

Chair:
Councillor Charles Adje

Deputy Chair:
Councillor Harry Lister

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report covers matters considered by the Executive at our meeting on 31 January 2006. For ease of reference the Report is divided into the Executive portfolios.
- 1.2 We trust that this Report will be helpful to Members in their representative role and facilitate a fruitful dialogue between the Executive and all groups of Councillors. These reports are a welcome opportunity for the Executive on a regular basis to present the priorities and achievements of the Executive to Council colleagues for consideration and comment. The Executive values and encourages the input of fellow members.

ITEMS OF REPORT

Finance

2. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE – NOVEMBER 2005

- 2.1 We considered the regular finance and performance monitoring report for November 2005 which showed the overall revenue position for each of the services and indicated the emerging pressures amounting to a variation of around £200,000 (less than 0.1% of the total revenue budget). This represented a significant improvement in the variation against plan and suggested that the remedial actions in place were taking root. The HRA continued to show cost pressures in repairs but options had been on how these pressures could be contained within the available resources without significant impact on service performance and they were expected to reduce the net overall overspend to £300,000 an improvement of £200k on the projected overspend in the previous month's report.
- 2.2 With regard to the capital position, pressures on the Building Schools for the Future programme, Tech Refresh and CCTV implementation were driving the projected variance of £0.6 million and work was continuing to resolve these with the objective of balancing at year end.
- 2.3 In terms of performance, Haringey was officially an improving borough as recognised by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment made by the independent Audit Commission. The report highlighted improvements in a wide range of service areas from Children Service's completion of all reviews of children on the register due so far this year, to Social Service's improvement in waiting times for new older clients, to Environmental Service's acceptable standard of cleanliness for 98.2% of Zone 1 streets. There remained areas for improvement which were receiving support from managers in the improvement and performance service.
- 2.4 Financial regulations required that proposed budget changes be approved by us and those agreed were shown in the table below. These changes fell into one of two categories:

- budget virements, where it was proposed that budget provision be transferred between one service budget and another. Explanations were provided where this was the case;
- Increases or decreases in budget, generally where notification had been received in-year of a change in the level of external funding such as grants or supplementary credit approval.

2.5 Under the Constitution, certain virements were key decisions. Key decisions were:

- for revenue, any virement which resulted in change in a directorate cash limit of more than £250,000; and
- for capital, any virement which results in the change of a programme area of more than £250,000.

Key decisions were highlighted by an asterisk in the table.

2.6.1 The following table sets out the proposed changes. There were two figures shown in each line of the table the first amount column related to changes in the current year's budgets and the second to changes in future years' budgets (full year). Differences between the two occurred when, for example, the budget variation required related to an immediate but not ongoing need or where the variation took effect for a part of the current year but would be in effect for the whole of future years. We report that we agreed to the virements set out in the following table:

Period	Service	Key	Amount current year (£'000)	Full year Amount (£'000)	Description
8	Housing	Cap	49		Additional allocation of disabled facilities grant
8	Environment	Cap*	430		Leisure services health and fitness equipment funded from revenue lease rentals budget
8	Environment	Rev	109		Additional TFL funding for London cycle network
8	Environment, Finance	Rev	43	86	Merger of Parking shop with Cahiers – transfer of overhead charges
8	Children	Cap	107		New LSC allocation for neighbourhood learning in deprived communities
8	Children	Cap*	5,087		New DFES funding for sixth form centre construction
8	Children	Cap	150		New SF allocation for city learning centres
8	Children	Cap*	1,033		New big lottery funding for St Thomas More school
8	Chief Executive's	Rev*	589	589	Agreed increase in legal fees to fund new case management system
8	Chief Executive's	Rev	120	120	Customer focus budget funded from business units in Access services

3. FINANCIAL PLANNING 2006/7 TO 2008/9

3.1 We reported on this matter to the Council meeting held on 6 February 2006.

Children and Young People

4. CROWLAND SCHOOL – ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TEMPORARY SCHOOL, THE PERMANENT REBUILD AND THE OUTCOME OF THE INVESTIGATION FOLLOWING THE FIRE

- 4.1 The Council will be aware that on 4 October 2005, an accident caused a fire to start on Crowland School which spread rapidly. All children and staff swiftly evacuated the building to safety. The Children's Service moved rapidly to create an alternative location to deliver education by the following Monday at the PDC. We considered a report which advised us that since the October fire, the Service had been transporting children twice a day to the PDC. This arrangement was not a sustainable long term option for children, parents or staff and it would take some 18 months to re-establish permanent education provision on Crowland school.
- 4.2 Alternative options had been reviewed to deliver education in this interim period and the Children's Service had sought to find a solution that kept the children together ideally within the Crowland community. A proposal was made to create a temporary school on the sports pitch within the Gladesmore Community School site, with an all weather sports pitch being provided in Markfield Park as a temporary replacement. It was reported to our meeting that the Planning Applications Sub-Committee had granted the necessary planning consent and plans to proceed with the works would be implemented as soon as possible so that the temporary school was operational by April 2006 assuming the building works were not interrupted for any unforeseen reason. All areas affected by the works connected with the temporary provision would be re-instated, including all areas in Markfield Park affected by the construction of the all weather sports pitch immediately after building works to Crowland School were completed.
- 4.3 Design work had progressed in developing a solution to re-instate the fire damaged teaching block at Crowland Primary School. This would be subject to a separate procurement action and current forecasts indicated a re-occupation of the teaching block by the school around August 2007 in readiness for the new school year. Costs incurred, excluding betterment, would be recovered through the Insurance policy provided by AIG Insurance Company.
- 4.4 Immediately following the making safe of the school site, the Chief Executive had commissioned an investigation into the contractual, health and safety and site operations and management of the building works at the school. This had not included an evaluation of the cause[s] of the fire and any recommendations that flowed from that Report as this required receipt of the Fire Investigation Branch Report which was still awaited at the time of our meeting. However, it appeared that the fire was started by a domestic sub-contractor of the main contractor which had not been notified to the Council in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.

- 4.5 The investigation report was not submitted to us or publicly available presently as it made some recommendations which had resulted in disciplinary investigations being undertaken. Until these proceedings were complete the full report could not be made available. Irrespective of the incident itself the Investigation Report had highlighted both areas of non-compliance with Council Standing Orders and areas of learning which would improve the Council's performance in the future. Key recommendations were made to us together with the action being undertaken.
- 4.6 We report that we approved the actions taken by officers to offer temporary accommodation and to re-instate the school following the remedial works including the submission of a Planning Application for service provision in the interim period. We also approved the actions and instructions of the Chief Executive in commissioning the Crowland School Fire Investigation Report and giving directions to both the Children's Service and to officers generally in terms of its outcome which we endorsed and adopted. We also agreed that the scope of the re-instatement of the School be defined by what the loss adjuster agreed to fund so that there would be no additional resource requirement. We placed on record our thanks to pupils, parents and teachers for their forbearance.

5. CHILDREN'S CENTRE DEVELOPMENT: SUPPORTING THE ORTHODOX JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE SEVEN SISTERS AREA

- 5.1 We considered a report which advised us that, consistent with the principles of the Every Child Matters Change for Children Programme, children's centre services had to include support those in most need, and should be tailored to meet the particular needs of individual children, their families, and the communities in which they were based. We noted that by March 2006 there would be 10 Children's Centres (4 already designated) and a further 8 by 2008. Together they would target almost 15,000 children under 5 years of age. The capital grant funding for Children's Centres for Phase I (2004-2006) was £3.4m and for Phase II (2006-2008) was £3.3m.
- 5.2 Through long term partnership working with the neighbouring authority, Hackney Council and with the Lubavitch Foundation, an opportunity had been identified to develop a Children's Centre which would meet the needs of Orthodox Jewish families living in the Seven Sisters area. By contributing to a new Children's Centre, including nursery provision, there would be opportunities for Haringey's Orthodox Jewish families to access high quality early education, family support, health and children's services.
- 5.3 We also noted that the £1.2 million scheme involved building a multi-purpose building adjacent to the existing nursery facility. The centre would provide the children's centre core offer services that met the cultural and religious needs of the Orthodox Jewish families and a range of universal services that would be accessible to all local families. In addition, 25 new full-time day care places and 9 childminder places would be created from 6 months upwards. Without a specific and tailored Children Centre, there was a risk that young Orthodox Jewish children and parents would not access early learning and family support services.
- 5.4 We report that we agreed that the Children's Service should seek to work in partnership with Hackney Council and the Lubavitch Foundation to support the needs of the Jewish community in Seven Sisters ward as part of the second phase of the Children's Centre

development and that, through contracting with Hackney Learning Trust, a maximum contribution of £300,000 of Phase II Children's Centre capital be made from within the current programme for Haringey to the £1.2 million Children's Centre development to support the needs of the Charedi Orthodox Jewish Communities in Seven Sisters ward.

- 5.5 We also agreed that the contract with Hackney Council outline the range of children's centre services to be delivered in line with the children's centre core offer up to a maximum of £45,500 in year 1 and year 2 with an allowance of 3% for inflation and that all of these decisions be subject to a legal agreement with the Hackney Learning Trust who would undertake all contractual arrangements with the voluntary sector children's centre provider, including monitoring and evaluation requirements.

6. PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE CAMPSBOURNE INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS

- 6.1 The Council will be aware that the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) Record of Performance Assessment for Adult Social Care is an annual review of Social Service Performance. We considered a report which advised us that there was a requirement for the Annual Review Meeting letter to be presented to us at an open meeting. The CSCI's independent judgements of performance across all Social Services rated the service on a scale of zero to three stars. The ratings aimed to improve public information about the current performance of services and the capacity for improvement.
- 6.2 We noted that the report evidenced high-level support and promotion of independence for people to live at home. Also, that services and involvement of users and carers through the partnership board structure was strong, with evidence of good partnership working across agencies, other Council departments and with local community and voluntary groups. The report also highlighted solid evidence of financial stability partnered with a positive performance management culture, while the Council's implementation of Framework-I promised an efficient electronic social care system.
- 6.3 The report identified a strong senior management team that demonstrated a clear understanding and vision for adult and older people's services. There was a strong commitment and understanding to delivering a range of services to meet the needs in such a diverse community. Development of skills and awareness of staff had been a positive focus, noticeable though improvements in management capacity through training and development.
- 6.4 The report also identified areas for improvement and in this respect the Council should carry on developing support for people with mental health problems to live in the community and supply evidence of users who were actively involved in assessments and care plans. A focus should also be maintained towards people acquiring quick services by reducing the time they wait for assessments. Haringey had made good progress regarding recruitment and retention of experienced and qualified staff, currently performing better than a number of similar authorities. However, recruitment and retention across social care remained an important challenge to the Council.
- 6.5 In noting the annual review monitoring letter for 2004/5 we were pleased to note the significant improvement to the Council's Social Services which followed the award of two stars by the CSCI.

Health and Social Services

7. COMMUNITY CARE STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE – THE FUTURE OF TRENTFIELD OLDER PEOPLE’S RESIDENTIAL STRATEGY

- 7.1 As part of the Council’s Older People’s Community Care Strategy which, in essence, moved resources from residential beds to community support, we agreed at our meeting on 5 October 2004, that the feasibility of disposing of Trentfield with vacant possession should be explored. A subsequent soft market testing exercise in April 2005 indicated that potential purchasers were not interested in buying a relatively small home in a residential area, as a going concern. The report had set out in detail the overarching policy and resource considerations which now had to be taken into account in making our decision.
- 7.2 When considering the closure of any care home, it was considered best practice to undertake both medical and social care assessments of need. In addition, it was clear from recent case law that an assessment of the risks of moving from the home must also be undertaken, so that an informed decision to close or not can be taken and we considered, following the exclusion of the public and press, an anonymised summary of the risk assessments and state of health of 15 permanent residents in November 2005.
- 7.4 We report that having noted the outcomes of the residents’ assessments (including medical risk assessments) we authorised officers to proceed with the disposal of Trentfield with vacant possession, with due concern for the care and future placements of the remaining residents and future arrangements for staff.

8. COMMUNITY CARE STRATEGY FOR OLDER PEOPLE: COOPERSCROFT CARE HOME

- 8.1 At our meeting on 4 October 2005 we asked our officers to look into the feasibility of marketing Cooperscroft Residential Care Home as a going concern. We recommended using a tender process to ensure prospective bidders could provide and maintain a comparable service to residents and employment to staff.
- 8.2 Messrs. Christie & Co., a specialist agency, was instructed to market Cooperscroft as a going concern and received interest from over 58 parties. We considered a report, following the exclusion of the public and press, which informed us that final bids had been accepted on 2 December 2005 with a positive response of 17 tenders received. These tenders have been subsequently evaluated with 2 recommended for our consideration.
- 8.3 We report that, having noted the outcome of the tender evaluation process, we agreed to the disposal of the Home and to delegate the finalisation of the sale and associated care contract to the Director of Social Services and the Director of Finance in consultation with the Executive Member for Social Services and Health and the Executive Member for Finance.

Housing

9. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ESTATE PARKING

- 9.1 The Council will be aware that the pressure on parking facilities in London continues to rise and parking on public highways and Council housing estates is a major issue. Parking management, control and enforcement on public highways within the Council was the responsibility of the Parking Service. While parking on highways was regulated through the Road Traffic Act issued by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), parking management control and enforcement on housing estates was the responsibility of the Housing Service. Normal Road Traffic Act parking regulations did not apply to Council estates as they were classified as private property.
- 9.2 We considered a report which advised us that two contractors (the Council's own Parking Service and Wings Security) were used to carry out the enforcement of parking restrictions and the removal of abandoned vehicles on Council housing estates. Wings Security operated on all estates with an estate car parking scheme while the Parking Service carried out these functions where those which did not.
- 9.3 We welcomed the Scrutiny Review and its recommendations, many of which represented work already in progress, and which both reinforced and extended the range of service improvements. In total 17 recommendations were made, the majority of which were agreed either fully or in principle. There was only one, which called for the appointment of a full time parking manager, with which we could not agree because we believed that the appropriate co-ordination and prioritisation of parking services in Housing Services could be delivered within existing resources.

Leader

10. CONSULTATION ON THE MAYOR'S AND GLA POWERS

- 10.1 We considered a report which advised us that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had launched a consultation exercise about extending the role and powers of the GLA and the Mayor. The consultation period ended on 22 February 2006 and the report recommended a detailed response.
- 10.2 We noted that the most significant and far reaching changes were contained in those proposals about housing and planning. Coupled together they could give the Mayor significant new powers. Our response was premised on ensuring that there were robust checks and balances in place to ensure proper scrutiny of any new powers. Additionally, any new powers should be drawn down from Government rather than removed from local authorities. To ensure this there would need to be built in mechanisms to make certain that the views of London boroughs could be heard in the right place at the right time.
- 10.3 In approving the response to the consultation we noted that there were merits in affording greater strategic responsibilities to the Mayor but that the Mayor should not take control of any operational functions.

11. ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

- 11.1 We were informed of two actions taken by Directors under urgency procedures following consultation with Executive Members.

Leisure Centres Investment – Procurement

Approval to a revised contract price of up to £3.462 million (including fees) in connection with the previously approved investment programme (Health and Fitness Facilities and Strategic Renewals).

Housing Rent Increase 2006/07 – Approval to Consult

Approval to consult secure tenants on proposed increases in rent and service charges effective from April 2006 at an average level increase of 4.99%.

12. DELEGATED DECISIONS AND SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS – DECEMBER 2005

- 12.1 We were informed of the following significant actions taken by Directors under delegated powers which involved expenditure of more than £50,000.

Assistant Chief Executive (Access)

Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS), English Heritage Grant Scheme, - Appointment of Architect

Microsoft Services for the Enterprise – Provision of Premier Support Services - Approval for award of contract under Contract Standing Order (CSO) 11.02

IT Technical Refresh – Delayed Handover and Deployment Support – 3rd Addendum for Logicalis

Director of Environmental Services

Stroud Green Area 20 m.p.h. Zone. Approval to proceed with the implementation of Phase 1 of the Zone with an allocation of £150,000 from the BSP being used to fund the scheme.