

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

11 February 2010

8pm-10:02pm

PRESENT

COUNCILLORS

Edna Stevens (Chairman)
Sue Livings (Deputy Chairman)

David Carter
Nick Churchill
Tony Durcan
Tony Hall
Shona Johnson
Patrick McClarnon
Linda Pailing
Clive Souter
Mark Wilkinson

Simon Carter
Jean Clark
Mike Garnett
Andrew Johnson
Joshua Jolles
Nick Macy
Russell Perrin
Lorna Spenceley

Joel Charles
Bob Davis
Mark Gough
Eddie Johnson
Muriel Jolles
Chris Millington
Lesley Rideout
Robert Thurston

APOLOGIES

Lee Dangerfield
Maggie Hulcoop

Sarah Dangerfield
Eleanor Macy

Manny Doku
John Strachan

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

65. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 December 2009 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

66. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

(i) Special Council meeting: 25 February 2010

The Chairman noted that Council would tonight set the budget for Harlow and the level of Council tax for Harlow only.

This was because the Council tax for the Essex Police Authority has not yet been finalised.

A Special Council meeting would therefore be held on 25 February 2010 on the rise of the special Policy and Resources Committee meeting for the single issue of setting the final amount of Council Tax for the Council's area.

(ii) Christmas Cards

The Chairman noted that as the budget for next year would be discussed at the meeting, she would like to inform the meeting that the cost of her Christmas cards for 2009 was £40.

67. **APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

Resolved: That the following amendments be made to the membership of Committees:

Appointed: Policy and Resources – Cllr Linda Pailing
Environment and Community – Cllr Muriel Jolles
Housing – Cllr Simon Carter
Discharged: Licensing – Cllr Chris Millington
Planning – Cllr Lee Dangerfield

68. **APPOINTMENTS TO WORKING PARTIES/PANELS/GROUPS**

None.

69. **APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY**

Resolved: That Cllr Tony Hall be appointed as a representative on the Harlow Leisurezone Board.

70. **PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None received.

71. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Attached at Appendix A.

72. **MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

None received.

73. **REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES**

(1) **Standards Committee - 13 January 2010**

Report from the Audit Commission on Ethical Governance

Resolved: That the report of the Committee and the contents of the Ethical Governance Review be noted.

(2) **Special Policy and Resources Committee - 4 February 2010**

The Council proceeded to the consideration of the reference from the Policy and Resources Committee which was circulated to Members after the agenda for the Full Council meeting had been published:

The Chairman noted that there was a typographical error on page 134 (General Fund Budget). The proposed car parking charges for the 1st hour at Bush Fair, The Stow and Old Harlow car parks should read nil or zero and not £0.20p as shown. This correction did not affect the financial estimates in respect of any of the proposals being discussed or debated.

Cllr Chris Millington (seconded by Cllr Robert Thurston) moved:

PROPOSED AMENDMENT (REDUCTION) TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S 2010/11 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET

#	Brief Description	Revenue £
	Regulatory Service	
1	Planning Services – staffing reductions Deletion of three vacant posts, and reduction in hours of manager post in Development Control	130,440
2	Waste Contract – delete Growth item for permanent Education/Enforcement officer post	35,000
3	Licensing and Hackney Carriages – delete budget for overtime	7,320
	Growth & Regeneration	
4	Civic Centre - energy cost saving from reducing the opening hours of the Civic Centre four evenings per week. Total saving of £20,400, of which £2,800 would accrue to the HRA.	17,600
5	Regeneration Unit - staffing reductions 4 posts	146,300
	TOTALS	336,660

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT (ADDITION) TO THE
ADMINISTRATION'S 2010/11 GENERAL FUND REVENUE
BUDGET**

#	Brief Description	Revenue £
	Community Services	
6	Welfare Rights & Advice Service – increase grant aid to the HWRAC	40,000
7	Community Wardens – one extra warden (total cost £28,200 of which £7,000 chargeable to the HRA)	21,200
8	Grant Aid – increase grant aid budget	49,850
9	Alfeva House – maintain the use of the building as a meeting venue for groups	2,560
10	Town Show – re-instate budget for show	20,000
	Regulatory Services	
11	Cleansing – re-instate block cleanse	80,000
12	Special Refuse – re-instate free service for the collection of bulky waste	35,000
13	Recycling - do not introduce a bookable service for collection of green waste at 50p plus vat per bag	40,550
14	Pest control – abolish charges for rat treatment	2,500
	Growth & Regeneration	
15	Neighbourhood car parks – abolish charges at Bush Fair and The Stow car parks	45,000
	TOTALS	336,660

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET

The proposed amendments to the General Fund budget will impact on the HRA as follows:

Additional cost of one extra Community Warden (item 7)

£7,000

Civic Centre energy savings from reduced opening hours (item 4) -

£2,800

The net additional cost of £4,200 will be managed within existing resources.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

Cllr Mark Wilkinson (seconded by Cllr Jean Clark) moved:

**PROPOSED (REDUCTION) TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S
2010/11 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET**

#	Brief Description	Revenue £
1	Waste Contract – reduce staffing costs associated with publicity and enforcement.	35,000
2	Regulation Service - reduce use of consultants	50,000
3	Chairman's Allowance – remove budget	15,370
	TOTALS	100,370

**PROPOSED (ADDITION) TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S 2010/11
GENERAL REVENUE FUND BUDGET**

#	Brief Description	Revenue £
4	Pest Control – abolish charges for treatment of rat infestation	2,500
5	Bulky Waste – continue to provide free service.	35,000
6	Neighbourhood Car Parks – abolish the Pay and Display scheme in Old Harlow, The Stow and Bush Fair with effect from June 2010.	62,870
	TOTALS	100,370
	Cost to be met from Reserves:	
7	From Waste Contract item 1 above	-35,000
8	Grants Panel – one off additional funding in 2010/11 only.	30,000
9	Aneurin Bevan Centre – delay in the introduction of hire fees to 1 October 2010.	5,500
10	Welfare Rights and Advice Service	40,000
11	Town Show – reinstate Council support for 2010/11 only.	33,000
	TOTALS (from Reserves)	73,500

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

- (a) Harlow Council Corporate Plan 2010/11-2014/15

Resolved: That that the Corporate Plan 2010/11-2014/15 be approved and implemented from April 2010.

- (b) Updated Medium Term Financial Strategy

Resolved: That

- (i) the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2010/11 to 2014/15 be adopted;
- (ii) the Invest to Save projects approved under delegated authority, as set out in paragraph 8(c) and Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.

(c) Revised General Fund Revenue Budget 2010/11

Resolved: That

- (i) the proposed General Fund estimates for 2010-11, as set out in Appendix A based on paragraph 7, be approved;
- (ii) the proposed fees and charges, as set out in Appendix D, be approved;
- (iii) the minimum level of recommended General Fund reserves for 2010-11 of £1,300,000 (noting the adjustments to the general uncommitted level of reserves as set out in table of paragraph 36) and the proposed movements and resulting balances on earmarked reserves as shown as Appendix F, be approved;
- (iv) Harlow Council's Band D Council Tax for 2010-11 is £251.55, which represents a zero increase compared to the Band D tax for 2009-10.

(d) Non-Housing Capital Programme 2010/11-2014/15

Resolved: That

- (i) the forecast Non-Housing Capital Programme outturn for 2009/10 be approved, as set out in Appendix A;
- (ii) the Non-Housing Capital Programme for 2010/11 be approved, as set out in Appendices B and C;
- (iii) temporary borrowing of £1.116m in 2009/10 and £nil in 2010/11 be approved to support the capital programme;

- (iv) priority be given to the repayment of temporary borrowing totalling £1,981,000 during 2010/11, from the realisation of earmarked capital receipts from asset disposals;
 - (v) the Non-Housing Capital programme forecast for 2011/12 to 2014/15, as set out in appendix D, be noted.
- (e) Treasury Management Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision 2010/11

Resolved: That

- (i) the revised Treasury Management Strategy be approved for implementation with immediate effect (current investments made in line with existing the 2009/10 Strategy remain unaffected) including, as detailed within the report:
 - (A) the annual investment and borrowing strategies;
 - (B) the Treasury Management Policy Statement (referred to in paragraphs 15 and 16 and set out in Appendix 2);
 - (C) the Treasury Management Reporting Arrangements (referred to in paragraphs 17 and 18 and set out in Appendix 3);
 - (D) the revised Scheme of Delegation for treasury management (referred to in paragraphs 19 to 21 and set out in Appendix 4);
 - (E) the estimated Prudential Indicators for 2009/10 to 2012/13 (referred to in paragraphs 34 and 35 and set out in Appendix 5);
 - (F) the Policy on borrowing in advance of need (see paragraphs 64 to 66);
 - (G) the Creditworthiness Policy (referred to in paragraphs 87 to 92 and supported by the

schedules of Specified and Non-Specified Investments set out in Appendix 8);

(H) the Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) (referred to in paragraphs 106 to 109 and set out in Appendix 10a);

(I) the Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision for 2010/11 (referred to in paragraphs 110 and 111 and set out in Appendix 11);

(ii) the revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice 2009 be adopted in its entirety and those clauses set out in Appendix 1, pages 206-207 of this report, be formally adopted.

(f) HRA Subsidy Determination 2009/10-Amending Determination 2009 (The Rent Offer)

Resolved: That

(i) the “rent offer” made by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) be rejected;

(ii) the above decision be exempt from call-in as any delay that may result from call-in would be prejudicial to the interests of the Council as set out in paragraph 19 of the report.

(g) Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2010/11

Resolved: That

(i) the rent increase for individual dwellings be agreed, as set out in paragraphs 10 to 22 of this report and be effective from 5 April 2010. This equates to an average weekly rent of £73.56, an average increase of 0.86%;

(ii) service charges for individual dwellings be agreed, as set out in paragraphs 23 to 31 of this report and be effective from 1 April 2010 for leaseholders and 5 April 2010 for tenants. This equates to an average weekly service charge to tenants of £2.00;

- (iii) heating charges be increased/decreased, as set out in paragraphs 32 to 37 of this report and be effective from 1 April 2010 for leaseholders and 5 April 2010 for tenants. Average weekly general needs charges move to £6.33 per week (leaseholders £14.78 per week equivalent) and for sheltered accommodation £9.18 per week;
- (iv) garage rents be increased to £7.65 per week (for a standard garage) and proportionate increases for other garages, car ports and car spaces, from 5 April 2010, as set out in paragraphs 38 to 39 of this report;
- (v) other charges be increased, as set out in paragraphs 40 and 41 of this report, with effect from 1 April 2010;
- (vi) the growth and savings outlined in paragraphs 50 and 51 be approved;
- (vii) the HRA budget, as set out at Appendix A (as amended*) of this report, be approved and the variances in Appendix B (as amended*) be noted;

* as set out in Amendment Sheet 1 (at pages 269-270).

- (viii) a minimum HRA working balance recommended by the Section 151 Officer of £1,230,000, as set out in Appendix C, be approved;
 - (ix) the above decisions be exempt from call-in as any delay that may result from call-in would be prejudicial to the interests of the Council, as set out in paragraph 4 of this report.
- (h) Housing Capital Programme 2010/11 to 2014/15

Resolved: That

- (i) a revised housing capital programme 2009/10 be approved, as set out in paragraphs 3 to 8;
- (ii) the housing capital programme 2010/11 be approved, as set out in Appendix B (as amended**);

** as set out in Amendment Sheet 2

- (iii) borrowing of £3.409m in 2010/11 be agreed to support the 2010/11 capital programme and a contribution of £325,000 from the Housing Revenue Account be made towards the Housing Capital Programme during 2010/11;
 - (iv) the policy in respect of allocating 50% of Right to Buy receipts after pooling to the housing capital programme, be amended to 0% in 2009/10 only;
 - (v) any garage receipts and receipts from miscellaneous housing land transfers be utilised to support the housing capital programme with effect from 1 April 2009;
 - (vi) the forecast 2011/12 to 2014/15 be noted, as set out in Appendix B (as amended**);
- ** as set out in Amendment Sheet 2 (at page 278).
- (vii) the above decisions be exempt from call-in as any delay that may result from call-in would be prejudicial to the interests of the Council as set out in paragraph 10 of this report.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.1 the meeting continued after 10:00 pm.

74. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Attached at Appendix B.

75. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

None received.

76. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following committee meetings be noted:-

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Date</u>
Environment and Community	19/01/10
Audit	20/01/10

Scrutiny	21/01/10
Policy and Resources	28/01/10
	04/02/10
Housing	04/02/10

77. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL