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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING Council Chamber - Town Hall 30 January 2013 (7.30 - 10.55 pm)

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Lynden Thorpe) in the Chair

Councillors Councillors June Alexander, Michael Armstrong, Clarence Barrett, Robert Benham, Becky Bennett, Sandra Binion, Jeffrey Brace, Denis Breading, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Andrew Curtin, Keith Darvill, Michael Deon Burton, Osman Dervish, Nic Dodin, David Durant, Brian Eagling, Ted Eden, Roger Evans, Gillian Ford, Georgina Galpin, Peter Gardner, Linda Hawthorn, Linda Van den Hende, Lesley Kelly, Steven Kelly, Pam Light, Mark Logan, Barbara Matthews, Paul McGeary, Robby Misir, Ray Morgon, Eric Munday, Pat Murray, John Mylod, Denis O'Flynn, Barry Oddy, Fred Osborne, Ron Ower, Garry Pain, Roger Ramsey, Paul Rochford, Geoffrey Starns, Billy Taylor, Barry Tebbutt, Frederick Thompson, Linda Trew, Jeffrey Tucker, Melvin Wallace, Keith Wells, Damian White, Michael White and John Wood.

Approximately 45 Members' guests and a representative of the press were also present.

There were no apologies for absence,

The Mayor advised Members and the public of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the Town Hall becoming necessary.

Father Roderick Hingley, of the Church of St Alban, Protomartyr, Romford opened the meeting with prayers.

The meeting closed with the singing of the National Anthem.

65 **COUNCILLOR DENNIS BULL**

The Mayor announced that Councillor Dennis Bull had died on the morning of the meeting following a brief illness. All present stood in silence as a mark of respect.

Councillors Michael White, Leader of the Council, Clarence Barrett, Leader of the Opposition, Keith Darvill, Leader of the Labour Group, Jeffrey Tucker, Leader of the Independent Residents' Group and Keith Wells paid tribute to Councillor Bull.

66 **MINUTES (agenda item 3)**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28 November 2012 were before the Council for approval.

The minutes were **AGREED** without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held 28 November 2012 be signed as a correct record.

67 **DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS (agenda item 4)**

The following Members disclosed interests in the subject matter of agenda item 14B (motion: closure of police stations): Councillors Wendy Brice-Thompson and Frederick Thompson; Councillor Jeffrey Tucker subsequently disclosed an interest in the subject matter of agenda item 14A (Motion: CCTV in Rainham).

68 **MOTION WITHDRAWN AND PROCEDURAL MOTIONS**

With the consent of the Council, the Labour Group motion at agenda item **14C (Closure of St. George's Hospital Hornchurch)** was withdrawn.

A procedural motion was proposed that agenda item **14D (parking in the Hilldene Shopping area)** be referred to the Highways Advisory Committee and was **CARRIED** by 30 votes to 19 (see division 1).

A procedural motion to limit the time for debate of agenda items 14A, 14B and 14C to 40 minutes each was **LOST** by 20 votes to 31 (see division 2).

69 **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (agenda item 5)**

The Mayor's Announcements are attached as **Appendix 1** to these minutes.

The Leader of the Council announced that, owing to doubt about calculations in the Local Government Finance Settlement, there was a possibility of delay in the budget and Council Tax setting (see also minute 70 below).

70 **PETITIONS (agenda item 6)**

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 23, petitions were presented as follows, by Councillors:

Councillor David Durant - from members of Rainham Allotment Users Group seeking to be added to the Melville Road allotment waiting list

Councillor Pat Murray - opposing plans to introduce Pay & Display parking and Residents Parking Permits at Hildene Shopping Area

It was **NOTED** that each petition would be passed to Committee Administration for attention in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme.

71 **COUNCIL TAX MEETING - POSSIBLE ADJUSTMENTS TO MEETING TIMETABLE (agenda item 6a)**

The Department for Communities and Local Government had indicated revisions would be necessary to the financial settlement for local government. It was possible therefore that it would be necessary to amend the dates and associated timescales of the forthcoming Cabinet and Council meeting at which the Council Tax would be set for 2013/14.

Accordingly, it was recommended that permission be granted by Council to amend the dates and timescales for the Council Tax meeting of Council in order take into account the late announcement of the revised financial settlement.

The recommendations of the Chief Executive Committee were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

- 1 **That, having regard to the expected late announcement of the revised financial settlement by the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, the Mayor (in consultation with the Group Leaders) be authorised:**
 - (a) **to agree if necessary a revised date for the Council Tax meeting of the Council; and**
 - (b) **to agree such adjustments to the timetable for the submission of motions and amendments as may be necessary to secure the proper consideration of those motions and amendments.**

- 2 **That so far as necessary to achieve the objective of recommendation 1, Council Procedure Rules be suspended.**

72 **THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY (agenda item 7)**

There had been a number of changes recently announced by central Government in the way in which local Government was funded. These included the localisation of business rates and of Council Tax support, revised arrangements for school funding and pupil referral units and changes to Capital funding.

Accordingly, Cabinet recommended to Council that the revenue and capital strategy statement, as set out in appendix 2 to these minutes, be approved.

The recommendations of Cabinet were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

That the revenue and capital strategy statement, as set out in Appendix 2 of the minutes be approved.

73 **LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT (agenda item 8)**

The Council had been required to implement a local council tax support scheme that would also meet a 10% reduction in central Government expenditure. A consultation on the scheme had been carried out with local residents and a share of £100 million funding would be available to assist the transition from council tax benefit to local council tax support.

The report before the Council included details of the proposed Scheme, an Equality Assessment and details of the responses received to consultation undertaken by the Council on the scheme proposals. The Mayor reminded Members of their obligation to take account of these supporting documents when coming to a decision on the report's recommendations.

The recommendations of Cabinet were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. **The proposed local council tax support scheme as set out in Appendix 3 of the minutes be adopted.**
2. **The proposals to vary the discounts in respect of certain classes of empty dwellings as summarised in Appendix A of the report be adopted.**
3. **The responses to consultation on council tax support and the council tax technical reforms be noted.**

4. The financial pressure of a £1.9 million reduction in government grant for council tax support in 2013/14 be noted.
5. The content of the transitional grant scheme be noted and the band D restriction to local council tax support be deferred to April 2014.
6. The delegation of responsibility to make any minor and consequential changes necessary to the detailed provision as a result of any changes to the draft regulations upon which the scheme is based to the Director of Finance & Commerce and the Portfolio Lead Member, be approved so far as the Council is concerned.

74 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 AND 2014/15 (agenda item 9)**

Cabinet had asked Council to approve certain key recommendations of the 2013/14 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme. Approval was sought, in advance of approval of the full programme, for elements such as the replacement of windows and installation of new kitchens and bathrooms under the Decent Homes programme. This would allow earlier consultation with tenants, leaseholders and contractors and hence more timely delivery of the work.

The recommendations of Cabinet were **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The following allocation of capital resources within the HRA Capital Programme for 2013/14 be approved:

	£'000s in 2013/14
Kitchens	7,900
Windows	1,600
Bathrooms	1,365
Non-traditional houses	1,467
Tower block refurbishment (for New Plymouth and Napier Houses)	600
Tower block works beyond Decent Homes (for New Plymouth and Napier)	900

<i>Houses)</i>	
Planned preventative maintenance	1,500
Total	15,332

75 **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME: AMENDMENT - INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR STANDARDS OF MEMBERS' CONDUCT (agenda item 10)**

Council had previously approved the appointment of a new Independent Person for standards of Members' conduct. Accordingly, Governance Committee now requested Council to approve an amendment of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme in order to reflect that the Independent Person was entitled to be paid an allowance for carrying out those duties.

The recommendation of Governance Committee was **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

Paragraph 15 of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme, be amended to read:

15 Co-Optees and Independent Persons' Allowances

The standard rate of allowance for statutory co-optees is £117 per meeting attended.

The Independent Person for standards of Members' Conduct will be paid an annual allowance of £1,000, in monthly instalments.

Co-optees and Independent Persons will be reimbursed for all travel costs in accordance with the above, whether the travel is within or outside the Borough, but will not be paid subsistence.

76 **KEY DECISIONS - AMENDMENT OF DEFINITION (agenda item 11)**

Recent changes had been made to the law with the aim of ensuring that decision-making by the executives of local authorities was more transparent and more open to public scrutiny. Accordingly, the Governance Committee had recommended that Council approve a change in the Executive Procedure Rules to make explicit that the meaning of "saving" in the definition of a key decision included expenditure avoided, additional revenue income generated or capital receipts obtained.

The recommendation of Governance Committee was **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The note to paragraph (14)(a)(i) of the Council's Executive Procedure Rules be amended to read:

In determining the meaning of "significant", regard must be had to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. For the avoidance of doubt, "savings" includes expenditure avoided, additional revenue income generated or capital receipts obtained.

77 **CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS - ARRANGING FOR REVIEW BY AN OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (agenda item 12)**

In order to make the call-in procedure clearer, Governance Committee had recommended that the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee be required to meet within 10 working days of the requisition being received unless an ordinary meeting of the Committee was due within 15 working days.

The recommendation of Governance Committee was **APPROVED** without division and it was **RESOLVED** that:

The Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules be adjusted by amending paragraph 17(b) of the Rules to read as follows:

- (b) If the Committee Administration and Member Support Manager is notified of a requisition of a decision shown on that notification within three working days in Calendar Brief (or any supplementary Calendar Brief) of a decision, then that decision shall not be acted upon but shall be submitted to the OSC as soon as possible, either at the next ordinary meeting if due within 15 working days of receipt of the requisition or at a special meeting convened for the purpose (to be held, so far as practicable, within 10 working days of the receipt of the requisition), for determination.

78 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (agenda item 13)**

Twelve questions were asked and replies given.

The texts of those questions, and their answers, together with those not asked orally, are set out in **Appendix 4** to these minutes.

Following the Leader of the Council's reply to question 2 (Veterans' Champion), Members indicated agreement to the submission of a report to the Governance Committee about establishing that appointment.

79 **CCTV IN RAINHAM (agenda item 14A)****Motion on behalf of the Independent Residents' Group**

Given the success of CCTV cameras in reducing crime in the borough's town centres, in the interest of the residents south of the borough, this Council will continue with that success and make further progress in reducing crime with the installation of CCTV cameras in Rainham town centre.

Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council notes the success of CCTV cameras in Havering and accepts that, when the further funding becomes available, priority will be given to those communities in Havering where official crime statistics suggest that the local need is greatest.

Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

Amend as follows:

In the first line, insert after the word "cameras" the following:

"and Safer Neighbourhood Teams"

At the end of the motion, after the word "centre" insert the following:

"and oppose vigorously the proposal of the Mayor of London to close front counter facilities of the Rainham SNT and to cut its dedicated resources"

Following debate, the Administration amendment was **CARRIED** by 31 votes to 12 (see division 3). The Labour amendment was **LOST** by 11 votes to 32 (see division 4). The Administration amendment was then **CARRIED** as the substantive motion by 31 votes to 12 (see division 5).

RESOLVED that:

This Council notes the success of CCTV cameras in Havering and accepts that, when the further funding becomes available, priority will be given to those communities in Havering where official crime statistics suggest that the local need is greatest.

80 **PROCEDURAL MOTION**

During the debate of the motion recorded in the preceding minute, a procedural motion that the meeting continue until item 14B had been fully debated was **LOST** by 19 votes to 32 (see division 6).

81 **CLOSURE OF POLICE STATIONS (agenda item 14B)**

Motion on behalf of the Residents' Group

In recognition of the valuable role Police Stations play in the community, this Council expresses its serious concern over any proposals to close our police stations and resolves to:

- a) Express our collective concerns in writing to the Mayor of London, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police
- b) Seek the support of our MPs and GLA Member in opposing any closures
- c) Support any other London wide activity in opposing such closures

Amendment on behalf of the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council is aware of the on-going consultation by the MPS on future strategies for policing in Havering. We note with concern the proposals to close some police stations, but welcome the proposed increased in manpower. We therefore call on all of Havering communities to play an active part in the current consultation.

Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

Amend as follows:

In the second line after the words "any proposals" insert the following:-

"by the Mayor of London and the Metropolitan Police Authority"

In the third line after the word "stations" insert the following:-

"and to close Safer Neighbourhood front counter facilities"

In the third line after the word "and" insert the following:-

"reduce the dedicated resources to the SNTs and"

In view of the time, and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.1(b), the motion and amendment were dealt with by vote only. The Administration amendment was **CARRIED** by 31 votes to 19 (see division 7); the Labour Group motion was **LOST** by 21 votes to 31 (see division 8); the Administration amendment was then **CARRIED** as the substantive motion by 31 votes to 21 (see division 9).

RESOLVED that:

This Council is aware of the on-going consultation by the MPS on future strategies for policing in Havering. We note with concern the proposals to close some police stations, but welcome the proposed increased in manpower. We therefore call on all of Havering communities to play an active part in the current consultation.

82 VOTING RECORD

The record of voting divisions is attached as **Appendix 5**.

Mayor

**Appendix 1
(Minute 69)**

Good evening everyone and welcome.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a happy 2013.

Twenty twelve was an incredible year for the borough, with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Olympics, and a visit by the Queen.

It was a very busy time with many challenges, but we continued to deliver our services with little or no disruption and helped make it a memorable year for our residents.

So a big thank you to everyone involved. I look forward to 2013 and another successful year for Havering.

It was busy time for my Consort David and me during Christmas and the New Year. We visited patients at the Queen's Hospital where we heard glowing reports about the nursing staff.

We also went to the Salvation Army and chatted to 50 local residents enjoying a Christmas lunch and learnt of the sterling work the Salvation Army do for the homeless.

I welcomed 2013 in with members of the community players from the Havering Theatre Trust at the London's New Year's Day Parade. It was a terrific day for everyone and we won a prize. So well done to all those involved in giving up their time to take part in the Parade.

I would now like to welcome Joy Hollister, our new Group Director for Social Care & Learning to Havering. Joy joins us from the Corporation of London.

I recently visited 100 Avelon Road, our day centre, which cares for people with disabilities. The clients are delighted with the refurbished building and the facilities available. It really is state of the art. I would urge Members to go and see it.

I believe a fantastic garden is being created there thanks to Cllr Pam Light and some of our Havering in Bloom Allotment winners.

I was delighted to hear that the Heritage Lottery Fund has provided funding to support two projects in the borough. One of these projects is the restoration of Upminster Windmill, which has received development funding.

The HLF also provided funding to go towards a project which aims to digitise historic exhibits, making them available online and more accessible to the public. This project, called "Romford: the birth and death of a Victorian town" is based in the Local Studies & Family History Centre in Romford Central Library.

Last Sunday I attended the Holocaust Memorial day service, along with more than 100 people in Coronation Gardens, Romford. This year, it had a national theme: Communities Together - Build a Bridge.

During the coming months I will be hosting visits from pupils of 20 primary schools to give them an insight into the workings of the Mayoralty and the Town Hall.

As we prepare for the setting of this year's Council tax, may I remind you that that the consultation on our budget proposals for 2013/14 is now online for our residents to have their say. This closes on Monday 4 February.

And finally, I would like to thank our Council staff, who worked hard during the recent cold snap, some through the night, to ensure our essential services were delivered and our roads were safe. They did a tremendous job.

APPENDIX 2 (Minute 72)

REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY

The Council will ensure that there is an effective Medium Term Financial Strategy in place to drive forward the financial planning process and resource allocation. The financial strategy will be determined by policies and priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan, together with other key Strategies, and with appropriate linkages in place to the Service Planning process.

The Council is clear about, and remains committed to, its *Living Ambition*, the long-term vision for the future of the borough, which is to provide Havering's residents with the highest possible quality of life, in a borough that thrives on its links to the heart of the capital, without ever losing the natural environment, historic identity and local way of life that makes Havering unique.

Underpinning the *Living Ambition* are five key goals: Environment, Learning, Towns and Communities, Individuals and Value, with a number of strategic objectives under each Goal. The Council is committed to allocating resources in a way that will support the achievement of these objectives.

The Council recognises the pressures on its budget, and while seeking to protect and enhance front-line services as far as possible, will aim to contain these pressures within existing resources. Cabinet Members will examine all budget pressures and seek reductions where possible.

The Council will wherever possible seek new funding and new ways of working. The Council will continue to look at new methods of service delivery to improve services to the public and the value for money that they provide, including working in partnership with others.

The Council will continue to seek to improve efficiency and deliver value for money, in particular, the Council will aim to identify efficiencies that will not impact on service delivery, and to identify options that will improve the value for money of its services through improving performance, and/or reducing service costs.

The Council will ensure that, given the severe financial pressures it is facing, growth will only be supported in priority areas, or where the Council is required to fund new responsibilities.

The Council will however ensure that the most vulnerable members of its community are protected, will continue to lead in the development of social cohesion, and will ensure that the services provided and resources allocated reflect the diverse nature and needs of our local community and our responsibilities to the local environment.

The Council will lobby to ensure that the Government provides adequate funding to take on any new responsibilities and to illustrate the impact of the low funding basis for Havering and its residents, but will ensure that, in broad terms, its spending is in line with the basis on which the Government allocates grant funding, and that spending levels will be realigned against any reductions in funding.

The Council will ensure that it engages with its local community, its partners and individual stakeholders in developing financial plans, and will reflect on the outcome of its consultation process in the identification of priorities and the allocation of resources.

That, while addressing its priorities and setting a balanced and prudent budget, the Council will seek to keep any increase in the Council Tax to the lowest possible level and in line with its stated aspirations whilst maintaining reserves at the minimum level of £10m.

And as part of that process, the Council will not utilise those reserves, or any reserves earmarked for specified purposes, to subsidise its budget and reduce Council Tax levels as this is neither a sustainable nor a robust approach.

The Council will seek to ensure that sufficient financial resources are available to enable it to deliver a long-term savings plan within the constraints of funding available to it from both local taxpayers and the Government, and will seek to utilise any unallocated funds with that purpose in mind.

The Council will adopt a prudent capital programme designed to maintain and where possible enhance its assets, in line with the Living Ambition.

The Council will finance capital expenditure through a combination of external funding and capital and Section 106 receipts, and will only apply prudential borrowing as a last resort, unless a business case can be made to finance investment through borrowing, where there is an income or savings stream arising from the investment.

CAPITAL BUDGET STRATEGY

The capital budget strategy sets out the Council's approach to capital investment over the medium term. It has been developed in consultation between senior officers, Members and the Council's key strategic partners and is integrated with Havering's *Living Ambition*, set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Council will ensure it engages with the local community and wider stakeholders in developing its financial plans.

The Council has adopted a prudent capital programme in line with the *Living Ambition* designed to:

- protect, maintain and develop existing assets and infrastructure – the backlog of repairs to existing assets such as school buildings, office accommodation, and infrastructure assets such as roads and paths;
- develop new facilities for which there is significant public demand or upgrading assets to meet the expectations of local people, and obtaining value for money from the use of our assets and resources;
- support the delivery of the Council's transformation programme and further initiatives to improve efficiency and effectiveness e.g. through the adoption of new technology to release revenue savings or improve service delivery to the community.

The Council will seek to continue to improve efficiency and value for money, in particular to:

- maximise asset utilisation;
- ensure assets are fit for purpose and health and safety compliant;
- facilitate and promote community use;
- explore alternative management arrangements e.g. leases to community groups;
- explore opportunities for innovative ways to procure and deliver capital projects to maximise the resources available;
- consider the wider aspects of capital projects, for example whole life asset costs, equality and diversity, and environmental implications;
- investigate shared usage/ownership arrangement with other local authorities, partners and stakeholders.

As well as the above, the Council's approach to capital asset management includes the review of existing assets in terms of suitability for purpose, alternative and future use, and maintenance requirements. The aim for the Council to rationalise its asset portfolio and only hold assets that support the delivery of its goals, offer value for money or in some other way are important for community, heritage or other significant social purpose.

The capital budget strategy is intrinsically linked to the revenue budget strategy. The revenue implications of capital expenditure and funding decisions are explored and accounted for on an ongoing basis. These are reflected as appropriate and include the consideration of the challenging financial climate which the Council faces.

The Council will finance capital expenditure through a combination of:

- Receipts
- External Funding
- S106 Contributions
- Revenue Contributions to Capital
- Capital Grants
- Capital Allowances
- Supported Borrowing
- Prudential Borrowing.

Each funding stream is considered in terms of risk and affordability in the short and longer term.

The current and future economic climates have a significant influence on capital funding decisions. As a result planned disposals are kept under regular review to ensure the timing maximises the potential receipt where market conditions are not favourable.

Capital expenditure will only be permitted where funding streams have been identified and confirmed. Prudential borrowing will only be used as a last resort, unless a business case can be made to finance the investment from an income or savings stream.

Every effort is made to maximise grant funding, leverage opportunities and other external funding opportunities, where they are consistent with the Council's *Living Ambition* vision, goals and strategic objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. Use of grant funding will however only be made where the cost to the Council is minimised or where this – both capital and revenue – can be contained within existing resources.

Where expenditure is to be financed through capital, this will only occur where funds have been realised. Neither capital receipts generated through disposals nor S106 contributions are committed until they are actually received. This is due to the complex conditions and timing issues that can be associated with them.

The Council is also continuing to attract private investment into Council facilities through exploration of potential partnership and outsourcing arrangements.

This funding approach has been made with reference to the Council's current and longer term financial position, the prudential code, the current and projected economic climate, and the Council's asset management strategy as set out in the Corporate Asset Management Plan.

The capital programme will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will consider items such as new funding opportunities and Member priorities. In year changes e.g. the availability of additional external funding, will be made on an ongoing basis as part of routine programme management. These will be implemented with regard to the Council's Constitution and agreed procedures.

**Appendix 3
(Minute 73)**

Final Option for Local Council Tax Support

Impacts working age claimants and people with second homes

Final Option	
<p>From April 2013, increase non-dependant deductions from: £0.00 to £0.00* £3.30 to £6.00 £6.55 to £9.00 £8.25 to £15.00 £9.90 to £20.00 Increase council tax for certain properties in line with the Council Tax Technical Reforms for 2013 as follows: Remove the second homes discount completely (currently 10%). Remove Class A exemption (empty and undergoing major structural repairs). Remove the Class C exemption (unoccupied and unfurnished) completely. Take the savings from the abolition of Class L (mortgagees in possession).</p> <p>From April 2014, the maximum council tax support award will be capped to the top of band D, which is currently £28.80 per week.</p>	
2013 Reduction: £1.8 mil	2013 Contingency: NIL

*Under the current benefit rules, non-dependant deductions are based on the gross income of the non-dependant. However, where the non-dependant is in receipt of an out-of-work benefit, the deduction remains at zero in line with the current scheme.

For 2013/14, this option uses a combination of increased non-dependant deductions and reductions in property exemptions.

For 2014/15, the CTS scheme will use a combination of increased non-dependant deductions, reductions in property exemptions and capping weekly council tax support to a band D charge which is currently £28.80.

The non-dependant deductions above have been calculated using 2012/13 rates. The DWP will provide 2013/14 non-dependant deduction rates in December 2012 from which savings can be calculated.

Potentially 582 claimants residing in properties banded E, F, G and H could be affected by restricting benefit to Band D Claimants. Further analysis will continue to determine more exactly the numbers affected.

This option comprising elements of benefits and council tax to make the savings could affect 8,296 households of which 715 will be in receipt of benefit and 7,581 will be Council Tax Payers with second homes. These are forecasted figures, which will be monitored up until the implementation of the new scheme.

Proposals in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 are optimized above to attain the savings to offset the Government's 10% reduction in expenditure. The proposed scheme for 2013 also takes advantage of the Government's additional transitional funding which is outlined in paragraph five of the report.

Preferred Option Statistical Data

Description	Properties that may be affected by band	No. cases All CTB lost	Annual LA Saving/Customer Loss £	No. of household affected
a. Increase Non dependant deductions: £3.30 to £6.00 £6.55 to £9.00 £8.25 to £15.00 £9.90 to £20.00	715 cases affected	94	£185k	715
From 2014 b. Restriction to Actual Band D Liability 2012/13 £28.80	Working Age: Band A - 0 Band B - 0 Band C - 0 Band D - 0 Band E - 454 Band F - 87 Band G - 20 Band H - 1	None	Total £89k A £0.00 B £0.00 C £0.00 D £0.00 E £45k F £32k G £11k H £1k	582
Exemption Category	Current scheme	LGFA Enables	Potential Additional Income £	No. of properties affected
c. Second homes	Having apply a Discretionary discount of 10%.	Range of discretion between 0% and 50%. Having propose 0%.	47K	739
d. Exemption Class A – empty and undergoing major repairs/structural alterations	100% up to a maximum of 12 months	Discretionary discount between 0% and 100%. Having propose 0% over 12 months.	240k	468
e. Exemption Class C – unoccupied and unfurnished	100% up to a maximum of 6 months	Discretionary discount between 0% and 100%. Having propose 0%.	1.303k	6289
f. Mortgagees in possession Class L	100% no time limit	Abolition. Having propose 0% from a date to be confirmed by DCLG.	41k	85
Total			1.816k	8,296

London Borough of Havering Final Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Introduction

Council Tax Benefit will be abolished from 1 April 2013. In its place each local authority is required by Section 9 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to produce its own scheme to reduce the liability of working age applicants it considers to be in financial need.

This document contains Havering's final Council Tax Support Scheme which the Council is required to produce under the provisions of Schedule 4 of the act.

The Council has decided to adopt its own scheme which has due regard to the Department for Communities and Local Government's policy intentions and unequivocally protects pensioners.

The Local Council Tax Support scheme is to be interpreted and applied in accordance with The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 which set out what must be included in the scheme.

The Council is required to design its own scheme to assist applicants who are below state pension credit age. If it fails to do this by 31 January 2013 it will be required to adopt the default scheme as set out in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) Regulations 2012.

It may also be amended if the expected cost of the new scheme changes before 31 January 2013 to such an extent that the scheme requires further amendment.

In this document 'the new scheme' means the proposed CTS scheme and 'the current scheme' means the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme (CTB).

The Regulations provide a detailed scheme for the calculation of CTS where an applicant is a pensioner which are incorporated within the Council's new scheme.

Unless expressly stated otherwise the provisions outlined below relate solely to working age applicants under the new scheme.

Havering's Local Council Tax Support Scheme

This document sets out the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme for eligible working age Council Tax payers to receive support.

The scheme applicable to pensioners is defined in The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012, Part 3, Schedules 1 to 6, which is adopted within this scheme.

The procedure for the operation of the Scheme summarised below is made in accordance with Schedules 7 and 8 of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012.

The principles of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme are:

- Local authorities will be expected to manage the 10% reduction in subsidised expenditure.
- Regulations have been set to protect claimants of state pension credit age.
- Local authorities must consult on their schemes with precepting authorities and the public.
- The Council must adopt the final scheme before 31 January 2013 or the default scheme will apply.
- Local authorities should aim to protect vulnerable groups.
- In developing schemes, local authorities should consider incentivising claimants into work.

The Local Council Tax Support Scheme includes the following:

- Introduction and definitions
- Prescribed of persons
- Provisions relating to entitlement under the scheme
- Applicable amounts
- Maximum Council Tax Reduction
- Alternative Maximum Council Tax Reduction
- Amount of reduction under the scheme
- Assessment of Income and Capital under the scheme
- Students
- Applications
- Extended reductions
- Period of entitlement and changes of circumstances

- Schedules

The new scheme has adopted the existing scheme as defined in the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 as they stand subject to the following amendments:

1. Increase weekly non-dependant deductions

That Paragraph 58 in Part 6 of the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 shall be taken to read as follows:

“58.

(1) Subject to the following provisions of this regulation, the non-dependant deductions in respect of a day referred to in regulation 57 (maximum council tax benefit) shall be—

(a) in respect of a non-dependant aged 18 or over in remunerative work, £20.00 x 1/7;

(b) in respect of a non-dependant aged 18 or over to whom sub-paragraph (a) does not apply, £6.00 × 1/7.

(2) In the case of a non-dependant aged 18 or over to whom paragraph (1)(a) applies, where it is shown to the appropriate authority that his normal gross weekly income is—

(a) less than £183.00, the deduction to be made under this regulation shall be that specified in paragraph (1)(b);

(b) not less than £183.00 but less than £316.00, the deduction to be made under this regulation shall be £9.00;

(c) not less than £316.00 but less than £394.00, the deduction to be made under this regulation shall be £15.00.

2. From April 2014, Restrict the maximum council tax support award to the top of Council Tax band D

That Paragraph 57 in Part 6 of the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 shall be taken to read as follows:

“57.

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (5), the amount of a person’s maximum council tax benefit in respect of a day for which he is liable to pay council tax, shall be 100 per cent of the amount A/B where—

- (a) A is the amount set by the appropriate authority as the council tax for the relevant financial year in respect of the dwelling in which he is a resident and for which he is liable, subject to any discount which may be appropriate to that dwelling under the 1992 Act; and
 - (b) B is the number of days in that financial year, less any deductions in respect of non-dependants which fall to be made under regulation 58 (non-dependant deductions).
- (2) In calculating a person's maximum council tax benefit any reduction in the amount that person is liable to pay in respect of council tax, which is made in consequence of any enactment in, or made under, the 1992 Act, shall be taken into account.
- (3) The level of any Council Tax Support awarded shall be restricted to the level of band D
- (4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a claimant is jointly and severally liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling in which he is resident with one or more other persons but excepting any person so residing with the claimant who is a student to whom regulation 45(2) (students who are excluded from entitlement to council tax benefit) applies, in determining the maximum council tax benefit in his case in accordance with paragraph (1), the amount A shall be divided by the number of persons who are jointly and severally liable for that tax.
- (5) Where a claimant is jointly and severally liable for council tax in respect of a dwelling with only his partner, paragraph (4) shall not apply in his case.

Applications for Council Tax Support

This part applies to both pensioners and working-age applicants

The following procedure is in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012, referred to as 'the Regulations' below and shall be implemented in accordance with those Regulations.

Entitlement to CTS is dependent on an application being made in the following way:

An application may be made:

- (a) In writing
- (b) By means of an electronic communication or
- (c) By telephone following publication by the Council of a number for this purpose.

The form provided by the Council for this purpose must be properly completed, and the Council may require the applicant to complete the form in the proper manner, and may further require that further information and evidence is provided by the applicant.

An application will be defective if the applicant does not provide all of the information the Council requires.

Applications made by telephone will only be valid if the applicant provides a written statement of their circumstances in the format required by the Council.

The Council will provide applicants making their applications with an opportunity to correct any defects in their application.

Applications may be made by those persons set out in paragraph 6 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

The Government has indicated that they intend to introduce legislation to the effect that people entitled to Council Tax Benefit on 31 March 2013 will be deemed to have made an application under the new scheme.

Evidence and information

Any person who makes an application or any person to whom a reduction under the Council's scheme has been awarded shall furnish such certificates, documents, information and evidence in connection with the application or award, or question arising out of it as may reasonably be required by the Council in order to determine the person's entitlement. Where the Council requests information it shall inform the applicant or person of their duty to notify the Council of any change of circumstances and shall indicate the kind of changes of circumstances which are to be notified.

Matters related to the electronic communication of information, proof of delivery and content of information will be determined in accordance with Part 4 of Schedule 7 of the Regulations.

Where the person is a pensioner paragraph 7(4) (5) (6) and (7) of Schedule 8 of the Regulations apply which specify matters relevant to evidence and information related to pensioners.

Amendment and withdrawal of applications

Any person who has made an application may amend it at any time before a decision had been made by serving a notice in writing to the Council in accordance with paragraph 8 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

Decisions by the Council

The Council will make a decision in respect of any application for a reduction under this scheme in accordance with the criteria set out within the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 (subject to the amendments made to

paragraphs 57 and 58 and Schedule 2 referred to above), and in accordance with Schedules 7 and 8 of the Regulations.

The decision will be made within 14 days of the Council receiving at its designated office the properly completed application or the information requested to complete it or the evidence required. The date upon which the Council is deemed to have received the properly completed application shall be determined in accordance with paragraphs 6 of Schedule 1, paragraph 7 and Part 1 of Schedule 7 of the Regulations being satisfied, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

The Council will notify the applicant or any person affected by its decision under the scheme in writing forthwith, or as soon as reasonably practicable. Any person affected to whom the Council sends or delivers a notification of a decision to may, within one month of the notification of the decision, request in writing from the Council a statement setting out the reasons for its decision on any matter set out in the notice.

Following receipt of a request for a written statement the Council will provide this within 14 days or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

Where an award or payment of reduction is made the time and manner of granting the reduction under the scheme will be in accordance with Part 5 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

Change of circumstances

For persons who are not pensioners the date on which changes of circumstances are to take effect will be determined in accordance with paragraph 4 of Part 2 of Schedule 8 of the Regulations.

Procedure for making an appeal

Any applicant who is not in agreement with the decision of the Council taken under this scheme may service a notice in writing on the Council setting out their reasons and grounds upon which they believe the Council has made the wrong decision.

Following receipt of an appeal in writing the Council will:

- (1) Consider the appeal
- (2) Notify the applicant in writing of the following:
 - (i) Any decision not to uphold the appeal and the reasons for that; or
 - (ii) That steps are being taken to proceed with the appeal and set out what steps.

Where an applicant remains dissatisfied following receipt of any written notice sent by the Council in response to their appeal, they may within two months of the service of that notice, appeal to the valuation tribunal.

Applications for further discretionary reductions

Under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) Regulations 2012, the Authority will consider applications for a further reduction in Council Tax.

There will be financial implications in that the cost of any reduction will be a direct cost to the Council. The cost of any discretionary reduction will, therefore, have to be met by the rest of the council taxpayers.

Applications must be made in writing or by prescribed electronic communications.

The Council will, in making decisions for further discretionary reductions, have due regard to its duties under The Child Poverty Act 2010, The Housing Act 1996, and The Equality Act 2010.

The Council will review all relevant matters when deciding whether to award a reduction including, but not limited to:

- The circumstances of any other person with whom the applicant is jointly and severally liable for Council Tax.
- The overall financial situation of the applicant and the applicant's family.
- The effect the council believes making an award will have on the applicant and any members of the applicant's family.
- Protecting the public purse and maintaining financial budgets.

A person who applies for a discretionary reduction may request that the Council review its decision. Any such request must be made in writing and be received within one month of the date the notification of the decision.

If practicable, another more senior officer, will reconsider the decision in light of all available evidence and, if appropriate amend it. Any change may lead to either a reduction or an increase in any award.

A further right of review will be available against the decision as reviewed which will be considered by a manager but only against the legality of the decision and not the actual outcome.

**APPENDIX 4
(Minute 78)****MEMBERS' QUESTIONS**

Note: Questions 1 to 12 were answered at the meeting. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.6(a), the remainder were treated as if put for written answer

1 PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES: INCOME**To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)**

By Councillor John Mylod

Income from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) amounted to £2.157 million in 2011/12 compared with £1.602 million in 2010/11, an increase of 35%. Would the Cabinet Member explain the reasons behind this significant increase?

Answer:

Income from Penalty Charge Notices amounted to £2.157 million in 2011/12 with a total of 47,001 PCN's issued.

37,420 PCN's were issued in 2010/11 generating an income of £1.602 million.

Reasons for the increase in issuing numbers included the Civil Enforcement team being fully staffed. In previous years the service had vacant posts which of course led to less PCN issuance.

More focussed operational changes were also made ensuring that the service concentrated their enforcement presence at locations highly problematic (i.e schools) and at locations specifically requested. These requests were via residents, local traders, transport and emergency services. Our resources were effectively deployed at the right places and at the right times. Since the introduction of the Traffic Management Act, the policy and issuing of PCN's has been the subject of statutory regulation.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member explained that the Council's parking enforcement policy in town centres was based on a number of factors including amount of footfall, preventing commuter parking and income generation. It was also necessary to use the policy to establish access and the free flow of traffic through the borough, particularly for buses.

2 VETERANS' CHAMPION**To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)**

By Councillor Denis O'Flynn

Will the Administration support the Labour Group proposal that the Council appoint a 'Veterans Champion' to act as a single point of contact and support for Armed Forces Veterans and Service leavers?

Answer:

Thank you Councillor O'Flynn for your question.

I think this is an excellent idea and I would like to request that Governance Committee brings forward a recommendation to Annual Council.

3 RAINHAM LIBRARY - DELAY

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Can this Council inform residents the reasons for the delay in building as promised, the proposed new Rainham Library?

Answer:

The new library, lifelong learning centre and flats in Rainham Village Conservation Area were a joint project between Havering Council and The London Thames Gateway Development Corporation.

As a result of the impending winding up of Thames Gateway Development Corporation, their role in the project passed to the Greater London Authority in April 2012

The Greater London Authority is responsible for £2,105,000 of the funding for the project.

The GLA approval process to enable them to commit to the project was finalised in late October 2012.

In December last year GLA solicitors forwarded the necessary draft legal agreements for construction to begin to Havering Council's solicitor.

The Council has done due diligence on the proposed agreements.

It is anticipated that final versions of the agreement will be signed off in early February.

As the construction contract has already been tendered, once the agreement is signed construction on site can begin.

Should the agreement be signed in early February it is hoped that construction can start in March 2013.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that he would continue, with officers, to keep a close watch on progress with the project and was hopeful that it would now proceed in accordance with the schedule he had outlined.

4 TREE REMOVAL POLICY

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm under which criteria of the council's tree policy were the trees in Hornchurch High Street and King George's Playing Fields removed?

Answer:

The Council's Tree Strategy applies to street trees only, under the conditions of the Highways Act 1980. Trees in parks are not subject to the same pressure from items of street furniture, highways usage, transport and other issues which affect street trees, and so are not subject to the same legislative framework as that which affects trees on the highway. Parks Grounds Maintenance Teams, Parks Protection Team and Parks Development Officers examine and report any Health and Safety issues relating to trees in parks for necessary action. In this context, work at King George's Playing Fields was governed by Policy DC60 on Trees and Woodlands of the borough's Local Development Framework. The Council's Regulatory Services Committee considered the proposals for King George's Playing Fields and concluded that they do accord with this and other relevant policies contained in the LDF, and so an area where trees have been removed will be replaced with alternative appropriate tree planting in accord with that decision.

Removal of trees in Hornchurch High Street was carried out under the terms of section 8 of the Council's Tree Strategy. 18 native trees will replace 13 trees which have been removed in accord with both this policy and decisions taken by Highways Advisory Committee. The new trees will be semi-mature species which will be more appropriate to this town centre location. The use of root deflectors will ensure they do not disrupt the footway, will ensure the robustness of the new footways, and maintain a level, trip free pavement. As part of a wide range of measures to strengthen nature conservation in and around Hornchurch, the new trees will extend some aspects of nature corridors on the edge of the village through the High Street itself, strengthen the link between the centre of the village and the natural environment around it, and link some aspects of nature corridors at either end of the village, which are currently divided by the High Street.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member asked Councillor Morgon to submit his request that the damage to highways policy be applied to all roads in the borough to the Cabinet Member for the Environment who would provide a written response.

5 HOMELESS PEOPLE IN HAVERING

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Paul McGeary

How many people in Havering are currently:

A) Registered as homeless and the Council have a statutory duty to house them; and

B) Rough sleeping?

Answer:

A) There are currently 535 households whose circumstances have been investigated and the Housing Service has concluded that they are homeless and a duty to secure accommodation applies. Of these:

- the vast majority, 498, are currently housed in good quality private sector accommodation leased and managed by the Council under the Private Sector Leasing, PSL, scheme. Typically a homeless household lives in PSL accommodation for three to five years during which time housing officers work with them to secure council, housing association or alternative private rented accommodation
- another 35 households are temporarily housed in one of the Council's hostels awaiting PSL or alternative accommodation – the average hostel stay is 12 weeks
- two households are living in specialist women's refuge accommodation.

B) Based on the Housing Service's work with London Street Rescue, the charity specialising in outreach to homeless people in East London, the Housing Service estimates that three people were rough sleeping in Havering on any one night during the period October to December 2012.

As soon as someone is reported as rough sleeping in the borough either an officer from the Homelessness and Housing Advice Team or London Street Rescue attends to try to find the person and make contact. Both the Housing Service and London Street Rescue are able to provide temporary accommodation to rough sleepers if required.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that she was aware of the Hope for Havering project and had held discussions with the project officers. The Cabinet Member felt that there was a need to bring together all parties involved in homelessness issues locally.

6 **EMPTY ROOMS IN COUNCIL PROPERTIES**

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Michael Deon Burton

As one who proudly supports local residents with family members who heed the call of their country, I am deeply concerned upon hearing of plans to penalise people in council housing who leave bedrooms empty for more than 13 weeks.

The results of which I am told will mean households with serving members of the Armed Forces will lose hundreds of pounds.

If this is the ramification of the clumsy construction of the governance, I ask the Executive to give assurance that they will accede to my request 'That we in Havering will take all

necessary steps to obviate this most unfair affect upon a most cherished section of our community'.

Answer:

Councillor Burton is referring to changes in Welfare Benefit rules that have been introduced by Central Government. The rules on the changes to Housing Benefit apply to all households who are in receipt of benefits, irrespective of their occupation. There are no special exemptions for people who are in, or who have been in the Armed Forces.

All households where the head of household is under the age of 61, will only receive benefit for the number of bedrooms that they need, as opposed to the number of bedrooms in the property. Therefore, households that under occupy their homes by one bedroom, will have their Housing benefit reduced by 14%, and those who under occupy their homes by two bedrooms will have their Housing Benefit reduced by 22%.

All households in this situation have a number of options. They can move to a home, that meets their housing needs, rather than under occupying their home. They can take in a lodger. They can meet the difference in costs themselves from their other resources. The final option available to a claimant, who wants to remain in the same homes, is that they can obtain employment.

In Havering we are doing our best to ensure that all claimants in this situation are aware of the impact of the changes to welfare benefits that will take place in April, and we are discussing those options with claimants face to face.

This measure however is designed to ensure that homes are occupied fully and also to pay benefit that meets household's needs, rather than to support them in homes that are larger than they need.

Briefings on the welfare reforms are being arranged for all Councillors.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet member explained that the Council's allocations policy did give priority to armed forces personnel. As regards welfare benefits however, there was very little the Council or individual Councillors could do as this was a central Government directive.

7 PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES: MISUSE OF PARKING FOR THE DISABLED

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Barbara Matthews

Of the 47,001 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in 2011/12, would the Cabinet Member disclose how many were for parking in a disabled bay without a legitimate blue badge?

Answer:

Between 01/04/2011 and 31/03/2012, a total of 245 Penalty Charge Notices were issued to vehicles parked in designated Disabled Persons parking places without displaying a valid disabled persons parking badge.

8 GREATER LONDON FIRE STATION CLOSURES AND REDUCTION OF FIRE ENGINES

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoffrey Starns)

By Councillor Denis Breading

What representations do the Administration propose to make to the Commissioner of the London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority about his proposals to close 12 Fire Stations and reduce the number of fire engines at 7 other Fire Stations, reducing the fire fighting capacity in Greater London significantly?

Answer:

The draft fifth London Safety Plan set out proposals for how the London Fire Brigade will deliver its services in the current economic climate while maintain its existing response times. Part of these proposals included plans for the closure of some fire stations across London, some loss of appliances as well as a reduction in firefighter numbers. However, Havering's Fire Station located in Harold Hill, which opened in 2010, is not on the planned list for closure and Havering was not proposed to be negatively affected by these proposals, which I am sure we will all agree is to be welcomed.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet member explained that plans would allow the transfer into Havering of additional appliances should any Havering appliances be in use at instances in central London. There would be no change in response times nor any adverse effect on Havering.

9 LAND IN WILLOUGHBY DRIVE

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Mark Logan

Why have a family of gypsies been allowed to park and stay on a parcel of council owned land at Willoughby Drive Rainham RM13 7SX?

Answer:

There are two sites to the north of Willoughby Drive where temporary planning permission has been granted for the stationing of a mobile home and residential use. Neither of these sites is owned by the Council.

There is a site, known as 1A Willoughby Drive, with a mobile home on it which is subject to a Planning Enforcement Notice, served in October 2011. This land is not owned by the Council. Any action in relation to the non-compliance with the planning enforcement notice will be considered once the Council has adopted its Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan.

Further east along Willoughby Drive is an area of land containing two private plots, with a third plot being confirmed as in Council ownership. There are no families living on these plots.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member stated that it was not the role of the Council to forcibly move people from one property to another. Planning enforcement was under way at the 1A Willoughby Drive site but this was a very lengthy process.

10 COST OF HORNCHURCH LIVE EVENT

To the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment (Councillor Robert Benham)

By Councillor John Wood

Would the Cabinet Member disclose the cost of the 2012 Hornchurch Live event against the allocated budget?

Answer:

£50,000 was allocated for Hornchurch Live and a total of £49,959 was spent. The 2012 event was a pilot and there was not therefore any base budget. Many of the infrastructure costs were shared with the Havering Show.

11 WARD COUNCILLOR CONSULTATION AND BRIEFING

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Pat Murray

Will the Administration ensure that before specific decisions are made and/or it is decided to put proposals out formally for public consultation which decisions or proposals impact on particular Wards and areas of the Borough, the Ward Councillors for those areas are informally consulted and/or briefed before they are formally announced to the public?

Answer:

The Administration welcomes this suggestion put forward by Cllr Murray. I have asked the Chief Executive to remind all staff to ensure that where consultations are being carried out

that affect particular wards, the relevant ward councillor should be notified before the consultation is made public.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the Administration would always listen to the views of residents as it had done in the past. It was however necessary to consider the position in the whole of the borough rather than any one ward in particular.

12 **PROTECTING COUNCIL ASSETS**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor David Durant

The Town Hall and Mercury House are valuable Council assets.

Therefore is it wise to outsource the Town Hall and Mercury House security staff or is it more prudent to put staff loyalty and the protection of these buildings before the prospect of a small financial gain?

Also is the possible outsourcing of security staff to make savings, beyond that needed to reach departmental targets - and is the process of tendering costing more than the anticipated saving?

Answer:

No firm decision has yet been taken to outsource the Building Superintendent service.

The Facilities Management service is required to deliver its proportion of the corporate savings requirement, in this case £110,000 p.a.

The cleaning specification for back-office areas in Council buildings has already been reduced although this measure will only deliver part of the overall savings requirement. Having considered an options report for future service delivery, Corporate Management Team have agreed that the building cleaning and building superintendent services should be market tested by seeking external tenders for these services - tenders are due next month. The cost and timescale for the tender exercise are significantly reduced by use of the Government Procurement Service (GPS) comprising 8 companies who have already passed a pre-qualification process. Furthermore, the tender costs are a one-off expenditure whereas savings delivered to the service will be a recurring reduction in spend.

The valuable service provided by the individuals is recognised and in the event of the service being outsourced, these staff would be protected by TUPE regulations whereby they would transfer to the new service provider. Consequently, in such an event it is likely that the same personnel would continue to provide security to these buildings.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member emphasised that a large degree of further savings across the Council would have to be made in the coming years. The Council did not take security lightly and the good work put in by staff was valued. Savings would however have to be made.

13 **DUPLICATE PAYMENTS****To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)**

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much was paid out in duplicate payments in each of the last three years?

Answer:

Year	Identified
2009/10	£44,168.37
2010/11	£11,402.98
2011/12	Currently not available *

For 2011 – 12 we are now working to identify the duplicate payments, with an aim of completion for the end of the year, due for the following reasons:

- IT issues with both the interrogation software and the new Oracle set up.
- Implementing the new Procure to Pay system.
- Training of staff in Dec 2012 who have now commenced work on the backlog - expected completion of backlog April 2013 (this will incorporate two years of payments)

14 **COMPENSATION AWARDED TO CLAIMANTS BY THE COUNCIL AS A RESULT OF POORLY MAINTAINED HIGHWAYS IN HAVERING****To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)**

By Councillor Denis O'Flynn

What was the total amount of compensation paid by the Council to claimants for each of the past three financial years in respect of claims for personal injury and damage to vehicles caused by poorly maintained highways?

Answer:

Year	2012	2011	2010
No of claims	121	257	329
No of claims paid	1	19	39
Cost * of claims £	1,755	40,727	378,323

15 **MAKING SAVINGS**

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Will this Council will now consider all points on how to save and make money, that will benefit the Council Tax paying Residents of Havering?

Answer:

Perhaps the member has not noticed the £40 million savings programme that has been underway, can I suggest he look at the savings report of July 2010 and 2011 and to the information contained within last week's Cabinet report.

16 **REMOVAL OF HIGHWAY TREES**

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member advise why there is a reluctance for StreetCare to remove trees from the highway even when there is a long history of damage being done to the footway?

Answer:

Each possible tree removal is taken on its own merits. By working together the Area Liaison Officers and the Highway Tree team look at the tree maintenance history and footway repairs are considered prior to any work being carried out to either the footway or the tree. If a mature tree can be saved by root pruning or repairs to the footway then every effort will be made to save it.

17 **HOMELESS FAMILIES IN BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION IN HAVERING**

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Keith Darvill

How many homeless families are currently placed in bed and breakfast accommodation and how many of them have been placed in such accommodation for more than six weeks?

Answer:

The Housing Service has not routinely used bed and breakfast accommodation to house homeless families or single people since 2004, and there are currently no homeless families or single people in such accommodation.

During 2012, unfortunately eight households had to spend some time in a B&B during the refurbishment of Abercrombie House. The average stay, however, of these eight households was only three nights.

With Abercrombie House now fully refurbished and completion of the Will Perrin Court conversion anticipated in March, the Housing Service does not envisage the need to use bed and breakfast accommodation in anything other than the direst unforeseen emergencies.

18 REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY: ABANDONMENT

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Mark Logan

What are the implications for Havering of the recent national Government decision to stop the Regional Spatial Strategy for housing?

Answer:

The Secretary of State announced the revocation of regional strategies on 6th July 2010, although there have been some challenges since to this.

This change, however, did not extend to London where the Mayor of London has separate powers granted under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 to produce spatial strategies. The consequent spatial strategy, known as the London Plan, continues to provide the planning framework for London Boroughs .

Implications of the revocation of regional strategies outside of London therefore are negligible.

19 INTRODUCTION OF “LIVING WAGE”

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm whether Havering will be introducing a 'Living Wage' along with other councils and organisations?

Answer:

I assume that the member is referring to what has been described as the “London Living Wage” covering the Greater London area. This has been adopted as a minimum by some London boroughs. The current Havering position is to include consideration of this issue in the review of a Pay and Reward review strategy paper which will be presented to CMT in late spring.

20 SUNSET DRIVE CARAVAN SITE LICENCE

To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Keith Darvill

Will the Council make urgent representations to the site owner to ensure that it grits the roadways serving the Sunset Drive Mobile Home Site during freezing weather conditions?

Answer:

An email has been sent to the owner asking him to grit the road and pavements as soon as freezing weather conditions are forecast for the area to ensure that he complies with the licence condition which states that:

"Roads shall be maintained in a good condition"

21 CHAFFORD SCHOOL: SIXTH FORM

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning (Councillor Paul Rochford)

By Councillor David Durant

Has the Administration any plans to restore a 6th Form to Chafford school, Rainham - and if not why not?

Answer:

With regards to the Administration's strategy for school places - whilst the number of primary pupils in Havering is set to increase by 2,833 (15%) between 2011/12 and 2016/17. At secondary level the pattern is different with projected decline until 2016/17. Currently there are 1,297 surplus places, 7% of total places.

There are no LA plans to expand the age range at any LA secondary school, including Chafford.

22 SPENDING ON RECRUITMENT

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much has been spent on recruitment over each of the last three years in the following two categories:

- a) Adverts in newspapers/journals/trade magazines
- b) Recruitment Consultants

Answer:

a) Havering works in partnership with other London boroughs as part of the London Boroughs recruitment partnership to provide recruitment advertising in newspapers, journals and trade magazines at very competitive rates.

All of Havering's recruitment is posted on the Council website at nil cost. In circumstances where the role may be difficult to recruit or we have a statutory obligation to advertise in an external publication, then spend is approved.

The total spend on adverts in newspapers, journals and trade magazine over the last three years was £128,292.

b) Recruitment consultants are only used in Havering to recruit to senior roles i.e. Head of Service and above. Where possible, internal resources are used to facilitate a recruitment exercise. The only roles at Head of Service and above recruited to in the last three years were:

Head of Children and Young People - facilitated internally, no spend on recruitment consultants

Interim Director of Adult Social Care - cost of recruitment consultants: £27,000

Head of Strategic HR and OD - cost of recruitment consultants: £20,217

Director of Social Care and Learning: cost of recruitment consultants: £22,404

23 QUEENS HOSPITAL: HYGIENE

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Mark Logan

Has the Queens hospital been meeting the required NHS hygiene standards?

Answer:

BHRUT have a formal policy for infection control and with that they have a suite of documents which relate to multiple different areas of infection prevention. BHRUT are updating their infection prevention control strategy and the commissioning organisation is reviewing this on Monday.

There is a comprehensive training programme for infection control and with that they have a training needs analysis of all staff and to ensure that the training programme is effective and the outcomes are improving they are running an audit programme. They have recently implemented the National Guidance for management of the Norovirus.

24 ACADEMIES AND FREE SCHOOLS: SEN ADMISSIONS

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning (Councillor Paul Rochford)

By Councillor Gillian Ford

There has recently been national concern over Academy and Free schools discriminating against SEN admissions. Would the Cabinet Member advise this Council if this has become an issue in Havering?

Answer:

No, this is not currently an issue; however it is something that we do keep under permanent review, so that we could intervene if necessary.

25 ACCESS TO DVLA DATABASE

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Nic Dodin

Would the Cabinet Member confirm whether this Council has been denied access to the DVLA database at any time over the past four years?

Answer:

No

26 BINS FOR DOG WASTE

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member consider installing suitable bins which can be used for dog waste close to areas of green open space in the borough?

Answer:

Residents can utilise the existing street litter bins for dog waste so there is no need for installing additional bins on the highway.

27 SALE OF FORMER GARAGE SITES

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ron Ower

Would the Cabinet Member reveal how much has been raised from the sale of former housing garage sites since 2010?

Answer:

The overall capital receipt from the sale of former housing garage sites since 1st January 2010 is £5,525,777.

The receipts are supporting the Council's overall capital priorities, including £2,088,010 provided as grant for housing associations to build new affordable homes for local people on the garage sites. This investment has in turn levered in £7,260,000 Homes and Communities Agency grant for housing associations to develop on further garages sites. The combined Council and HCA grants have funded a total of 135 new affordable homes on council garage sites since 2010, consisting of 113 houses, 6 bungalows and 16 flats.

Out of the overall 135 new homes, 84 have been completed to date with the remaining 51 currently under construction.

28 PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor John Mylod

It was recently reported that 337 councils have set up partnerships between each other to help drive down costs. Would the Leader set out:

- a) How many partnerships have we with other local Councils and which ones?
- b) Details of any savings achieved through these partnerships?
- c) Have we an indication whether they are successful?

Answer:

Due to the length of the answer I will provide a written to the Member.

29 STAFF SICKNESS

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Gillian Ford

Would the Leader set out the average levels of staff sickness over each of the last three years and the cost to the authority respectively?

Answer:

Financial Year		£ sickness cost
09/10	(8.90 average days per person)	£2,120,859.19
10/11	(7.11 average days per person)	£1,668,532.38
11/12	(8.16 average days per person)	£1,949,618.38

30 **AGENCY STAFF****To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)**

By Councillor Linda Hawthorn

Would the Cabinet Member set out how much has been spent on agency staff in each of the last two years broken down by division?

Answer:

Division	Total Charge April 2010 - March 2011
Culture and Community	£5,807,846
Finance and Commerce	£4,781,007
Legal and Democratic Services	£644,354
Social Care and Learning	£4,697,116
Grand Total	£15,930,315

Division	Total Charge April 2011 - March 2012
Culture and Community	£6,205,593
Finance and Commerce	£3,431,983
Legal and Democratic Services	£546,113
Social Care and Learning	£4,153,274
Grand Total	£14,336,962

<i>DIVISION NUMBER:</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Mayor [Cllr. Lynden Thorpe]	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
The Deputy Mayor [Cllr. Eric Munday]	O	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
<u>CONSERVATIVE GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Michael White	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Michael Armstrong	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Robert Benham	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Becky Bennett	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Sandra Binion	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Jeff Brace	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Wendy Brice-Thompson	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Andrew Curtin	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Osman Dervish	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Ted Eden	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Roger Evans	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Georgina Galpin	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Peter Gardner	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Lesley Kelly	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Steven Kelly	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Pam Light	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Robby Misir	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Barry Oddy	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Frederick Osborne	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Gary Pain	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Roger Ramsey	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Paul Rochford	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Geoffrey Starns	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Billy Taylor	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Barry Tebbutt	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Frederick Thompson	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Linda Trew	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Melvin Wallace	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Keith Wells	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr. Damian White	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓
<u>RESIDENTS' GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Clarence Barrett	X	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
Cllr. June Alexander	X	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
Cllr. Nic Dodin	X	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
Cllr. Brian Eagling	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Gillian Ford	X	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
Cllr. Linda Hawthorn	X	✓	✓	X	O	O	X
Cllr. Barbara Matthews	X	✓	O	O	O	O	X
Cllr. Ray Morgon	X	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
Cllr. John Mylod	O	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
Cllr. Ron Ower	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Linda Van den Hende	X	✓	✓	O	X	X	X
Cllr. John Wood	X	✓	✓	O	O	O	X
<u>LABOUR GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Keith Darvill	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Denis Breathing	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Paul McGeary	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Pat Murray	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Denis O'Flynn	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
<u>INDEPENDENT LOCAL RESIDENTS' GROUP</u>							
Cllr. Jeffery Tucker	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. Michael Deon Burton	A	A	✓	X	✓	X	X
Cllr. David Durant	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	O
Cllr. Mark Logan	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	O
One vacancy							
TOTALS							
✓ = YES	30	20	19	31	11	31	31
X = NO	19	31	32	12	32	12	19
O = ABSTAIN/NO VOTE	3	1	2	10	10	10	3
ID = DECLARATION OF INTEREST/NO VOTE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A = ABSENT FROM MEETING	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	53	53	53	53	53	53	53

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