from the survey. It was noted that the survey was conducted towards the end of a period of considerable change within the organisation and that this was likely to cause concern among employees. One area of concern alluded to in the Executive Summary was the problem staff had with bureaucracy within the authority and the management of the recent restructuring was reported as an area that could be improved upon. Members also noted that senior managers were viewed less well than line managers. The Interim Head of Personnel advised the Forum that the survey highlighted a need for greater communication. It was added that at a recent CMT meeting three areas had been identified to focus upon. These included more two-way communication, regular appraisals for all staff and a greater degree of shared ideas and teamwork. The Interim Head of Personnel informed Members that the full survey would be available on the intranet and hard copies would also be available from 25 February. It was further noted that the Harrow Update Newsletter would highlight the main areas and report on the outcome of the IDeA Review.

Members acknowledged that they had not had an opportunity to take a detailed look at the Staff Survey. A Member from UNISON offered to post the survey on the UNISON website, which was welcomed by the Council side. The Chair confirmed that this item would be on the agenda for a future meeting of the Forum for further consideration. Members were delighted with the 52% response rate from the Staff Survey. It was agreed that the high response rate added genuine validity to the conclusions of the survey.

Review of Employee Absence

Members were referred to the review of employee absence on page 41 of the agenda. The Interim Head of Personnel informed Members that consultants had been engaged and produced a report on the Council's employee absence. Members were informed of a Project Group that has been established, Chaired by the Area Director (Urban Living) and also including Trade Union representation. The Project Group's role is to consider the report and implement its recommendations. It has met two times and was reported to be making good progress in the areas of concern. These were noted as return to work interviews and contacting the Occupational Health support service. A Member from UNISON suggested that Occupational Health was not the answer to solving the problem of sickness absence but rather good management was the key. Members discussed the role of Occupational Health within the Organisation and questioned its specific duties. The Interim Head of Personnel noted that the current service is provided by Northwick Park Hospital. The Forum briefly discussed the possibility of considering other service options. Members were asked to consider the financial implications of employing an alternative service. Members balanced this consideration by alluding to the financial benefits of a healthy and efficient workforce. It was felt that there should be a commitment to examine the total benefits of tackling the problem. A Member from UNISON also suggested that staff had increasingly perceived

Occupational Health to be a management tool. The Member added that a change in the perception of Occupational Health was imperative in order to improve its service. It was felt by UNISON that a negative perception of Occupational Health prevented employees coming forward at an early stage when a health problem had been identified.

A Member of UNISON noted that in the attempt to tackle the problem of sickness absence, genuine cases should not be neglected. It was further noted that employees in high-pressure positions should not necessarily be dismissed but rather considered for other positions where their expertise could be utilised. The Chair agreed and added that career paths should be planned for those entering high-pressure jobs. A Member from UNISON noted that the stress incurred in some positions meant that it was appropriate to examine how long it is reasonable to expect a person to remain in that position. A UNISON Member added that it should be the choice of the individual to determine how long they can sustain a position that entails a large degree of stress.

Human Resources Strategy

Members discussed the draft Human Resources Strategy. The Interim Head of Personnel welcomed any comments or feedback. A Member from UNISON informed the meeting that UNISON would make a response to the draft strategy in due course.

RESOLVED: That (1) the full Staff Survey be included on the agenda for a future meeting of the Forum;

(2) Members notify the Interim Head of Personnel of any comments or feedback on the draft Human Resources Strategy;

(3) the progress made against Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) of the Working Draft Improvement Plan be noted.

92. **Revenue Budget 2004-2005 For Consultation:**

See Recommendation 1.

93. **Single Status & Pay and Grading Review Negotiations - Progress Report:**

The Interim Head of Personnel read out a joint statement from the Council and UNISON. The statement read as follows; 'The Council and UNISON are continuing to have positive discussions towards achieving a package of harmonised terms and conditions for former manual, APT&C and Contract Services staff. The discussions are being held on a regular basis in order to ensure that all aspects are thoroughly considered.' The Council side wished to express their gratitude to UNISON's sympathetic and supportive approach to this issue.

RESOLVED: That the joint statement by the Council and UNISON be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.40 pm, closed at 8.55 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR SANJAY DIGHÉ
Chair

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE FORUM

10 FEBRUARY 2004

Chair: * Councillor N Shah

Councillors: * Arnold * Lavingia (1)
 * Janet Cowan * Omar
 * Currie * Anjana Patel

* Denotes Member present
 (1) Denote category of Reserve Member

[NB Attendance at this meeting by representatives of community organisations and representatives of the Local Authority is recorded at Appendix 1].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**56. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Reserve Member</u>
Councillor Bluston	Councillor Lavingia

57. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

58. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

59. **Presentation regarding Diversity in the National Curriculum:**

The Forum received a presentation by Patrick O'Dwyer, General Education Adviser (Humanities), regarding cultural diversity in the National Curriculum, particularly in regards to History.

The objective of the National Curriculum was explained to the Forum. It was stated that History was taught as a compulsory subject to children aged between 5 to 14 years' old, after that time pupils decided whether they wished to study it further. The benefits of learning history was described as: developing critical thought, social responsibility, challenging pre-conceptions and understanding political processes.

Forum members were advised that the National Curriculum generally encompassed a great deal of diversity which was not just limited to History but were evident in subjects such as Music, Design and Technology, English and Drama.

Key Stage 3 was explained to members, however, it was suggested that the types of Black studies that was taught was often geared towards American personalities and the experience of Slavery in the US, which was an important aspect of Black studies but not its entirety. It was stressed that more positive portrayals of Black British people and people from the Asian and African continents that had contributed to the world, and to Britain in particular, in inventing technology, theory, science and sports, should be exemplified. Members were advised that this was a shared feeling amongst many teachers. Opportunities to teach Black history with these perspectives were often limited due to insufficient resources. It was also put forward that the community should enter into partnerships with schools so that children could acquire more knowledge of history of their ethnic group.

During the discussion community representatives raised a number of concerns centred around: the amount of Black studies taught in schools, context, accuracy of information and the American focus, in comparison to the proportion of Black and ethnic children that attended Harrow schools. The General Education Adviser responded by saying the concerns expressed were shared by teaching staff and was often dependent upon resources. It was also reported that concerns had been raised about the lack of diversity in the teaching of Welsh, Irish and Scottish history; members were reminded of the large amount of historical content that teachers were expected to cover at Key

Stage 3. He also pointed out that historical studies within Key Stage 3 were always going to be selective and not all aspects of any regional history could be taught. The central focus was the contribution of Black people to Britain although there were some opportunities for non-British studies.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

60. **Presentation by Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service:**

The Forum received a presentation by Lakhvir Randhawa, Deputy Director and Centre Manager of the Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service in Harrow (EACH), who explained what the service did.

Members were informed that the service was established in 1991 to provide culturally appropriate counselling service, advice and information, and structured day care service to hard-to-reach groups. EACH's primary aim was to work with individuals, family members and carers primarily from minority ethnic communities affected by alcohol, drug and mental health problems. It was stressed that EACH was a voluntary charity group that acquired funding from various organisations like the Association of Local Government and the Community Fund. EACH's headquarters was in Hounslow but there were centres in Harrow and Brent.

The Deputy Director highlighted to members the service user profile, which illustrated ethnicity, religion, age and problems possessed by clients. It was also mentioned that half of the service users that were seen in 2003 were Asian, and that women who used the service suffered primarily from depression. In relation to men it was an alcohol problem. The reason behind EACH's success was suggested to be linked to the holistic approach in administering help and support, and an awareness of diverse cultures.

The Forum was informed of some of the many achievements that EACH had achieved, which included: negotiating with Ealing Drug and Alcohol Action Team to provide day care services for Ealing residents; partnership working with local agencies and professionals which led to increased referrals; 7100 counselling sessions were offered at all three centres and at 14 GP surgeries; construction of Structured Day Care Programme in Hounslow that lasted 8 weeks and was carried out 6 times a year, which attracted 109 people; creation of support groups and complementary therapies in Harrow and Brent; Outreach programme; and a dual diagnosis programme.

The areas that hampered development were linked to resources to improve access to EACH, cultural appropriate mainstream services and greater partnership working. It was also recommended that the Service Level Agreements between the PCTs and local authorities needed to be more transparent.

Forum members thanked the Deputy Director for her presentation and expressed a number of concerns to do with raising awareness of the charity group, which was taken on board by the Deputy Director.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

61. **Presentation on the New Harrow Project - Progress Report:**

Andrew Trehern, Area Director, delivered a verbal presentation based upon the developments that had so far taken place in the New Harrow Project (NHP), which focused upon Area 1, South and West Harrow, Area 2, Wealdstone, Marlborough and Greenhill and, Area 3, Kenton East and West.

Forum members were reminded of the corporate vision behind the Project, which was to reform the way services were delivered in the borough. In addition to, improving the environment, strengthen local communities and promote a prosperous and sustainable economy.

Some improvements that had been implemented in Areas 1, 2 and 3 were illustrated to members, such as: new CCTV van for use in crime hotspot areas, replaced and relayed pavement in areas, new litter bins, objects re-painted, removal of graffiti and chewing gum, eye-sore objects removed or were in the process of being removed by Harrow Council's Enforcement unit. It was also mentioned that there were more people on the street sweeping, in addition to having 2 new mobile vans that had the capabilities to wash and sweep.

Members were advised that as a result of the work of the NHP, compensation claims paid out by the Council in South and West Harrow for trips and falls on pavement by pedestrians were nil and incidence of crime had also dropped from the past year

(2002). It was also stressed that the Council would be taking a firm line on any form of anti-social behaviour, such as fly-tipping and parking on pavements, and was anticipated that by March 2004 Areas 2 and 3 would be at a stage where it was considered very clean on a daily basis.

The Area Director explained that that the Council was now positioning itself to allow the community and schools the opportunity to think about Harrow's environment in order to keep it clean and viable. For example, one High School had already undertaken a cleaning day whereby pupils collected litter, removed graffiti and cleared land of fly tips. Community representatives were urged to complete a comment sheet with their contact details, which indicated ways in which their organisation could help the NHP.

It was also noted by members that the NHP team had won a national award by the Local Government Network praising the Council for its success in joint working across the Council and with partners.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

62. **Consultation on the Draft Community Strategy - Update:**

A report of the Executive Director (Organisational Development) was presented by Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section, regarding development of the Community Strategy for Harrow.

Members were reminded that consultation on the draft Community Strategy was undertaken late last year with residents and stakeholders in the community to ascertain what they thought the draft Strategy should include. It was explained that the consultation process was divided into two phases. The first phase involved mapping existing priorities and the second phase encouraged consultees to identify any additional priorities.

It was also emphasised that the public consultation was advertised in local papers, libraries, schools, on Harrow Council's website and through direct mailing to existing Partnership stakeholders. Forum members were informed that: questionnaires, focus groups, existing meetings and newsletters were used to acquire priorities, all of which were accessible to partners and residents.

The next phase of the Strategy was for partners to establish how the identified priorities were being addressed through existing work. If it were highlighted that priorities were not being covered, officers would need to devise a way to ensure they were. Members of the Forum were encouraged to take copies of the Strategy and make any comments to the Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section.

The Community Strategy for Harrow would officially be launched on 19 May 2004 at the first summit of the Harrow Strategic Partnership.

RESOLVED: That the Forum noted the consultation process so far and the early results received.

63. **Planning for Black History Month 2004:**

The Forum received a verbal report from Bindu Arjoon-Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section, regarding Black History Month (BHM) '04.

Members were informed that the Black History Month Steering Group met on 19 November 2003 at the Civic Centre to appraise BHM '03. It was highlighted that the discussion amongst members revealed mixed feelings on Harrow's coverage of BHM, such as, whether religious festivals should be funded by the Council.

The Manager advised the Forum that the general feeling amongst members on the Steering Group was that they would like community groups to play more of a role in organising BHM, and for a community representative to Chair the Steering Group. It was indicated that the Council's Corporate Management Team was meeting to discuss the Council's role. It was also anticipated that this year would benefit from additional revenue from sponsorship and more schools' involvement.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted

64. **Widening the Community Consultative Forum Membership:**

The Chair asked community representatives to put forward names of other community groups that were not already a member of the Forum in order to widen its membership.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

65. **Open Forum:**
The Chair called for suggestions of topics for discussion at future meetings. Members put forward the following ideas:
- Update report on Community Cohesion
 - Update report on POP
 - Male Domestic Violence
- RESOLVED:** That the above ideas be noted.
66. **Asian Applicants Review Group - Progress Report:**
- RESOLVED:** That the progress report be noted as Information.
67. **Petitions:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that there were no petitions received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 13 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
68. **Deputations:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that there were no deputations received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
69. **Public Questions:**
- RESOLVED:** To note that no public questions were put at meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).
70. **Minutes:**
- RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2003 having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.
71. **Any Other Urgent Business:**
- **Iranian Earthquake Appeal:** The Chair advised the Forum that the event to launch the Iranian Earthquake Appeal that was held at Harrow High School was a success and thanked Councillors and community representatives who attended. It was also mentioned that the money raised would be used to build a school.
 - **Indian Vegetarian Meals:** Councillor M Davine attended the meeting to state that the Council had been successful in securing transportation to deliver freshly cooked Indian vegetarian meals to elderly people, which would commence on Monday 16 February 2004. It was noted by members that 142 meals would be delivered on Monday to elderly people in the borough as part of the Meals on Wheels programme. It was emphasised that the transport capacity to carry hot meals was 150, which means if there was a further demand for such meals it might present problems in the future. However it was hoped that a long-term strategy would be devised to solve the problem. Vijay Malik, Equalities Manager, advised the Forum that a formal report would be presented at the next Forum meeting.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.01 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR NAVIN SHAH
Chair

APPENDIX 1

Community Consultative Forum - 10 February 2004**(1) Representatives of Community Organisations who Attended**

P Pawar	Harrow Council for Racial Equality
E Challoral	Harrow Council for Racial Equality
Lakhvir Randhawa	Ethnic Alcohol Counselling Service in Harrow
K OumeR	Harrow Islamic Society
K Nagda	Sangat Centre
SMA Farooqi	Islamic and Cultural Society of Harrow
S Mayo	Harrow Association for Voluntary Services
M Shah	Hindu Council Harrow
L Gorasia	Hindu Council Harrow
T Chisholm	Harrow African-Caribbean Association
P Gan	Harrow Interfaith Council
J Lawal	Education for Life

(2) Interested People who Attended

M Mbabazi
 I Attwood
 Councillor Williams
 Councillor Ray
 Councillor M Davine
 Hayley Doyle
 Sarah Walker

(3) Apologies Received by Community Organisations

Harrow Mencap
 Harrow Anti Racist Alliance
 Women's Association
 Pakistan Society of Harrow

(4) Officers who Attended

Vijay Malik, Equalities Manager
 Bindu-Arjoon Matthews, Manager of the Strategic Partnership Section
 Andrew Trehern, Area Director
 Patrick O'Dwyer, General Education Adviser (Humanities)

[Please note that Mrs Desai of the Women's Association was in fact present at the last CCF meeting held on 22 October 2003.]

