

London Borough of Havering ***COUNCIL MEETING***

**7.30pm WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 2006
AT HAVERING TOWN HALL
MAIN ROAD, ROMFORD**

Members of the Council of the London Borough of Havering are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council at the time and place indicated for the transaction of the following business



Chief Executive

For information about the meeting please contact:

Ian Buckmaster (01708) 432431

ian.buckmaster@haverling.gov.uk

NOTES ABOUT THE MEETING

1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Council is committed to protecting the health and safety of everyone who attends its meetings.

At the beginning of the meeting, there will be an announcement about what you should do if there is an emergency during its course. For your own safety and that of others at the meeting, please comply with any instructions given to you about evacuation of the building, or any other safety related matters.

2. MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Although mobile phones, pagers and other such devices are an essential part of many people's lives, their use during a meeting of the Council can be disruptive and a nuisance. Everyone attending is asked therefore to ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off completely.

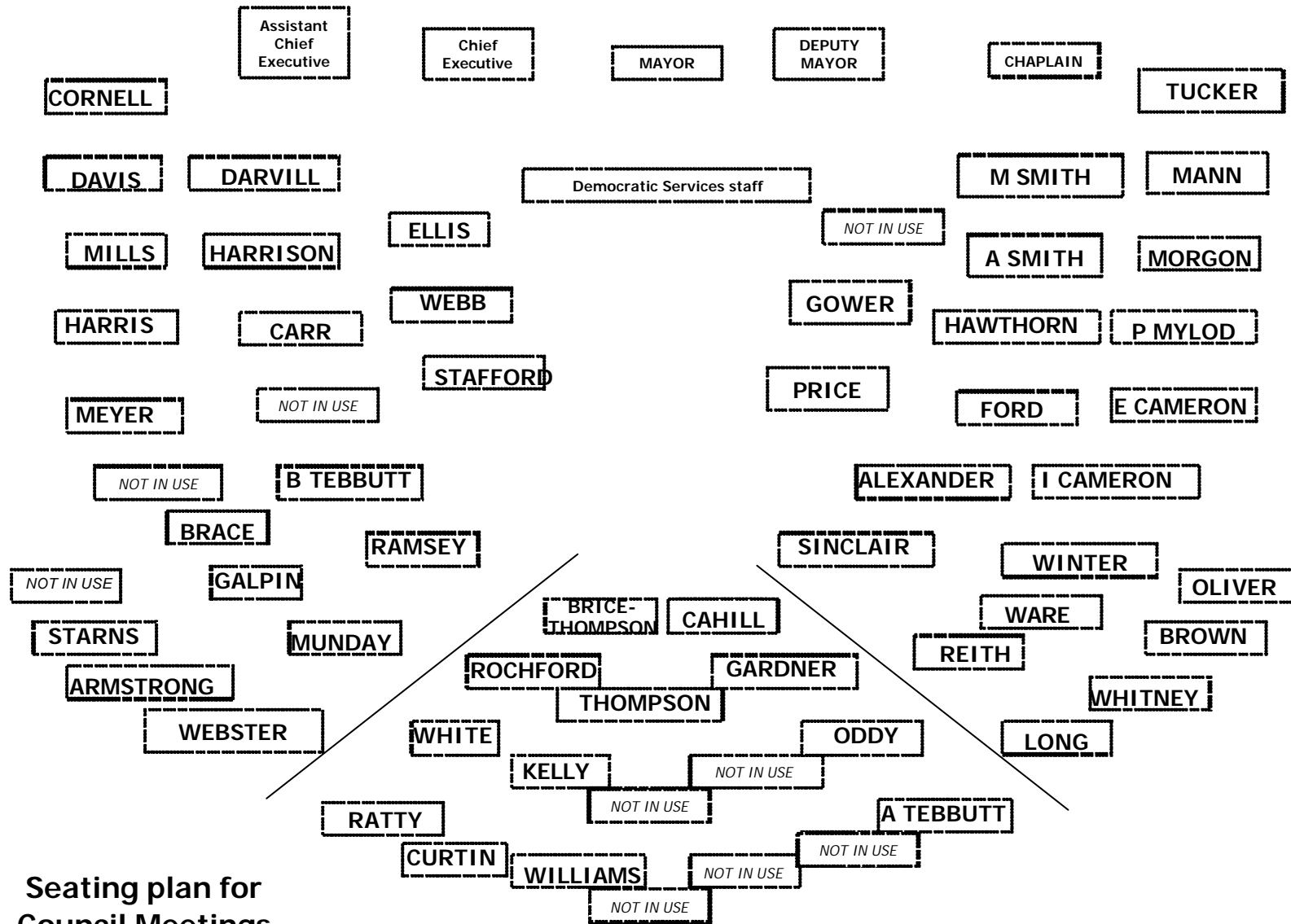
3. CONDUCT AT THE MEETING

Although members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Council, they have no right to speak at them. Seating for the public is, however, limited and the Council cannot guarantee that everyone who wants to be present in the public areas of the Council Chamber can be accommodated. When it is known in advance that there is likely to be particular public interest in an item the Council will endeavour to provide an overspill room in which, by use of television links, members of the public will be able to see and hear most of the proceedings.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE MAYOR MAY REQUIRE ANYONE WHO ACTS IN A DISRUPTIVE MANNER TO LEAVE THE MEETING AND THAT THE MEETING MAY BE ADJOURNED IF NECESSARY WHILE THAT IS ARRANGED.

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If you need to leave the meeting before its end, please remember that others present have the right to listen to the proceedings without disruption. Please leave quietly and do not engage others in conversation until you have left the Council Chamber.



Seating plan for Council Meetings

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Commencement of Meeting

As an aid to Members, a single ring of the division bell will sound 5 minutes before the meeting is due to begin, followed by a double ring at 2 minutes before, at which time Members are asked please to take their seats for the commencement of the meeting.

Control of microphones

Members are reminded that, at Council meetings, the microphones are controlled centrally under the direction of the Mayor. Consequently, Members do not need to press the **MIC ON** button in order to speak, nor to turn off the microphone when they have finished.

The Mayor would find it helpful, however if Members would press the **MIC ON** button to indicate that they wish:

- to speak in the course of debate on any motion (including movers and seconders)
- to rise to a point of order, of information or in personal explanation

Voting

When the Mayor calls a division, the division bell will sound briefly. In order to ensure that votes are recorded correctly, Members are asked to wait until the division bell has finished ringing before pressing the appropriate voting button.

Members are, of course, free to change their vote as they choose at any time until the Mayor directs that the votes be counted. Once a count has been called, however, no further change is possible. In the event that a Member's vote appears not to have been recorded, the clerks should be informed immediately, before the result is declared, so that account can be taken of the vote.

AGENDA

1 **PRAYERS**

2 To receive apologies for absence (if any)

3 **MINUTES**

To sign as a true record the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 1 March 2006

4 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting.

Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

5 **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

6 **PETITIONS**

Councillors Wilf Mills and Jeff Stafford have both given notice of their intention to present petitions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 24

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7 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

To consider reports and recommendations concerning:

- A Revised Contract Procedure Rules**
- B Awards for eminent service to the Borough (to follow)***
- C Amendments to the Constitution (to follow, if any)***
- D Polling Station Review (to follow, if any)***
- E Area Committees (to follow, if any)***

** Reports subject to consideration by the Committee at its meeting on 21 March 2006. The Mayor has agreed that these will be taken as urgent items.*

Note: Pursuant to Rule 13.6, any amendment to any of the reports marked * may be moved at any time prior to the conclusion of the debate on them.

8 DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

To consider the report of the Chief Executive concerning dates of Council meetings in 2006/07 and, provisionally, for the balance of 2007

9 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME, 2006/07

To consider the report of the Chief Executive concerning the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2006/07 (to follow)

Note: Pursuant to Rule 13.6, any amendment to this report may be moved at any time prior to the conclusion of the debate on it.

10 ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

- A Adult Services & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
- B Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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- C Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
- D Culture & Regeneration Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
- E Environment & Scrutiny Committee**
- F Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Note: Pursuant to Rules 13.9(i)(a) and 13.9(ii), the last date for receipt of notice of any amendment to any of these reports will be Monday 27 March 2006

11 MEMBER CHAMPIONS: ANNUAL REPORTS

To receive the Chief Executive's Report concerning the Annual Reports of Member Champions

Note: Pursuant to Rules 13.9(i)(a) and 13.9(ii), the last date for receipt of notice of any amendment to this report will be Monday 27 March 2006

12 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

MOTIONS FOR DEBATE

13 RIGHT OF MEMBERS TO DETERMINE COUNCIL POLICY

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council notes with regret the difficult position in which the Mayor was placed at the last Council meeting, where he was given advice to exclude a motion submitted jointly in the names of the Labour and Residents' groups relating to elderly care homes. This Council does not accept that the rights of members to debate an issue of real concern to an important section of our community should be fettered by advice that this "may" give rise to further Judicial Review applications.

Council acknowledges that the Cabinet, when they made the decision to privatise and close the remaining elderly care homes in the borough in July 2005 were advised at their meeting that this decision would be subject to Judicial Review. They were not advised that this prevented them making a decision. The fact that a motion seeking to address some of the concerns which gave rise to Judicial Review is removed from the Council agenda suggests either that the original decision was unsound or that political decisions are being made on behalf of the Council as to what is and is not acceptable for debate at Council meetings in the light of the views of the administration.

Accordingly this Council agrees that an appropriate motion should be debated at this meeting.

13A Amendment by the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council notes the difficult position in which the Mayor was placed at the last Council meeting, and agrees with the legal advice given to him by the Monitoring Officer to exclude a motion.

14 ELDERLY CARE HOMES

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council notes with concern that the recent successful application for Judicial Review once again casts doubt on the future direction of provision of elderly care homes in Havering. It further notes that this development arises from the decision of the Administration to close homes and transfer remaining homes to the private sector.

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Council regrets the fact that after nearly four years and much delay, the administration chose to move away from their commitment to keep existing homes open and they should recognise the total antipathy of all concerned to privatisation of care homes and the vulnerable people living in them.

This Council therefore calls upon the Administration to reconsider its decision to sell off and close all our homes and to find a solution within a framework of partnership with other public service providers, wherein the Council can retain an influence in future home provision. In doing so the Council would expect regard to be had to the report to Cabinet which showed that for the Council to fund the building of new homes would cost £10 millions, with an expected capital receipt of £12 millions and that does not include any financial contribution which may be attracted from other partners.

In order to facilitate as far as possible a solution acceptable to all interested parties a monitoring group is established, including representatives of all political groups, the residents and relatives of our care homes and the action group against home closures, to oversee the possible options that achieve this objective.

14A Amendment by the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council notes the positive effect of the current policy of the Council, which provided a way forward after years of inactivity and aims to provide excellent facilities for our elderly people.

15 RESPECT CAMPAIGN

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council welcomes the government's £50,000 additional funding for a Respect Campaign in Romford. It notes the actions being taken by the Community Safety Partnership during January to March to give effect to the campaign. The Council recognises that this is a matter for the whole community and agrees to utilise the opportunity which this initiative brings to launch a borough wide Respect campaign involving the whole Council and the wider community.

15A Amendment by the Administration

Amend to read:

This Council welcomes the Borough wide respect campaign launch by the Leader last year and the Government £50,000 grant to fund the expansion to Romford Town

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Centre. It notes the good work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership, Police, and other Partners.

16 **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council believes that it is important that the Standards Committee of the Council is seen to be impartial and not open to accusations of political bias. It therefore agrees that the independent membership of the Committee should be strengthened and should represent a majority of the voting membership of the Committee.

17 **RETIRING MEMBERS**

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council notes that there are several senior and long-serving members of the Council who will not be seeking re-election in the forthcoming Council elections. In particular it is noted that this is the last Council meeting of the Deputy Leaders of both the Labour and Residents' groups. This Council notes with gratitude the many years of loyal and valuable service contributed by the several members who will be retiring and offers the best wishes of this Council for a long and healthy retirement.

18 **PUBLICITY TO IMPROVE BENEFITS' TAKE UP**

Motion on behalf of the Residents' Group

As there are residents throughout the Borough that are unaware that they are eligible for benefits and/or reduced Council Tax rates, this Council will actively promote through all channels available, including the Living Magazine, the Website, Housing Staff, Home Carers etc, the contact details of where individuals can seek help and advice.

18A Amendment by the Administration

After the word "will" and before the word "actively" **insert** the words "continue to" and at the end of the motion **delete** the full stop **and add** the following "and will step up still further its successful Benefits Take Up Campaign."

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Note: the motion would then read:

As there are residents throughout the Borough that are unaware that they are eligible for benefits and/or reduced Council Tax rates, this Council will continue to actively promote through all channels available, including the Living Magazine, the Website, Housing Staff, Home Carers etc, the contact details of where individuals can seek help and advice and will step up still further its successful Benefits Take Up Campaign.

19 **NEW AREA COMMITTEES: ST ANDREWS AND HACTON WARDS, HORNCHURCH**

Motion on behalf of the Residents' Group

Note: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1, this motion has been signed by the following, comprising at least 25 per cent of the Council's Membership:

Councillors Barbara Reith, Ivor Cameron, Eileen Cameron, Patricia Mylod, Len Long, Nigel Meyer, Linda Hawthorn, Gillian Ford, June Alexander, Owen Ware, Malvin Brown, Louise Sinclair, Mike Winter, Chris Oliver, Ray Morgon, Martin Smith and Alex Smith.

This Council recognises the historical and well established community ties between St Andrews and Hacton Wards, who make up the centre of Hornchurch, and therefore agrees:

- 1 That the decision of Council of 7 December 2005 to establish nine new Area Committees shall be rescinded insofar as it relates to the Area Committees covering the Elm Park, Hacton, Hylands and St Andrews Wards;
- 2 That a Hornchurch Area Committee be established instead, comprising the St Andrews and Hacton Wards, as unanimously agreed at the Area Meeting held on 24 January 2006; and
- 3 That in consequence, an Elm Park and Hylands Area Committee be established, comprising the Elm Park and Hylands Wards.

20 **PROPOSED ARTIFICIAL TURF PITCH AT BRITTONS PARK - CONSULTING THE PUBLIC**

Motion on behalf of the Residents' Group

Council, 29 March 2006 - Agenda

This Council will temporarily delay a decision on siting an ATP at Brittons Park pending a speedy but full public consultation exercise with residents neighbouring the park, similar to that carried out in Hornchurch when Harrow Lodge Park was being considered.

20A Amendment by the Administration

Add new paragraph:

This consultation will be on the understanding that the borough's draft Sports Strategy identifies the need for two additional Artificial Turf pitches, such as that referred to in the motion, by 2016. It will also be in the context of the Council being committed to excellent borough-wide community sport provision, because we recognise that this is valuable and enjoyable in its own right, but also because it is important to the future of Havering in terms of our economy, educational attainment, public health, community safety and community cohesion.

Note: the motion would then read:

This Council will temporarily delay a decision on siting an ATP at Brittons Park pending a speedy but full public consultation exercise with residents neighbouring the park, similar to that carried out in Hornchurch when Harrow Lodge Park was being considered.

This consultation will be on the understanding that the borough's draft Sports Strategy identifies the need for two additional Artificial Turf pitches, such as that referred to in the motion, by 2016. It will also be in the context of the Council being committed to excellent borough-wide community sport provision, because we recognise that this is valuable and enjoyable in its own right, but also because it is important to the future of Havering in terms of our economy, educational attainment, public health, community safety and community cohesion.



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING
Havering Town Hall, Romford
1 March 2006 (7.30 p.m. – 9.25p.m.)**

Present: The Mayor (Councillor John Mylod) in the Chair.

Councillors June Alexander, Mike Armstrong, Jeffrey Brace, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Malvin Brown, Edward Cahill, Eileen Cameron, Ivor Cameron, Graham Carr, Yve Cornell, Andrew Curtin, Keith Darvill, Jan Davis, Tony Ellis, Gillian Ford, Georgina Galpin, Peter Gardner, Jean Gower, Ray Harris, Bill Harrison, Linda Hawthorn, Steven Kelly, Len Long, Andrew Mann, Nigel Meyer, Wilf Mills, Raymond Morgon, Eric Munday, Pat Mylod, Chris Oliver, Barry Oddy, Denis O'Flynn, Graham Price, Roger Ramsey, Natasha Ratty, Barbara Reith, Paul Rochford, Louise Sinclair, Alex Smith, Martin Smith, Geoffrey Starns, Jeff Stafford, Alby Tebbutt, Barry Tebbutt, Frederick Thompson, Jeffrey Tucker, Owen Ware, Harry Webb, Joseph Webster, Michael White, Reg Whitney, Daryl Williams and Mike Winter.

Three guests, ten members of public and representatives of the press also attended.

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

Councillor Barbara Reith expressed sympathy on behalf of fellow members to the Deputy Mayoress, Mrs O'Flynn, wife of the deputy Mayor who had recently suffered a serious accident, and wished her a speedy recovery to good health.

68 MINUTES (Agenda Item 3)

It was **RESOLVED** –

**That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8
February 2006 be signed as a true record.**

69 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 4)

There were no Mayor's announcements.

There were no announcements by the Leader of the Council.

70 CORPORATE PLANNING AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY – 2006/07 BUDGET

The Council considered the report and recommendations of the Cabinet meeting held on 15 February 2006 together with the final version of Appendix D, the Council Tax statement.

The Administration's proposals as set out in the Cabinet's report were proposed and seconded, and statements were made on behalf of the Opposition and Labour Groups.

The Administration's proposals contained in the recommendation of Cabinet were **CARRIED** by 53 votes to 1 and it was accordingly **RESOLVED**

1. **That the following as submitted in the report to Cabinet be approved:**
 - a) **The revenue estimates for 2006/2007.**
 - b) **The capital programme for 2006/2007.**
2. **That it be noted that under delegation the Chief Finance Officer has calculated the amount of 87,032 (called T in the regulations) as its Council Tax base for the year 2006/2007 in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
3. **That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2006/2007 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:**

- a) **466,112,621** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act.
- b) **323,199,302** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act.
- c) **142,913,319** being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement of the year.

This figure is R in the regulations.

- d) **47,927,465** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant or additional grant (increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its collection fund to its general fund in accordance with Section 97 (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) or (reduced by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its general fund to its collection fund in accordance with Section 97(4) of the local Government Finance Act 1988) and (increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its collection fund to its general fund pursuant to the directions under Section 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) or (reduced by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its general fund to its collection fund pursuant to the directions under Section 98(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988)

and the Local Authorities (Alteration of Requisite Calculations) (England) Regulations 1999.

This figure is P in the regulations.

- e) **94,985,854** being the amount at 3(c) above less the amount at 3(d) above, which is then divided by the amount at 2 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

f)

Valuation Bands London Borough of Havering	
	£ p
A	727.59
B	848.86
C	970.13
D	1,091.39
E	1,333.92
F	1,576.45
G	1,818.98
H	2,182.78

being the amount given by multiplying the amount at 3(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 regulations, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in differing valuation bands.

4. That it be noted for the year 2006/07 the major precepting authority (the GLA) has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands	Greater London Authority
	£ p
A	192.41
B	224.47
C	256.54
D	288.61
E	352.75
F	416.88
G	481.02
H	577.22

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(f) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2006/07 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands	£ p
A	920.00
B	1,073.33
C	1,226.67
D	1,380.00
E	1,686.67
F	1,993.33
G	2,300.00
H	2,760.00

6. That any Council Tax payer who is liable to pay an amount of Council Tax to the Authority in respect to the year ending on 31st March 2007, who is served with a demand notice under Regulation 20(2) of The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 and who makes payment to the Authority of the full balance of the estimated amount shown on that demand by 1st April 2006, may deduct a sum equivalent to 1.5% of and from the estimated amount and such reduced amount shall be accepted in full settlement of that estimated amount.
7. That it be noted that Cabinet had noted that a Housing Revenue Account standstill budget would leave a deficit of £1.651 million, and agreed the recommended pressures and efficiency savings set out in Section 10 and Tables 4 and 5 of the report to balance the budget and leave a working balance currently estimated at £1.9 million.

8. That the Housing Revenue Account for 2006/07 as set out in Column E, Table 3 of the budget report to Cabinet.
9. That in respect of Treasury Management and the Prudential Code, as per the Cabinet Report of the 15th February, Council:
 - I. Re-affirms the Treasury Policy Statement set out in Section 2 of Appendix L.
 - II. Approves the Treasury Management Strategy set out in Section 3 of Appendix L together with the Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management and External Debt.
 - III. Approves the Annual Investment Strategy set out in Section 4 of Appendix L.
 - IV. Notes the Treasury Management budget for 2006/07 set out in Section 6 of Appendix L), which has been included in the overall Council budget.
 - V. Approves the prudential indicators for capital finance set out in Section 7 of Appendix L) as required under the Regulations.
10. That the Corporate Plan as per the Cabinet Report of the 15th February be approved and the Chief Executive be authorised to make any necessary changes and additions prior to its publication.

(Note – in respect of minute 70 all Members voted in favour with the exception of Councillor Jeffery Tucker who voted against)

71 COUNCILLORS LOUISE SINCLAIR AND WILF MILLS

The Mayor allowed the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Denis O'Flynn to make a statement paying tribute to these two long standing Members who, over the years had paid a huge part in budget preparation processes. For them this would be their last budget-setting meetings. Other Members associated themselves with the comments and noted that the contribution of all Members who, for whatever reason, would not sit on the new Council would be recognised appropriately in due course.



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

7A

1 FEBRUARY 2006

REPORT TO COUNCIL

REVISION OF CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) have not been substantially revised since the initial drafting of the Constitution in 2002. The opportunity has now been taken therefore to incorporate comments from users of the current CPR and substantially re-order the CPR into a more logical and accessible format, as well as detailed rewording. The new CPR incorporate provisions for new and developing forms of procurement, and alterations in the various financial limits both to balance the cost of procurement with the value of the goods or services being procured and to accord with recently revised European procurement financial limits. Some changes in responsibilities were also proposed.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO THE COUNCIL THAT:

- 1 The revised Contract Procedure Rules, as appended to the report submitted to the Committee, be adopted (*see note below*)
- 2 Part 3, section 2.2, paragraph 10 of the Constitution be amended to read:
"To approve staff commencing a tendering process for all contracts between £144,000 and £5,000,000"
- 3 Part 3, Section 2.2, paragraph 12 of the Constitution be amended by deleting "£154,000" in line 3 and substituting it with "£144,000"
- 4 Part 3, Section 3.3.4, paragraph 1 of the Constitution be amended by deleting "£154,000" in line 1 and substituting it with "£144,000"
- 5 Part 3, Section 3.3.4, paragraph 2 of the Constitution be amended by deleting "£154,000" in line 1 and substituting it with "£144,000"
- 6 Part 3, Section 3.3.4, paragraph 3 of the Constitution be amended by deleting "£50,000" in sub-paragraph (ii) and substituting it with "£100,000"
- 7 Part 3, Section 3.4.4, paragraph 1 of the Constitution be amended by deleting "£154,000" in line 1 and substituting it with "£144,000"

Council, 29 March 2006

- 8 Part 3, Section 3.4.4, paragraph 2 of the Constitution be amended by deleting “£154,000” in line 1 and substituting it with “£144,000”
- 9 Part 3, Section 3.4.4, paragraph 3 of the Constitution be amended by deleting “£50,000” in sub-paragraph (ii) and substituting it with “£100,000”

NOTE: In the interests of economy, the full revised Contract Procedure Rules have not been re-printed to accompany this report but a copy can be made available to any Member on request.



COUNCIL
29 MARCH 2006

8

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

In accordance with the Constitution, meetings of the Council are fixed by the Council itself.

It has been the practice that dates for the whole of the Municipal Year are agreed each municipal year with dates for the balance of the following calendar year being agreed on a provisional basis for the purposes of the Council Diary.

It is proposed that the pattern of meetings for the coming year continues to follow past practice, which would mean dates of the Council would be as follows (all Wednesdays) –

	2006 (already shown in the current diary as provisional)
19	July
18	October
6	December
	2007
7	February
28	February (Council tax Setting)
21	March
23	May (Annual Meeting)
25	July (provisional)
17	October (provisional)
5	December (provisional)

These dates are subject to any change that may subsequently be agreed following the Council elections in May.

The meetings shall begin at the time agreed by the Council or by the Mayor, or at 7.30pm if no other time is agreed.

Council, 23 March 2005

There are no identified, direct **financial, legal, Human Resources or equalities implications and risks** associated with selection of these dates.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council fixes the date of its meetings for the Municipal Year 2006/07 and, on a provisional basis, the balance of 2007.

Staff Contact: Ian Buckmaster, Manager of Committee and
Overview & Scrutiny Support
01708 432431

STEPHEN EVANS
Chief Executive

Background Papers

None.



COUNCIL

23 MARCH 2005

9

This report is submitted with the agreement of the Mayor as an urgent matter, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME, 2006/07

SUMMARY

The Council is obliged to make a scheme annually before the first of April each year. This report presents for approval a Members' Allowance Scheme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Council agree the existing Scheme set out in the Constitution as the new scheme effective for the year commencing from 1 April 2006 and, if agreed, that the Council revoke the existing Scheme.
2. That the Council considers any amendments to the Scheme at its meeting in May.
3. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to amend the date of the scheme to commence from 1 April 2006 in accordance with this recommendation.

REPORT DETAIL

1. The Council agreed the existing Scheme of Allowances on 23 March 2005. It is a requirement under Section 6 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 1991 that a new scheme is put in place by 1 April each year. The existing scheme is revoked as part of this process.

Council, 29 March 2006

2. The Council is required to establish a new scheme to take effect from 1 April 2006. Given the proximity of the Council elections, and following discussions with the Group Leaders, it is being recommended that the existing scheme should be adopted as the new scheme for the year commencing 1 April 2006.
3. Amendments may be made to the scheme at any time, so it is further recommended that a report is considered by Council at its May meeting to agree any changes. This will include changes relating to the allowances of Chairmen of Area Committees.
4. The effect of this would be that there would be no increase in the existing allowances until further amendments, if any, were agreed by Council.

Financial Implications and Risks:

The 2006/7 budget assumes no inflation on Special Responsibility Allowances. Actual expenditure will depend on the allocation of responsibilities at any point in time with any expenditure over/under the budget being managed as part of the overall budget.

Legal Implications and Risks:

Section 6 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 1991 requires a Scheme to be made prior to the 1st April in the year the Regulations came into effect and subsequent years. A year is defined as a twelve month period from 1st April.

A Scheme may be revoked only with effect from the beginning of a year provided a new Scheme is made for the period beginning with the date of revocation.

A Scheme may be amended at any time.

Human Resource Implications and Risks:

None arising directly.

Staff Contact: Rita Greenwood **Title:** Group Director
Finance & Commercial

Telephone: 01708 432218

STEPHEN EVANS
Chief Executive

Background Papers

"Making Allowances", a new report by the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London – August 2001.

Council, 29 March 2006

“The Remuneration of Councillors in London: 2003 Review.”



CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10B

REPORT TO COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is the fourth annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ended May 2006.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council accept the Annual Report.

REPORT DETAIL

During the year under review, the Committee has met on six occasions and dealt with the following issues:

1. NAME OF COMMITTEE AND REPORTING MECHANISMS

During the year under review, the Committee undertook a great deal of work scrutinising issues arising from the implementation of the Children's Act 2004. These matters are discussed later in this report but one change of particular relevance to the Committee was the establishment during the year of the Children's Social Services Directorate. The linking, as required under the Children's Act, of education with children's social services necessitated a change in the Committee's terms of reference in order that both these areas could be scrutinised. It was also therefore decided to change the name of the Committee during the year to Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. BUDGET SCRUTINY

In January, the Committee received a detailed presentation on the 2006/07 budget and associated matters. While the Committee declined to make any formal comments to Cabinet on the budget proposals, a number of issues were discussed during the presentation. These included the comparatively high increase in the national grant to schools relative to other services (an indication that schools remain the Council's number one priority) and changes to teachers' pay and conditions. Other issues raised included cross-borough working on foster carer initiatives and changes to the arrangements for specific education grants.

3. TOPIC GROUP SCRUTINY REVIEWS

3.1 Primary Provision

3.1.1 This Group consisted of the following Councillors, some of whom have since left the Committee: Councillors Owen Ware (Chairman) Graham Price, Louise Sinclair (replaced by Chris Oliver) and Graham Carr (replaced by Alby Tebbutt). There were supported by Robert Binion (Senior Schools Parent/Governor representative) Richard Britton (Special Schools Parent/Governor representative) Keith Passingham (NASUWT representative) Peter Townrow (Head Teachers representative) and the Reverend Stephen Waine (Church of England representative).

3.1.2 The Group met on three occasions during the year under review. The Group was requested by Cabinet to reform in order to give further consideration to some impacts of its proposals for considering changes in the provision of primary education, specifically how other Councils approach the primary provision area, the impact of the Freedom of Information Act and how the respective roles of Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the process can be reconciled.

3.1.3 The Group's subsequent report was adopted by the Committee in September and considered by Cabinet in January at which point it was decided to take no further action in this matter.

3.2 Every Child Matters Working Party (joint Group with Adult Services and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

3.2.1 Both the Children's and Adult Services and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees felt that the establishment of a Children's Trust in Havering was of sufficient importance to merit a dedicated joint working party to scrutinise these matters. The Group was chaired by Councillor Yve Cornell and comprised Councillors Wendy Brice-Thompson, Keith Darvill and Owen Ware. Other meetings were attended by the relevant Cabinet Members, Councillors Steven Kelly and Geoff Starns and by Councillor Gillian Ford.

3.2.2 The Group met on four occasions during the period of review. Proposals for the Trust were considered in detail with the assistance of senior Children's Services officers. Specific areas scrutinised included the structure of the Trust board,

accountability, governance issues and the respective roles of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member.

3.2.3 The Group met throughout the period of preparation for the launch of the Trust. It was decided that the Group should not meet after December 2005 as the Children's Trust itself would commence operations shortly after this and new overview and scrutiny arrangements would be in operation from this point.

4. COMPLETED GIRL/BOY ATTAINMENT DIFFERENCES TOPIC GROUP

4.1 The scope of the topic Group was to raise standards in boys' achievement in relation to girls and to encourage the maximum achievement for all. In their pursuit of information, Members of the Group visited a number of schools across the Borough to meet staff and pupils and undertook a survey relating to gender differences in attainment. A member also attended a conference at Ardleigh Green entitled "Raising the Attainment of Boys in English".

4.2 The Committee received the Groups Report at its meeting on 7 April 2005 and recommended that it be referred to Cabinet, which took place on 28 April 2005 and Cabinet accepted the recommendations.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S ACT 2004

4.1 In addition to the Working Party outlined above, the Committee received updates throughout the year on progress towards implementation of the Act's proposals. A wide variety of issues were discussed at the various meetings including financial implications of the Act's proposals, the multi-agency working that would be required and issues relating to looked after children. Members also considered the consultation programme undertaken in relation to the various proposals and noted the extensive work being undertaken by officers in order to implement the proposals to schedule.

6. OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

6.1 Special Educational Needs – The Committee considered in June and September a proposal to reduce the use of Statements when dealing with students with special educational needs. Members considered the proposals in detail, and supported the plans in principle whilst expressing reservations about some areas of the detail. The Committee asked for a further report to be given during 2006 to allow the consideration of future funding options for this area.

6.2 Primary Strategy – The Committee in June, noted the Government's "Excellence and Enjoyment" strategy for primary education and the different stages Havering schools had reached in extending this support across all foundation subjects.

6.3 Adult Education Inspection – The Committee discussed the results of a Quality Monitoring Inspection of the Council's Adult Education Services. It was noted that the service had made significant progress since its full inspection in late 2003 despite ongoing concerns over its future funding.

6.4 Havering Children's Centre Strategy – The Committee undertook pre-decision scrutiny of this matter prior to its presentation to Cabinet. The timescales for consultation and implementation were noted and the Committee declined to make any specific comments on this subject to Cabinet.

6.5 Extended Schools – At its September meeting, the Committee received a report on Extended Schools in the borough. It was noted that some Havering schools already offered facilities such as breakfast clubs and after school care. Further reports on this programme would be submitted to the Committee in the future.

6.6 "Youth Matters" Green Paper – The Committee considered in September a report setting out the main implications of this initiative. The Committee noted the likely impact on Havering and commented that it was important that consultation is undertaken with the voluntary and community sectors as they are major local providers of youth facilities and activities.

6.7 Key Stage Attainment 2005 – The Committee received reports in September and January on Havering schools' results at key stages 1-4 and commended the very real achievements of Havering schools in achieving such high results.

6.8 Estate Asset Management – At its January meeting, the committee noted a report on schools' estate and asset development. The Committee noted that a three year programme of works had been set for each school, taking into account the level of capital that both the Council and the school was able to provide.

6.9 Permanently Excluded Pupils – In January, the Committee received a report on the level of exclusions in Havering schools and measures taken to provide fresh starts for excluded pupils. The Committee discussed issues around exclusions that occurred in years 6 or 11 or at key stage 3 and resolved that a further report on these issues should be presented to it in due course.

6.10 Corporate Plan 2006/07 – Members were requested by Corporate Policy and Projects officers to consider comments on the Council's draft corporate plan. Members felt that the plan should give top priority to a consideration of racism before it became a problem for Havering and also that the plan should give more encouragement to walking and cycling as alternatives to travelling by car.



**CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

10C

**REPORT TO COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06**

SUMMARY

This report is the fourth annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ended May 2006.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council accept the Annual Report.

REPORT DETAIL

During the year under review, we have met as a Committee on 4 occasions and dealt with the following issues:

1. BUDGETARY ISSUES

The Committee met in January to scrutinise the progress made by the Council with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and its effect on the 2006/07 budget. The Committee reviewed in detail a number of pressures and savings options provided by officers and the Lead Member but decided not to make any formal comments on these matters to Cabinet. Further details of the Committee's work on the MTFS are given later in this report.

2. SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUPS

We have undertaken the following scrutiny reviews during the year:

2.1. MEMBER INFORMATION & IT TOPIC GROUP (Phase 2) - completed

2.1.1 This Group was chaired by Councillor Barbara Reith and comprised Councillors Ray Harris, Ray Morgon and Martin Smith.

2.1.2 The Group have met regularly with officers from ICT, corporate performance, finance and customer service directorates. The Group have investigated and received updates on a number of different issues including the contents of the performance monitoring information pack (both on-line and paper versions) the FIS 11i financial system, the GGP graphical information system and options for reporting of street care information.

2.1.3 The Group arranged for a demonstration of the information now available to Members on line to be given to full Council where research into Members' use of IT was also undertaken.

2.1.4 The Group have formulated a number of recommendations in different areas including street care reporting, the GGP system, IT induction and broadband access for Members.

2.1.5 The Group presented its report at the Committee at its meeting in June 2005. The Committee received the review presented by the Topic Group. It considered the recommendations made and noted the comments by finance and human resources. The Committee resolved to forward the report, unmodified, to Cabinet for their consideration. Cabinet accepted some of the Committee's recommendations but referred two (the use of e-GPP graphical information system and broadband access for Members) back further consideration of the financial implications of adopting them. This financial advice was obtained from officers and presented to the Committee in January. The Committee approved the revised financial advice on these areas and referred the relevant recommendations back to Cabinet. The recommendations were due to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting in April 2006.

2.2. INCREASING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION TOPIC GROUP - ongoing

2.2.1 This Group is chaired by Councillor Ray Harris and comprised Councillors Wilf Mills, Daryl Williams and Nigel Meyer.

2.2.2 The scope of the Group is to consider, in the light of good practice, how community participation in the work of the Council can be enhanced and in

particular to focus on how the Council currently engages with young people. The main aim is to engage young people in local democracy and enhance awareness of the wider people to the potential of young people across the Borough.

2.2.3 The Group met up with officers from the Youth Service, Head of School Services and Havering members from the Youth Parliament and discussed possible ways to engage with youth on wider scale, reaching out to young people of all ages.

2.2.4 The Group undertook a visit to London Borough of Lewisham in January 2006, where the group met up with the Mayor and Youth Mayor of Lewisham to discuss how the youth mayoralty was set up and any opportunities that may arise for Havering from Lewisham's experience.

2.3.5 The Group proposes, subject to changes in its composition, to continue to engage with young people inside and outside the Town Hall. This is likely to continue into the new municipal year.

2.3. SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES TOPIC GROUP (Phase 2)

2.3.1 A report was submitted to the Cabinet on 28 April 2005. Cabinet accepted the recommendations of the Topic Group as an interim contribution to the development of a new senior management structure for the Council. Cabinet requested the Chief Executive to take the Topic Group's conclusions and recommendations into account in the proposals currently under consideration for restructuring the Council's senior management. Additionally, Cabinet also requested the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee to carry out a further review as the reorganisation proceeds. The Committee was informed that this was accepted by Cabinet and it agreed that a "phase 2" topic group should be set up.

2.3.2 The core objective of the Group was to understand and examine the current Senior Management Structure of Havering Council by considering the generic Management responsibilities, roles and profiles of the posts including job descriptions and person profiles (as published), considering generically how performance management was ensured and by examining how these arrangements compared with other councils.

2.3.3 A phase two Topic Group was set up that comprised three Members; Councillors Wilf Mills (Chairman), Ray Harris and Paul Rochford. The Group met on four occasions altogether and reviewed the role of Assistant Chief Executive and third and fourth tiers of the management structure as well as holding further discussions with David Ede, Assistant Chief Executive (ACE), Human Resources.

2.3.4 The Group reviewed a report from the ACE (HR) on the implications of the recent management restructuring. The Group recognised that it was unable to complete its review in time before the elections in May 2006 and therefore intends to present its report to the Committee in April proposing that

Cabinet consider the work undertaken to date and refer the task back to the Corporate OSC to be included in its Annual Work Programme with a recommendation that the Topic Group continue with the work.

2.4. FAIRTRADE BOROUGH STATUS TOPIC GROUP - ongoing

2.4.1 A report was commissioned after a Council motion taken on 23 March 2005 that:

A report should be prepared for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the implications of becoming a Fairtrade Borough.

2.4.2 The Committee was asked to note that the Fairtrade campaign was a nationally recognised and supported campaign and would provide positive recognition for the area if Havering became a Fairtrade Borough. The Committee was also asked to consider the level of commitment needed by the Council and what the best way forward would be.

2.4.3 The following Members comprised the Topic Group for this review; Cllr Wilf Mills (Chairman), Paul Rochford, Nigel Meyer.

2.4.4 The Topic Group presented its report to the Committee in November 2005. Members were advised, however, by officers that further evaluation was required for procurement and legal issues as there were concerns that there could exist legal and procurement problems. The Committee referred the report back to the Topic Group and sought information as to what officers proposed and were informed that:

- Other boroughs would be consulted,
- Collaboration in procurement would be sought,
- More detail would be sought concerning finance and fair comparison with alternative providers, and
- It would include a review of the procurement policy/strategy in catering

The Committee agreed that the report should be reviewed by a member of each Group and, if found acceptable, should be referred directly to Leader's Briefing.

2.4.5 Given however, the differences between advice received from Council officers and the reported position in other Boroughs, (as discussed in the financial implications section) this revised report was in fact presented to the Committee at its meeting on 25 January, in order that a decision can be reached on how matters should now proceed. The Committee was informed that since the previous meeting, certain contractual issues had arisen. There were concerns that approaching only Fairtrade suppliers could be interpreted as fettering the procurement process. Members were asked if they were content for officers to consider the options. The Committee accepted this.

2.4.6 It has however subsequently emerged that further work needs to be undertaken before the report is submitted to Cabinet.

3. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MFTS)

3.1 At the Committee meeting on 25 January 2006, a presentation was made by Councillor Roger Ramsey, Cabinet Member for Resources. Members were notified that the public had been consulted, efficiencies and savings had been identified and investments were being proposed to meet local priorities. Members were presented with the following information:

- Havering had only received some £945,000 increase to its grant, which had to be spread over a service spend of £125 million. On the other hand, interest alone would account for some £2.9 million.
- the Council needed £1.9 million to spend on the needs of the borough's most vulnerable people – children in need and the elderly. A further £1.3 million was required to deliver new laws, deliver national requirements and to cover unavoidable cost increases, such as waste collection.

3.2 Councillor Ramsey informed Members of the investment plans for the next three years.

- Street & highway improvement: £2.9m in 2006/7 rising to £8.8m 2006-9
- Parks, libraries & sports centres: £1.9m increasing to £2.9m 2006-9
- Community safety would rise from £660,000 to £1.4m during 2006-9.

3.3 The Committee accept the MFTS in the report.

4. OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

4.1. On 22 June 2005, the Committee considered a report on the Havering Crime Disorder and Drugs Reduction Strategy 2005-08. This report had been presented to the Committee on 12 April but at the request of Members, had been referred to this meeting for consideration. Members now felt they had been able to consider it properly and, after discussion, the report was accepted.

4.2. Performance Plan 2005 - The Committee received the Performance Plan 2005. It was noted that the Plan had already been to Cabinet (15 June). Also the Committee therefore accepted the report and noted this as a possible future Scrutiny work.

4.3 Corporate Plan 2006/07 - The Committee received a report from the Assistant Chief Executive on the Council's corporate plan 2006/07. The report identified and demonstrated Council's vision and priorities for the year 2006/07 and beyond. The plan sought to provide a focus for the planning of

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service delivery, fundamental to the Council's corporate planning process and to integrate with the Corporate Plan and the MTFs. Members were asked to comment on the contents of the paper ahead of the Corporate Plan being presented to Cabinet in February and considered by full Council in March. The Committee accepted the recommendations in the report.

4.4 Best Value Review – Alternative Service Delivery (ASD) – The Committee considered a report to be drawn up on the achievements during the last 3-4 years, from which it would consider setting up a Topic Group to look at:

- Internal ASDs,
- Partnerships with external agencies – e.g. the police and health authority.
- How they impacted on the Community Safety Strategy.

It was agreed that further information regarding ASD would be provided to the Committee before it decides on the membership of the proposed topic group.



**CULTURE & REGENERATION
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

10D

**REPORT TO COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06**

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is the second annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ended May 2006.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council accept the Annual Report.

REPORT DETAIL

During the year under review, the Committee has met on six occasions and dealt with the following issues:

1. BUDGETARY ISSUES

The Committee met in met in January 2006 to scrutinise the relevant parts of the Council budget at various stages of its implementation process. The Committee received a presentation from the Lead Member for Resources on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Budget. The MTFs aims to minimise the Council Tax increase whilst improving local services.

The Committee was advised that Cabinet, at its meeting on 18 January, had considered a report concerning the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2006/07. The report outlined the context within which the 2006/07 budget was set and, together with the Corporate Development Plan and Best

Performance Value Plan, set out the Council's overall policy direction, statutory duties and financial strategy.

The Committee noted the report.

2. TOPICS SELECTED FOR REVIEW

The following scrutiny reviews were undertaken during the year.

2.1 Anti Social Behaviour in Parks and Leisure Centres

The Group comprised Councillors Gillian Ford (Topic Leader), John Mylod and Jan Davis and was supported by Dennis Holmes, Interim Head of Service and Guy Selfe, Leisure & Cultural Services Manager. The Group met on six occasions.

The Group met with Inspector Brian Casson, Romford Police and Phil Hennessey, Partnership Inspector (Community Safety) and Donald Nolan (Design Advisor - Crime Prevention) in connection with this review.

The Committee received a report which informed that at its meeting on 21 September 2005, Cabinet considered a report on anti-social behaviour in parks. Cabinet accepted the recommendation in-part, but referred the un-adopted recommendations back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

At its meeting on 19 January, the Topic Group considered, as requested by Cabinet, several of the recommendations made in the Group's original report. The Committee accepted the recommendations and referred it back to Cabinet for consideration.

2.2 Hornchurch Leisure Centre

The Topic Group comprised Councillors John Mylod (Topic Leader), Eric Munday and Jean Gower as members.

The Group was supported by Dennis Holmes, Interim Head of Service, Cultural and Leisure Services and Micky Organ, Leisure Direct Manager. The Group met on five occasions.

The Group's report was presented and adopted at the last meeting of the Committee on 12 May 2005 and presented to Cabinet on 15 June 2005. It was reported that a tender had been accepted for lighting along the footpath had been agreed.

2.3 Harrow Lodge Park, Lake and Fountain Topic Group

The Topic Group was chaired by Councillor Jan Davis and other members of the group were Councillors Jean Gower and Natasha Ratty. The Group was

supported by Dennis Holmes, Interim Head of Service, Guy Selfe, Leisure & Cultural Services Manager and James Rose, Parks Development Officer.

The Group aimed to ensure that cleanliness and de-silting is carried out regularly at the lake and fountain and that a regular maintenance culture is in place and that grounds maintenance of the park is maintained.

The Group met on five occasions and also undertook visit to the Harrow Lodge Park. Photographs of the current issues were recorded for discussion with officers. The Group invited Technical Services to give a review on the last de-silting exercise. The Group also met with the Harrow Lodge Park Conservation group in order to have their views noted.

The Topic Group finalised its conclusions and proposed its recommendations to the Committee in February 2006. The Committee accepted the recommendations and report was due to Cabinet in March 2006.

2.4 The Queen's Theatre and Sustainable Communities in Hornchurch and Havering

Four Members, Councillors Andrew Curtin (Lead Member), Louise Sinclair, Jan Davis, Wendy Brice-Thompson were part of the Topic Group.

The Group met on three occasions including one visit. The group was supported by Dennis Holmes, Interim Head of Culture & Leisure Services, Thom Stanbury, Administrative Director Queen's Theatre, Isobel Liebman, Director Havering Music and Richard Partridge, Business Monitoring Officer.

The Group made recommendations, intended to ensure that the local authority and local strategic partnership are able to take advantage of the opportunities offered to Hornchurch and Havering by the work of the Queen's Theatre and by the "Sustainable Communities" Plan, and are able to provide the ambitious leadership to local communities that the Plan envisages they should. These recommendations were adopted by the Committee in November 2005 and the report has been submitted to Cabinet in March 2006.

2.5 Matters Related to Listed Buildings Topic Group

Two Members, Councillors Linda Hawthorn and Wendy Brice-Thompson comprised the Topic Group. Councillor Hawthorn led the review.

The Group was supported by the following officers: Sue Smith, Conservation Officer, Nigel Oxley, Historic Buildings & Landscape Officer, Simon Donoghue, Local Studies Librarian and Chris Cole, Arts Officer.

The Group met on six occasions and also undertook three visits. They visited Eastbury Manor in Barking, Vestry House Museum in Waltham Forest to understand their maintenance regime and Council owned listed buildings.

Council, 29 March 2006

The Group reviewed to evaluate access into Council buildings for disabled persons, check on the general well being of listed buildings in Havering and ensure a maintenance regime is in place for listed buildings.

The Group submitted its report to the Committee in January 2006 and was advised that further information was required on financial implications. A revised report was submitted and accepted by the Committee in February 2006 and the report was due to Cabinet in March for consideration.

2.6 Sports Pitches

The Group comprised Councillors John Mylod (Topic Leader), Jean Gower, Andrew Curtin and Graham Carr.

The Group met on three occasions and were supported by Guy Selfe, Leisure and Cultural Services Manager and James Rose, Parks Development Officer. They also met and interviewed various sport pitch users, for their contribution to the review.

The Group found that there were issues around security, graffiti, and the shortage of pitches in Havering. There were also issues raised around Grounds Maintenance, but officers informed the group that there were several good practices and changes to working practices that would lead to a higher standard of pitch maintenance by Council staff.

The Group made recommendations on improvements which were reported to the committee at its meeting on 16 February 2006. The Group's report was due to be presented to Cabinet on 15 March 2006.

2.7 Improving Relationships with Business Community

This Group was chaired by Councillors Louise Sinclair and other members were Jan Davis, Jean Gower and Andrew Curtin comprised the Topic Group. The Topic Group was supported by Bob Flindall, Regeneration Team Leader, Nigel Young, Regeneration Manager and Yvonne Bendall, Regeneration Officer.

The Group met on four occasions and also undertook a visit to the Bexley Business Centre as well as a number of site visits within the Havering Borough. The Group scrutinised the level of support the Council gives to the Local Businesses in the community and considered ways in which the Council could improve its relationship with the business community and promote partnership.

The Group presented its report to the Committee at its meeting in February 2006. The Committee agreed to the recommendations framed by the Group and resolved to forward the report to Cabinet in March 2006.

3. OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

3.1 Libraries Refurbishment Programme - Requisition of Cabinet decision

At its meeting in September 2005, the Committee were provided with an oral presentation on the current status of the library refurbishment programme. The Committee considered proposals for the future redevelopment of Elm Park Library and of the scope of the Romford Library phase 2 refurbishment.

Some Members commented that it was important for libraries to be seen as being at the heart of local communities, and the refurbishment programme supported that vision.

3.2 ROMFORD AMENITY BLOCK – Requisition of Cabinet decision

A special meeting was called in November 2005 regarding requisition of Cabinet's decision at its meeting on 21 September 2005.

Members raised concerns regarding the operational aspects of the proposed amenity block, and whether it should provide a dual service to both the traders and the public. Some Members were concerned that limiting access to the market traders would not maximise usage of the facilities, particularly as the market operated only three days a week. Also that there was no provision for market traders to contribute to either the capital or revenue costs of the scheme, which they would be able to use free of charge.

Cabinet was requested that the requisition of the Cabinet decision held on 21 September 2005 be upheld and:

- a) The proposed amenity block facilities be accessible to both market traders and the general public;**
- b) Usage of the facilities be free of charge to market traders with the general public being required to pay a service charge comparable with existing rates applied to JC Decaux facilities;**
- c) Financial provision be made for a contribution to both the capital and revenue costs incurred by the Council to be recouped through the market income.**

3.3 Hornchurch Urban Strategy

The Committee received a report which described a proposal for a strategy to promote the critical role of Hornchurch in the cultural development and prosperity of Havering. The strategy proposed the appointment of consultants as a key part of the delivery process and described a community consultation and participation process.

The report named the various consultants appointed to develop the Strategy. Regeneration and planning consultants 'Urban Practitioners', architects 'Allies and Morrison', property market specialists 'CB Richard Ellis', and transport consultants 'Faber Maunsell' were appointed in December 2004.

Members were informed that following initial consultation held in 2004, a more detailed community engagement and empowerment process took place during March-September 2005.

The Committee was advised that an additional consultation was carried out with young people in Hornchurch as part of the Greater London Sustainable Suburbs Toolkit Project. The work with the young people consisted of a series of workshops with local youth groups. The workshops explored young people's views towards Hornchurch, focusing on a range of issues including transport, the physical environment, and facilities for young people, and views on how Hornchurch should develop in the future.

The feedback from the various consultation processes would feed into the process of preparing the options consultation.

Members were advised that the draft Urban Strategy would be presented to Cabinet for consideration in December 2005 / January 2006.

Members commented that they were pleased with the progress that had been made on the Strategy, and were looking forward to the release of the draft Urban Strategy.

The Committee noted the report.

3.4 Performance Plan 2005

At its meeting in June 2005, the Committee reviewed this report addressing the requirement of the Local Government Act 1999 to produce an annual Performance Plan as a key element in the delivery of best value. The report was accepted by Cabinet at its meeting held on 15 June. The data contained within the report was still subject to audit and the Committee was invited to note changes and developments before the final Performance Plan was published on 30 June.

The Committee noted and accepted the report.

3.5 Best Value Review – Alternative Service Delivery (ASD)

The Committee considered whether they would wish to look at Council services on a rolling programme, which addressed Alternative Service Deliveries, likely synergies between services and external agencies and areas for service improvement with a view to the co-ordinating committee taking an overview of the conclusions reached by each service committee, such work

would then feed into continuing improvements and a rolling and effective programme. Members discussed the possibility of partnerships in connection with leisure services at the new Central Park, Chafford and Hornchurch Sports centres.

The Committee accepted the Report.

3.6 Corporate Plan - 2006/07

In January 2006, the Committee considered a report on the Council's vision and priorities for the year 2006/07 and beyond, to provide a focus for the planning of service delivery, fundamental to the Council's corporate planning process and to integrate with the Corporate Plan and the MTFs.

The Committee noted the report.

3.7 The Externalisation of Havering Leisure Direct –Award of 'Preferred Bidder' Status

In January 2006, the Committee received and noted a report which informed it that at its meeting on 14 December 2005, Cabinet considered and agreed the recommendations in the report on the externalisation of Havering Leisure Direct. This report was submitted at Cabinet, who requested for the Committee to note.

4. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

In June 2005, the Committee reviewed the Performance Indicators report and was updated with the latest developments.

The Committee accepted the report.

Council, 29 March 2006



ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10E

REPORT TO COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is the fourth annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ended May 2006.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council accept the Annual Report.

REPORT DETAILS

Over the year we have met as a Committee on six occasions.

1. BUDGET – 2005/2006

At the meeting on 17 January the Committee received a presentation from the Cabinet member for Streetcare on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Budget. It was reported that the Strategy aimed to minimise the Council Tax increase whilst improving local services.

Cabinet member for Streetcare advised the Committee that, based on present indications, there were signs that the current expected level of GLA increase at over 16% would be reduced before final agreement resulting in a reduction in the expected overall rate of Council Tax.

The Committee considered the details of the budget proposals and the following were discussed:

- The Cabinet Member for Streetcare explained that both TfL and the council shared ownership of the grass verges on the A127 and that the Council had recognised the need to be in dialogue with TfL.
- Members suggested that there needed to be agreements between the Council and the essential utilities services as to when they would finish their work on digging up the roads. The Cabinet member confirmed that this was already being pursued.
- Members discuss the issue of Street furniture, including lamp posts, which was part of the liveability project which looked to get rid of all street furniture not being used.
- The Members wanted to know how often the streets were swept. It was explained that this happened every two weeks on most streets, some main roads were swept daily.
- Members wanted to know what would happen to the new rubbish bins if they got damaged. The Cabinet Member for Streetcare confirmed that the new ones were sturdy, and hence should not get damaged easily, and that these were also fixed to the floor. The Group were however informed that there was a small budget to replace damaged bins if damage did happen. The first point of contact if any damaged bins were found was the Head of Streetcare.

2. TOPICS SELECTED FOR REVIEW

The following scrutiny reviews were undertaken during the year.

2.1 Graffiti Topic Group

The Group comprised Councillors Ivor Cameron (Chairman), Bill Harrison (Vice Chairman), Peter Gardner, Fredrick Thompson, Tony Ellis, Jean Gower and Eddie Cahill. The Topic Group was supported by John Gross, Streetcare Co-ordinator (Environmental Maintenance)

The Group met on two occasions and reviewed the possible opportunities and parameters for improving the graffiti service in Havering.. The group held discussions with officers from Environment, now Public Realm, to analyse what is needed to be done in order to tackle graffiti effectively and efficiently.

The Group noted that the service had procured a specialist vehicle for graffiti removal and the Anti Graffiti Service had been extended with the provision of a free graffiti removal service which includes privately owned property (up to a maximum of 3 occasions). Funding for the provision of the graffiti service is agreed until the end of the current financial year – March 2006.

2.2 Recycling Topic Group

The Group comprised Councillors Ivor Cameron (Chairman), Bill Harrison (Vice Chairman), Peter Gardner, Frederick Thompson, Tony Ellis, Nigel Meyer and Eddie Cahill. The Topic Group was supported by Bob Wenman, Head of Streetcare, Paul Ellis, Waste & Recycling Manager and Lisa Foster, Waste and Recycling Officer.

The Group met on four occasions and reviewed the possible opportunities and parameters for improving the recycling service in Havering. The Group undertook a visit to the frog Island Facility in Rainham in January 2006 and to London Borough of Bexley in February 2006.

The Group felt that the recycling in Havering could be improved with increased frequency of waste collection. The recommendations made by the Group to the Committee on 6 March 2006 were:

- That the kerb side collection of glass in the Borough is introduced
- Raising awareness of recycling in the Borough with broader incentives is noted and supported.
- The introduction of more recycling bins in the Borough is considered.
- There is an increase in frequency of monitoring and cleaning waste in streets and from households.
- That recycling in Council buildings is increased and encouraged and local businesses/ statutory bodies are also encouraged to increase recycling.
- That there is further encouragement of schools to take up education lessons in recycling.
- That Planning guidance should include recommendations to include recycling provisions in applications for new developments.
- That facilities for recycling of textile clothing be introduced on a Borough wide basis.
- That ways in which incentives and penalties could be used to improve recycling are given detailed consideration.

2.3 Fly Tipping Topic Group

The Group comprised Councillors Ivor Cameron (Lead Member), Jeff Brace, Malvin Brown, Bill Harrison, Ray Morgan, Louise Sinclair and Fredrick Thompson. The Topic Group was supported by Zulfiqar Ali, Interim Head of Streetcare Services and John Gross, Streetcare Co-ordinator.

The Group's report was presented for adoption to the Committee on 25 November 2004. The Report has now been considered by Cabinet, who agreed:

1. To adopt the recommendations of the environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the exception of Recommendation 3 (Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping).

2. That in respect of Recommendation 3, the proposal be examined further in the light of the enforcement policy and strategy recommended by the Committee in Recommendation 5.
3. That, subject to the availability of the appropriate staff, the enforcement policy and strategy be drawn up as a matter of priority, with a progress report to Cabinet in three months with a view to the strategy being adopted in no more than six months.

At a special meeting of 14 March 2005 the Committee noted that at the Cabinet meeting on 25 January 2005, the Committee's policy review of fly-tipping had been referred back to the Committee, in order that the financial implications of the recommendations in the report to Cabinet could be considered in more detail, and the recommendations reconsidered accordingly.

Officers had completed their review, and provided the committee with a summary of their findings

2.4 Climate Change Topic Group

The Group comprised Councillors Ivor Cameron (Lead Member), Eddie Cahill, Tony Ellis, Peter Gardner, Jean Gower, Bill Harrison, Nigel Meyer and Frederick Thompson. The Topic Group was supported by Peter Williams, Environmental Strategy Manager, Abigail Burrige, Sustainability Officer and Mark Lowers, Energy Management Officer.

Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the production of a climate change plan was important work which required Member involvement and ownership. The Committee therefore decided it would be appropriate to undertake a review of the sustainability procedures and initiatives in order to be better informed.

The group met with the following officers in order to have an inclusive understanding of this subject. David Lawn, Planning Control Manager, Roger McFarland, Head of Regeneration and Partnerships, Martyn Thomas, Principal Planner and Andy Skeggs, Principal Architectural Adviser.

The Group also undertook a visit to Gallions Ecopark in Thamesmead and are currently delivering with officers on a Climate Change Strategy for the Council.

2.5 Street and Gully Cleansing and Drainage Topic Group

The Group comprised Councillors Ivor Cameron (Lead Member) and Peter Gardner. The Topic Group was supported at Head of Service level by Interim Head of Streetcare Services Zulfiqar Ali, John Gross, Streetcare Co-ordinator Environmental Maintenance and Chris Layton, Streetcare Co-ordinator Highways.

The Group met on four occasions to review current practice and opportunities for improvements in this area. The Group undertook a visit to see a gully being cleansed in action. The Group were aware that Street Cleansing vehicles were due to be renewed shortly and a detailed description and function chart of proposed replacement vehicles has been made available to the group.

The Groups report was presented to the Committee on 30 June 2005 and made the following recommendations:

1. That the Service gives priority to considering the offer for GIS plotting by the contractor responsible for cleaning of the entire drainage network in Havering.
2. That Council, Members and Officers apply pressure for an investment in new underground water storage on the Water authorities responsible for the main sewers that highways gullies discharge into.
3. That Officers examine the options for improving enforcement action

3 OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

3.1 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Group met on four occasions to discuss the Council performance indicators. Members felt that additional information could be included to clarify some of the indicators. The Committee had concerns particularly about flytipping and staff sickness levels.

Statistical information relating to the Head of Technical Services Quarterly performance information was presented to the Committee. It was noted that the BV99 indicator reported road casualty information in calendar years, which was 16 months in arrears due to historic delays in receiving data from the Metropolitan Police.

The Group learnt that all 101 crossings in the Borough were now provided with tactile paving.

3.2 REVIEW OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

At the meeting on 10 November 2005 a booklet produced by Local Government Association (LGA) – titled: ‘Leading the way: How Local Authorities can meet the challenge of climate change’ was circulated. The Committee were informed that there was a conference on 18 November 2005. It was noted that the Chairman would attend the conference.

3.3 SETTING THE COUNCIL’S VISION AND PRIORITIES

At the meeting on 17 January 2006, the Corporate Policy and Projects Manager advised the Committee that part of the preparation work for CPA purposes was to clearly identify and demonstrate the Council’s vision and priorities for the year 2006/07 and beyond.

Members recommended that more work needed to go into the priorities and ambitions to ensure that targets set for 2010 were met.

3.4 CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

At the meeting on 20 September 2005 the Committee were presented with a report updating on the progress made by the Policy Review Task Group on the Corporate Environment Policy. Officer reported that the Policy was under review and a sustainability Strategy will be produced and reported to Cabinet.

The Chairman, who had worked on the Climate Change sub-group informed the Committee that a report had been completed and would be presented to Cabinet.

Members noted that Schools were being encouraged to take part in the recycling programme and the uptake was reasonably high. It was also suggested that households should be given more orange bags.

It was reported that in March 2006, the Shanks Frog Island Bio-MRF would be receiving recyclable waste from the borough, including the waste from Council corporate buildings. This will enable all of the Council’s main corporate buildings to be incorporated into the orange bag recycling scheme.

Officer informed the Committee that there was a move towards providing duplex printers which would also save paper, and an awareness campaign was ongoing. Members commented about the cost implications of all staff changing to duplex printers but agreed that there was a moral imperative to do so. It was also noted that many offices now have flat computer screens which consume less energy. With the regard to using recycled paper, it was reported that there were pilot schemes in place in the Environment Directorate, this was part of the “Sustainability in Business Plans” scheme which also included energy savings and recycling initiatives.

3.5 BEST VALUE REVIEW – ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

At the meeting on 30 June 2005 the Committee were presented with a report updating on the Best Value Review which addressed Alternative Service Delivery. The Committee were asked to consider whether they wished to look at Council services on a rolling programme, which addresses Alternative Service Deliveries, likely synergies between services and external agencies and areas for service improvement with a view to the co-ordinating committee taking an overview of the conclusions reached by each service committee, such work then being fed into continuing improvements and a rolling and effective programme.

3.6 PERFORMANCE PLAN 2005

At the meeting on 30 June 2005 the Committee were advised that the Local Government Act 1999 required all best value authorities to prepare an annual Performance Plan as a key element of delivering Best Value. Havering's approach to Best Value was supported by its strategic and financial planning process, which linked the corporate Development Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Performance Plan, to ensure all staff were working to improve the quality of life of Havering's residents.

The committee resolved to:

1. Note the (unaudited) outturns being reported to the Audit Commission for both the statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) and a selection of the locally collected performance indicators (PI's).
2. Endorse the improvement in performance targets being set by services for 2005/06 and the subsequent two years.
3. Recognise that some of these outturns might be subject to change before either the final publication of the Performance Plan on 30 June 2005 through additional work carried out within services, or as a result of the external audit requesting changes. The external audit would be completed by September 2005.

At the special meeting of 14 March 2005 the Committee noted that at the Cabinet meeting on 25 January 2005, the Committee's policy review of fly-tipping had been referred back to the Committee, in order that the financial implications of the recommendations in the report to Cabinet could be considered in more detail, and the recommendations reconsidered accordingly.

Officers had completed their review, and provided the committee with a summary of their findings

Council, 29 March 2006



HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10F

REPORT TO COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is the fourth annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ended May 2006.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council accept the Annual Report

REPORT DETAILS

Over the year we have met as a Committee on five occasions.

1. BUDGET – 2005/2006

We met in January 2006 in order to scrutinise the relevant parts of the Council budget at various stages of its implementation process.

1.1 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY – 2006/07 BUDGET AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Committee received a presentation from the Cabinet Member for Housing on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Budget. The Strategy aimed to minimise the Council

Council, 29 March 2006

Tax increase whilst improving local services. It was pointed out to Members that the financial settlement from Central Government was one of the lowest in Greater London. It was noted that the low financial settlement placed a greater burden on the Council to deliver high quality local services.

The Committee were advised that Cabinet, at its meeting on 18 January, considered a report concerning the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2006/07. The report outlined the context within which the 2006/07 budget was set together with the Corporate Development Plan and Best Value Performance Plan and set out the Council's overall policy direction, statutory duties and financial strategy.

The Committee were invited to consider the report submitted to Cabinet, to note the advice in it concerning the Council's financial position and to comment upon the various proposals set out in it so far as was relevant to this Committee's remit. The following comments were agreed by the Committee for consideration by Cabinet:

- The Committee were concerned regarding the proposed caretaking surcharge, and were concerned that Council tenants would be paying for a service that already exists.
- The Committee considered that the costs should be born by the General Fund, and not by Council tenants.
- The Committee considered that if there were to be a surcharge then Council tenants needed to be assured that there would be a visible improvement in the Service provided.
- The Committee commented that housing services provided by the general fund should not continually be subsidised by the housing revenue account.
- The Committee commented that the £5k saving in privatising the pest control service should be reconsidered

2. TOPICS SELECTED FOR REVIEW

The following scrutiny reviews were undertaken during the year.

2.1 Estate Services Topic Group

The Group comprise Councillors Peter Gardner (Topic Leader), June Alexander, Denis O'Flynn and Alexandra Smith.

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The Group is supported at by Barry Kendler, Head of Housing, Stephen Lowe, Estate Services Manager, and Bob Wenman, Head of Streetcare.

The Group met on six occasions during the year.

The Group found at the start of this review that Streetcare, Housing and Parks and Open Spaces were all responsible for different areas, which often were adjacent to each other. As part of the review a GIS mapping system was used to map the ownership/ responsibility of all public areas in Havering. During the review, the group were pleased to note a closer working relationship being formed between senior Housing and Streetcare officers. This was with the aim of establishing an agreed policy on a number of areas including flytip removal from estates, mapping of flytipping hotspots and data collection. Road sweeping boundaries between Housing and Streetcare have now been clarified and it is planned to map these for further clarification in the future.

The Group learnt that there was now a dedicated Streetcare team dealing with graffiti removal. If, however, caretaking staff identify graffiti, it was also possible for them to remove the graffiti themselves and recharge this to Streetcare. The Group also learnt that Streetcare were also were responsible for the removal of abandoned vehicles.

It is planned for the Group's report to be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 5 April 2006.

2.2 Homelessness Topic Group

The Topic Group comprises Councillors June Alexander (Topic Leader), Denis O'Flynn, Barry Oddy and Martin Smith. Some meetings were also attended by Councillor Jeffrey Tucker.

The Group is supported at Head of Service level by Barry Kendler, Head of Housing, and, also by Jonathan Geall, Housing Needs & Strategy Manager and Alex Szantai, Interim Homelessness Manager

The Group have met on five occasions during the year

The Group visited Harrow Council who were awarded a charter mark for excellence in their homelessness approach. The Group commented on the draft consultation paper and Harrow homelessness manual. The group felt that Havering were in the same situation as Harrow in respect of reduction in Housing stocks.

The Group commented on the draft consultation paper on Homelessness Policy and will present its final report at the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 5 April 2006.

2.3 Vulnerable Persons' Protocol (joint working party with Adult Services and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

This Group was chaired jointly by Councillor June Alexander and Councillor Yve Cornell (chairman of the Adult Services and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee). The other members were Councillors Wendy Brice-Thompson, Councillor Pat Mylod, Councillor Barry Oddy and Councillor Denis O'Flynn.

The Group first met in May 2005 in order to scrutinise the revised version of the Council's policy for the protection of vulnerable people. The Group met on a total of four occasions.

The Group reviewed the policy for this area in detail as requested by Council and the revised policy is now in operation. A report on the Group's work was given to both Overview and Scrutiny Committees in January.

3. OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED

3.1 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The Committee were provided with information relating to the two revenue budgets that fund the Housing Service. The Housing Revenue Account financed all service which related to the Council as a landlord. The Head of Housing advised the Committee that he forecasted a small surplus of £55,600 at 31 March 2006.

The Committee received a report updating them as to the Council's HRA Capital Investment Programme. The Council's overall investment programme for Council Housing was reviewed from December 2003 following the results of a Stock Condition Survey completed in February 2004. The Committee were informed that there was a completely new 3-year investment programme which was submitted and approved as part of the Council's HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Members were informed that despite continued improvements to the planning and delivery of the Capital Programme, the Council would still fall short of the Government's Decent Homes Target for December 2010 on the current rate of investment. This shortfall was being addressed through the formation of an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) which would, as part of its establishment, develop an investment programme (Delivery Plan) for implementation from April 2006 that would overtake the Council's approved programme.

The Committee noted the financial changes in splitting the HRA between the retained service, the Homes in Havering Arms

Length Management Organisation (ALMO) and a management fee for the Circle-Anglia Housing Trust to manage some aspects of the Mardyke Estate.

3.2 BEST VALUE REVIEW – ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Members were advised that during the Best Value review a meeting was arranged with the Chairmen of the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees (the co-ordinating committee) who suggested that Overview and Scrutiny would be able to contribute to ASD by looking at synergies between services and potential service improvements arising from better cross directorate working and engagement with other agencies. As this was a large task it was suggested that Council services could be considered on a rolling programme.

The group expressed the view that the Committee already received a rolling programme of reports which addressed alternative service delivery, and considered that this practice should continue.

3.3 NEW LETTINGS POLICY

At the meeting on 21 June 2005 the committee received a presentation by the Housing Needs and Strategy Manager on the Council's new lettings policy.

The Committee were informed that housing needs were now translated into Bands. Band A applicants were the most needy, with Band D applicants the least needy. All applications for transfer would be dealt with according to the applicants Band rating. This policy went live on 11 April, and all individuals on the applicant and transfer list had received their Band listings. An appeal process was in place for any individuals who were not content with their Band setting.

The presentation also showed that the choice-based lettings system was anticipated to go live in January 2006. A report was due to be submitted to Cabinet which provided further information on the scheme.

3.4 ARMS LENGTH MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (ALMO) BRIEFING

At the meeting on 21 June 2005 the Head of Housing provided the Committee with a presentation on the introduction of an ALMO. They were informed of what an ALMO was, how it functioned and who controlled it. The group were advised that even though an ALMO was a private registered company, its

Board was owned by the Council, with representatives from the Council, elected tenants/ leaseholders, and Independents (elected by the Board).

3.5 HOUSING REPAIRS SERVICE

At the meeting on 15 November 2005 the Committee were presented with a report which updated the group on the Housing Day to Day Repairs Service.

The Group were informed that the Council's overall Housing Service (including the Housing Repairs Service) was inspected by the Audit Commission in January 2005 and was rated as fair with promising prospects for improvement and the Audit Commission noted the progress made in the Housing Repairs Service since their report of January 2004 arising from the earlier re-inspection.

The Group were informed that in order for the repairs service to improve its rating, certain key improvements to management processes and service enhancements were undertaken. The Group were advised that Officers were assessing the contractual arrangements between the council and its contractor, Morrison, to identify possible improvements in service delivery which would boost the service's rating with the Audit Commission.

3.6 PERFORMANCE PLAN

At the meeting on 21 June 2005 the Committee were advised that the Local Government Act 1999 required all best value authorities to prepare an annual Performance Plan as a key element of delivering Best Value. Havering's approach to Best Value was supported by its strategic and financial planning process, which linked the corporate Development Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Performance Plan, to ensure all staff were working to improve the quality of life of Havering's residents.

The Committee resolved to:

1. Note the (unaudited) outturns being reported to the Audit Commission for both the statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's) and a selection of the locally collected performance indicators (LPI's)
2. Endorse the improvements in performance targets being set by services for 2005/06 and the subsequent two years.

3. Recognise that some of these outturns might be subject to change before either the final publication of the Performance Plan on 30 June 2005 through additional work carried out within service, or as a result of the external audit requesting changes. The external audit would be completed by September 2005.

3.7 HOUSING QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REVIEW

At the meeting on 5 October 2005 the Committee received a report which provided statistical information as to the performance of the Housing Service in relation to its targets for 2005/06.

Members were provided with a performance indicator booklet which highlighted performance against target using a four-aspect traffic light system.

3.8 HOUSING STRATEGY

At the meeting on 5 October 2005 members received an updated report on progress against the action plan in the Council's fit-for-purpose Housing Strategy 2004-2007.

Members were provided with information which related to targets that had been achieved, targets that had been revised, and targets that had not been achieved.

The Committee noted the progress of the Housing Service in meetings its strategic priorities.

Council, 29 March 2006



COUNCIL

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29 March 2006

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEMBER CHAMPIONS, 2005/06

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. In this report the Council's Champions, Councillors Andrew Curtin, Keith Darvill, Patricia Mylod and Daryl Williams will inform the Council of their activities and achievements over the last year and their aims for the next year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Council receive the report of the Historic Environment Champion.
- 2.2 That the Council receive the report of the Diversity Champion.
- 2.3 That the Council receive the report of the Elderly Person's Champion.
- 2.4 That the Council receive the report of the Younger Person's Champion.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council established three posts of Member Champion on 19 May 2004 and made the following appointments
- Councillor Keith Darvill as Champion for Diversity Issues,
 - Councillor Pat Mylod as Champion for the Elderly and
 - Councillor Daryl Williams as Champion for Younger Persons
- 3.2 It was noted that these Champions would promote the profile of and be a positive focus to the Council's ongoing commitment to ensure that full consideration was given to the needs of both younger persons, the elderly and the disabled and disadvantaged including minority groups, in all aspects of Council activities.

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- 3.3 The Council established the post of Champion for the Historic Environment on 8 December 2004 and appointed Councillor Andrew Curtin to that post on 23 March 2005.

4. AIM OF THE ROLE

- 4.1 The Champions would liaise with the relevant sections of the community and their representative organisations and represent their views to the Council across all aspects of its activities. They would act as a positive focus for the local community at elected, non-executive Member level.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The suggested Council actions required could have financial implications for the Council. These actions will be considered as part of the Corporate Planning process and detailed reports/approvals sought as necessary.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no legal implications or risks arising from this report.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no human resources implications or risks arising from this report.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

The Champions role is to promote the profile of and be a positive focus to the Council's ongoing commitment to ensuring that full consideration is given to the historic environment, the needs of younger persons, the elderly, the disabled and disadvantaged including minority groups, in all aspects of Council activities.

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STEPHEN EVANS
Chief Executive

Background Papers List:

Council Report, 19 May 2004 (Additional Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Member Champions)
Council Report, 8 December 2004 (Amendments to the Constitution)
Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Havering, 23 March 2005
Council Report, 13 July 2005 Annual Report of the Member Champions 2004/05



COUNCIL

29 March 2006

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIVERSITY CHAMPION, 2005/06

1. SUCCESSES

- 1.1 I have attended meetings of the Corporate Equality and Diversity Group who continue to make progress on a wide range of diversity issues. I also attended the panel discussion at the Supporting People to Achieve Cultural Empowerment (SPACE) Conference on 9 December 2005. Various questions were raised, concentrating on the role of Members and officers observed that in taking the next steps, Members needed to show their commitment to equalities and diversity and encompass a multi cultural Havering. Havering (Black and Minority Ethnic) BME officers wanted answers to questions raised, it was recognised that to enable the organisation maximise the potential of the workforce, there had to be a pro-active approach in eliminating any form of discriminatory practices. The conference was a success and another is being planned for this year.
- 1.2 I am pleased to see that 112 of 226 Council staff who are registered on the electronic Equalities and Diversity training package have now completed the training and have passed the final assessment. I hope that this progress continues. I have signed up to complete this training package and I hope that other councillors will do the same. I also welcome the Council's introduction of Equality Impact Assessment training with selected staff across the Council. The impact assessment training is a practical workshop that aims to assist managers in the completion of Equality Impact Assessments, a requirement of the Race Relations Amendment Act and part of our Race Equality Scheme.
- 1.3 On 31st January 2003, new regulations governing bus stop clearways came into force requiring all existing bus stop cages be converted to clearways or removed where not required by 31st December 2006. Our staff continue to work with London Buses and Transport for London on the Bus Stop Accessibility Programme with the aim of coordinating bus stop and shelter works with accessibility improvements. The introduction of bus stop clearways reduces the problem of accessibility by providing sufficient space for buses to pull in close to the kerb. It has become even more important with the provision of buses that are fully wheelchair accessible,

because the benefits of low-floor and “kneeling” buses are considerably reduced if the bus cannot get to the kerb.

2. CHALLENGES

- 2.1 On 13 October 2004, this Council carried, without a vote, a motion on the abuse of car parking spaces for people who have disabilities. The Council agreed that there should be a review of powers available to the authority to penalise motorists who wilfully and without the appropriate disabled badges displayed, park in spaces in Council car parks designated for the disabled. In addition, the Council agreed to discuss with other car park operators in the borough the possibility of more effective enforcement of their designated spaces.
- 2.2 Unfortunately, the Blue Badge scheme continues to suffer a high level of abuse, despite rigorous enforcement by parking attendants in both Council owned and private car parks. The Council’s Parking Services are currently exploring alternative methodologies which would preserve the benefits to badge holders, reduce fraud and deliver tangible benefits to users. A bid has recently been submitted to Transport for London for the installation of physical barriers to prevent unauthorised parking in disabled bays. The funding would also provide for the deployment of modern software to process and manage the Blue Badge Scheme. If successful, this initiative would address the abuse of the scheme and associated criminal activity.
- 2.3 I have developed contact with a group within the Gay, Lesbian and Transgender community following reports that violent attacks on the Gay, Lesbian and Transgender community are comparatively high in Havering compared with other nearby London Boroughs. The Council needs to build contacts with the gay/lesbian community and agree a strategy for doing so as a matter of priority following the local elections. The Community Safety Strategy should also reflect the concerns of the Gay, Lesbian and Transgender community as victims of homophobic crime.
- 2.4 All Members of the Council, together with the Cabinet, have a collective responsibility to promote race equality and to ensure that the Council's equality and diversity policies are uniformly applied. They must also ensure that the Council discharges its responsibility both as an employer and as a service provider. Officers are currently reviewing the 2002-05 Race Equality Scheme. It is planned to issue a revised Scheme for consultation in the near future, prior to seeking Cabinet ratification. The revised Scheme will outline the Council's priorities and commitments on race equality for the period up to 2008.

2.5 The Equality Act received Royal Assent on 16th February 2006. It:

- Establishes a Commission for Equality and Human Rights as a single organisation to replace the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission;
- Outlaws discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the provision of goods, facilities, education, the use and disposal of premises, and the exercise of public functions;
- Requires local authorities to promote equality of opportunity between men and women and prohibit sex discrimination in the exercise of public functions.
- Public authorities will also have specific duties that will impact on them in their capacity as employers. These will be set out in regulations and will include identifying gender equality goals and showing the action they will take to implement them. These will then be published, monitored and reviewed every 3 years.

In practice, this legislation will place statutory obligations on the Council to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination. This will affect all activities from the provision of bus services to social care. The role of Champion will be of central importance to these developments and I will endeavour to keep Members informed on the changes required by the legislation before it comes into force in April 2007.

3. COUNCIL ACTION REQUIRED

- 3.1 As last year, resources are still required to support the role of Champions and to properly facilitate outreach work in order to reach 'hard to reach' groups.
- 3.2 I would like to see more Councillors undertaking and successfully completing the electronic Equalities and Diversity training package.
- 3.3 All Councillors have a collective responsibility to promote race equality and to ensure that the Council's equality and diversity policies are uniformly applied. We must ensure that the Council discharges its responsibility both as an employer and as a service provider.

Council, 29 March 2006



COUNCIL

29 March 2006

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ELDERLY PERSONS' CHAMPION, 2005/06

1. SUCCESSES

- 1.1 My role as Mayoress has naturally brought me into contact with a lot of older people and I believe has raised the profile of the Older Persons' Champion in the Borough. I have had a lot of positive feedback from the elderly and can confirm that there are many activities on offer for the elderly in Havering, whether it be swimming or walking clubs etc. It has been a pleasure to learn that over 60's are happy with the provision in Havering and especially to hear positive feedback about some of the improvements at St. George's Hospital.
- 1.2 I attended the Active Citizenship Conference at Time and Envy on 23rd September and was very pleased by the turnout. A nightclub was chosen in order to deconstruct some myths about where young people go for a night out. We had approximately 80 attendees and the event was a good opportunity to brainstorm and gauge the opinions of elderly residents on active citizenship and allow older people to share their views with us. As this event was quite successful, we hope to follow it up with another conference in October, preferably to coincide with the International Day for Older People which is on 1 October 2006. I would have liked to see more people within the age bracket of 50 - 65 at the Conference and I hope this age group will be better represented at the next conference.
- 1.3 I subsequently attended a challenge session at the Centre of Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence (CEME) on the 18th November which was designed to bring all agencies involved in Active Citizenship in the borough together and to get them to really work together on issues that affect the elderly. In my view, the main outcome of this event was a commitment by organisations to work in partnership on older peoples' issues. This includes bringing together the 'Older Peoples Champions' of various organisations (such as the Primary Care Trust and Council) so that we can share best practice and ideas. I believe that we still have work to do in ensuring effective working and partnership between all these agencies.

2. CHALLENGES

- 2.1 After my initial letters in 2005, I have found it difficult to make contacts within and engage with 'hard to reach' groups such as ethnic minorities. I shall continue working to engage and maintain effective communication lines with hard to reach groups of elderly people in our community. We must discover whether we are providing accessible and effective services for these groups and whether we are responding to their needs.
- 2.2 To encourage older people within the age bracket of 50 - 65 to attend more events and the 2006 Active Citizenship Conference.
- 2.3 There are concerns amongst the elderly about transport in the borough and I hope this is an area that Overview and Scrutiny might choose to review.
- 2.4 I am disappointed that no pump priming monies were available to start social events for our elderly such as luncheon clubs. A small budget of approximately £500 would have been effective in launching this initiative. I have canvassed local organisations such as the Veteran Club and the Royal British Legion and there seems to be a lot of support for this initiative.
- 2.5 Although the Council's Christmas Pantomime in 2005 was an undoubted success and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves, I feel we should endeavour to include as many disadvantaged elderly people as we possibly can in this year's celebration. The original aim of the Council event was to entertain elderly people who would be on their own for Christmas and who would not otherwise have enjoyed any form of festive celebration. We should not lose sight of this intention and we must do everything possible to ensure that vulnerable and lonely elderly people in our community are invited to this event. I would like the Council to look into holding the shopping event for the elderly in the summer. I think it would hugely benefit the elderly and give them the chance to enjoy the sunshine and good weather as the rest of us do.

3. COUNCIL ACTION REQUIRED

- 3.1 A corporate will at the Senior Management level, for the role of Champions has not materialised and I find this disappointing.
- 3.2 Council officers should look into the issue of funding elderly groups, specifically in terms of pump priming.
- 3.3 The Council should review its provision of Elderly People's holiday events.



COUNCIL

29 March 2006

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE YOUNGER PERSON'S CHAMPION, 2005/06

1. SUCCESSES

- 1.1 Earlier this year I met with the Manager and Deputy of the Youth Support Service and was briefed on the developments in services to young people as well as the local and national challenges ahead. The Youth Support Service consists of the Youth Service, Connexions Service and Careers Contract, Teenage Pregnancy Service, Tier 2 Drugs Service and the Education Welfare Team (Secondary Schools).
- 1.2 I am pleased to report that young people remain engaged in programmes, enjoy the contacts they have with workers and their peers, are learning new skills and developing in confidence and making informed choices. The Youth service has put in place some clear systems to enable it to improve the quality of provision and partnerships with the Primary Care Trust and London East Connexions Partnership, and the funding of the voluntary sector has led to the broadening of provision within the borough.
- 1.3 Local Democracy Week took place from 17 to 23 October 2005. The purpose of Local Democracy Week was to engage young people in local democracy and provide an opportunity for two-way dialogue between Councillors and young people through a range of interesting and fun events. A programme of events took place, with a variety of ways for young people and councillors to get involved.
- Meet the Cabinet
 - Councillors' and Connexions Truck Tour
 - I'm a councillor get me out of here
 - Political Speed dating
 - Youth debate
 - Councillors speak to Sixth Form students
 - Mayor visits St Joseph's Primary School
- 1.4 Young people were involved in all aspects of the programme – from helping to design the publicity (and appearing on the posters) to chairing the debate in the Council Chamber.

2. CHALLENGES

- 2.1 In order to support young people in the Borough we should look at increasing the numbers of qualified proportional Youth Support Workers and further develop and implement a strategy, to address effectively the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic young people, those with disability or at risk of social exclusion, ensuring we deal with young people from across the spectrum.
- 2.2 In the last year the Government has been consulting on the Green Paper entitled "Youth Matters" . The consultation period ended on 4 November 2005, with over 19,000 responses from young people - one of the largest responses to a government consultation from any group. The Government also collected views through consultation with 'hard to reach' young people and their parents, and through regional events involving local partners.
- 2.3 Subject to parliamentary approval, a new duty on Local Authorities will ensure that young people have access to a wide range of positive activities. The Department for Education and Skills wants to see proposals fully implemented by April 2008 and the Government wants to see all young people achieving the five Every Child Matters outcomes, with Children's Trusts at the heart of their services.

3. COUNCIL ACTION REQUIRED

- 3.1 The Government "Next Steps" document was published on the 8 March 2006 and points the way for the young people's services to become integrated under one new structure linked to the Children Trust, with a clear remit for supporting young people and a new agenda to deliver in the main from 2008. There is much work to be done and it will be addressed over the coming months by officers, and through the Children's Trust.
- 3.2 Local Democracy Week is a fun and light hearted way of engaging young residents in democracy. I hope it will continue to receive the support of officers and councillors and that Councillors will continue to participate and make it a success as they have done in the last year.
- 3.3 That the Council prepares for the new duties placed on us by the Youth Matters Paper.

I hope the next Young Person's Champion will receive support from all directorates and political parties in their work.



COUNCIL

29 March 2006

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT CHAMPION, 2005/06

This report outlines progress in dealing with the historic environment in Havering in the context of the job description for Historic Environment Champions, which is provided by English Heritage ("A Guidance Note on Historic Environment Champions", 2004).

1. SUCCESSES

1.1 Promote the value of the historic environment as a catalyst for urban and rural regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.

There have been a number of excellent publications by national and regional bodies relating to this area over the last year. Of particular importance to Havering, English Heritage has published its work on the historic environment of the Thames Gateway area and its role in ensuring high-quality economic development in the area. Work on Hornchurch Urban Strategy has recognised the role of the historic environment, alongside other aspects of culture, in ensuring that the village is a civilised place in the future, but there is a need to ensure that the detail of policies which flow from the strategy reflect this recognition fully.

1.2 Be alert to the opportunities for the historic environment to attract inward economic investment and funding.

The site of Hornchurch Airfield in Hornchurch Country Park has proved to be an aspect of the historic environment in Havering with particular potential capacity to attract funding over the last year. Negotiations with English Heritage to attract funding from the Aggregates Levy have progressed well, and it is hoped that a plan could be put together which would link this funding with the significant money that the Big Lottery Fund has released to every local authority for creative playsite development to produce a high-quality new playsite for this site, based upon artists working with children to develop a scheme which draws on the significant historical importance of the site to enhance understanding of it in a creative way, which also gains the maximum benefit that creative play provision can have for enhancing the future employment prospects of children, enhancing their educational attainment, promoting their mental and physical health, community safety and community cohesion.

- 1.3 Work with officers in the planning service to ensure that new development in historic areas responds creatively and sympathetically to its environment and ensure quality assurance, compliance and enforcement where necessary.**

Officers in the planning service have been most co-operative and keen to be of assistance wherever possible over the last year.

- 1.4 Ensure that good practice within the Authority relating to heritage and the historic environment is shared, and that examples of such practice from other authorities are brought to the attention of the relevant Members or officers.**

English Heritage has recently featured Romford Market in a publication on the historic markets of London. Rainham Village has featured heavily in English Heritage publications on the Thames Gateway, with a particular focus on the Historic Environment Regeneration Scheme which is ongoing there. Relevant publications on the role of the historic environment in promoting economic development and other key priorities such as education, health, safety and community cohesion have been shared with colleagues on the Culture and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- 1.5 Work closely with corporate property officers and other colleagues and Members to ensure a positive and long-term strategic approach to the management and conservation of the Authority's own historic estate, and to ensure that it is appropriately identified and recorded.**

Current work by the Public Realm Directorate in drawing up a strategy for the aspects of the historic environment that falls within the care of Cultural Services within the borough demonstrates a commitment on the part of the Authority to pursuing such work and should constitute a model for all other directorates within the Council.

- 1.6 Ensure that all relevant colleagues within the Authority (both elected Members and officers) are aware of the external expertise and advice on the historic environment available from bodies such as English Heritage and the national statutory amenity societies.**

Publications by English Heritage, CABE Space and other bodies have been circulated to relevant colleagues, particularly the Culture and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and officers.

2. CHALLENGES

2.1 Ensure that Cabinet portfolio holders and senior officers (including the Chief Executive) are aware of historic environment issues and opportunities as they relate to their service.

The new Sustainable Communities Directorate has taken a pro-active approach to considering the role of the historic environment in its work preparing the Local Development Framework. It is important to ensure that this document gives maximum protection to heritage of a locally-significant character in particular in its final iteration. The inclusion of features dealing with local history and the origins of street names in the borough's "Living" magazine has proved popular and an excellent way of beginning to harness the social, economic and cultural benefit which the heritage of the borough can give residents. The current senior officer structure of the Council mitigates strongly against effective action by the authority in many areas including that of the historic environment. The role of the Local Studies Library Service in interpreting the historic environment and of the contribution which this service gives to ensuring that Havering's historic environment plays its full role in supporting key goals that the authority and Local Strategic Partnership have around jobs, education, public health, community safety and community cohesion could be better understood. Further work on the role of the historic environment in services for children would be welcome. The historic environment in Havering would benefit from a clear policy statement by the Authority demonstrating its understanding of the value of excellence in the historic environment and its interpretation to local communities, and the role it plays in ensuring that broader goals around jobs, education, health, safety and community cohesion are met in a high-quality way in Havering. The historic environment, and the quality of life in Havering in general, would benefit from the Local Strategic Partnership articulating a clear understanding of local community aspirations to see towns as centres for civilised living, offering a balance of commercial, cultural and social opportunities, as well as between protection and interpretation of the historic environment and cutting-edge modern development.

2.2 Ensure that relevant historic environment issues are taken into account in the preparation of all relevant corporate strategies and local development frameworks, including Community Strategies prepared by Local Strategic Partnerships.

There has been good progress on ensuring that the historic environment is given proper consideration in the preparation of the Local Development Framework, but a need to ensure that the final document reflects the importance that history has to local communities and the benefits that excellence in dealing with the historic environment bring to shared goals around better quality local jobs, better quality educational attainment, better quality public health, better quality community safety and community cohesion. Havering Community Strategy shows little understanding of the role of many important areas of community life in Havering, including the historic environment, in achieving key shared goals around jobs, education, health, safety and community cohesion.

- 2.3 Ensure that the provision of historic environment expertise is adequately resourced to enable the continuity and quality of service to be maintained.**

There is still an urgent need to resolve the Libraries staffing crisis to enable the Local Studies Library Service to play a more constructive role in enhancing the benefit of the historic environment to local communities.

- 2.4 Ensure that the Authority's key policies, such as education, highways management, tourism and culture take proper account of the local and regional historic environment.**

Progress in this area has been poor because of a lack of articulation of the importance of excellence in conservation and the interpretation of the historic environment in achieving broader goals around jobs, education, health, safety and community cohesion by the Authority or the Local Strategic Partnership.

- 2.5 Work with officers and colleagues in the Authority to develop and Conservation Management Statement or Strategy.**

There has been no progress on this.

3. COUNCIL ACTION REQUIRED

- 3.1 That the local authority work with partners on the Local Strategic Partnership to articulate an understanding of towns as centres for civilised living in Havering, to guide the work of all organisations in the Partnership.
- 3.2 That the local authority articulates its understanding of the importance of excellence in the historic environment and its interpretation to high-quality community life, and to the achievement of broader goals such as better-quality local jobs, better quality educational attainment, better quality public health, better quality community safety and community cohesion.
- 3.3 That opportunities to attract funding to enhance understanding of the historic environment at Hornchurch Airfield in a creative way - particularly through excellent children's play provision - be energetically pursued.
- 3.4 That the Local Development Framework make particular provision for the protection and enhancement of the opportunities that Havering's locally-significant heritage offers the borough.
- 3.5 That the role of the Local Studies Library Service in enhancing the quality of the economic, educational, public health, community safety future of the borough, and also of community cohesion, through its ability to interpret the historic environment for local communities, be properly recognised.



COUNCIL
29 MARCH 2006

12

QUESTIONS

1 COUNCIL TAX: SUPPORT GRANT FORMULA

To the Cabinet Member for Resources
(Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Given the ongoing controversy over the Council Tax, could the Council please explain the formulas, and why Havering receives so much less in Government Grant than neighbouring boroughs.

2 CHALLENGING RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA

To the Cabinet Member for Adult Services
(Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Jeff Stafford

Will the Cabinet Member tell this Council what importance he has placed on positively challenging all forms of intolerance including racism and xenophobia?

3 ROUNDABOUT ARTWORK

To the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning
(Councillor Eric Munday)

By Councillor Jeff Stafford

What is the significance of the artwork on the roundabout opposite CEME as you leave the A13 into Link Road in South Hornchurch(A1311)? What do the numbers refer to?

Council Meeting, 29 March 2006 – Questions



COUNCIL

29 March 2006

<p>SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA</p>
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These reports are submitted with the agreement of the Mayor as urgent matters, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

7 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

B Awards for eminent service to the Borough

C Amendments to the Constitution

D Polling Station Review

E Area Committees



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

7B

**1 FEBRUARY AND
21 MARCH 2006**

This report is submitted with the agreement of the Mayor as an urgent matter, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

REPORT TO COUNCIL

AWARDS FOR EMINENT SERVICE TO THE BOROUGH

The Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to recognise “eminent service” to the borough by conferring the honorary freedom of the borough, or (in the case of former Members) the office of Honorary Alderman.

It is also open to the Council to present non-statutory certificates in recognition of long service, irrespective of its eminence.

The Committee has considered a report inviting consideration of a suggested policy for the conferment of such awards and agreed that it would be appropriate now to establish one.

In agreeing that the Council should have formal means to consider conferring such awards, the Members of the Committee felt that each nomination should be treated on its merits and that there would be no need, therefore, for specific definitions of the service to the borough that could be so recognised.

The Committee noted that establishing a specific policy would not prevent consideration being given to the conferment of these honours at other times, should that appear desirable.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO THE COUNCIL:

- 1 That consideration be given annually as to whether the Council ought to confer the Honorary Freedom of the Borough on any person.
- 2 That, in the year of the Local Elections, consideration be given as to whether any former Member of the Council should be admitted as an Honorary Alderman.

Council, 29 March 2006

- 3 That the practice of awarding non-statutory certificates of service to Members and former Members be reinstated and that their award be considered following the Local Elections.
- 4 That, if the those recommendations are adopted, the amendments to the Constitution set out in the Appendix to this report be approved in order to give effect to them.

AWARDS FOR EMINENT SERVICE TO THE BOROUGH

Amendments to the Council Procedure Rules: Part 4 of the Constitution

Note: CPR refers to Council Procedure Rule

CPR 1 Annual Meeting of the Council:

Insert new paragraph (viii) and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly

- (viii) other than in a year when there is an ordinary election of Councillors, consider whether to confer on any person of distinction or who has rendered eminent service to the borough the Honorary Freedom of the Borough

CPR 2 Ordinary Meetings:

Insert new paragraph (iv) and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly

- (iv) at the first ordinary meeting following the Annual Meeting in a year when there is an ordinary election of Councillors, consider whether to confer on any former Member who has rendered eminent service to the Council the office of Honorary Alderman, and to present to any other Member a certificate of service.

Insert new CPR and renumber subsequent CPRs accordingly

25. CONFERMENT OF AWARDS FOR EMINENT SERVICE

25.1 Other than in a year in which there is an ordinary election of Councillors, Council shall consider at the Annual Meeting whether to confer on any person the Honorary Freedom of the borough, in recognition of their distinction or eminent services to the borough.

25.2 In a year in which there is an ordinary election of Councillors, Council shall consider at first ordinary meeting following the Annual Meeting

- (a) whether to confer upon on any person of distinction or who has

rendered eminent service to the borough the Honorary Freedom of the Borough

- (b) whether to confer upon any former Councillor the office of Honorary Alderman, in recognition of their eminent services to the Council; or
 - (c) the presentation to any Member or former Member of a certificate in recognition of service to the Council.
- 25.3 Notwithstanding rules 25.1 and 25.2, the Council may by motion consider conferring Honorary Freedom or the office of Honorary Alderman on a qualifying person, or presenting a certificate to a Member, where in the circumstances it is inappropriate to await the next Annual Meeting or that following it, as the case may be.
- 25.4 A motion to confer the Honorary Freedom or the office of Honorary Alderman shall set out the details of the “eminent service”, or the reason for “distinction” for which the award is to be conferred, and shall be passed if two thirds of those present and voting at the meeting vote in favour.



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

7C

21 MARCH 2006

REPORT TO COUNCIL

This report is submitted with the agreement of the Mayor as an urgent matter, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Council's Constitution is subject to continuous review to ensure that it remains "fit for purpose" and that there is a smooth the flow of business through the Council's decision-making processes.

A number of proposals were accordingly submitted to the Committee for changes to existing provisions, and it was agreed that Council be recommended to approve them. These changes are summarised as follows:

Proposal	Subject	Summary of proposal
1	Appointment of Members to certain committees	To ensure continuity of membership of certain key Council Committees
2	Attendance and speaking at Cabinet meetings	To improve conduct of Cabinet business
3	Rights of Reply in debate at meetings of the Council	To clarify speaking rights at the conclusion of debates in Council
4	Consideration by Council of reports	To clarify the rule on debate of reports at Council
5	Annual Reports of Committees and Member Champions	To clarify the process for considering certain Annual Reports
6	Avoiding conflict of interest: members appointed to the board of Havering Homes	To avoid possible conflict of interest between membership of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the board of Havering Homes
7	Committee meetings: time and duration	To add flexibility to the arrangements for convening and conducting Committee meetings
8	Council meetings: time and duration	To add flexibility to the arrangements for convening and conducting Council meetings

9	Ex-gratia Payments	To make better provision for paying compensation in minor cases
10	Decision making processes	To clarify the basis for decision-making processes and to improve the call-in arrangements
11	Schedule of Council meetings	To clarify the process for setting Council meetings
12	Agreeing Community Safety Partnership strategies	To clarify the individual Cabinet Member's decision-making power
13	Treasury Management	To transfer responsibility for Treasury Management to the Cabinet
14	Areas of responsibility of Overview and Scrutiny Committees	To clarify responsibility for overview and scrutiny of certain functions
15	Appointment of Area Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman	To clarify the process for appointing Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Area Committees
16	Schedule of meetings	To codify the arrangements for setting the schedule of Committee meetings
17	Committee meeting procedure rules: suspension	To make specific provision for suspension of Rules by Committees
18	Overview & Scrutiny: Topic Groups – number	To regulate the number of Topic Groups that may be running at any one time
19	Time limiting overview and scrutiny Topic Groups	To regulate the time taken by Topic Groups to carry out their reviews
20	Overview and Scrutiny: Topic Groups – terms of reference	To clarify the Committees responsible for O & S of particular services

In each case, the Committee considers that the change(s) proposed will lead to an improvement in the way in which the Council's business is conducted.

THE COMMITTEE ACCORDINGLY RECOMMENDS TO THE COUNCIL THAT THE CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION SET OUT IN THE SEVERAL PROPOSALS APPENDED TO THIS REPORT BE APPROVED

PROPOSAL 1

Appointment of Members to certain committees

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

As a general principle, Groups and Group Leaders are free (within the rules of political balance) to alter their memberships of all bodies other than Council itself, Cabinet and Area Committees, as they wish. Various changes during the term of the Council are inevitable and may impact on this, of course, and it is accepted that changes of circumstances inevitably affect the Groups' membership arrangements.

There are certain Committees, however, where it is desirable for Groups to make few, if any, changes to their representation. These Committees carry out specialist functions for which Members receive additional training in order to undertake their duties. Continuity, experience and/or special knowledge are useful, if not essential, to the effective working of these Committees.

In the case of the **Audit Committee** and **Investment Committee**, it is highly desirable for the memberships to remain unchanged for the whole four years of the Council's term and Council agreed that as a principle, on the recommendation of this Committee, in July 2004 (and that certain nominated substitutes should be appointed).

In the case of the following Committees, it is desirable for the membership to be unchanged for at least two years:

Adjudication and Review
Licensing
Regulatory Services

The Committee agrees therefore that Groups and Group Leaders should be asked to strive to avoid making changes to their representation on those Committees for as long as possible.

Amendments proposed:

In Rules for Specific Meetings, Add:

- 5 Membership of certain committees

In the interests of business continuity, Groups and Group Leaders shall strive to avoid making changes to their representation of the Committees indicated below for as long as possible and shall accordingly seek to ensure that their members remain on the particular committee for the period indicated:

Committee	Period
Adjudication and Review	At least two years
Audit	Full four year term
Investment	Full four year term
Licensing	At least two years
Regulatory Services	At least two years

For the Audit, Investment and Standards Committees, Groups shall nominate members other than those appointed to the respective Committees to be “designated substitutes”, to attend a meeting in the event that an appointed member is unable to do so. “Designated substitutes” shall be offered the same training opportunities as appointed members.

This rule shall operate without prejudice to the ability of the Council and the Standards Committee to require changes in membership where to do so is appropriate for other reasons, or to comply with statutory requirements.

PROPOSAL 2

Attendance and speaking at Cabinet meetings

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Executive Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

The Rules currently provide that Cabinet members attend and speak at Cabinet meetings as of right, and that other members may attend and speak with the consent of the Chairman. An informal rule agreed sometime ago provides that, generally, the Leaders of Groups not in the Cabinet (or their nominees - generally, the Group spokesperson for the particular service) will be invited to speak but other members will not normally do so.

It is proposed that the arrangement (which appears to have worked well) be formalised. At the same time, it is proposed to give the Chairman discretion to allow members of the public to address the Cabinet where to do so is desirable.

Amendments proposed:

Amend to read:

2 How are meetings of the Cabinet conducted?

.....

(b) Who may attend and speak?

All members of the Council may attend meetings of the Cabinet.

Without prejudice to the powers of the person presiding at the meeting to control debate as chairman, the following rights of address apply:

- Members of the Cabinet are entitled to speak at any meeting on any matter.
- Any Group Leader who is not a member of the Cabinet (or a member nominated by him) may speak on any item before the Cabinet.
- Any other member may speak only with the consent of the person presiding.

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of orderly debate, the person presiding has discretion to limit the amount of time, and the number of times, that any member may speak on a particular item.

The person presiding at the meeting has discretion to permit one or more members of the public to address the Cabinet on a matter before it provided he is satisfied that to do so will assist the Cabinet in coming to a decision on that matter. In giving such permission, the Chairman may attach such conditions as he thinks fit.

.....

PROPOSAL 3

Rights of Reply in debate at meetings of the Council

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Council Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Confusion sometimes arises over the rights of reply afforded to Group Leaders at the conclusion of debates in full meetings of Council. Current rules provide for automatic rights of reply by the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition, and for a right of reply by the Leader of the Group proposing the motion if not the Leader of the Council or the Opposition.

There is, however, no explicit provision for a right of reply by the Leader of any other Group proposing an amendment to a motion. It is suggested that it would be helpful for such a right to be provided for.

It is also considered that it would be helpful to make explicit that the rights also arise where the debate is on a report of Cabinet, a Committee or an officer.

Amendments proposed:

13.12 Rights of reply

At the close of each debate upon a motion or report, or after a motion "That the question be put" has been carried, rights of reply may be exercised in the following order:

- (i) the Leader of the Group by which any motion, recommendation or amendment was proposed (if not the Leader of the Council or the Leader of the Opposition)
- (ii) the Leader of the Opposition
- (iii) the Leader of the Council.

In each case, the appropriate Leader may nominate another member to reply on his behalf.

PROPOSAL 4

Consideration by Council of reports

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Council Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

The Rules do not make explicit provision for the way in which reports are dealt with by Council.

The Constitution provides, in various places, for Council to consider reports of the Cabinet, Committees and certain officers. Reports are rarely the subject of debate at Council and are usually “nodded through”. The rules of debate do not, however, set out what should happen if members wish to debate the recommendations of a report. This proposal aims to address that.

It is suggested that the Council Procedure Rules should refer explicitly to the consideration and debating of reports to which amendments are proposed. There would be no significant change from present customary practice in doing so but, procedurally, the way forward would be clearer.

In essence, the suggested procedure is that the any report to which an amendment is proposed be deemed to be subject to a motion “that the report be adopted and its recommendations carried into effect”, to be moved and seconded in the usual way, with debate proceeding to vote in the usual way.

Amendments proposed:

In paragraph 11, add new 11.5:

11.5 Reports to Council

Reports of Cabinet, Committees or officers to Council to which an amendment is proposed shall be deemed subject to a motion “that the report be adopted and its recommendations carried into effect”, which shall be moved and seconded by members of the Administration or the relevant committee chairman and vice-chairman. In these Rules, “motion” includes a deemed motion in respect of a report.

PROPOSAL 5

Annual Reports of Committees and Member Champions

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Council Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

There are requirements for Annual Reports to be submitted to Council by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Audit and Investment Committees and Member Champions. Some are provided for in the Council's Constitution, others by external regulation, directive or good practice advice.

Generally, the practice is for such Annual Reports to be submitted at the July meeting of Council – the first ordinary meeting following the end of the preceding municipal year (submission to the Annual Meeting would generally be impractical, given that a municipal year does not end until the Meeting begins).

In election year, however, this would be nonsensical as the report would be to a new Council in respect of work in which Members have no 'interest', while conceivably, Chairmen could be missing. It is suggested that the relevant paragraph in the Council Procedure Rules, which currently refers only to Annual Reports of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees, be amended so that (a) in election year the report is submitted to the final ordinary meeting of the year, and (b) the approach refers to all Committee/Member Annual Reports that need to be submitted.

Amendments proposed:

Insert the underlined words:

2.
 - (xiii) at the first ordinary meeting in the Municipal Year, receive reports for the previous year from the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Audit Committee and the Investment Committee and from the Champions except in the year where there are Borough Elections when the reports will be submitted to the last ordinary meeting before those elections.

PROPOSAL 6

Avoiding conflict of interest: members appointed to the board of Havering Homes

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Rules
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Details of proposal:

A conflict of interest is likely to arise if members appointed to the board of Havering Homes are also appointed to the overview and scrutiny committee that is responsible for reviewing the Council's Housing Services. The board will be responsible for management of the Council's housing properties and land under delegated executive powers; the overview and scrutiny committee will be tasked with reviewing the effectiveness of those arrangements as part of its overall concern for the delivery of good-quality housing services.

It is therefore proposed that, to avoid doubt, the Rules should provide explicitly that a member cannot serve simultaneously on both bodies.

Amendments proposed:

20 Restrictions on appointment to Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee

No member who has been appointed by the Council to the board of Havering Homes shall be appointed to the overview & scrutiny committee responsible for scrutiny of the Council's housing management functions.

PROPOSAL 7

Committee meetings: time and duration

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Currently, the Committee Procedure Rules provide that (other than in special circumstances), meetings of Committees shall commence at 7.30pm and end at 10pm.

It is proposed to amend the Rules to give greater flexibility over the starting time in particular, and in consequence the finishing time. The quality of debate and decision making is likely to be adversely affected the longer a meeting lasts: and decisions taken at the later stages of an over-long meeting on

issues such as planning applications could successfully be challenged under Human Rights and other legislation.

The amendments suggest that the normal duration of a meeting be 2½ hours (subject to the ability of the Committee to suspend the operation of this Rule).

Amendments proposed:

Amend to read:

1 Ordinary meetings of committees

- (a) An ordinary meeting of each committee shall begin at 7.30pm (or such other time as the Chairman may agree shall be specified in the agenda) on the date, and at the place, specified for that meeting in the schedule of meetings published annually.
- (b) The Chairman of a committee may, following consultation with its members, agree to a variation of the date, time or place of meeting or its cancellation, as appropriate.

9 Conclusion of meetings

- (a) All meetings shall finish when two and a half hours (including any time spent in adjournment) have elapsed from their beginning.
- (b) If it is necessary to adjourn and reconvene in order to complete the business of the meeting, such adjournment shall be to a date, time and place to be fixed by the committee in question, or failing that, by the Chairman.
- (c) As soon as two and a half hours (including any time spent in adjournment) have elapsed from the beginning of a meeting, unless a procedural motion has been passed to suspend this rule and to extend the time of the meeting, the business of the meeting will continue only until the end of the discussion then in progress. At that point the Chairman will call for a vote immediately on any items remaining and votes will then be taken in the usual way on those items without further discussion

PROPOSAL 8

Council meetings: time and duration

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Council Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Currently, the Council Procedure Rules provide that (other than in special circumstances), meetings of Council shall commence at 7.30pm and end at 10.30pm (or as soon as practicable thereafter).

It is proposed to amend the Rules to give greater flexibility over the starting time in particular, and in consequence the finishing time. Members will be conscious that the quality of debate and decision making is likely to be adversely affected the longer a meeting lasts: it is indeed conceivable that decisions taken at the later stages of an over-long meeting could successfully be challenged under Human Rights and other legislation.

The amendments proposed would ensure that meetings would terminate after a set period (subject to the ability of the Council to suspend the operation of this Rule).

Amendments proposed:

5. TIME AND PLACE OF MEETINGS

Meetings of the Council will be held at the Town Hall (or such other place that may be determined either by the Council generally or by the Mayor for a particular meeting) and begin at 7.30pm unless an earlier time is agreed in advance by the Council, or by the Mayor, and the change is notified in the summons.

9.1 Conclusion of meeting

- (i) Once two and a half hours have elapsed from the beginning of the meeting (including any time spent in adjournment), if the Mayor believes that an item could not properly be considered in the time remaining available, then notwithstanding rules 11 and 13.4, the Mayor may direct that an item be not taken, or may modify the length of speeches and general debate in respect of any item. In the case of an item already being debated, the Mayor may modify the length of speeches or restrict the number of speakers
- (ii) Unless a procedural motion has been passed to suspend this rule and to extend the time of the meeting, once three hours have elapsed from the beginning of the meeting, the business of the meeting will continue only until the end of the debate then in progress. At that point the Mayor will call for a vote immediately on any items remaining and votes will then be taken in the usual way on those items without further discussion.
- (iii) in the event of an adjournment of any meeting of the Council being necessary such an adjournment shall be to a date to be fixed by the Council, and in the event of no date being fixed then on a date to be fixed by the Mayor. For the purposes of rules (i) and (ii) above, any reconvened meeting shall be treated as a new meeting.

PROPOSAL 9

Ex-gratia Payments

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 3: Responsibility for functions
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Details of proposal:

This Committee considered this matter in November 2005 and at that time were minded to approve an extension of ex-gratia payments and for payments to cover all matters rather than those restricted in Part 3 Section 7 Appendix B i.e. loss of personal property and ex-gratia payments to housing tenants for breakdown, floods and improvements to vacated property. This will tie in with the delegation to staff to settle ex-gratia payments up to £3,000 which is not limited to certain areas. There is also a discrepancy between the figures; £3,000 in the staff delegation and £3,070 in Appendix B as the latter has inflation applied to it.

Amendments proposed:

To alter the current limit to a figure reflecting inflation and to provide for its automatic adjustment annually in line with inflation.

In section 3, paragraph 3.3.3, sub-paragraph 5

Amend "£3000" to "the limit specified in Appendix B for such payments"

In section 3, Appendix B

Amend entry for ex-gratia payment read:

Expenditure	Limit
Ex gratia payments where action taken by or on behalf of the council in the exercise of their functions amounts to, or may amount to, maladministration, to a person who has been, or may have been, adversely affected by that action (s92 of Local Government Act 2000).	£3,070 (in consultation with the Group Director Finance & Commercial and Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services)

PROPOSAL 10

Decision making processes

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 2: Articles of the Constitution Part 4: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Confusion some times arises over the respective roles of the Council, the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. To assist obviate some of the confusions that can arise, it is suggested that a statement of the general principle of Council's decision-making process would be helpful.

If agreed, the statement would be incorporated in Part 2 of the Constitution, the Articles of the Constitution, as Article 13.09 (with the existing article of that number re-numbered to 13.10). Some consequential amendments of the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules would also be required.

See also Proposal 14 following.

Amendments proposed:

In Part 2: add new Article

13.09 General principle of the decision-making process

- 1.1 The general principle of the Council's decision making process is that decisions will be taken at the lowest practicable level, having regard to operational requirements, the democratic process and the relevant provisions of law.
- 1.2 "Executive decisions" are those that are required to be taken by the Cabinet or in accordance with delegations agreed by the Cabinet to Area Committee, to individual members of the Cabinet or to specific officers.
- 1.3 Decisions that are not executive decisions shall be taken by the Council, or by a Committee to which Council has delegated power to act on its behalf, or by specific officers to whom powers have been delegated. In reaching such decisions, officers to whom powers have been delegated may consult the Chairman of the relevant Committee where to do so is expedient, and shall do so where an earlier decision so requires.
- 1.4 An individual or body to whom power to make a decision has been delegated may decline to make that decision and refer it for decision by the relevant Committee, by Cabinet or by Council instead.

2 Executive decision-making processes

- 2.1 Executive decisions that are key decisions (see Article 13, paras 13.03(6)) may be taken only if due notice has been given of them in the Forward Plan, unless the procedure for taking decisions without due notice has been followed.

- 2.2 Key decisions may be taken by Cabinet, by individual members of Cabinet or Chairmen of area committees or by officers acting in accordance with powers delegated generally or for specific purposes.
- 2.3 Executive decisions that are not key decisions may be taken by officers as well as by Cabinet, individual Cabinet members or area committee chairmen, in accordance with powers delegated generally or for specific purposes.
- 2.4 A list of all executive decisions (whether or not key decisions) taken by member and of key decisions taken by officers in the preceding week will normally be published in the weekly Calendar Brief issued on Fridays, but where circumstances so require a supplementary Calendar Brief may be issued at any time.

3 Call-in

- 3.1 A key decision may be called in by written requisition signed by two members of the Council who are not also members of the Cabinet, or by one such member and one co-opted member of an overview & scrutiny committee. Where two members sign, they must be from different Groups (which in this context includes, as if they were a Group, any independent member(s)).
- 3.2 A requisition must state the grounds upon which it is based.
- 3.3 A requisition must be received by the Chief Executive not later than three working days following the publication in Calendar Brief of the requisitioned decision. The deadline for requisitions shall be stated in Calendar Brief.
- 3.4 The two signatories may designate the requisition as a “holding requisition”, the effect of which shall be to extend the period of deadline from three working days to eight working days, to enable the two signatories to meet the relevant Cabinet member, to discuss with him their concerns and to seek a mutually satisfactory resolution. Time shall be of the essence in such cases.
- 3.5 No key decision shall be acted upon until either the deadline for submission of a requisition has passed without one being submitted, or any requisition submitted has been disposed of.
- 3.6 A holding requisition shall expire at the deadline unless, following discussion with the relevant Cabinet member, both signatories confirm that it is to be referred to the overview & scrutiny committee. It shall then be dealt with in accordance with the following paragraphs.

- 3.7 A requisition submitted in accordance with this section shall be referred to the relevant overview & scrutiny committee(s) for consideration. Such referral shall be made as soon as reasonably practicable so that, if the requisition is upheld, the matter may be referred to the Cabinet no later than its second meeting following the making of the original decision, or to the Council at its next ordinary meeting.
- 3.8 An overview & scrutiny committee may:
- Refuse to uphold the requisition;
 - If the decision has been made by an individual Cabinet member, uphold the requisition and refer the matter to the Cabinet, with or without recommendations as to action to be taken;
 - If the decision has been made by Cabinet, uphold the requisition and refer the matter back to Cabinet for further consideration, with or without recommendations as to action to be taken; or
 - If the decision has been made by Cabinet and has implications for the Council's policy framework or financial framework, uphold the requisition and report upon the matter to the Council, with or without recommendations as to action to be taken
- 3.9 For the avoidance of doubt, an overview & scrutiny committee considering a requisition may
- adjourn its meeting if further information is needed to enable proper consideration of it (but not so as to prevent its referral to the Cabinet no later than the second meeting following the making of the original decision or to the next ordinary meeting of the Council)
 - uphold a requisition in part
- 3.10 A requisition is "disposed of" when
- it is withdrawn
 - an overview & scrutiny committee has refused to uphold it;
 - Cabinet has considered the overview & scrutiny committee's reference and determined what, if any, action to take;
 - the Council has considered the overview & scrutiny committee's report and determined what, if any, action to take; or
 - in the case of a holding requisition, eight working days have passed from the publication of the decision and the requisition has not been confirmed.
- 3.11 Either of the two signatories of a requisition, or the Leader of a Group to which one of them belongs on the signatory's behalf, may withdraw the requisition at any time prior to the overview &

scrutiny committee reaching a decision on it.

- 3.12 Once a matter has been called-in, it shall not be liable to further call-in once the requisition has been disposed of, unless Cabinet reaches a substantially different decision upon that matter.

4 Action where a key decision has not been shown on the Forward Plan

- 4.1 A key decision that has not been shown on the Forward Plan shall be made only in exceptional circumstances.

- 4.2 Such a key decision shall be made only if the Chairman of the relevant overview & scrutiny committee signifies in writing that he is satisfied on the report of the member or officer responsible for making the decision that

- it was reasonable in all the circumstances for notice of need for the decision not to appear in the Forward Plan
- there is urgency for the decision to be made that justifies its being dealt with immediately rather than awaiting processing in the normal way
- there are no grounds for supposing that the decision would be likely to be called in if processed in the normal way

- 4.3 Where the Chairman so signifies, the decision may be made forthwith and implemented without delay, and shall not be liable to be called in under the procedure provided for in section 3.

In Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules

Delete existing paragraph 16 and insert:

16 Call-in (“requisition”) procedure

- (a) All decisions of Cabinet and individual Cabinet members, and all key decisions taken by staff or area committees, will be notified weekly to all members, and non-Executive members shall be entitled to requisition that decision. Notification will be by the weekly Calendar Brief (or supplementary Calendar Brief) to all members, indicating the latest date for submission of a requisition.
- (b) If the Chief Executive is notified of a requisition of a decision shown on that notification within three working days of the deemed receipt of a decision, then (subject to (g) following) that decision shall not be acted upon but shall be submitted to the next overview and scrutiny committee meeting, or one convened for the purpose, for determination.
- (c) At that meeting, the overview and scrutiny committee may resolve to initiate either of the specific call-in procedures set out in rule 5 of the Policy Framework Procedure Rules or in rule 8 of the Budget

Framework Procedure Rules.

- (d) Any requisition submitted under (b) above must be in writing and must be signed by:
 - (i) at least two non-Executive members representing more than one group, or
 - (ii) at least one co-opted member and one non-Executive member.Additionally, the requisition must give the grounds for the requisition.
- (e) Following the consideration of the matter by members if the requisition submitted under (b) above is upheld, the matter shall be referred to either
 - (i) The Council where the committee considers the matter is contrary or not wholly in accordance with the policy or budgetary framework, or otherwise
 - (ii) The Cabinet
- (f) A requisition under (b) above shall be determined at the committee meeting by simple majority.
- (g) The members may indicate at the time of submitting any requisition that it is “holding” requisition, to permit informal discussion with the Cabinet member as to the merits of the decision. Time shall be of the essence when dealing with “holding” requisitions. A “holding requisition” shall be treated as withdrawn if, eight working days having passed from the publication of the decision, both members have not confirmed by notice in writing to the Chief Executive that the requisition should be subject to the full requisition procedure provided for in the preceding paragraphs.
- (h) Any requisition may be withdrawn at any time prior to it being disposed of.
- (i) For the avoidance of doubt, “notice given in writing” for the purpose of this Rule includes notice given by fax or by email from an address or number recognised as associated with the member sending it, and shall be regarded as validly signed by both members if either an identical fax or email is received from both of them or one clearly associates him or herself with a submission by the other,

PROPOSAL 11

Schedule of Council meetings

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Council Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Council customarily agrees the schedule of its meetings for the coming municipal year (and provisionally until the end of the following calendar year) at the final meeting of each municipal year (usually held late March or early April). When the Council Procedure Rules were revised in 2005, however, by

inadvertence they provided that the scheduling should be done at the Annual Meeting.

Since the administrative processes relating to the scheduling of all meetings are geared to when the Council meets and to its schedule being fixed in March/April, deletion of the requirement that this be done at the Annual Meeting is proposed.

Amendments proposed:

In the preamble to CPR 2, delete “at the Council’s annual meeting” and insert “by the Council”.

PROPOSAL 12

Agreeing Community Safety Partnership strategies

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 3: Executive functions
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Details of proposal:

It is proposed that Cabinet Member decision-making be extended to enable the relevant Cabinet Member to accede to strategies agreed by the Havering Community Safety Partnership (of which s/he is a member, representing the Council).

Amendments proposed:

In Part 3:2, paragraph 2.2, add new entry:

- 33 The Cabinet Member for Crime and Safety to approve all Community Safety Partnership Strategies arising under the Crime and Disorder Act or other related legislation.

PROPOSAL 13

Treasury Management

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 3: 1 – Functions delegated to general council committees Part 3: 2 – Executive functions
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Details of proposal:

The treasury management powers can be exercised by either the executive or non-executive members and in the light of the fact that the function is linked to the Capital Programme proposals it seems in the light of experience more sensible for the powers to be held by Cabinet.

The Investment Committee has agreed with this proposal.

Amendments proposed:

In the table to section 1.2 , delete from the entry for Investment Committee:

Treasury management strategy

To consider the Council's treasury management strategy, making recommendations to full Council on its content and to subsequently monitor its effectiveness taking account of appropriate expert advice

In section 2.1, insert new paragraph 30 and renumber all subsequent paragraphs as appropriate:

Treasury management strategy

To consider the Council's treasury management strategy, making recommendations to full Council on its content and subsequently to monitor its effectiveness taking account of appropriate expert advice

PROPOSAL 14

Areas of responsibility of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 2: Articles of the Constitution
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Details of proposal:

There have been few changes to the areas of responsibility of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees listed in Article 6 since the adoption of the new constitution in 2002. The areas of responsibility are fairly wide but, from time to time it may not be clear which particular Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of a particular area of activity.

Accordingly, based on experience so far, it is suggested that, for the avoidance of doubt, Diversity is listed under Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Adult Education be listed under Culture and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and Environmental Strategy and Planning & Building Control are both listed under Environment.

Amendments proposed:

In Article 6: Overview and Scrutiny Committees, para 6.01. Areas of Responsibility add, in column 3 headed 'Area of Responsibility'

Diversity alongside Corporate

Adult Education alongside Culture and Regeneration

Environmental Strategy alongside Environment

Planning & Building Control alongside Environment

PROPOSAL 15

Appointment of Area Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the area committees are elected by those committees, and they hold office until the first meeting of the area committee after the next annual meeting of the Council, when the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the next municipal year are elected.

To date this has happened without constitutional difficulty. The situation could arise, however, where a committee fails to appoint to one or either of these positions. In those circumstances, the meeting would choose a member to preside for that meeting alone: strictly, however, as the Constitution allows this to happen at the "first" meeting, it could be argued that it cannot appoint the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at a "second" meeting.

The position of Chairman attracts a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) and the mechanisms for the post's appointment ought to be absolutely clear. As from the next Annual Meeting the area committees will only be meeting four times a year. If the first meeting of the municipal year fails to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman, then, if the committee were to retain the ability to elect the positions, three months would elapse before the election could take place and local decision-making start operating properly. Moreover, each area committee will comprise just six members: this being an even number, there is a greater risk of an area committee failing to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman.

The Committee considers therefore that, in cases where a Chairman is not elected at the first meeting, the matter falls to Council either to appoint a Chairman (from within the area committee's membership) or positively to empower the area committee to make such an appointment at that committee's next meeting.

The position of Vice-Chairman does not attract an SRA. If an area committee cannot agree on the appointment of a Vice-Chairman, it is suggested that they be left to operate without one.

Amendments proposed:

Deletions and Additions as shown

- (b)(i) The Chairman ~~and Vice-Chairman~~ of the area committees shall be elected by those committees and shall hold office until the first meeting of the area committee after the next annual meeting of the Council. If at its first meeting an Area Committee does not make an appointment, Council shall be so notified at its next meeting and shall either

- (1) Make the appointment from among the Area Committee's membership, or
- (2) Empower the Area Committee to make the appointment at a second or subsequent meeting.

(ii) ~~The Chairman and~~ Vice-Chairman of the area committees shall be elected by those committees and shall hold office until the first meeting of the area committee after the next annual meeting of the Council.

PROPOSAL 16

Schedule of meetings

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 3: Responsibility for Functions Part 4: Committee Procedure Rules Executive Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Every year, a schedule of meetings for the coming municipal year is published. Based on the programme of meetings for full Council, the schedule sets out the dates for meetings of Cabinet and most Committees and attempts to match meeting commitments with members' availability, although there are inevitably factors that cannot be taken into account in advance that lead occasionally to clashes of commitments for some individuals.

The schedule has been compiled on the basis of "customary practice" but it would be useful now to specify the rules within which the schedule is compiled in order to ensure that there is no doubt about the basis on which it is drawn up.

The following is a broad outline of the existing position:

Council meets seven times a year, at roughly eight week intervals (the exception being the Council Tax meeting, which has to be held in late February/early March to comply with legal requirements). The cycle starts with the Annual Council in May, and ends in late March/early April. There is a longer interval over the summer period, which means effectively that August is ignored in setting up the cycle; and the December meeting is held slightly less than eight weeks after the October meeting to avoid clashing with the Christmas/New Year period. By tradition, Council meets on Wednesdays.

Cabinet meets monthly, generally on the third Wednesday, except when that would clash with a Council meeting (Council takes precedence), normally in August (when there is no programmed meeting) and in February when the meeting's timing depends on the

meeting of Council at which the Council Tax is set.

Area Committees meet quarterly, in July, October, January and April.

The Regulatory Services Committee meets every three weeks (except around the Christmas/New Year period when there is inevitably a different pattern of meetings).

The Audit, Governance, Investment and Standards Committees and the Overview & Scrutiny Committees all generally meet once during each period between Council meetings.

Council determines the programme of its meetings each March. The Manager of Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Support within Democratic Services then draws up the schedule of other meetings, in consultation with Cabinet Members, Group Leaders and the Chairmen of the various Committees, and officers.

It is proposed that the Executive Procedure Rules (EPR), be amended to provide explicitly for Cabinet to meet monthly, on the third Wednesday of the month, except

- when Council is due to meet that day (Cabinet shall then meet a week later)
- in December, when it shall meet in the second week of the month
- in February, when it shall meet two weeks before the meeting of Council at which the Council Tax will be set
- in August, when it shall not normally meet

It is also proposed that the Committee Procedure Rules (CPR) be amended to authorise the Manager of Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Support, in consultation with Cabinet Members, Group Leaders and the Chairmen of the various Committees to determine the schedule of Committee meetings within the parameters mentioned above.

Amendments proposed:

In Part 3:3 – paragraph 3.9.2 (Functions the responsibility of the Assistant Chief Executive, Legal & Democratic Services):

Add new subparagraph

- 29 In consultation with Cabinet Members, Group Leaders and the Chairmen of Committees, to determine the schedule of meetings for each municipal year (including dates, times and places of meeting), on the basis that, so far as possible and practicable:
- Area Committees shall meet quarterly, in July, October, January and April
 - The Regulatory Services Committee shall meet every three weeks (except around the Christmas/New Year period)
 - The Audit, Governance, Investment and Standards Committees and the Overview & Scrutiny Committees shall generally meet once during each period between ordinary Council meetings

Council, 29 March 2006

- Meetings will only be arranged for Monday or Friday evenings in exceptional circumstances.

In Part 4:4 – CPR 1 Ordinary meetings of Committees:

Add new subparagraph

- (c) The Manager of Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Support shall publish a schedule of meetings for each municipal year. Subject to the provisions of this Rule and of Rule 4 following, all meetings shall be convened in accordance with the schedule.

In Part 4:6 – EPR 1(f) Cabinet meetings – when and where:

Amend to read:

- The Cabinet will meet at monthly, on the third Wednesday of the month, except
- when Council is due to meet that day (Cabinet shall then meet a week later)
 - in December, when it shall meet in the second week of the month
 - in February, when it shall meet two weeks before the meeting of Council at which the Council Tax will be set
 - in August, when it shall not normally meet

The Leader may cancel a scheduled meeting where there is insufficient business, or require the Chief Executive to convene an additional meeting at any time.

The Cabinet shall meet at the Town Hall or another location to be agreed by the Leader.

PROPOSAL 17

Committee meeting procedure rules: suspension

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

From time to time, it is useful to be able to suspend the operation of particular Committee Procedure Rules, especially that relating to the duration and closure of meetings.

The Council Procedure Rules contain a power to suspend and it is now proposed to rectify the omission by inserting a similar provision in the Committee Procedure Rules.

Amendments proposed:

Add new Rule:

11 Suspension of Rules

All of these Rules may be suspended for the duration of a meeting by motion without notice, except where a Rule is noted as not being capable of suspension.

PROPOSAL 18

Overview & Scrutiny: Topic Groups – number

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

The volume of topic group activity is such that some services cannot do justice to the topic being examined. As a consequence some groups might not be as well informed as they should in formulating recommendations. Furthermore, some topic groups find their timetables slipping as they cannot make timely progress.

It is proposed therefore that each Overview & Scrutiny Committee be entitled normally to establish a maximum of three topic groups. With six committees this would mean no more than 18 topic groups running at any time.

If the above were to be adopted a topic group covering two or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees would count as one and the Chairmen would need to agree in respect of which committee the topic group would be counted. The number could be exceeded should Council or Cabinet refer a matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that Committee decides to pursue the matter.

Amendments proposed:

Insert in paragraph 3

(b) Overview and Scrutiny Committees may

(vii) Establish Topic Groups

(C) Each committee may establish topic groups, not normally exceeding three to operate at any one time.

Any cross cutting topic group involving two or more committees counts as one topic group (and the relevant Chairmen are to agree which committee's number it counts towards).

Any topic group established in consequence of a reference of a matter from Council or Cabinet does not count towards this maximum number.

PROPOSAL 19

Time limiting overview and scrutiny Topic Groups

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

Members have expressed concern about the time some topic groups take to complete the tasks they set themselves and the open endedness of some of groups' activities.

It is therefore suggested that any topic group established by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee automatically finishes in twelve months time or some shorter period decided by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Any extension on that period would have to have the agreement of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Once the period expires, members of the topic group would have no authority to act without the committee itself extending the time to a specified date.

Amendments proposed:

Insert in paragraph 3.

(b) Overview and Scrutiny Committees may

(vii) Establish Topic Groups

(A) Any topic group automatically ends twelve months from the date of its first meeting or some shorter period decided by the Committee which established it. Any extension on that period would have to have the agreement of that Committee. Once the period expires, Members of the topic group would have no authority to act without a renewal of that authority.

PROPOSAL 20

Overview and Scrutiny: Topic Groups – terms of reference

Relevant Part(s) of the Constitution:	Part 4: Overview & Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules
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Details of proposal:

It is suggested that topic groups report back immediately to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee after their first meeting with the wording of the group's terms of reference. This ought to assist in avoiding a gradual drift during the life of a topic group away from the purpose established by the Committee when the topic group was set up. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee could then be sure that the topic group was indeed focussing entirely on the issue for which it was established.

Amendments proposed:

Insert in paragraph 3

(b) Overview and Scrutiny Committees may

(vii) Establish Topic Groups

(B) The topic group must report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which established it immediately after their first meeting with the group's detailed terms of reference for confirmation. The Committee is entitled to alter the terms of reference if it sees fit.

Council, 29 March 2006



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

21 MARCH 2006

7D

REPORT TO COUNCIL

This report is submitted with the agreement of the Mayor as an urgent matter, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

In September 2005, the Committee commissioned a review of polling districts and polling places. A set of preliminary proposals was published as a basis for discussion by Members and for wider consultation with the public and interested groups.

The Committee has now considered the outcome of that exercise and agreed detailed proposals for change within each ward, to be implemented following the forthcoming local elections.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT THE CHANGES PROPOSED FOR EACH WARD IN THE APPENDIX TO THIS REPORT BE AGREED, AND THAT, IN DUE COURSE, AN ACCESSIBILITY REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES BE UNDERTAKEN.

Ward - Brooklands

The current polling places used are:-

BL1 - St Johns Hall, Pretoria Road
BL2 - Mawney School, Mawney Road
BL3 - Sports Pavilion Cottons Park, Cottons Road
BL4 - Crowlands School, London Road
BL5 - Romford/Gidea Park Rugby Club, Crow Lane
BL6 - Rush Green Gospel Hall, Birbeck Road

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts –**
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts BL1 and BL5.**
 - (b) To redraw the boundary of BL3 to incorporate part of Jubilee Avenue, Recreation Avenue, Richards Avenue, Cromer, Norfolk, Kensington and Knighton Roads, Sheringham Avenue etc., into polling district BL4 and rename it BL3.**
 - (c) To amalgamate the remainder of polling district BL3 and BL2 into one polling district, BL2.**
 - (d) To rename polling district BL6, making it BL4.**
- (2) To make no changes to the polling place venues used, except for electors in BL3 who will be split between Mawneys and Crowlands qSchools and no longer use the Sports Pavilion in Cottons Park.**

Ward - Cranham

The current polling places used are:-

CM1 - St Luke's Church Hall, Front Lane
CM2 - Front Lane Community Hall, Front Lane
CM3 - Cranham Church, Severn Drive
CM4 - Cranham Community Centre, Marlborough Gardens
CM5 - Methodist Church Hall, Hall Lane
CM6 - Methodist Church Hall, Hall Lane

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) To retain the existing polling districts CM1, CM2, CM3 and CM4.
- (2) To amalgamate polling districts CM5 and CM6 into one polling district CM5.
- (3) To make no changes in the polling station venues currently used.

Ward - Elm Park

The current polling places used are:-

EL1 - Scargill Infants School, Mungo Park Road
EL2 - R.J.Mitchell School, Tangmere Crescent
EL3 - Scargill Junior School, Mungo Park Road
EL4 - Elm Park Hall, Eyhurst Avenue
EL5 - Baptist Church Hall, Rosewood Avenue

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) To amalgamate polling districts EL1 and EL3, renaming the new polling district EL1.
- (2) To make no changes to the other polling districts except for renaming EL5 as EL3.
- (3) To make no changes to the polling places currently used for EL2, EL4 and EL5 (to be renamed EL3) except to amalgamate polling for EL1 so that instead of using Scargill Junior and Infant Schools, the Junior School be used as the polling place.

Ward - Emerson Park

The current polling places used are:-

EM1 – Harold Wood Primary School, Recreation Avenue
EM2 – Gidea Park Church, Manor Avenue
EM3 – Gidea Park Church, Manor Avenue
EM4 – Nelmes Hall, Burntwood Avenue
EM5 – Whittaker Hall, Woodhall Crescent
EM6* – Nelmes School, Wingletye Lane

*EM1 to EM5 is in the Upminster Parliamentary Constituency, EM6 is in the Romford Parliamentary Constituency until the parliamentary boundaries become coterminous.

Outcome of the consultation

A Member's suggestion that the polling station for EM2 and EM3 be at Emerson Park Community Hall, Slewins Lane was considered. That hall is already used as a polling station for in Squirrels Heath Ward. As it is recommended that different wards should not use the same polling places and there is nowhere else suitable available, it is recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council be recommended that the following proposals be adopted -

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts**
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts EM1, EM4 and EM5.**
 - (b) To amalgamate polling districts EM2 and EM3 into one polling district.**
 - (c) To rename polling district EM6 as EM3.**
- (2) To make no changes to the polling station venues currently used.**

Ward - Gooshays

The current polling places used are:-

GS1 – Harold Hill Library, Hilldene Avenue
GS2 – Old Peoples Home, Chippenham Gardens
GS3 – Broadford School, Faringdon Avenue
GS4 – Brookside School, Dagnam Park Road
GS5 – Holy Redeemer Church, Petersfield Avenue
GS6 – Holy Redeemer Church, Petersfield Avenue
GS7 – Pyrgo Priory School, Settle Road
GS8 – Pyrgo Priory School, Settle Road

GS9 – Brookside School, Dagnam Park Road

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts –**
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts GS1, GS2 and GS3.**
 - (b) To amalgamate polling districts GS4, GS8 and GS9 into one polling district GS4.**
 - (c) To amalgamate polling districts GS5 and GS6 into one polling district GS5.**
 - (d) To rename polling district GS7 as GS6.**
- (2) To make no changes to the polling places currently used, except the electors from GS4 (was GS8) use Brookside School instead of Pyrgo Priory School.**

Ward - Hacton

The current polling places used are:-

HN1 – St Georges Hall, Kenilworth Gardens
HN2 – St Matthews Hall, Chelmsford Drive
HN3 – Hacton School, Chepstow Avenue
HN4 – Suttons School, Suttons Lane
HN5 – Ayloff School, South End Road

Outcome of the consultation

No change was proposed in the arrangements for this ward and there were no suggestions for change as a result of the consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That no changes be made to existing polling districts or places.

Ward - Harold Wood

The current polling places used are:-

HW1 – Mead Infants School, Amersham Road
HW2 – Baptist Church Hall, Ingreway
HW3 – Ingrebourne Centre, Gubbins Lane
HW4 – Methodist Church Hall, The Drive
HW5 – Harold Court School, Church Road

Outcome of the consultation

A suggestion that a mobile station in Tesco's car park be used for HW1 and HW4 was considered. It was, however, not feasible to offer electors a choice of more than one location at which to vote, as it would not be possible to stop them from voting at each polling station; and the use of Mobile units was not recommended. It is, therefore, proposed that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That no changes be made to existing polling districts or places.

Ward - Havering Park

The current polling places used are –

HP1 – Forest Lodge Activity Centre, Lodge Lane
HP2 – Clockhouse School, Clockhouse Lane
HP3 – Chase Cross Neighbourhood Centre, Hillrise Road
HP4 – St James Church Hall, Chase Cross Road
HP5 – St James Church Hall, Chase Cross Road
HP6 – North Romford Community Centre, Clockhouse Lane
HP7 – Chase Cross Neighbourhood Centre, Hillrise Road
HP8 – Dame Tipping School, North Road
HP9* - Dame Tipping School, North Road

*HP1 to HP8 is in the Romford Parliamentary Constituency, and HP9 is in the Upminster Parliamentary Constituency, until the parliamentary boundaries become coterminous.

Outcome of the consultation

The appropriateness of combining polling districts HP3 and 7 was questioned, as the polling place Chase Cross Neighbourhood Centre was located on a hill.

However, there were no other alternative suitable venues within the locality. The use of a mobile unit was not recommended. It is therefore recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted:

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts –**
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts HP1 and HP2.**
 - (b) To amalgamate polling districts HP3 and HP7 into one polling district, HP3, and polling districts HP4 and HP5 into one polling district, HP4.**
 - (c) To rename polling district HP6 as HP5, and HP8 as HP6.**
 - (d) To rename polling district HP9 as HP7 to be automatically incorporated into polling district HP6 when the Parliamentary boundaries become coterminous at the next Parliamentary election.**
- (2) To make no changes in any polling place currently used.**

Ward - Heaton

The current polling places used are:-

HT1 – Ingrebourne School, Ashbourne Road
HT2 – St Ursulas School, Straight Road
HT3 – Hildene School, Grange Road
HT4 – Betty Strathern Centre, Myrtle Road
HT5 – Betty Whiting Centre, Briar Road
HT6 – Betty Whiting Centre, Briar Road
HT7 – United Reformed Church, Chaucer Road
HT8 – United Reformed Church, Chaucer Road

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted:

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts –**
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts HT1 and HT4.**
 - (b) To redraw the boundary of HT2 and HT3 to incorporate Grange Road, Hale End and Archway into polling district HT2.**

- (c) To amalgamate the remainder of polling district HT3 with polling districts HT7 and HT8 into one polling district, HT3.
 - (d) To amalgamate polling districts HT5 and HT6 into one polling district, HT5.
- (2) As Hildene School will no longer be required, the electors who previously used this polling place be divided between St Ursula's School and the United Reformed Church.

Ward - Hylands

The current polling places used are:-

HY1 – Dukes Hall, Maygreen Crescent
HY2 – Dukes Hall, Maygreen Crescent
HY3 – St Marys School, Hornchurch Road
HY4 – Albany School, Broadstone Road
HY5 – Wykeham School, Rainsford Way
HY6 – Towers School, Windsor Road
HY7 – Towers School, Windsor Road

Outcome of consultation

It was suggested that electors from St Andrews Ward could also vote at St Georges Hall as, prior to the Ward boundary changes some electors in St Andrews Ward had voted at St Georges Hall, Kenilworth Gardens (used as the polling station for HN1). As this would be impracticable for many reasons, it is recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) To retain the existing polling districts HY3, HY4 and HY5.
- (2) To amalgamate polling districts HY1 and HY2 into one polling district, HY1.
- (3) To amalgamate polling districts HY6 and HY7 into one polling district, HY2.
- (4) To make no changes to any polling place venues currently used.

Ward - Mawneys

The current polling places used are -

MN1 – Ascension Church Hall, Collier Row Road
MN2 – St Patrick's School, Lowshoe Lane

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MN3 – Havering Road Church, Moray Way
MN4 – Good Shepherd Church Hall, Redriff Road
MN5 – Scout Hall, Abbots Close
MN6 – Crownfield School, White Hart Lane

Outcome of the consultation

No change was proposed in the arrangements for this ward and there were no suggestions for change as a result of the consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That no changes be made to existing polling districts or places.

Ward - Pettits

The current polling places used are –

PT1 – Tweed Way Social Hall, Tweed Way
PT2 – Rise Park School, Annan Way
PT3 – Parklands School, Havering Road
PT4 – Marshalls Park School, Pettits Lane
PT5 – St Michael's Church Hall, Main Road
PT6 – Marshalls Park School, Pettits Lane

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (a) To retain the existing polling districts PT1, PT2, PT3 and PT5.**
- (b) To amalgamate polling districts PT4 and PT6 into one polling district PT4.**
- (c) To make no changes in the polling places currently used.**

Ward – Rainham & Wennington

The current polling places used are:-

RW1 – Parsonage School, Farm Road
RW2 – Wennington Village Hall, Wennington Road
RW3 – Brady School, Wennington Road
RW4 – Rainham Village School, Upminster Road South
RW5 – Parsonage School, Farm Road

Outcome of the consultation

A suggestion had been made that Wennington Hall cease to be used as a polling place but, in the light of representations from that locality, the Committee decided to retain it.

RECOMMENDATION

That no changes be made to existing polling districts or places.

Ward - Romford Town

The current polling places used are:-

RT1 – Central Library, Main Road
RT2 – Manor School, Shaftesbury Road
RT3 – Salem Church, London Road
RT4 – RAFA House, 18, Carlton Road
RT5 – Gidea Park School, Lodge Avenue
RT6 – Manor School, Shaftesbury Road
RT7* – Edwin Lambert School, Malvern Road

*RT1 to RT6 is in the Romford Constituency, and RT7 in the Hornchurch Constituency, until the parliamentary boundaries become coterminous.

Outcome of the consultation

An alternative proposal was received in respect of the Romford Town Ward from the Romford Residents Association, suggesting that all of polling district RT3 east of Waterloo Road be incorporated into polling district RT1 as residents would find access easier to get to Central Library to vote.

It is, in other respects, recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) In respect of polling Districts**
 - (a) To amend RT1 and RT3 by incorporating all of RT3 east of Waterloo Road into RT1.**
 - (b) To amalgamate polling districts RT6 with RT2 into one polling district, RT2, and RT4 and RT5 into one polling district, RT4, and to rename polling district RT7 to RT5.**
- (2) In respect of Polling Places –**

- (a) To make no changes to the polling places venues currently used for RT1 and for the new polling district RT5.
- (b) To use Manor School as the polling place for the newly formed polling district of RT2.
- (c) As Salem Church does not have adequate disabled access, to use St Andrews Church Hall, St Andrews Road as polling place for RT3.
- (d) To use Gidea Park School as the polling place for the newly formed polling district of RT4.

Ward - St Andrews

The current polling places used are:-

ST1 – Fairkytes Art Centre, Billet Lane
ST2 – Langtons School, Westland Avenue
ST3 – Robert Beard Youth Centre, Inskip Drive
ST4 – The Herons, Abbs Cross Gardens
ST5 – Benhurst School, Benhurst Avenue
ST6 – Benhurst School, Benhurst Avenue

Outcome of the consultation

Concern was expressed about electors from polling district ST5 having to cross Abbs Cross Lane to get to Benhurst School and to avoid this suggested that they could vote at St George's Hall, which is the polling station for HN1. It is impracticable for voters from more than one ward to use the same polling place, not least because of the risk of ballot papers being placed in the wrong ballot boxes.

The only suitable venue within polling district ST5 was Abbs Cross School, which was not available for polling station use. No other suitable alternative venue is currently available.

It is, therefore recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) **In respect of Polling Districts –**
 - (a) **To retain the existing polling districts ST1 and ST2**
 - (b) **To redraw the boundary between ST2 and ST3 moving part of Westland Avenue and Allenby Drive from ST2 to ST3.**

- (c) To amalgamate polling districts ST5 and ST6 into one polling district, ST5.

(2) To make no changes to the polling place venues currently used.

Ward - Squirrels Heath

The current polling places used are:-

SQ1 – Royal Liberty School, Upper Brentwood Road
SQ2 – Catholic Church Hall, Brentwood Road
SQ3 – Squirrels Heath School, Salisbury Road
SQ4 – Royal Liberty School, Upper Brentwood Road
SQ5 – Royal Liberty School, Upper Brentwood Road
SQ6 – Ardleigh Green School, Ardleigh Green Road
SQ7 – Baptist Church, Ardleigh Green Road
SQ8 – Emerson Park Community Hall, Slewins Lane

Outcome of the consultation

A Member's suggestion that the polling station for EM2 and EM3 be at Emerson Park Community Hall, Slewins Lane was considered. That hall is already used as a polling station for in Squirrels Heath Ward. As it is recommended that different wards should not use the same polling places and there is nowhere else suitable available, it is recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

(1) In respect of Polling Districts –

- (a) To retain the existing policy districts SQ3 and SQ6.
- (b) To amalgamate polling districts SQ1, SQ4 and SQ5 into one polling district, SQ1.
- (c) To redraw the boundary of SQ1 along the railway line and incorporate Durham Avenue, Elvet Avenue, part of Squirrels Heath Lane and part of Brentwood Road in polling district SQ2.
- (d) To rename polling district SQ7 to SQ4, and SQ8 to SQ5.

(2) To make no changes to the polling place venues currently used.

Ward - South Hornchurch

The current polling places used are:-

SX1 – St Johns Church Hall, South End Road

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SX2 – La Sallette School, Rainham Road
SX3 – Brittons School, Ford Lane
SX4 – Whybridge School, Blacksmiths Lane
SX5 – South Hornchurch Airfield Community Association, Nelson Road
SX6 – Newtons School, Lowen Road

Outcome of the consultation

Continued use of Brittons School was suggested but the accommodation previously used was no longer available, and closure of the school for polling was inappropriate. The proposed alternative venue Whybridge School, Blacksmiths Lane, for amalgamated SX3 and SX4 polling districts, was considered to be very nearby. It is, therefore, recommended that the original proposals be agreed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council be recommended that the following proposals be adopted.

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts –**
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts SX1, SX2 and SX5.**
 - (b) To amalgamate polling districts SX3 and SX4 into one polling district, SX3.**
 - (c) To rename polling district SX6 as SX4.**
- (2) To make no changes to the polling place venues currently used, except to no longer use Brittons School.**

Ward - Upminster

The current polling places used are:-

UP1 – James Oglethorpe School, Ashvale Gardens
UP2 – Corbets Tey School, Harwood Hall Lane
UP3 – St Josephs School, St Marys Lane
UP4 – Upminster School, St Marys Lane
UP5 – Baptist Church Hall, Springfield Gardens
UP6 – Branfil School, Cedar Avenue
UP7 – Gaynes School, Brackendale Gardens
UP8 – Corbets Tey School, Harwood Hall Lane
UP9* – Corbets Tey School, Harwood Hall Lane

*UP1 to UP8 is in the Upminster Parliamentary Constituency, and UP9 is in the Hornchurch Parliamentary Constituency, until the parliamentary boundaries become coterminous.

Outcome of the consultation

There were no comments on the proposals put forward for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That the following proposals be adopted –

- (1) In respect of Polling Districts –
 - (a) To retain the existing polling districts UP1 and UP6.
 - (b) To amalgamate polling districts UP2 and UP8, to be called UP2.
 - (c) To alter the boundary of UP5 to take in part of UP4 comprising Beech Avenue, Elm Avenue and parts of Gaynes Park Road, Southview Drive and Corbets Tey Road.
 - (d) To amalgamate polling districts UP3 and the remainder of polling district UP4, to be called UP3.
 - (e) To rename polling district UP7 to UP4.
 - (f) To rename polling district UP9 as UP7 to be automatically incorporated into polling district UP2 when the parliamentary boundaries become coterminous at the next Parliamentary election.
- (2) To make no changes to the existing polling place venues currently used except that the use of St Josephs School, St Mary's Lane will no longer be required.



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

7E

21 MARCH 2006

REPORT TO COUNCIL

This report is submitted with the agreement of the Mayor as an urgent matter, pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

AREA COMMITTEE REVIEW

At its meeting in December 2005, Council accepted recommendations from this Committee on proposals to amend the Area Committee structure. At the request of the Leader of the Council, that decision was subsequently reported to each Area Committee during the January cycle of meetings.

At each Area Committee meeting, comments were made by both members of the public and Members of the Area Committee. On some occasions such views were formulated as formal views of the Area Committee, and on others simply noted as comments not necessarily reflecting the views of the Area Committee.

The report now before the Committee summarised the views formally recorded in the respective Area Committee's minutes (whether or not endorsed by the Area Committee). In addition, Members referred to comments and views expressed at Area Committee meetings at which they had been present.

The Committee noted that a particular intention of the new structure was to facilitate Area Committee Chairmen and Members arranging *ad hoc* meetings to discuss and seek to resolve local issues of concern in an informal manner.

The Committee noted also a Member's comment that the boundaries of the new Area Committees did not altogether reflect local communities. A motion would be before Council on 29 March 2006, seeking to make changes to two Area Committee boundaries.

THE COMMITTEE DECIDED, HAVING REGARD TO THE COMMENTS MADE AT THE RECENT AREA COMMITTEE MEETINGS, TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL THAT THE NEW AREA COMMITTEE

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STRUCTURE BE REVIEWED AFTER IT HAS BEEN IN OPERATION FOR A YEAR.