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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING Council Chamber - Town Hall 27 November 2013 (6.30 - 10.50 pm)

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Eric Munday) in the Chair

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

Approximately twenty-five Members' guests and members of the public and a representative of the press were also present.

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Sandra Binion, Gillian Ford, and Billy Taylor.

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

Prayers were said by Reverend Enid Pow of St George's Church, Harold Hill.

52 **MINUTES (agenda item 3)**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9 October 2013 were before the Council for approval.

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

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9 October 2013 be signed as a correct record.

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

There were no disclosures of interest.

54 **ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE MAYOR (agenda item 5)**

The Mayor expressed his disappointment at unseemly events concerning the attempted taking of photographs prior to the recent Remembrance Sunday parade and expressed a wish that such behaviour would not be repeated in future.

55 **PROCEDURAL MOTIONS (agenda item)**

A procedural motion was proposed by the Administration that the emergency motion concerning remarks made by Councillor Tucker be heard as the first item of business under agenda item 16 (Motions for Debate). The procedural motion was **CARRIED** by 46 votes to 3 (see division 1).

A procedural motion was proposed by the Administration that agenda item 16 (Motions for Debate) be heard prior to agenda item 15 (Council Questions). The procedural motion was **CARRIED** by 45 votes to 3 (see division 6).

56 **PRESENTATION ON SHARED SERVICES (agenda item 6)**

Council received a presentation from the Leader of the Council on the proposed shared services agreement with London Borough of Newham following which Members asked questions concerning aspects of the proposals. The presentation by the Leader is set out at **Appendix 1** to these minutes.

57 **SHARED SERVICES - REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (agenda item 7)**

A report of Cabinet outlined the main benefits of a shared service with London Borough of Newham and recommended that the decision on this matter be supported by Council. A report of Governance Committee recommended some changes to the Constitution to accommodate the establishment of a Joint Committee to oversee the shared service.

Deemed motions on behalf of the Administration

That the Cabinet decision be adopted by Council.

That the recommendations of Governance Committee be agreed.

Amendment by the Independent Residents' Group

That the Council rejects merging our back-room services with Newham as a false economy that puts our lean but well run Council at risk.

Following debate, the amendment by the Independent Residents' Group was **NOT CARRIED** by 46 votes to 3 (see division 2) and the deemed motions by the Administration were **CARRIED** by 46 votes to 3 (see division 3).

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet decision be adopted by Council.

That the recommendations of Governance Committee be agreed as follows:

- 1. That Council agrees to the formation of a joint committee with the London Borough of Newham to deliver various back-office functions for both Councils.**

And that the section of the Constitution dealing with Joint Working Delegations (Section 2.8) be extended to include the following:

- 2. The following amendment to the constitution is made:**

In section 2.8 Joint Working Delegations add:

(c) Shared Services Joint Committees

This is an executive committee of this Council and the London Borough of Newham with a membership of 3 councillors from the executive of each Council.

The committee's functions will be from the 1st April 2014 to control and co-ordinate the back-office functions of both Councils, in the case of Havering these will be:

- (a) Finance & Procurement
- (b) Exchequer Services
- (c) Asset Management
- (d) Legal Services
- (e) Democratic Services
- (f) Strategic HR and Organisational Development
- (g) Business Systems

These functions are set out in detail in Schedule 2 of the Joint Committee Agreement with the London Borough of Newham.

The Joint Committee will, prior to the 1st April 2014 determine the senior management arrangements for the proposed shared service.

58 **PETITIONS (agenda item 8)**

There were no petitions presented.

59 **EXPANSION OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME TO FUND THE CONVERSION OF 6,000 SODIUM STREET LIGHTS TO MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT LED LIGHTS (agenda item 9)**

A report by Cabinet recommended that Council approve funding for the conversion of 6,000 sodium street lights in the borough to more energy efficient Light Emitting Diode (LED) lights. These would generate substantial savings over time in both energy and maintenance costs to the Council. Cabinet had agreed to proceed to tender for the conversion of the existing 6,000 sodium street lights and to apply for the maximum interest free loan (£770,000) available under the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme in order to part fund the project.

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

That Council add the funding of the scheme as set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes to the Capital Budget for 2013/14.

60 **ALLOCATION OF FUNDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING (agenda item 10)**

The Council had submitted bids under the Mayor of London's 'Building the Pipeline' budding round for a number of affordable housing schemes to be built on Council-owned land held within the Housing Revenue Account. These proposals focused on the provision of bungalows for older people and general needs houses and flats in line with locally-defined strategic priorities.

The proposed schemes, which had been supported by Cabinet, were in keeping with the Council's Asset Management Plan. Details of the schemes are shown at **Appendix 3** to these minutes.

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

1. **Approval be given for an allocation of £1,001,863 from the proceeds of right-to-buy council property sales accruing between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013 for this new build programme**
2. **Approval be given for an allocation of £3,399,936 resources from the HRA Business Plan, including £353,000 already approved for Hidden Homes works, for this new build programme**
3. **Approval be given for an allocation of £311,891 of section 106 commuted sums for this new build programme**
4. **Approval be given for an allocation of £110,000 from the Adult Social Care capital budget, from Department of Health grant, to enable the addition of assistive technology to a scheme specifically for Adult Social Care clients for this new build programme**
5. **Approval be given for a virement of £655,949 from unallocated capital resources held in the Housing General Fund previously earmarked to support vulnerable and/or disabled residents**

61 **EXPANSION OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME TO PART FUND THE ROMFORD LEISURE DEVELOPMENT (agenda item 11)**

A report of Cabinet sought Member approval to finalise negotiations with Morrisons to ensure that the Romford Leisure Development can proceed. An increase of £2 million to the budget had been recommended due to factors such as construction inflation, planning requirements and ground condition issues.

Following debate, an amendment to the report by the Residents' Group that the recommendation of Cabinet be amended to read:

It is recommended that Council receive a full and transparent review of the viability of the capital cost projections and revenue assumptions in respect of the proposed Romford Leisure Centre before committing any further funding to the project.

was **LOST** by 27 votes to 18 (see division 4).

Following debate, an amendment to the report by the Independent Residents' Group that the recommendation of Cabinet be amended to read:

This Council has an aspiration for a new Leisure Centre but rejects the proposal to make a £2 million payment from reserves towards a prestige project at this time of Government imposed cuts to jobs and local services.

was **LOST** by 45 votes to 3 (see division 5).

The motion of the Administration that the expansion of the Capital programme be approved by Council such that:

Council agrees to an increase of £2m to this budget, making a revised capital budget of £28.848m, subject to the Agreement with Morrisons becoming unconditional.

was **APPROVED** without division.

RESOLVED that:

Council agrees to an increase of £2m to this budget, making a revised capital budget of £28.848m, subject to the Agreement with Morrisons becoming unconditional.

62 **APPOINTMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PERSON FOR STANDARDS ISSUES (agenda item 12)**

A report by Governance Committee advised that, following the sad death of the previous incumbent, Council was required to appoint a new Deputy Independent Person as part of the arrangements for regulating Members' Standards of Conduct. Governance Committee had received information about the experience and skills of the new Deputy Independent Person – Ms Sarah Cooper James and it was confirmed that Ms Cooper James' allowances for the position would be funded by Redbridge, with whom the Council had an informal mutual support arrangement for these roles.

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

That Ms Sarah Cooper James be appointed as Deputy Independent Person for Havering.

63 **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (agenda item 13)**

A report by Governance Committee recommended that Council approve an amendment to the Constitution whereby planning applications by the Council could be determined by the use of delegated powers, provided that such developments covered less than 1000m² floor space, were in accordance with development plans and/or national planning policies and that no third party objections had been received. It would remain open to any Councillor that wished to, to refer such an application to the Regulatory Services Committee for its consideration. It was felt that this policy would reduce bureaucracy and result in a quicker and more cost effective method of dealing with planning applications submitted by the Council itself.

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

Section of the Constitution 3.6.6 be extended to include the following category:

- (xv) To decide any application by the Council, or concerning Council land/premises, involving buildings or structures/changes of use of no greater than 1000m² floor space, where the proposal accords with development plan and/ or national planning policies and no third party objections have been received.

64 **THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY (agenda item 14)**

Cabinet had recently considered the proposed approach to the Council's financial strategy and the proposed approach to the development of a long term financial strategy. Cabinet had, as part of this process, approved and recommended to Council the adoption of the revenue budget strategy statement set out in **Appendix 4** to these minutes.

The recommendation of Cabinet was **AGREED** without division and it **RESOLVED** that:

The revenue budget strategy statement as set out in Appendix 4 to these minutes be adopted.

65 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (agenda item 15)**

It was **AGREED** without division that answers to Members' Questions would be given in writing. It was noted that question 1 was withdrawn by the Residents' Group and that this would be resubmitted to the next meeting of Council.

The text of the questions, and their answers, are set out in **Appendix 5** to these minutes.

66 **MOTIONS FOR DEBATE (agenda item 16)**

During the discussion on the first motion, the Mayor terminated the meeting of Council owing to the conduct and behaviour of some Members, which had disrupted the smooth running of the meeting and prevented orderly debate.

67 **VOTING RECORD**

The record of voting divisions is attached as **Appendix 6**.

Mayor

A shared back office support service for Havering and Newham

Full Council

Wednesday 27th November

A reminder - why we're planning to share our back office services

- Both councils need to make significant savings, whilst protecting frontline services
- Further cuts to Government funding expected
- Limited scope for further savings in existing back office
- By working together we can do much more
- Take the best from both Councils
- Learn from each other
- Create an outstanding and innovative service

Benefits of a shared back office service

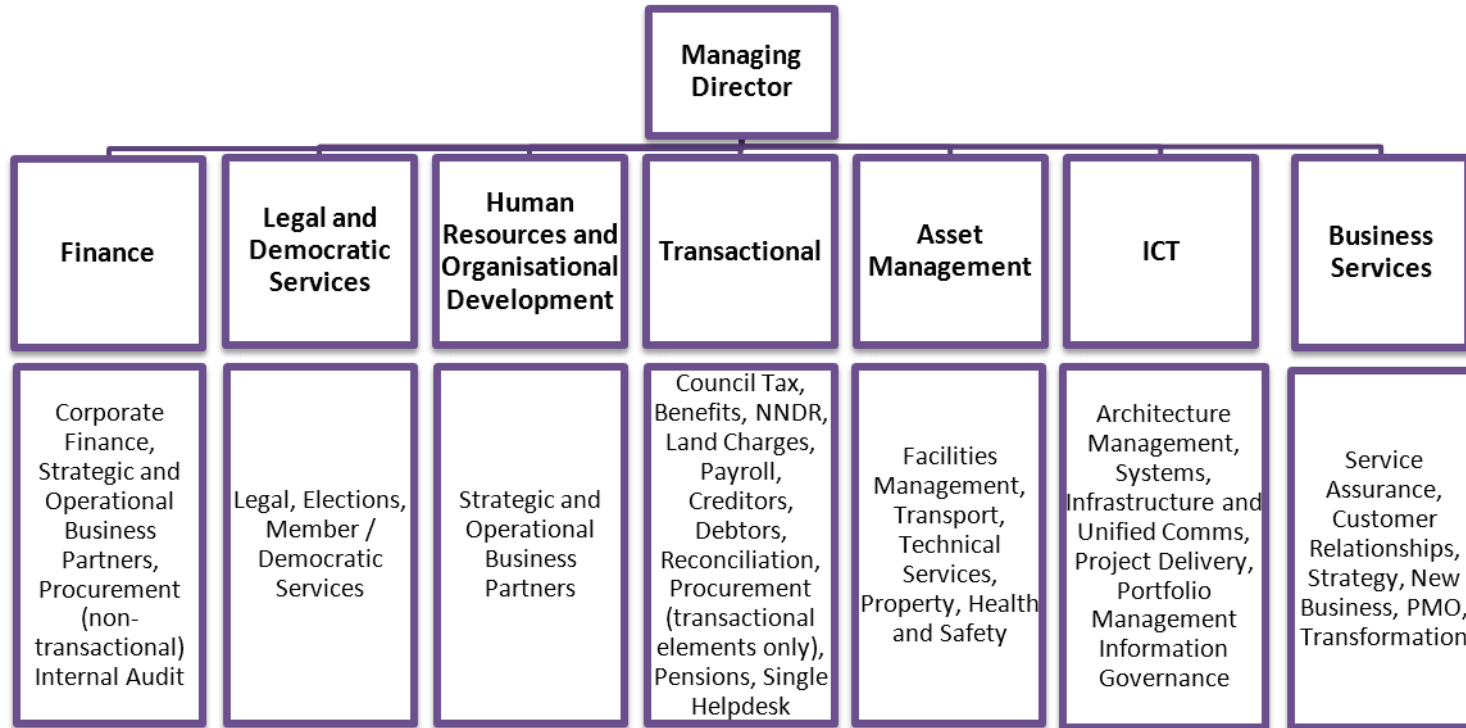
- NO SHARING OF FRONTLINE SERVICES
- Increasing operational efficiency
- Reducing costs by:
 - Sharing staff and assets
 - Common procurement
 - Sharing expertise
- Resilience and flexibility through standard systems and a pool of specialist resources
- Reducing costs of transformation - only do things once

The estimated savings

	Year 1 2014/15 (£000)	Year 2 2015/16 (£000)	Year 3 2016/17 (£000)	Year 4 2017/18 (£000)	Year 5 2018/19 (£000)
Havering	1,460	2,829	3,314	3,566	3,904
Newham	2,652	4,961	5,629	6,182	6,708
TOTAL	4,112	7,790	8,943	9,748	10,612

What is being shared and the operating model

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How the Joint Committee will work

- Cabinet members (3 & 3)
- Meet at least twice a year
- Rotate chair / vice chair of committee
- Approve senior management structure, service plans, budgets, business / strategic plan
- Monitor service levels and performance

Setting up the service – the review timetable

Year 1	Year 2	Year 2/3	Year 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payroll • Transactional Finance • Transactional HR • Pensions (contract at LBH) • Procurement (transactional / operational / strategic) • ICT • NNDR • Legal • Democratic Services / Election Services (after legal) • Facilities Management • Health and Safety • Management of School Capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational / Strategic Finance • Audit Insurance and Risk • Operational / Strategic HR • Debt Management / Recovery team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property • Technical Services • Post Room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits • Council Tax

What does it mean for staff?

- Employees are employed by each council.
- Employees retain parent authority terms and conditions.
- No TUPE of staff.
- Employees can opt to join the pension fund of relevant employing council as now.

- Questions?

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LED Streetlighting - proposed implementation - estimated financial impact

APPENDIX 2

Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Totals
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	
Total Cost	288,889	1,011,111															1,300,000
Less TFL funding		(50,000)															(50,000)
Less loan	(171,111)	(598,889)															(770,000)
Initial Cost to Council	117,778	362,222															480,000
Loan repayment		192,500	192,500	192,500	192,500												770,000
Capital Cost to Council	117,778	554,722	192,500	192,500	192,500												1,250,000
Revenue Savings																	
Energy	(25,667)	(117,553)	(166,566)	(173,229)	(180,158)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(187,365)	(2,724,188)
Component replacement		(44,235)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(58,980)	(457,095)
Total revenue savings	(25,667)	(161,788)	(225,546)	(232,209)	(239,138)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(3,594,143)
Net flow in year	92,111	392,934	(33,046)	(39,709)	(46,638)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(246,345)	(2,344,143)
Net flow cumulative	92,111	485,045	451,999	412,290	365,651	119,307	(127,038)	(373,383)	(619,728)	(866,073)	(1,112,418)	(1,358,763)	(1,605,108)	(1,851,453)	(2,097,798)	(2,344,143)	
Payback year 6																	
NPV at 4%	1	0.962	0.925	0.889	0.855	0.822	0.790	0.760	0.731	0.703	0.676	0.650	0.625	0.601	0.577	0.555	
NPV of net flow in year	92,111	378,002	(30,568)	(35,301)	(39,876)	(202,495)	(194,613)	(187,222)	(180,078)	(173,181)	(166,529)	(160,124)	(153,966)	(148,053)	(142,141)	(136,721)	
Net NPV flow cumulative	92,111	470,114	439,546	404,244	364,369	161,873	(32,739)	(219,961)	(400,040)	(573,220)	(739,749)	(899,874)	(1,053,839)	(1,201,893)	(1,344,034)	(1,480,755)	
Payback yr 6																	

SUMMARY OF INITIAL FUNDING

Salix Loan	770,000	Final decision on loan to be confirmed
LBH capital - general	380,000	
LBH capital - streetcare	55,000	
LBH capital - community safety	45,000	
Tfl	50,000	
	1,300,000	

SIGNIFICANT CONCLUSIONS

Investment pays back in year 6 - a good rate of return
 From 2018/19 onwards, ongoing base savings of £247k - **no need for further capital investment**
 Strong financial case for proceeding

ASSUMPTIONS

- 1 Assume 1.02.14 start to 31.10.14
- 2 Unit cost of capital investment - £1.3m by 6,000 units gives £217 per unit
- 3 Energy - savings pa of £154k at current prices. Per Ofgem, assumed energy 4% rise year on year from 14/15 to 18/19 - thereafter assumed to stabilise
- 4 Very prudent assumption made around component replacement; assumed above every 10 years, in line with warranty; however, industry standard is 15-20 years (Annual current cost £17.83 pa; anticipated cost of £8 pa - difference £9.83, times 6,000 units gives saving of £58,980)

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**Council 27 November 2013, Appendix 3
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITES**

Scheme 1

Redevelopment of Albyns Close redundant sheltered housing scheme to provide self-contained bungalows for shared ownership and affordable rent for downsizers.

- The site is located at Albyns Close, Rainham RM13 7YA.
- The site was previously used to provide sheltered accommodation for the elderly. The building is currently empty awaiting demolition.
- Proposed dwellings and tenure:
 - 1 x 1 bed self-contained affordable rented bungalow
 - 9 x 2 bed self-contained affordable rented bungalows
 - 10 x 2 bed self-contained bungalows for shared ownership

Scheme 2

Enlarging the existing sheltered housing schemes at Holsworthy House and Ravenscourt by building self-contained bungalows on under-used car parks and adjacent land currently outside the scheme boundary.

- Holsworthy House is located on Neave Crescent in Harold Hill.
- The development scheme is made up of two plots, an existing parking facility for the scheme which will be re-provided to the front of the scheme and a plot of land adjacent to the scheme and has no defined use.
- The proposal is to incorporate the unused drying areas of the scheme into the plots identified above and build 3 x 2 bed roomed self-contained bungalows for affordable rent for older.
- Ravenscourt is located on Ravenscourt Grove in Hornchurch.
- The scheme benefits from 3 parking facilities and one of them is used predominantly by surrounding private residential properties that are not part of the sheltered scheme. This plot has been identified as a suitable development plot where 2 x 2 bed roomed bungalows and 1 x 1 bed roomed bungalow for affordable rent can be built for older downsizers.
- All new bungalows proposed would become part of the existing sheltered schemes and the future occupants of the bungalows would benefit from the related services.

Scheme 3
Development of new affordable rented flats on Bideford Close, Harold Hill.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme consists of 2 plots of land within an existing development of 3 storey blocks. The plots currently serve as a parking facility for the existing development and it is proposed that the parking provision is recreated around the periphery of the development which would free up the plots for development. • The proposal is to build an additional 9 x 2 bed roomed flats on 3 floors for affordable rent.
Scheme 4
Redevelopment existing hard-to-let small bungalows.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bungalows are located within Harold Hill, with exact bungalows to be redeveloped yet to be finalised. Vacant properties will be prioritised. • The existing bungalows are very small and are often difficult to let. A feasibility exercise revealed that, using a modern pod construction method, the bungalows can be demolished and replaced by larger 2 storey dwellings using the same foundations. • This proposal is to replace 12 bedsit bungalows with 12 x 2 bed roomed houses for affordable rent.
Scheme 5
Redevelopment of pram stores at the base of high rise New Plymouth House and Napier House in Rainham.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal is to construct 3 x 2 bed roomed flats for social rent by converting the previously under-used pram stores on the ground floor of New Plymouth and Napier Houses in Rainham. This is an integral element of the wider regeneration of the two blocks and has been discussed with residents.
Scheme 6
Redevelopment of ground floors, including former storage areas, of the high rise Thomas England and William Pike Houses, Waterloo Gardens

Romford RM7 9BD.

- The proposal is to construct 4 x 2 bedroomed flats for social rent using the unused communal areas on the ground floors of these blocks.

Scheme 7

Supported housing scheme for Adult Social Care clients.

- This site in Ullswater Way, South Hornchurch previously contained garages. These were demolished many years ago with the site standing empty with no identifiable use since then.
- The proposal is to build 4 x 1 bedroomed bungalows and 4 x 1 bedroom flats over 2 floors for allocation to Adult Social Care clients, with one of these flats providing an officer and sleep-in space to the tenants' support provider.

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Council, 27 November 2013, Appendix 4

REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY

The Council will ensure that there is an effective Medium Term Financial Strategy in place to drive forward the financial planning process and resource allocation. The financial strategy will be determined by priorities set out in the Council's Living Ambition vision and detailed in its Corporate Plan.

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

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

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

The Council will wherever possible seek new funding and explore new ways of working. The Council will continue to look at new methods of service delivery to improve services to the public and the value for money that they provide, including working in connection with a range of other organisations and groups.

By becoming an increasingly 'connected council', Havering will continue to seek to improve efficiency and deliver better value for money. In particular, the Council will aim to identify efficiencies that will not impact on the delivery of key services to local people. Its focus will be on identifying ways to reduce the cost to tax payers of running those services.

The Council will ensure that, given the severe financial pressures it has already faced and is continuing to face, growth will only be supported in priority areas, and only where these are unavoidable. However, the Council will expect the Government to ensure that adequate funding is made available to fund any additional costs arising from new burdens placed on Havering, or from services transferred to it.

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

The Council will lobby to ensure that the Government provides adequate funding to take on any new responsibilities and to illustrate the impact of the low funding basis

for Havering and its residents, but will ensure that, in broad terms, its spending is in line with the basis on which the Government allocates grant funding, and that spending levels will be realigned against any reductions in funding. The Council will therefore continue to reduce its spending where the Government removes funding, in line with the relevant level of reduction.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The overarching objective of the Council's financial strategy remains to deliver high quality, value for money services to our community, whilst ensuring that the cost of those services is compatible with the level of funding provided to it by the Government.

COUNCIL, 27th November 2013 Appendix 5

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

1 *(Question Withdrawn by Residents' Group)*

2 **Recruitment & Retention**

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning, Cllr Paul Rochford

By Councillor Cllr Pat Murray

Question:

What initiatives is the Council adopting to improve recruitment and retention of key staff particularly social workers in Children's Services?

Answer:

We want to recruit and retain high quality social workers across our social care teams. We know that recruitment and retention of social workers is a London-wide issue and so we're looking at how we can improve our social work teams internally, as well as working with neighbouring boroughs.

We have a good record of taking on students, which means employing newly qualified social workers across all of our teams.

It can be harder to recruit and retain more experienced workers. To tackle this, we have recently employed some former agency staff and we are also participating in a major jobs fair this month.

We are also developing an attractive employment package including pay, travel costs and training opportunities to attract and keep experienced social workers in Havering.

3 **Bedroom Tax**

To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Lesley Kelly

By Councillor Michael Deon Burton

Question:

What action is the housing department taking to ameliorate the impact of the Government's iniquitous bedroom tax aka 'spare room subsidy'?

Answer:

We disagree that the spare room subsidy is iniquitous and will point to the fact that 84 family sized homes have been released because of downsizing which means families who are in need are able to let appropriate sized properties.

However, as with any significant change it was crucial to allow for a process of bedding in. We did this by providing training to front line staff who work with families, sharing useful information through Council publications such as At the Heart and boosting our debt advisor team.

Tenants who are under occupying their properties have been contacted individually and we will continue to support them and advise on possible options.

4 Duplicate Payments

To the Cabinet Member for Value, Cllr Roger Ramsey

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Question:

Following duplicate payments made by this Council of £44,168 in 2009/10 and £11,403 in 2010/11, would the Cabinet Member set out the amount of duplicate payments made in 2011/12 and 2012/13?

Answer:

We have a very robust process and IT system in place for recovering duplicate payments.

In 2011/12 duplicate payments of £217,468 were made. This mainly comprised of four large invoices. However, we have recovered 99.6 per cent of these payments, amounting to £216,553 and we continue to pursue recovery of the outstanding amount – just under £1,000.

In 2012/13, duplicate payments of £13,331 were made. To date, we have recovered £8,588 and we are confident that we will again recover the bulk of the payments.

5 Council Dwellings

To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Lesley Kelly

By Councillor Denis O'Flynn

Question:

How many Council dwellings are being kept empty to cater for specific needs and in view of the shortage of family accommodation why are the Council retaining so many empty properties?

Answer:

We do not keep properties empty to cater for those with a specific need.

Rather, we look at those who have specific needs on a case by case basis. As of this month (November 2013) we have 215 properties which are empty because they are either undergoing repair work or repair work is due to start. We have 82 homes that are empty because they are awaiting demolition.

6 Rainham War Memorial

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities, Cllr A Curtin

By Councillor David Durant

Question:

Please provide an update on plans to renovate the Rainham War Memorial and add additional names as compiled by local historian Sean Connelly.

Answer:

I'm very pleased to tell members that the Council recently secured over £86,000 from Veolia North Thames Trust to restore the borough's five main war memorials in Romford, Hornchurch, Upminster, Rainham and Harold Hill.

The funding will go towards repairing and maintaining the memorials and forms a key part of the borough's plans to recognise the centenary of the start of the First World War, in 2014.

This will form part of a comprehensive piece of work into the study of social history, education and the restoration of structures relating to the First World War, including a joint exhibition to mark the centenary with Havering Museum. It will illustrate the impact of war on the small towns and villages that existed in Havering then, and the contribution and sacrifices made by those who lived here and died serving their country.

The Borough's war memorials bear testament to the ultimate sacrifice made by Havering's residents and it is hoped that the exhibition will illuminate some

of the personal stories of those who served as well as look at the lives of those who remained on the home front.

A considerable amount of work is needed to restore the war memorial in Rainham, which we hope to complete by the end of the financial year (31 March 2014).

With regards to adding more than 800 names that have recently been identified by Sean Connelly as missing from the borough's war memorials, we're considering the best and most appropriate way to ensure that these names are recognised and we will continue to liaise with Mr Connelly.

We will also continue to work with community groups to gather information, photographs and memorabilia for the exhibition.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Warrant Officer Ian Fisher from Elm Park who recently died in Afghanistan. Our thoughts are with his family at this very difficult time.

7 Employment opportunities for young people

To The Leader of the Council, Cllr Michael White

By Councillor Barbara Matthews

Question:

What is being done by this Council to provide employment opportunities for young people between 18-24, given unemployment amongst this group in Havering is well above the London average?

Answer:

We know that we have a wealth of talented young people in the borough and we want to do all that we can to help them into employment and ensure they are able to reach their full potential.

Therefore, through the Skills and Workforce Development group, we regularly meet with representatives from Jobcentre Plus, Work Programme and several other organisations to put together projects which will help reduce unemployment in Havering.

This group has mapped the employment and skills provision across the borough, and works with businesses to encourage local recruitment.

Some of our projects include:

Securing £250,000 from the London Council's European Social Fund to fund an employability project specifically targeted at young unemployed people at risk of homelessness. They'll get advice, guidance and training.

A new City of London Scheme, Get Young People Working – The Youth Offer, has invested £100,000 into working with young people who are not in education, employment or training - to get them into four-month paid work placements. Those taking part will gain valuable work experience and skills.

We also champion apprenticeships, working with local training providers through the Apprenticeship Provider Forum to promote apprenticeships to employers and young people. This includes organising events for Apprenticeship Week in March 2014, identifying new apprenticeship opportunities from employers, and a monthly vacancy report is completed, detailing all the vacant apprenticeships in Havering.

8 Havering's population

To The Leader of the Council, Cllr Michael White

By Councillor Keith Darvill

Question:

In view of the anticipated increase in Havering's population as described in the recent Housing Strategy approved by Cabinet recently what plans have the Administration developed to address the severe pressures on public services are likely to occur in the foreseeable future?

Answer:

We know that this will be a huge challenge for us in the coming years and that's why we are already working hard to fully identify the scale of the population growth, where the budgetary pressures will be and what we can do to continue to provide the best possible quality of life to all of our residents.

We know that particular age groups such as older people and young children are likely to rise the most and this will place pressure on local services such as schools, the NHS and social care. So we're already taking action.

Last week, our Cabinet agreed to the second phase of our primary school expansion programme which will deliver 23 new classes for September 2014. It also sets out our plans to continue to provide enough places for the coming years, including encouraging new free schools - such as the Oasis Academy in Romford - as well as looking at measures such as split site and all-through schools.

In the longer-term, we will be looking at how we can work better with the NHS to prevent people needing hospital treatment. Other initiatives we'll be considering include working more closely with the voluntary sector to provide befriending schemes for isolated older people and help to keep them healthier for longer.

Using the most up-to-date information on how our population will change, we'll continue to plan for the future, ensuring we use limited resources where they are most needed and for the benefit of all local residents.

9 TNO Crime Figures

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Cllr Geoffrey Starns

By Councillor Jeff Tucker

Question:

The latest TNO crime figures show that the number of crimes committed in Rainham is high and not, as the Council have previously said, '*somewhere in the middle*' of the table of crimes?

In view of this will the Council now seriously re-consider extending the CCTV network to deter and solve crime in Rainham.

Answer:

Havering is one of the safest boroughs in London and when there is crime we work closely with the police to drive it down year on year. In Rainham specifically the statistics speak for themselves:

In the last year, Met Police data shows that burglary is down 7%, criminal damage is down 20% and robbery is down 13%. This doesn't mean we're complacent about keeping residents and businesses safe.

Council initiatives like the alert box scheme is already up and running allowing shopkeepers to stay in touch and provide assistance should the need arise. It is crucial that we look to the official statistics in cases like this and they don't support the need for CCTV at this time.

10 Green Belt Land (Lower Thames Crossing closure)

To the Leader of The Council, Cllr Michael White

By Councillor Linda Van den Hende

Question:

Given that the Department of Transport's initial consultation on the proposed Lower Thames Crossing has now closed, what plans does the Council have in terms of resisting the expected preference for 'Option C' which cuts through swathes of Green Belt land in parts of the borough?

Answer:

As one of the greenest boroughs in London we are committed to protecting our natural environment and especially our green belt land. This is why when asked to respond to the consultation about the changes to the Crossing we went for Option A. This option is not only the least costly but we think it is also the most likely to get the work to the Crossing done within reasonable time frame while having least impact on our open spaces.

The Department for Transport has yet to publish their report on the consultation so we cannot predict what the final result will be.

11 Private Sector Leasing

To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Lesley Kelly

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Question:

What action is taken to ensure that properties under Private Sector Leasing arrangements are of the appropriate standard and, in some cases appropriateness for letting and what procedures are in place to ensure that any repairs needed are carried out to the same standard and timescales as a council tenant would expect of the Council?

Answer:

Before we take on any private properties we carry out due diligence by identifying any repairs that need to be done. We look at the condition of the building, make sure that the kitchen and bathroom is up to scratch, as well as checking for fire and other health and safety hazards.

If repair work were needed, we would expect this to be done to high standard and if there were significant damage, which has not been repaired, we wouldn't take on the property at all.

In terms of repair timescales, we would aim to fix very urgent issues like a total loss of power, water or a major leak within one day. For other issues, such a partial loss of power, we would aim to fix any problems within three days. We would aim to fix not so urgent issues between seven and twenty days.

By law, we are not required to maintain the same standards for temporary accommodation as for permanent properties however we do ensure that all homes meet safety and legal guidelines.

12 Potholes

To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Barry Tebbutt

By Councillor Linda Hawthorn

Question:

What is the expected timescale from when a pothole is identified with orange paint to when it is actually repaired?

Answer:

A pothole is usually repaired within 28 days or sooner, depending on the classification of the carriageway and the severity of the defect.

13 Proposed Health Centre (former St George's Hospital)

To the Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Steven Kelly

By Councillor Nic Dodin

Question:

Confirm if the proposed Health Centre on the site of the former St George hospital will be funded through a PFI (private finance initiative) arrangement or some other funding mechanism?

Answer:

Responsibility for developing the site of the former St George Hospital in Hornchurch lies with NHS England and NHS Property Services. Under the new NHS arrangements, the Havering Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has to develop a clinical case for the proposed health centre to

go on the site, which takes into account local need and our Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

A bid would then be submitted to NHS England which decides whether it should proceed. If so, NHS Property Services then considers the options to deliver the scheme, including a wide-range of funding options. The final decision is made by NHS Property Services and NHS England.

14 Winter gritting

To the Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Barry Tebbutt

By Councillor Ron Ower

Question:

In respect of winter gritting, would the Cabinet Member please confirm that:

- a) We have sufficient supplies of grit/salt to distribute/spread during the season?
- b) Have there been any changes in the routes roads areas being given priority?
- c) Has any thought been given for residents to obtain supplies direct from the Council?

Answer:

- a) **We have sufficient supplies of grit/salt to distribute/spread during the season?**

Yes, we do believe we have sufficient grit for the winter. We have more than 2,000 tonnes currently in store. We also have a contract to replenish our stocks with the Salt Union if we need more.

- b) **Have there been any changes in the routes roads areas being given priority?**

No, the priority routes are the same.

- c) **Has any thought been given for residents to obtain supplies direct from the Council?**

We have a statutory duty to keep the public highway free from ice and snow. As you can imagine, grit is a very well used and it's a highly-desired resource, but we can't sell or give it to residents because it could be used in areas where there isn't a great need and where we wouldn't normally grit, such as front drives – which would reduce the amount we have available to keep the roads moving.

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DIVISION NUMBER:	1	2	3	4	5	6
The Mayor [Cllr. Eric Munday]	O	O	O	O	O	O
The Deputy Mayor [Cllr. Linda Trew]	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
CONSERVATIVE GROUP						
Cllr. Michael White	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Michael Armstrong	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Robert Benham	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Becky Bennett	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Jeff Brace	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Wendy Brice-Thompson	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Andrew Curtin	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Osman Dervish	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Roger Evans	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Georgina Galpin	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Peter Gardner	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Lesley Kelly	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Steven Kelly	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Pam Light	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Robby Misir	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Barry Oddy	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Gary Pain	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Roger Ramsey	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Paul Rochford	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Geoffrey Starns	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Billy Taylor	A	A	A	A	A	A
Cllr. Barry Tebbutt	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Frederick Thompson	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Lynden Thorpe	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Melvin Wallace	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Keith Wells	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Cllr. Damian White	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
RESIDENTS' GROUP						
Cllr. Clarence Barrett	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. June Alexander	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Nic Dodin	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Brian Eagling	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Gillian Ford	A	A	A	A	A	A
Cllr. Linda Hawthorn	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Barbara Matthews	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Ray Morgon	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. John Mylod	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Ron Ower	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Linda Van den Hende	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. John Wood	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
LABOUR GROUP						
Cllr. Keith Darvill	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Denis Breeding	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Paul McGeary	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Pat Murray	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Denis O'Flynn	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
INDEPENDENT LOCAL RESIDENTS' GROUP						
Cllr. Jeffery Tucker	X	✓	X	O	✓	X
Cllr. Michael Deon Burton	X	✓	X	O	✓	X
Cllr. David Durant	X	✓	X	O	✓	X
Cllr. Mark Logan	A	A	A	A	A	A
UNITED KINGDOM INDEPENDENCE PARTY						
Cllr. Lawrence Webb	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Sandra Binion	A	A	A	A	A	A
Cllr. Ted Eden	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓
Cllr. Fred Osborne	✓	X	✓	O	O	O
TOTALS						
✓ = YES	46	3	46	18	3	45
X = NO	3	46	3	27	45	3
O = ABSTAIN/NO VOTE	1	1	1	5	2	2
ID = INTEREST DISCLOSED/NO VOTE	0	0	0	0	0	0
A = ABSENT FROM MEETING	4	4	4	4	4	4
	54	54	54	54	54	54

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