

## EXTRACT OF CABINET MINUTES – 9 FEBRUARY 2012

### KEY DECISION TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME MOBILE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING

The Portfolio Holder for Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services introduced the report, which outlined the case for the Council to proceed with the implementation of the Mobile and Flexible Working project, which would ensure seamless working across all Directorates in conjunction with the residents of Harrow and the Council's Partners.

The Portfolio Holder assured Cabinet that all outcomes had been reviewed both internally and externally and the Project would provide value for money. The project had been scaled down to ensure its viability, and that it was the one of the final building blocks alongside the IT infrastructure, Customer Contact Assess and Decide (CCAD) project and the proposals for Modernising the Terms and Conditions of staff. He referred to the flexible working initiative launched by O2 with a quarter of its UK force operating remotely and gave a flavour of how this had been received:

Director of Human Resources at O2 – “We live in such a connected world today that it is far easier for employees to remain in touch, no matter where they happen to be. There are huge benefits to be gained in enabling your workforce to be mobile. Not only does it foster trust between organisations and employees, but allows staff to shape their own working environment gives them back their most valuable resource – time. It also allows companies to overcome geographical boundaries and open new doors in terms of recruiting the best talent. So whether it is a mum that needs to be at home for the school run or an employee that working remotely three days and travels to the office for two, with the right tools, implementing flexible working policies have the potential to transform the way we do business. For companies, it is hoped that the pilot will showcase the wider economic business case for flexible working in helping to drive efficiency, productivity and innovation.”

O2 Business Director – “While more than a third of businesses say that allowing staff to work flexible hours makes their workforce more productive, and 43% believe that it helps to retain employees, existing policies are often outdated and ineffective. More than ¾ of organisations are hindering the sharing of best practice by preventing staff from working flexibly across teams, while 16% still have no flexible working policy at all.”

Andrew Marunchak, Specialist/Flexible Recruitment, Work Clever – An excellent initiative and example of the UK private sector realising the true potential of flexible working. Hopefully, encouraging many more organisations to adopt flexible working practices and recognise the efficiency it can bring to business, it might be the ‘shot in the arm’ needed by our economy.”

The Portfolio Holder considered these comments to relate to Council business and that the moving of boundaries would help develop services. He added that Mobile and Flexible Working was the last building block in the Modernisation of the Council and he commended the report to Cabinet.

#### **RESOLVED:** That

- (1) the implementation of the Mobile and Flexible Working project, as set out in the report, be approved.
- (2) the Corporate Director Place Shaping, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Business Transformation and the Portfolio Holder for

Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services, be authorised to take all actions necessary to implement the project.

**Reason for Decision:** To build on the enabling investments which are being implemented as part of the Council's IT contract, Transformation Programme, and business process and cultural change elements of the Transformation Programme. The proposed investment is a key element of the Business Transformation Programme, which will totally transform the ability of the Council to deliver the right services, within budgets, at the time and place our residents demand. To significantly contribute to the modernising of the Council's ICT Infrastructure, business processes, data security, working practices and organisational culture, through adopting modern and proven ways of working, supported by best practice tools and techniques. This investment will, over the course of the next few years, allow the Council to realise its vision of being a community hub for all residents' services, collaborating and sharing with NHS, Police and partners alike, as well as facilitating a rationalisation of property assets.