

MINUTES OF MEETING Cabinet HELD ON Tuesday, 8th February, 2022, 6.30 - 7.40 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Peray Ahmet (Chair), Mike Hakata, John Bevan, Zena Brabazon, Seema Chandwani, Julie Davies, Isidoros Diakides, Erdal Dogan and Ruth Gordon

ALSO ATTENDING VIRTUALLY: Cllr Gunes, Cllr Connor, Cllr Dennison

723. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred to the information as set out in the agenda and advised that the meeting was being filmed.

724. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lucia das Neves.

725. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

726. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Erdal Dogan declared a personal interest in relation to item 9, Scrutiny Panel Review on Haringey Family of Schools, as he had been the Chair of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel between 2020-21 when the review had commenced.

Councillor Seema Chandwani declared an interest in relation to item 11, To Award a Leasehold Building Insurance Contract, as she was a Homes for Haringey leaseholder. She confirmed that she would not take part in the discussion and voting on this item and would leave the room for the duration of the item.

727. NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN PRIVATE, ANY REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED AND THE RESPONSE TO ANY SUCH REPRESENTATIONS

No representations were received.

728. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

729. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/QUESTIONS

No deputations, petitions, or questions were received.

730. MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET BY THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair advised that the budget scrutiny recommendations would be considered as part of item 10 and the scrutiny report on Haringey Family of schools would be considered as part of item 9.

731. SCRUTINY PANEL REVIEW ON HARINGEY FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

Cllr Gunes, Chair of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel introduced the Scrutiny Review on Haringey Family of Schools, thanking fellow Panel members and Co-opted members for their support and participation in the review.

She outlined that there were now a far greater variety of schools than previously, with a number of new types being established in recent years. The resulting fragmentation presented challenges for local authorities, which included ensuring that all schools were providing a good standard of education and planning and co-ordinating the provision of school places. Schools were also now subject to varying degrees of local democratic control and the capacity of local authorities to influence them had been diminished.

The Chair of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel referred to the demand for primary school places, which had reduced, and there was currently a significant surplus of reception places in Haringey. This had serious budgetary implications for many primary schools due to the way in which schools were funded. The drop in demand for places would feed through to secondary schools in due course. Demand for school places was subject to fluctuation though and there would be a need for sufficient places to be available to accommodate any future increases in demand for places.

The review report had looked at how the Council could respond most effectively and strategically to these issues and made a number of recommendations.

The Chair of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel continued to present the recommendations as set out in pages 4 to 7 of Appendix 3.

The Leader invited questions on the Scrutiny Review report.

There were questions from Cllr Bevan on the lessons learnt from the school learning event on exclusions, and when the follow up event would take place. It was noted that there was a learning event, last night, on exclusions with a further event planned for the summer considering inclusion in the borough.

It was noted a framework of support had been put in place to help schools at a much earlier stage when the pupil's needs become apparent. There was particular focus in the framework on primary schools and the boundaries that are put in place during a school day. The AD for Schools and Learning offered to provide more details to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Licensing and Planning outside of the meeting.

Councillor Brabazon, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Early Years welcomed the report and the discussion on school structures. She set out the Cabinet response to the scrutiny recommendations, highlighting the following:

- That all of the recommendations were agreed or partially agreed.
- The areas explored in the review concerning: admissions, finance, school numbers, SEND and academisation were significant issues in their own right for schools.
- Paragraph 6.11 highlighted that the Department of Education had carried out a consultation on the school improvement and brokering grant. This was resulting in £250k being removed from the budget for supporting school improvement. The Council would be working with schools to manage and contain this decrease in funding to provide the support needed in 2022/23.
- Grateful to the Scrutiny Panel for inviting people to speak and provide evidence on this subject of schools. It was important for the Council to maintain relationships with the Church diocese as it continues to consider school numbers and planning places together with the support needed to a variety of schools.
- The Cabinet Member added that she had attended the learning event on exclusions, referred to by the AD for Schools and Learning, and she commented on the good progress made in support, positively impacting on the most vulnerable students as exclusion numbers had reduced. It was noted that the Haringey Education Department [HEP] was working well on early intervention programmes and offering alternative placements for a while and then allowing children & young people to go back into their mainstream school. This successful approach was being developed further, in the next couple of the months.

In response to questions from Cllr Gordon, Cllr Chandwani, and the Leader of the Council, the following information was provided.

- With regards to the action, being taken on absenteeism and where children/young people were frightened to come back because of issues from the pandemic, attendance was recorded, monitored and discussed each week. During the pandemic schools were contacting families that they were most concerned about on a daily basis to assess how they were doing.
- The AD for Schools and Learning provided information on the Council's statutory requirement, through the Schools Welfare team, to pursue non-attendance. This team dealt with intransigence issues and was making sure children and young people were enrolled and getting to school. However, there was work done with schools, well before, Welfare services became involved to support schools to improve attendance of some pupils.

- The Council could identify attendance issues through their daily monitoring activities which included considering data to understand if was a pattern of absences developing or where they identified that the absences were going above a certain level. The AD for Schools and Learning was happy to provide more detail outside of the meeting.
- Responding to the question on the support for BAME children who were under achieving but not at risk of exclusion, there was work being completed by the BAME achievement group and it was noted that Black Afro Caribbean student's attainment at Commerce House had significantly improved.
- The Cabinet Member noted that there was good improvements across the borough on attainment and it was important to celebrate all successes in attainment and not just in GCSE and A level exams. There was an online Saturday academy, which had over 80 registered pupils. This was a supplementary school for year 7 and year 4 to help improve attainment.
- The Director for Children's Services outlined that there was a high focus by teachers and schools on a framework and contained strategies for narrowing the attainment gap for BAME students.
- It was noted that , the curriculum was reviewed and updated to be culturally appropriate. Examinations would be likely reinstated nationally and would help further measure progress in attainment. There was focus on all BAME group and this included support for parents to help their children with attainment.
- There was a question on how the Council focus on support to different ethnicity groups given the way the data was collated. A big minority of BAME groups such as Turkish and Kurdish pupils could be hidden under 'white other' in schools data. It was noted that the Council did have data on the BAME ethnic groups; it was collected locally, and provided a focus for the Schools service. It was noted that this data could be collected at every level. The Council could analyse and extrapolate this data to gain a constant understanding of how different BAME cohorts were performing. This data was also used with school improvement partners to challenge schools around outcomes and underpinned part of the BAME pledge programme. This helped ensure outcomes for BAME children and young people as good as can be.

RESOLVED

1. To consider the report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee attached at Appendix 1 and Appendix 3.
2. To agree the response to these recommendations attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

Reasons for decision

On 29 November 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met to approve the recommendations of the scrutiny review of the Haringey Family of Schools.

In its work, which contributed to the report, the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held several evidence gathering sessions and took evidence from Council officers and key stakeholders. The CYP Scrutiny Panel then made several recommendations, which were adopted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 29 November 2021.

Alternative options considered

None.

732. 2022/23 BUDGET AND 2022-2027 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation introduced the report, which finalised the Council's General Fund and HRA 2022/23 Budgets and Medium-Term Financial Strategies for 2022-2027.

It was noted that the only items not confirmed at this stage were:

- Notification of final levy sums however, the Council were not forecasting any levies to be significantly different to the sums currently budgeted for;
- Confirmation of the GLA council tax element;
- The implications of the Final 2020/21 Local Government Finance Settlement announcement and any other late notifications from government departments – there were no indications that this would bring forward any / material changes to the provisional figures already received.

The report outlined that these final notifications were not expected to lead to any significant budget implications, but an update would be included in the Full Council report on 1st March; this would also include details of any final budget adjustments required.

The Cabinet Member advised that the budget was well received and the consultation dialogue had been genuinely constructive with no hidden issues.

There was praise for the Finance Team and other officers for compiling the report and producing good budget proposals. The Cabinet Member continued that this was the first budget that balanced without savings and allowed for substantial levels of investment in revenue and capital whilst maintaining a fiduciary approach.

The Cabinet Member continued to refer to alignment of the budget to the administration's future manifesto and political priorities. This included:

- increase in council housing,
- helping the most vulnerable,
- support to the social care budget which in the past had been chronically underfunded,
- maintained commitment to the green agenda,

- support to parks, active travel,
- investment in preventing antisocial behaviour,
- significant increase in budget allocation for the prevention of violence against women and young girls , and
- investment in public participation, co- design and co-production.

The Cabinet Member also highlighted the following:

- A Council Tax rise by 1.99% for the general Council services, plus a further 1% social care precept, which added up to a total of 2.99%, (i.e. lower than the anticipated rate of inflation). In practice, this would mean that the increase for a Band D property (excluding the GLA element) would be 83 pence per household per week,
- Continuing with a comprehensive Council Tax Reduction Scheme which meant that over 16,000 residents would pay no Council Tax at all;
- Recognition that even this modest council-tax increase, at this challenging time, would be an additional ask for some. However, it was felt that without these resources, the Council would have to cut back support and services for the most vulnerable in the borough and therefore felt appropriate to put forward.

In conclusion, the Cabinet Member was proud to recommend this budget for Cabinet and onward full Council approval.

Councillor Pippa Connor, Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the budget scrutiny meetings presented the Overview and Scrutiny recommendations set out at appendix 9 of the report.

She thanked Finance officers and scrutiny officers for facilitating the process, also praising co-opted members for helping members maintain their community focus of what scrutiny were trying to achieve in the budget recommendations.

The Vice Chair of Scrutiny spoke about the format of the papers for budget Scrutiny Panel meetings and, for future years asked that, these reports were made more accessible to the public as it was helpful to ensure that these are as clearly presented as possible.

She asked that each of the four Scrutiny Panels have their own budget specific papers for their respective revenue and budget areas.

The Vice Chair for Overview and Scrutiny continued to refer to the recommendations set out at Appendix 9 - pages 191 to 231.

In response to questions from Cllr Dennison, and Cllr Connor the following information was provided:

- With regards to the contention that the budget assumed a structural gap of £65m over the next term of the administration and would involve budget cuts of this sum, the Cabinet Member underlined that there would be no cuts to the budget. The Director for Finance further responded that the report made clear there was a balanced budget for next financial period, a pre-requisite for the

budget to be considered at full Council on the 1st of March. The Director further explained that as the MTFS moved forward in year two, and onwards, there was a significant budget gap identified in the report. However, this was now around 50% less for 2023/24 than assumed for and reported in the draft MTFS report considered in December 2021. This helped make the closing of this budget gap more accessible over this coming year.

- The ambition for the forthcoming period was to consider efficiency improvements and opportunities to fulfil the roles of the Council at a lower total cost.
- The Director of Finance continued to outline that the long-term challenge for the budget had not changed for a number of years. This report was consistent with information provided in the February 2021 reports but there were a number of factors being considered that might change the long-term budget positions in a positive way. This included potential re-establishing of the funding base for Local Authorities under the Government's levelling up scheme and the council were waiting to find out how this will affect the longer-term funding position. This was hoped to be better known in the course of this year and would help consideration of the approach that the Council will take for year three, when the budget gap is expected to widen. The Council would also use this coming longer financial period in year one and year two, to develop the change and transformation agenda to also mitigate the budget gap which if continued at the scale described would require the Council to do things differently.
- In response to Cllr Connor's request from Scrutiny to consider the risk of additional costs to cover increased future borrowing, the Cabinet Member advised that Overview & Scrutiny Committee had put forward constructive recommendations and the responses were set out in Appendix 9. The Finance Team would continue to work on considering and accommodating them as much as possible. Overall, the long financial strategy calculations took into account projected loan charges and revenue costs.
- In response to the question that there was a reduction in the Place budget area of £3.7m, it was clarified that there were no new cuts involved to this budget area. There were budgetary changes between December 2021 and February 2022 in the Place budget that looked like the budget had been reduced but this was to do with the budget forecast revised estimates concerning the concessionary fare charges and other areas outlined at paragraph 1.3.
- The Director of Finance advised that the revised budget forecast areas listed in paragraph 1.3 and 1.4 would primarily fund budget growth in the social care services area. The Cabinet Member concurred and highlighted the potential accumulative positive impact of invest to save schemes on the budget.

RESOLVED

1. To consider the outcome of the budget consultation as set out in Appendix 8, to be included in the report to Council. Having taken this into account this report does not propose any amendment to the Budget for 2022/23 nor to the MTFS 2022/27.
2. To approve the responses made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations following their consideration of the draft budget proposals as set out in Appendix 9. Having taken this into account this report does not propose any amendment to the Budget for 2022/23 nor to the MTFS 2022/27.
3. To propose approval to the Council of the 2022/23 Budget and MTFS 2022/27 Budget Proposals as set out in Appendix 2.
4. To propose approval to the Council of the 2022/23 General Fund Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix 1, including specifically a General Fund budget requirement of £262.923m, but subject to final decisions of the levying and precepting bodies and the final local government finance Settlement.
5. To propose approval to the Council of the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022-2027 as set out in Appendix 1.
6. To propose approval to the Council that the overall Haringey element of Council Tax to be set by London Borough of Haringey for 2022/23 will be £1,484.13 per Band D property, which represents a 1.99% increase on the 2022/23 Haringey element and with an additional 1% for the Adult Social Care Precept amount.
7. To note the Council Tax Base of the London Borough of Haringey, as agreed by the Section 151 Officer under delegated authority (Article 4.01(b), Part 2, of the Constitution), as 79,303 for the financial year 2022/23.
8. To propose approval to the Council of the 2022/23 Housing Revenue Account budget as set out in Table 9.4.
9. To propose approval to the Council of the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022-2027 as set out in Table 9.4.
10. To approve the changes to the rent levels for residents in temporary accommodation, Council tenants in General Needs and Sheltered/Supported homes reflecting the recent rent guideline requiring Councils in England to increase rent by no more than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September of the previous year plus 1%. This will increase the average weekly rents as set out in Tables 9.1 and 9.2.
11. To agree the changes to service charges to tenants as set out in Table 9.3.
12. To propose approval to the Council of the 2022/23 – 2026/27 General Fund capital programme detailed in Appendix 4.

13. To propose approval to the Council of the 2022/23 – 2026/27 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme detailed in Table 9.5.
14. To propose approval to the Council of the Capital Strategy detailed in Section 8 of this report.
15. To propose approval to Council of the strategy on the use of flexible capital receipts to facilitate the delivery of efficiency savings including capitalisation of redundancy costs (Appendix 6).
16. To propose to the Council the Dedicated Schools Budget (DSB) allocations for 2022/23 of £282.282m as set out in Appendix 7.
17. To note the funding to be distributed to primary and secondary schools for 2022/23 based on the figures advised to Schools Forum and submitted to the Education Funding Agency in January 2022 set out in Section 10.
18. To note the budgets (including the use of brought forward DSG) for the Schools Block, Central Services Block, High Needs Block and Early Years Block as per Appendix 7.
19. To delegate to the Director of Children Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families, the power to amend the Delegated Schools Budget to take account of any changes to Haringey's total schools funding allocation by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
20. To delegate to the Section 151 officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, the power to make further changes to the 2022/23 budget proposals to Full Council up to a maximum limit of £1.0m.

Reasons for decision

The Council has a statutory requirement to set a balanced budget for 2022/23 and this report forms a key part of the budget setting process by setting out the forecast funding and expenditure for that year. Additionally, in order to ensure the Council's finances for the medium term are maintained on a sound basis, this report also sets out the funding and expenditure assumptions for the following four years in the form of a Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Alternative options considered

The Cabinet must consider how to deliver a balanced 2022/23 Budget and sustainable MTFS over the five-year period 2022/27, to be reviewed and ultimately adopted at the meeting of Full Council on 1st March 2022.

Clearly there are options available to achieve a balanced budget and the Council has developed the proposals contained in this report after determining levels of both income and service provision. These take account of the Council's priorities, the extent of the estimated funding shortfall, the estimated impact of wider environmental factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the Council's overall financial position.

These final proposals now presented take into consideration the funding allocations announced in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, the responses to the consultation and the Overview & Scrutiny process.

733. COUNCIL'S CORPORATE INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation introduced the report which sought approval to award the contract for insurance arrangements to successful tenderer(s) for the following: Property, Combined Liability, and Terrorism.

Following consideration of the exempt information, it was

RESOLVED

In accordance with Contract Standing Order (CSO) 9.07.1(d), to approve the award of the contracts for the provision of the Insurance Services via the Insurance London Consortium (ILC), effective from 1 April 2022, for a period of five years with a break clause at the end of year three and year four to the following providers: Property Insurance Services (Lot 1) to Insurer 1 (identified in Appendix A to the report), Terrorism Insurance Services (Lot 2) to Insurer 1 (identified in Appendix A to the report), and Liability Insurance Services (Lot 3) to Insurer 3 (identified in Appendix A to the report).

Reasons for decision

The current insurance contracts commenced on 1 April 2017 and were based on a three year agreement with an option to extend by a further two years. The extension period will end on 31 March 2022. It is necessary to ensure that the new contracts are in place from 1 April 2022, to avoid any gap in insurance cover for the Council.

Alternative options considered

Purchasing stand-alone cover for the Council, using agreed procurement processes. This was not considered appropriate because:

- Haringey Council's membership of the ILC has enabled it to benefit from significant economies of scale in procuring policies for a number of local authorities; these economies of scale would not be available if the Council were to opt for a single authority procurement route.
- Membership of the ILC has also allowed the Council to share best practice on insurance and risk management practices, which would not be available on a stand-alone basis; and
- The insurance market for local authority risks has historically had a limited number of competitors. Procuring through the ILC has previously increased the number of providers willing to respond and resulted in lower premiums.

734. TO AWARD A LEASEHOLD BUILDING INSURANCE CONTRACT

At this point in the meeting, Cllr Chandwani left the room.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation introduced the report which sought approval to award a contract for the provision of the Leaseholders' Building Insurance Service from 1 April 2022 for a period of five years with a break clause at the end of year three and year four.

Following consideration of the exempt information, it was

RESOLVED

In accordance with Contract Standing Order 9.07.1(d), to approve the award of the contract for the provision of the Leaseholder Building Insurance Service from 1 April 2022 for a period of five years with a break clause at the end of year three and year four to Insurer 1 (identified in Appendix A to the report).

Reasons for decision

The current insurance contract commenced on 1 April 2017 and was based on a 3-year agreement, with an option to extend by a further 2 years, expiring on 31st March 2022. It is necessary to ensure that the new contract is in place from 1 April 2022, to avoid any gap in insurance cover for the Council and leaseholders.

Alternative options considered

The Council as the freeholder of the property it owns is required to put appropriate insurance arrangements in place. Procurement of stand-alone cover for leaseholder insurance was carried out via Open tender process.

Historically, leaseholder insurance tender was run utilising the Crown Commercial Services framework (Pro 5 Insurance Framework) but this resulted in reduced competition compared to tenders in recent years. As a result, for this tender, the Council decided to use the Open tender process.

Cllr Chandwani did not take part in the discussion or voting on this item and re-entered the room at the end of the item.

735. APPROVAL FOR HARINGEY TO WITHDRAW FROM THE LONDON HOUSING CONSORTIUM JOINT COMMITTEE

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing, and Licensing Services introduced the report which sought Cabinet approval for Haringey to withdraw from the London Housing Consortium (LHC) Joint Committee and, in the case of its disbandment, to agree to consider at a future meeting options for the Council's continued participation in a new LHC corporate entity.

RESOLVED

1. To agree that Haringey, as one of the ten Constituent Authorities of the London Housing Consortium (LHC) Joint Committee, withdraws from the LHC Joint Committee, resulting in its potential disbandment in December 2022 at the earliest.

2. That Haringey notifies LHC of this decision by 25th February 2022 at the latest.
3. To agree that Haringey will consider at a future meeting, the options for continued participation in the new LHC corporate entity when the options are known.

Reasons for decision

Recommendation 3.1 takes forward the decision reached by all 10 constituent boroughs, including Haringey, on the 3rd of December that the Joint Committee be disbanded and a new corporate entity explored.

Members of the LHC Joint Committee recognised that the dynamic nature of LHC as a commercial enterprise is also at odds with the democratic and regulatory processes that are required by local authorities. It is felt that LHC would benefit from having more autonomy around:

- Governance and organisational design
- Job design and reward
- Future provision of pension
- Financial modelling and risk management.

Recommendation 3.3 indicates that LHC would encourage current Constituent Authorities to consider participation in the new corporate entity. LHC officers indicated there would still be potential, with this decision to explore partnership related working with neighbouring boroughs and maintain the principle of collaborative working.

Alternative options considered

To continue as a Joint Committee which would require two or more Constituent Authorities with one of them acting as lead authority. This was not considered as Haringey voted to withdraw from the Joint Committee and new corporate entity be explored.

Please note in the unlikely event Hillingdon decides not to withdraw, the Joint Committee will continue (provided that at least one other Constituent Authority also decides not to withdraw).

736. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

RESOLVED

To note the minutes of other bodies.

737. SIGNIFICANT AND DELEGATED ACTIONS

RESOLVED

To note the significant and delegated actions.

738. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of urgent business.

739. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of agenda items 18-21 as they contained exempt information as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972; Paragraph 3 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information; Paragraph 5 – information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

740. EXEMPT - COUNCIL'S CORPORATE INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Cabinet noted the exempt information and resolutions as per minute 733.

741. EXEMPT - TO AWARD A LEASEHOLD BUILDING INSURANCE CONTRACT

At this point in the meeting, Cllr Chandwani left the room.

The Cabinet noted the exempt information and resolutions as per minute 734.

Cllr Chandwani did not take part in the discussion or voting on this item and re-entered the room at the end of the item.

742. EXEMPT - MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the exempt minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 18 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

743. NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of exempt urgent business.

CHAIR: Councillor Peray Ahmet

Signed by Chair

Date

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