

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD
Council Chamber - Town Hall
15 November 2023 (7.30 - 8.55 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	Dilip Patel, Keith Prince, Timothy Ryan and David Taylor
Havering Residents' Group	Laurance Garrard, Gerry O'Sullivan (Chairman) and Natasha Summers
Labour Group	Mandy Anderson and Matthew Stanton (In place of Katharine Tumilty)
East Havering Residents' Group	Martin Goode

16 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded members of the actions to be taken in case of an emergency.

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillors Philip Ruck, Bryan Vincent and Katharine Tumilty (Matthew Stanton substituting).

18 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor David Taylor declared a non-pecuniary interest.

19 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Board resolved to exclude members of the public and press for agenda item 5.

20 CALL-IN OF AN EXECUTIVE DECISION - PROPOSED LOANS TO MERCURY LAND HOLDINGS LIMITED (COMPANY NO: 09878652), FOR DEVELOPMENT AT FORMER ST BERNARD'S DAY CENTRE, PEEL WAY.

The Board were presented with a report following a call-in requisition requesting additional information on the financial viability of the scheme,

Mercury Land Holding's (MLH) ability to complete and sell the units and the financial impact to the Council for issuing the loan.

It was explained to members that the viability assessment would be reviewed and the cost estimates would be based on the market rates at that time. Members noted the scheme had not been put out to tender at the time of the meeting but, although officers were confident in the cost estimates they would be reassessed. It was also noted that if costings did increase when the tender would be sought there was a contingency in place.

Members questioned who the advisors to the scheme were and officers explained the advisors were knowledgeable in both property and land values however members were keen to have independent advisors to the scheme. It was then explained to members that if the construction of the units did not go ahead, the vendor would determine what would happen to the land.

The Board:

Considered the requisition of the Key Executive Decision on the proposed loans to mercury land holdings limited (company no: 09878652), for development at former st bernard's day centre, peel way and **decided** not to uphold it by 9 votes to 0 with 1 abstention.

Although the requisition was not upheld, Members, through the Chair, requested that Cabinet were asked to consider:

- The viability of the Council taking on the project itself
- The viability of MLH retaining and renting the units
- Adding social housing to the development
- Independent advise separate to the Council and MLH
- Involve group leaders when discussing future investment strategy decisions

Chairman