

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD
Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
3 February 2016 (7.00 - 8.45 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	+Ray Best, +Garry Pain, Dilip Patel, Viddy Persaud, Carol Smith and Linda Trew
Residents' Group	June Alexander, Barbara Matthews and +Ray Morgon
East Havering Residents' Group'	Gillian Ford (Chairman) and +Darren Wise
UKIP Group	Ian de Wulverton and Lawrence Webb (Vice-Chair)
Independent Residents' Group	David Durant and Graham Williamson

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors John Crowder, Robby Misir, Linda Hawthorn and Nic Dodin.

+Substitute members: Councillor Ray Best (for John Crowder), Councillor Garry Pain (for Robby Misir), Councillor Darren Wise (for Linda Hawthorn) and Councillor Ray Morgon (for Nic Dodin).

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

35 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 October, 24 November, 9 December 2015 and 12 January 2016 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

36 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2 2015/16

The report before Members set out the Quarter 2 Performance Report 2015/16 that had previously been considered by Cabinet.

Also appended to the report was the Quarter 2 2015/16 Demand Pressure Dashboard which illustrated the growing demands on the Council's services

and the context that the performance levels set out in the report had been achieved within.

Members noted that 71% of the performance indicators had a RAG status of Green and 29% had a RAG status of Red or Amber.

The Council's performance on making Havering a clean borough had been positive, with **73%** (11 of 15) indicators performing within target tolerance.

The Council's performance on ensuring Havering was a safe borough had been very positive, with **61%** (22 of 36) indicators performing within target tolerance.

The Council's performance on ensuring Havering's residents were proud to live in the borough had been very positive, with **81%** (22 of 27) indicators performing within target tolerance and **52%** (14 of 27) indicators showing an improvement on the previous quarter.

Members **reviewed** the pressures set out in Appendix 1 and **noted** the content of the Demand Pressures Dashboard in Appendix 2.

37 THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The report before Members outlined the context within which the 2016/17 budget was being set and identified the Council's overall policy direction, statutory duties and financial strategy.

The Council's budget needed to reflect the level of funding allocated to it by the Government. Cabinet had received reports in November and December 2015 that provided an update on developments at the national level and the consequential impact on local government funding and set out information on the financial position within Havering.

The November report also set out the Council's long term financial strategy to manage the implications of funding reductions and cost pressures over the next three years. It contained specific proposals to bridge the funding gap for the next two years, but left a funding gap of £2.4m in 2018/19 which required further steps to be taken in order to close that gap.

A further report had been made to Cabinet on 20 January 2016 which updated Members on the Local Government Financial Settlement, the impact on the proposed financial strategy for the coming financial year and the latest in year financial monitor. The report advised Cabinet that the three year funding gap had increased from £2.4m to £12.5m including £5.6m relating to 2016/17. The draft strategy recommended in the report included a range of additional measures which were intended to bridge the gap for 2016/17. Further reports would be made to Cabinet during the course of 2016/17 to consider the options for bridging the gap for the financial year 2017/18 and beyond.

The current position was that there would be an increase in the Havering element of the Council Tax of 1.99% plus a 2.00% precept for Adult Social Care.

In addition to the report members received a presentation from the Deputy Chief Executive which detailed the Government's settlement and the demand impacts this would have on Havering's budget strategy.

The presentation detailed the authority's position pre and post settlement.

Due to changes in apportionment, Havering faced a reduction of over 96% to its Revenue Support Grant (RSG) by 2019/20 leaving a funding of 1.38m by 2019/20.

The presentation showed that Havering was one of the biggest losers in outer London in terms of percentage of RSG funding and that compared to neighbouring authorities had suffered the second largest funding cut.

Havering had seen a significant reduction in funding due to new methodology that had been introduced which penalised authorities that had a high taxbase and or council tax rather than those that were reliant on central government funding.

As part of the Government's spending powers, it was assumed that councils would grow their taxbase by the same rate as previous years, increase council tax by 1.75% each year and introduce the Adult Social Care precept by 2% each year over the current parliament.

Members were advised that the overall picture was similar to what had been planned for, as it had been assumed that RSG funding would be lost, however, the savings were significantly front loaded particularly in 2016/17 and little time had been given to allow for the identification of savings. This had meant that additional savings had had to be identified that had not required the need for consultation.

The presentation detailed the savings that had been identified and what impact they would have on service level provision.

Members were advised that a combination of a core council tax increase, Adult Social Care precept and a reduction in GLA funding would result in an overall increase in council tax increase of 1.96% which was lower than the originally planned 1.99% increase.

Members noted that officers would continue to identify additional savings throughout the year.

Following the presentation Members sought and received clarification on several items of the presentation from the Deputy Chief Executive. However, Members had no specific comments regarding the budget

strategy and its demand impacts that they wished to put before Cabinet at its meeting on 10 February 2016.

38 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEES/TOPIC GROUP UPDATES

Environment O&S Sub-Committee

The Chairman advised that the topic group looking at waste minimisation had now concluded and that a report to the Cabinet member was being drafted. The report recommended ideas to encourage residents to take a greater responsibility in managing their waste.

Health O&S Sub-Committee

Members were advised that a visit to the 111 centre had taken place which had proved to be insightful. Discussions were continuing with BHRUT regarding the changes that were taking place throughout the trust. The topic group looking at delayed treatments continued to meet with representatives of BHRUT.

Children & Learning O&S Sub-Committee

Members were advised that the topic group looking at educational attainment were currently formalising a draft report which would be presented at the next meeting for Members to decide whether to refer the group's recommendations to Cabinet.

Towns & Communities O&S Sub-Committee

The Chairman advised that the topic group looking at anti-social behaviour was close to completion and that a report would be presented to the Sub-Committee shortly. A new topic group looking at Green Belt land designation would be starting later in the month.

Individuals O&S Sub-Committee

The Chairman advised that the topic group looking at social isolation in older people would shortly begin visits to community groups in the area.

Crime & Disorder O&S Sub-Committee

The Chairman advised that a visit to Romford and Hornchurch town centres had taken place so Members could observe the night time economy.

Members were also looking at people who were being trialled at court who had not been assessed for mental health issues.

Debt Recovery Topic Group

Members were advised that following several meetings with officers the topic group was now in the process of formulating a report for the next meeting of the Board which would contain a number of recommendations for officers to take forward which would help to alleviate the problem of historical debt.

Chairman