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MINUTES OF A CABINET MEETING Council Chamber - Town Hall Wednesday, 21 January 2015 (7.30 - 9.45 pm)

Present:

Councillor Roger Ramsey (Leader of the Council), Chairman

Cabinet Member responsibility:

Councillor Damian White	Housing
Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson	Adult Social Services and Health
Councillor Meg Davis	Children and Learning
Councillor Osman Dervish	Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Councillor Melvin Wallace	Culture and Community Engagement
Councillor Clarence Barrett	Financial Management
Councillor Ron Ower	Housing Company Development and OneSource Management

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillor Robert Benham.

Councillors Ray Morgon, Keith Darvill, Patricia Rumble, Graham Williamson, Linda Hawthorn, Jody Ganly, Lawrence Webb, David Johnson and Philip Hyde also attended.

There were three members of the public and a representative of the press present.

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

The clerk, on behalf of the Chairman, announced the evacuation procedures in the event of an Emergency

Unless otherwise indicated, all decisions were agreed unanimously with no Member voting against.

29 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2014 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

30 THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Councillor Roger Ramsey, Cabinet Member for Value, introduced the report

Cabinet was reminded that it had received reports in May and September 2014 which had provided updates on fiscal developments at the national level and the consequential impact on local government funding and set out information on the financial position within Havering.

The September report set out the Council's long term financial strategy to manage the implications of funding reductions and cost pressures over the next four years. It contained specific proposals to bridge the funding gap for the next two years, with further proposals that would move the Authority towards a balanced four-year budget.

The report updated Members on the Local Government financial settlement and the progress of the corporate budget and the proposed financial strategy for the coming financial year, the latest in-year financial monitor, feedback on the public consultation to the proposals affecting services which were included in the September report and the proposed capital programme.

The provisional Local Government Financial Settlement had now been announced, and relevant details were included in the report, together with a summary of the key elements of the Autumn Budget Statement.

The report also set out the Council's capital spending position.

Cabinet was reminded that the demographic growth built into the budget was held corporately until it was demonstrated that it was needed. This would now be released to help manage the pressures in Adults and Children's services. Members were also reminded that the provision for demographic growth in the budget assumptions had been reduced as part of lowering the budget gap from £60m to £45m. However, the levels of demand in Children's services had required the Council to review the previously reduced demographic growth build into the budget forecast. It was therefore considered prudent to increase the demographic growth back to £1m in light of these pressures, an increase of £500k.

Cabinet was informed that there had been a substantial number of responses to several aspects of the recent consultation. Though the majority of respondents had been in favour of the overall strategy, a considerable number of representations had been received about particular areas.

Specifically, a significant number of responses had been received about the libraries proposals - and in the light of these and the fact that libraries were an important statutory service - the proposals were being reviewed to consider whether adjustments could be made. This had been a statutory consultation.

A considerable response had also been received about the youth service proposals. In addition to the consultation responses, the demographic area

showing most change was around children's services, particularly around increases in looked-after children and an increased number of troubled adolescents. Members were informed that the Council had recently received good feedback from a peer review on the way it was tackling serious youth violence - though the feedback did recognise that the Council needed to commission new services for a challenging group of young people as part of its preventative work. Crime and safety was also given the highest priority within the overall consultation responses received. Consequently the proposals around youth service reductions were to be reviewed.

Parking was also considered for review to see whether any changes to the strategy were required as this was also a statutory consultation.

Given the changes highlighted in the report, it had been found that there was currently about £500k of headroom within the overall budget strategy which would allow Cabinet to consider possible changes to the proposals originally presented and - in light of the consultation feedback, officers would be asked to review those proposals.

Reasons for the decision:

This enables the Council to develop its budget as set out in the constitution.

Other options considered:

None. The Constitution requires this as a step towards setting its budget.

Cabinet:

1. Noted the progress made to date with the development of the Council's budget for 2015/16 and the Council's intention to increase council tax up to 2%.
2. **Noted** the outcome of the Autumn Budget Statement and the likely impact on local authorities.
3. **Noted** the outcome of the local government financial settlement announcement, and that arising from the settlement, there would be reductions in mainstream Government funding 2015/16 of £10.02 m.
4. **Delegated** authority to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Health and the Leader to approve an annual spend plan for the Public Health grant.
5. **Delegated** to the Group Director for Children Adults and Housing to agree inflation rates with social care providers for 2015/16.
6. **Noted** the extensive consultation responses set out in Appendix D to the report.
7. **Noted** the financial position of the Council in the current year.

8. **Noted** that a report will be made to Cabinet on 4th February to consider any possible changes to the budget strategy following this Cabinet meeting and requested officers to consider whether the savings proposals in respect of libraries and youth services, along with any others identified at the meeting should be reconsidered in the light of consultation responses.
9. **Agreed** the adjustments to the budget assumptions set out in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report in respect of assumptions about the council tax base, un-ring-fenced grants, demographic growth, inflation and the risks in terms of new legislation.
10. **Noted** the proposed Capital programme for the two years of the budget strategy.
11. **Agreed** that any future underspends from the Corporate Contingency Fund, from the Transformation budget, and from any service revenue underspends, were allocated to the Strategic Reserve.
12. **Noted** the summary of the GLA's consultation budget and the expected date for the publication of the final proposals.

31 **COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2015**

Councillor Ron Ower, Cabinet Member for Housing Company Development & oneSource Management, introduced the report

Cabinet was reminded that at its meeting on 3 September 2014, Members were made aware that a review of the Council Tax Support Scheme was being initiated due to anticipated reductions in settlement funding for 2015/16 which included the rolled-in CTS grant and the consequent need for the Council to consider a range of spending reductions or realignment of budgets.

The provisional settlement which had been announced in December for the 2015/16 financial year had seen a 17% reduction to the upper and lower tier funding allocations. From 2013/14, Council Tax Support had been rolled into the formula and was therefore no longer separately identifiable. If the upper and lower tier reduction was to be applied to the already reduced Council Tax Support allocation, the funding would reduce by a further £1.9m. Cabinet had, as a consequence, initiated consultation on a series of proposals to reduce Council spending and to consider Council Tax levels. Consultation on proposed reductions to the Council Tax Support Scheme formed part of these proposals. The Council would also need to consider its use of reserves and balances in coming to a decision on the Council Tax Support Scheme.

Full Council on 17 September 2014 also considered increasing the Council Tax level for properties which had been empty for more than two years to 50% above the standard Council Tax rate.

The report considered responses to the consultation about the budget position overall and specifically with respect to Council Tax Support and made proposals in relation to both the Council Tax Support Scheme and empty homes. Formal consultation with residents, persons affected and the Greater London Authority (GLA) had been appended to the Council's Financial Strategy.

Reasons for the decision:

The Council had consulted on a broad package of savings and an overall budget strategy which included changes to the CTS Scheme and this consultation has provided broad support for the strategy.

The proposed CTS scheme for 2015 would bring Havering into line with neighbouring borough schemes. The scheme itself had been designed to assist people on low incomes pay their council tax. Certain vulnerable groups faced barriers to work which resulted in less earning power and entitled them to claim CTS. An even distribution of the 15% reduction did not therefore disproportionately impact any specific single vulnerable group.

A CTS bill at only 15% of the standard rate was felt to be reasonable for a CTS claimant who may also be a first time council tax payer to pay over the course of a year.

In making their recommendation, officers noted that approximately 10,000 consultation questionnaires had been posted to working-age CTS claimants and not to a corresponding number of residents who were not in receipt of CTS. It was possible that respondents may have found it more important and convenient to fill in and return a *paper* survey rather than go online to complete the same survey.

While the consultation response had shown 363 respondents were not in favour of reducing CTS by 15% or reducing the capital limit from £16,000 to £6,000, the majority of the 2,000 people responding to the wider budget strategy supported the overall priorities contained in it, which included £1.2m savings coming from the CTS scheme.

By applying the Empty Homes Premium, Havering would fall into line with other London Boroughs which had already introduced this increase in council tax and encouraged owners of these empty properties to bring them back into occupation.

Other options considered:

Eight options were considered at Cabinet and reconsidered by Officers in light of the consultation responses. The CTS options could be found in the Cabinet report of 3 September 2014.

Five of these alternatives options reduced expenditure by varying degrees but not sufficiently to make significant savings and so would fall outside of the strategy and priorities set by the Council and consulted on. Two alternatives did provide the savings through the scheme but would have placed a significant burden on the CTS claimant to pay 20% or more in Council Tax. The 15% figure was considered to be fairer.

The option outlined in Appendix C to the report was considered the fairest proposal to CTS claimants and council tax payers if the CTS scheme was to be included as part of the savings package.

While the Council had reserves it could use to fund the CTS scheme, it could only be used for one-off savings and schemes in future years would still need funding. The Council's overall budget strategy was consulted and did not include use of balances or reserves. No significant responses had been received suggesting the Council should not reduce spending but instead should use reserves.

The option of increasing the Council Tax was already being considered as part of the main budget strategy. Consultation with the public had shown a majority were not in favour of a higher Council Tax rise than proposed in the Strategy.

Cabinet:

1. **Noted** and **considered** the responses to the CTS and Empty Homes Premium consultation appended to the Council's Financial Strategy Cabinet report considered in the Financial Strategy report.
2. **Noted** the financial pressure of the reduction in settlement funding considered in the Financial Strategy report and the potential impact on the Council Tax Support allocation.
3. **Approved** and **recommended to Council** the adoption of the proposed revised local council tax support scheme as summarised in Appendix A to the report with effect from April 2015.
4. **Approved** an increase of 50% to the standard rate of council tax for properties that had been empty for more than two years with effect from April 2015, subject to the current discounts and exemptions.

32 **ESTATE IMPROVEMENTS - HIGHFIELD ROAD**

Councillor Damian White, Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report

Cabinet was informed that it was proposed to make a set of improvements to the Highfield Road estate and the report before it was to provide details of those improvements which would be delivered in the course of the next financial year. The aim was that the improvements would enable a

regeneration of the estate to be completed in time to be associated with the date on which the Queen became the longest serving monarch – 9th September 2015. It was proposed that this should be associated with a renaming of the estate and its blocks of flats, as part of those celebrations.

Members were reminded that the estate in Collier Row - owned and managed by the Homes and Housing service of the Council - consisted of 339 units of accommodation. These were comprised of one high rise block of 76 flats (Highfield Towers) and 33 other blocks of low and medium rise flats. There were also 16 houses of the Cornish type, which had been built of non-traditional materials and therefore required extensive recladding work to bring them up to a mortgageable standard.

The estate had never had a coherent identity or name, or a community association. The properties had been brought up to Decent Homes standard as part of the Council's overall programme of Decent Homes work, but there had not been a great deal of expenditure on the environment, or communal areas which did not form part of the Government's Decent Homes standard.

The proposals as set out should make a significant impact on the identity and appearance of the estate. It would bring much needed investment to an area which was on the edge of the borough, and felt itself neglected. The improvement programme would provide a focus for engaging with the residents and engender a feeling of pride in the community, the estate and the borough.

Reasons for the decision:

The proposals within the report had been brought forward as the estate based on the Highfield Road, was considered to have a poor environment and lacked a coherent identity. The investment proposed would give the estate a new lease of life and improve the quality of life for the local residents.

Other options considered:

Option 1

Do nothing, apart from essential maintenance. This option was rejected, as it was likely over time that the estate may become unpopular and difficult to let.

Option 2

Demolish and rebuild. This option was rejected as too expensive. There was an established community which would have to be rehoused during any demolition phase. There were also 83 leaseholders who would have to be bought out. This option therefore was not feasible financially.

The proposal was therefore considered the best way forward for this estate.

It was noted that the appendix referred to in the report was not attached to the agenda and would be appended to these Minutes

Cabinet:

1. **Agreed** to establish a Residents' Steering Group to oversee the improvement delivery programme, and commented on the proposals
2. **Agreed** to consult the residents on the possibility of renaming the Highfield Road estate and the individual blocks to names which reflected the celebrations due to take place on 9th September 2015.
3. **Approved** the expenditure of £1.853m from the HRA capital programme of 2015/16 to carry out the improvements detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. This approval would be subject to Council ratification as set out in the financial implications to the report.
4. **Authorised** officers to invite tenders from appropriate building firms to carry out the proposed works.

33 **BETTER CARE FUND SECTION 75 AGREEMENT**

Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Health, introduced the report

Cabinet was reminded that with the arrival of the Better care Fund (BCF) the Council had to enter into an agreement under section 75 of the National Health Services Act 2006, with Havering NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, to govern the delivery of the approved Better Care Fund Plan for 2015/2016 and that the Council had to approve this agreement.

The governance for this in Havering would be the Health and Wellbeing Board with delegated authority to the Group Director Children, Adults and Housing to make executive decisions, and to the Joint Management and Commissioning Forum, which was a joint committee of the Clinical Commissioning Group and Local Authority, to undertake monitoring and scrutiny of the operation of the arrangements.

The BCF was a highly ambitious programme announced by the Government in the June 2013 spending review. It aimed to ensure a closer integration between health and social care, putting person centred care and wellbeing at the heart of decision making.

The BCF was a vital part of both NHS planning and local government planning. In Havering, the BCF plan supported both budget strategy and the implementation of the Care Act 2014.

Section 121 of the Care Act 2014 required the BCF arrangements to be underpinned by pooled funding arrangements; this is best facilitated by a section 75 agreement and a section 75 agreement was an agreement made under the National Health Services Act 2006 between a local authority and

an NHS body in England. It could include arrangements for pooling resources and delegating certain NHS and local authority health related functions to the other partner(s).

It was proposed that all schemes in the BCF plan were to be run as a pooled fund and that there would be no establishment of non-pooled funds for any schemes.

A joint BCF performance pack had been developed and would be presented to the Joint Management & Commissioning Forum on a monthly basis so that both parties had oversight of both activity and performance measures. This information would also be presented in summarised form to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Care Act Programme Board and the Corporate Management Team on a regular basis.

Reasons for the decision:

There was a statutory requirement for the BCF funds to be managed via pooled funding arrangements.

The reasons for this decision were that the Council was required to have a section 75 in place with regard to the BCF pooled fund by April 2015. This was a statutory obligation in order for the Council to deliver its BCF ambition.

As part of a s75 agreement governance protocol, the Joint Management and Commissioning Forum was established to ensure there would be a partnership forum for monitoring and scrutiny purposes.

Other options considered:

The option of not entering into an agreement would only be feasible if the Council was not agreeing to BCF principles and delivery which would not be a desirable option.

A Section 75 agreement with the CCG in relation to the BCF was a Government requirement. This needed to be in place before the beginning of the financial year 2015/16.

Cabinet:

1. **Agreed** to enter into a section 75 agreement with Havering NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, on the terms and conditions outlined in the report, to govern the delivery of the approved Better Care Fund Plan for Havering for the period 2015/2016 and for an agreed period thereafter.
2. **Delegated** authority to approve the final terms of the proposed section 75 agreement to the Lead Member for Adult Services and Health, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Group Director for Children, Adults and Housing.

3. **Delegated** the function of monitoring the implementation and operation of the Better Care Fund and s75 Agreement to the Joint Management & Commissioning Forum, upon the draft terms of reference set out in the attached Appendix A to the report.
4. **Delegated** authority for all necessary decisions with respect to the implementation and operation of all matters relating to the Better Care Fund and section 75 agreement, involving the Council and NHS bodies, to the Group Director, Children, Adults and Housing.

Chairman

Address and UPN	Description	External Decorations	Sundry Repairs	Concrete/balcony Repairs	Windows	Block entrance doors and screens	Door entry system	Internal Decorations	Roofline	Roofing	Car Parking and Paths	Landscaping	Other	Total Estimated cost per area £	Comments
Highfield Tower	16 storey block and surroundings including wooded area to rear. 76 flats										£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ 70,000.00	Excludes any costs for re-cladding block. No aesthetic works to block included at all.
	6209263 BLK 1-76 HIGHFIELD TOWERS HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	161 - 223 Hillrise Road														
	6209423 BLK 161-171 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 4,000.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 16,000.00	£ 6,400.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 9,600.00		£ 32,000.00	£ 9,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 5,000.00		£ 100,200.00	
	6209434 BLK 173-183 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	6209445 BLK 185-199 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
142 - 164 Hillrise Road	6209456 BLK 201-211 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	6209467 BLK 213-223 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	2 Nr 3 storey blocks, open balconies, 12 flats														
	6209387 BLK 142-152 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 2,400.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 7,200.00		£ 12,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,000.00		£ 39,000.00	
	6209401 BLK 154-164 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	139-143 Hillrise Road (including 19 - 23 Vernon Road) and 145 - 159 Hillrise Road														
106 - 116 Hillrise Road	6209398 BLK 145-159 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,400.00	£ 1,400.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 2,800.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 8,400.00		£ 14,000.00	£ 3,800.00	£ -	£ 1,000.00		£ 41,800.00	
	6209376 BLK 139-143 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ESSEX														
	1 Nr 3 storey corner block, open balconies, 6 flats, single communal area. Expenses of boundary wall														
	6209354 BLK 106-116 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 500.00	£ 600.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 3,600.00		£ 6,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ -	£ 1,000.00		£ 20,000.00	Planting to soften brick boundary walls
	1 Nr 3 storey and 1 Nr 4 storey block, open balconies, 1 Nr communal lobby per block, 14 flats in total, open car parking to front and expense of crazy paving to front. Boundary fences to maintain but good existing planting														
	97 - 111 and 113 - 123 Hillrise Road														
45 - 55 Hillrise Road	6209343 BLK 97-111 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,400.00	£ 1,400.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 2,800.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 8,400.00		£ 14,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 2,000.00		£ 48,000.00	Planting at front is good. Overlay car park and white line. Planting instead of crazy paving.
	6209365 BLK 113-123 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	2 Nr 3 storey blocks, no balconies, 1 Nr communal area per block, 12 flats. 3 Nr non-trad properties in LBH ownership. 1 is leasehold.														
	6209309 BLK 45-55 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,200.00	£ -	£ 2,400.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 7,200.00		£ 12,000.00	£ 800.00	£ -	£ 2,000.00	£ 45,000.00	£ 73,800.00	Some repairs to front boundary walls. EWI to 3 LBH owned houses at Willmott Dixon rates
	6209332 BLK 65-75 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	48 - 66 Hillrise Road and garage site to rear, in Hendon Gardens														
17 - 43 Hillrise Road and Harlow Gardens including garage site and land to rear of 1 - 14 Harlow Gardens	6209310 BLK 48-56 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,500.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 6,000.00		£ 10,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 21,000.00	£ 3,000.00		£ 82,500.00	Garage site possible for development. Potential to develop undercroft, subject to access rights and potential ceiling heights.
	6209321 BLK 58-66 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	Comish type 2 non-traditional properties. 16 houses in LBH ownership. 2 Nr 3 storey blocks, rendered quite recently. One communal entrance per block. 6 flats per block.														
	6209070 BLK 5-10 HARLOW GARDENS COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,200.00	£ -	£ 2,400.00	£ 2,000.00	£ -		£ -	£ -	£ 13,000.00	£ -	£ 200,000.00	£ 219,600.00	Price for external wall insulation to non-traditional properties obtained from Willmott Dixon. 17-43 close well planted. Allowance for overlay parking surface only plus £8k for garage areas. Development potential for land to rear of Harlow Gardens
	6209296 BLK 25-35 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	8 - 30 Hillrise Road, and land to rear and 19 - 26 Hendon Gardens														
65 - 75 Highfield Road	6209274 BLK 8-18 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,500.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 12,000.00		£ 20,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 1,000.00		£ 63,500.00	Planting to front of 9-26 Hendon Gardens included. Existing planting to Hillrise blocks is reasonable.
	6209285 BLK 20-30 HILLRISE ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	6209081 BLK 19-26 HENDON GARDENS COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX														
	1 Nr 3 storey corner block, open balconies, single communal area, 6 flats.														
	6209138 BLK 65-75 HIGHFIELD ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 3,600.00		£ 6,000.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 500.00		£ 23,500.00	Repairs to front retaining wall. Low level planting to soften walls
	88 - 98 Highfield Road														
100 - 134 Highfield Road and surrounding land	6209149 BLK 88-98 HIGHFIELD ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 600.00	£ 600.00	£ -	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 3,600.00		£ 6,000.00	£ 400.00	£ -	£ -	£ 3,000.00	£ 16,400.00	Garage site to rear has been developed
	3 Nr 3 storey blocks, no balconies, 1 Nr communal area per block, 18 flats in total.														
	6209150 BLK 100-110 HIGHFIELD ROAD COLLIER ROW ROMFORD ESSEX	£ 1,800.00	£ 1,800.00	£ -	£ 3,600.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 10,800.00		£ 18,000.00	£ 1,200.00	£ -	£ 2,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 48,200.00	Needs improvements to bin stores and repairs to long low-level boundary wall.

[illegible]