

MINUTES OF THE ST ANN'S AND HARRINGAY AREA ASSEMBLY THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2011

Councillors Adamou (Chair), Alexander, Brabazon, Browne, Canver and Schmitz

Observer Councillor Guest
Inattendance
ShortList

Apologies Councillor

LC20. WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR - CLLR GINA ADAMOU

Cllr Adamou welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Haringay and St Ann's Area Assembly.

LC21. COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE CLLR KOBER - LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader of the Council gave an update on the budget position of the organisation in light of the significant cuts to government spending. The Council had recently been informed of how much funding it would receive from central government and which identified a £86.9m shortfall over the next three years. The impact of this would fall more in the next financial year due to a frontloading effect and would require £47m of savings to be identified for 2011/12. This would be particularly challenging set against the general increase in demand for Council services owing to factors such as an ageing population, the implications of changes to housing benefit etc.

A report setting out the Council's budget for 2011/12-2013/14 was due for consideration by Cabinet on 8 February followed by final approval by Full Council on 24 February. Overview and Scrutiny Committee would also be considering the budget in detail. The results of the consultation exercise undertaken on the budget were being carefully analysed to ensure they were reflected in the final budget paper.

The Leader provided the following responses to questions:

Members allowances: In response to a question on whether a contributory cut would be made to Cabinet Member allowances it was confirmed that a proposal had been put forward for a £150k reduction across the whole Member package of allowances.

Postal distribution of budget consultation booklet: the Leader advised that a decision had been made not to post the survey to all residents due to the high costs associated. The approach used to distribute the survey had aimed to achieve a balance between maximising engagement and cost. Over a thousand responses to the consultation had been received so it was considered this approach had been successful.

Icelandic bank deposits update: the Council had invested in 3 Icelandic banks, two UK registered and one registered in Iceland. A 95-96% return on the £5m invested in the UK registered banks was expected. The process for recovery from the Iceland registered bank was more uncertain with ongoing court cases around the prioritisation for paying back public organisations.

**MINUTES OF THE ST ANN'S AND HARRINGAY AREA ASSEMBLY
THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2011**

Impact of cuts on elderly: concerns were raised on how the Council would ease the impact of the potential closure of residential homes. The Leader acknowledged that difficult choices had to be made in relation to social care in the light of significant budget cuts but that the Council had a duty to set a legal budget. In relation to the potential closure of specific residential homes, it was emphasised that scoping work was still ongoing in relation to the future of three homes. Any closures would require further consultation and for an Equalities Impact Assessment to be undertaken. Additionally, any closures would occur over a fairly long period of time and would be carefully planned. Work was underway in relation to maintaining drop in centre services through investigating the potential for them to be run in an alternative way for example by the voluntary sector.

Replacement of chairs in the Council Chamber: in response to a question it was confirmed that the chairs were replaced owing to their poor condition and had been paid for in April 2009.

Impact of the closure of Neighbourhood Management: concerns were raised on the likely negative impact on community engagement. The Leader advised that no formal decision had yet been made on the future of the service, with the Cabinet considering various options in its January and February meetings. As such, it was not a suitable time to discuss specifics also in consideration of the presence of staff members potentially affected. The Leader emphasised the Council's ongoing commitment to community engagement but that significant challenges needed to be faced owing to the financial situation.

It was advised that Resident's Associations might be willing to help distribute consultation documents.

LC22. HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION UPDATE AND THE INTRODUCTION OF A PILOT DISCRETIONARY LICENSING SCHEME - PRESENTATION / CONSULTATION STEVE RUSSELL - HOUSING IMPROVEMENT TEAM

It was advised that a HMO (Houses in Multiple Occupation) pilot project was proposed to be introduced in the Harringay and St Anns wards in response to concerns raised at the Area Assembly about the large numbers of these often poorly managed properties in the area. The scheme to be trialled would impose additional licensing conditions on the HMOs to the areas either side of Green Lanes, Turnpike Lane and Salisbury Road. Currently all large (above 3 storey) HMOs across the borough required licensing but because of the level of complaints about anti-social behaviour associated with HMOs in the specific area such as noise and litter, extending licensing controls to all HMOs was proposed. This would allow a targeted approach for problem HMOs and co-ordination of services to ensure that properties met appropriate standards including fire safety, that the landlord was a fit and proper person, the correct council tax was being paid and more control provided over anti-social behaviour. Should licensing conditions not be complied with, the Council would have power to take action including serving notices, doing works in default etc. Fines and prosecution could also be taken if necessary.

Consultation was underway to introduce this additional scheme to evidence its necessity. A survey of the area was being carried out including delivery of the consultation document to all houses in the area. The consultation period would end on

MINUTES OF THE ST ANN'S AND HARRINGAY AREA ASSEMBLY THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2011

7 March, with a view to seeking Cabinet approval in June to allow the scheme to come into force in October. Attendees were encouraged to fill out the survey form and it was also explained that officers were available to talk to resident's groups on request. It was suggested that the benefits of HMO licensing be added to the consultation form.

It was questioned whether the pilot scheme could be extended further into St Anns ward but it was advised that the scheme needed to remain effective and manageable and as such couldn't be too large. The scheme was also resource intensive although the fee income received would provide financial support to some of the activity. It was confirmed that it was hoped to extend the enhanced licensing scheme across more of the borough over time, particularly focusing on areas where a large number of complaints about HMOs were being made.

LC23. NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARTER

Cllr Brabazon introduced the newly launched Green Lanes Charter, which aimed to provide a framework for partnership working between the community and Council services and to drive priorities over the next 5 years through the 5 key themes identified. Consultation on the Charter was undertaken during the Green Lanes festival at the steer of the Green Lanes Strategy Group.

In order to promote the Charter, it was suggested that a short article if possible be included in Haringey People magazine and that copies could be circulated alongside the distribution of other material in the area e.g. the HMO licensing survey.

LC24. CABINET QUESTION TIME

Cllr Canver, the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods provided responses to questions from attendees:

Progress with subletting issues: it was advised that work was progressing with the Voids Team in relation to securing empty Council properties faster. Compulsory Purchase Powers could be used in relation to private sector properties.

Laurel's pharmacy planning application: in response to concerns on plans for a pharmacy to be located on site at the operation of a private company, it was confirmed that Planning Committee would be determining the application and would take into consideration any representations made.

LC25. SOAP BOX

Mario Petrou talked to the meeting about his concerns about the new pharmacy proposed for the Laurels health centre and the negative effect it might have on other pharmacies in the Green Lanes area. He encourages other residents to register their objections.

Ruby Brown spoke about her concerns on the impact of funding reductions on older people and how the community would need to work together.

**MINUTES OF THE ST ANN'S AND HARRINGAY AREA ASSEMBLY
THURSDAY, 13 JANUARY 2011**

The Chair together with the other ward councillors, thanked Dasos and his team for all the excellent work they have carried out over the years and were sorry to see them go. The St Ann's and Harringay Neighbourhood Team were given everyone's good wishes for the future.

LC26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Cllr George Meehan

Chair