



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET Monday 26 January 2015 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Butt (Chair), Councillor Pavey (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Crane, Denselow, Hirani, Mashari, McLennan and Moher

Also present: Councillors Ahmed, Chohan, S Choudhary, A Choudry, Kabir, Mahmood, Perrin and Warren

1. Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None made.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 December 2014 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Museum and Archives Strategy

The report before the Cabinet presented for consideration the Brent Museum and Archives Strategy produced following a comprehensive consultation process. The report set out a framework and action plan for evolving the service to meet the needs of a wider audience. Councillor Denselow (Lead Member, Stronger Communities) supported the vision of the strategy which he said was a unique opportunity and he was pleased that the council would be one of the few in London that had a local museum. The council would be working in partnership with the voluntary sector and the facility would seek to appeal to the whole borough. Councillor Denselow reported that the community looked forward to the prospect of the rebranded museum space and archives search room in the Library at Willesden Green.

With the consent of the Chair, Councillor Warren addressed the meeting and spoke in support of maintaining traditional access to the archives. Councillor Denselow responded that existing users would be welcomed however efforts would be made to attract young people as they were the users of the future. Cabinet members expressed support for the strategy and the sustainable opportunity to showcase the borough's history and heritage with the new Library at Willesden Green. Members

also paid tribute to the Wembley Library at the Civic Centre which demonstrated the transformation from old to new use of space, with many activities in conjunction with partners.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the findings of the Museum and Archives Strategy be noted and agreement be given to its vision that: "Brent's museum and archives are here for everyone; a window into the history of Brent, its people and places. We will use these unique resources to create opportunities, improve lives and create stronger communities";
- (ii) that the three interlinked objectives which have been formed to deliver the vision of the Strategy as set out in paragraph 3.15 of the report be agreed;
- (iii) that agreement be given to the action plan to deliver the Museum and Archives Strategy as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (iv) that the content of the Equality Impact Assessment as set out in Appendix 4 to the report be noted.

5. Adult Social Care - Local Account 2013/14

Councillor Hirani (Lead Member, Adults, Health and Well-being) introduced the report Local Account 2013/14 which provided a mechanism by which councils were required to demonstrate local engagement and accountability. It was also a tool for planning improvements, as a result of sharing information on performance with people who use services and engaging with them to get feedback on their experience. The document attached to the report from the Strategic Director, Adults had appended at Appendix A the full version of the report. Councillor Hirani advised that in response to feedback, the report had been made more accessible and an easy to read interactive version would be available on the council's website. He drew attention to the partnership approach adopted in consultation and the role of other stakeholders. Councillor Hirani highlighted the increase in the number of people receiving home care and the variation in the number of hours of care from the average of 7.3 per week to 35 hours per week (at a cost of £21,400 per year). He referred to the Adult Social Care core priorities which included zero tolerance of abuse, prevention by supporting independence, early intervention and choice and control to help people access the support they wanted to meet their individual needs. Councillor Hirani paid tribute to the work of the Carers Hub which dealt with approximately 4,000 enquiries per year.

With the consent of the Cabinet, Councillor Warren addressed the meeting and welcomed the role of Healthwatch Brent as the council's critical friend. He also sought more information on the number of safeguarding adults alerts, the outcome of full investigations and why some were inconclusive. Councillor Hirani responded wherever possible cases were investigated but sufficient information was not always available to allow this.

RESOLVED:

that the finance and performance information and the public service standards contained in the report be noted, together with the current and future risks associated with the information provided and the strategic priorities identified.

6. Procuring an Accommodation Based Respite Framework Agreement

The report from the Strategic Director, Adults sought authority for the invite of tenders in respect of an accommodation based respite framework agreement as a means of managing the increase in demand for community-based respite care. Members noted that as the West London Alliance Home Support Framework and the Day Care services, Shared Lives Services did not include accommodation-based respite care and neither was there an appropriate contract elsewhere, there would be a supply gap for those cases where residential respite placement services were needed. It was therefore proposed that the council established a dedicated Framework, called the Accommodation Based Respite Framework Agreement for this service.

Councillor Hirani (Lead Member, Adults, Health and Well-being) advised that the framework would allow for an agreed price instead of the current spot purchasing. In response to a question from Councillor Perrin, Councillor Hirani confirmed that the framework was not London Living Wage compliant but that work towards this continued.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the invite of tenders in respect of an accommodation based respite framework agreement on the basis of the pre-tender considerations as set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report from the Strategic Director, Adults;
- (ii) that approval be given to the evaluation of tenders referred to in (i) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

7. National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) - Discretionary Discount Scheme for businesses accredited to Living Wage Foundation

Councillor Mashari (Lead Member, Employment and Skills) introduced the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth which set out proposals for an incentive scheme designed to support those businesses who were considering paying the London Living Wage (LLW) by offering a discount to any business who becomes accredited with the Living Wage Foundation. Councillor Mashari reminded the Cabinet that the majority of people in poverty were in work particularly in retail, hospitals and the private sector. The Cabinet noted that approximately 30% of Brent residents were paid less than the London Living Wage in comparison to a London average of 20%. Councillor Mashari advised that the council was trying to incentivise and encourage employers through the discretionary rate discount. She advised that negotiations were taking place with the local businesses and partners for the package to be put in place by April 2015 to coincide with the proposed discount coming into effect. Councillor Mashari was pleased to report that Brent Council was the first authority in the country to offer business rates discounts as an incentive to pay the 'living wage' to help living standards for low paid workers.

Members of the Cabinet welcomed the initiative and Councillor Mashari advised that the success of the initiative could be measured by the number of employers that signed up. Approximately 30 had expressed interest and further information would be included with business rates correspondence. Work was also taking place with the trade unions.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the proposal to offer a discount in National Non-Domestic Rates of five times the costs of accreditation to the first 100 businesses in Brent which become accredited with the Living Wage Foundation and who meet the criteria detailed in Appendix 1 of the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth, pursuant to the Council's powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and that the Cabinet is satisfied that that this proposal is reasonable having regard to the interests of those persons who are liable to pay council tax in the borough of Brent;
- (ii) that the scheme be implemented from 1 April 2015 and run to 31 March 2016 in order to monitor take up and the cost incurred by the council in funding the scheme. A report would be submitted in January 2016 detailing the success of the scheme thus far and whether or not it should be extended into 2016/17;
- (iii) that applications for such discounts in National Non-Domestic Rates that meet the criteria as set out in Appendix 1 be approved jointly by the Head of Employment and Skills and Head of Customer Service and Revenue.

8. Brent's Local Welfare Assistance Scheme for 2015/16

The report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth set out a recommended scheme for Local Welfare Assistance payments in 2015/16. It proposed amendments to the current local scheme and changes to funding arrangements in Brent for the scheme in 2015/16 and beyond. It also recommended a fundamental review the scheme for 2016/17 and set out the financial impacts of the recommended Local Welfare Assistance Scheme for Brent and residents.

Councillor Mashari (Lead Member, in introducing the report, recommended Option 2 for 2015/16 as referred to in the report, which involved an increase in the maximum period for a Crisis Payment award to up to 14 days subject to a more fundamental review of the scheme in preparation for 2016/17 (Option 3). Councillor Mashari drew attention to the government's announcement earlier in the year that continued funding was to be withdrawn. The decision to continue with a Local Welfare Assistance scheme would be at the discretion of each authority but any scheme from April 2015 would need to be funded from the council's budget.

With the consent of the Chair, Councillor Warren, questioned why, of the £1.7m Government funding provided for the scheme, only £400,000 had been spent. Councillor Mashari drew attention to Appendix B of the Strategic Director's report which set out a draft timetable for the scheme review for implementation in 2016/17. She also pointed out that central government misclassification in the formula by the inclusion of budgeting loans had adversely affected Brent together with local authorities across London and the UK. As a result, the initial figures from the Department of Work and Pensions made the scheme appear less generous. The council could afford to be more flexible in the coming year and any underspend

could be used to continue the scheme. Councillor Mashari acknowledged that a number of successful applicants had subsequently been found to have savings over the permitted thresholds and efforts would be made to retrieve the assistance given. The administration costs had deliberately been kept low. Councillor McLennan welcomed the intention to add to the list of qualifying benefits which allow an application to be considered.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the current Local Welfare Assistance scheme objectives and structure be retained into 2015/16, but with amendments to scheme criteria designed to ensure that support is targeted at those most in need as as described in Option 2 set out in the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth;
- (ii) that the underspend in Local Welfare Assistance scheme payments in 2013/14 and the forecast underspend in 2014/15 be ring-fenced to provide a Local Welfare Assistance scheme for at least the next two years;
- (iii) that the Local Welfare Assistance scheme be fundamentally reviewed during 2015 with a revised scheme to be implemented in April 2016;
- (iv) that the content of the Equalities Analysis as set out in Appendix C to the report be noted.

9. Update on Schools Capital Portfolio

The Cabinet noted that in a report on the revised School Place Planning Strategy 2014-2018 approved in October 2014, officers had committed to report back with fully detailed and costed proposals on three projects to be added to the Phase 3 Permanent Primary School Programme to enable full Cabinet approval to proceed. The report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth primarily addressed that requirement and provided a full update on the financial profile of the overall schools capital portfolio. Approval was also sought to enable the commencement of works contract procurement on additional Phase 3 projects as appropriate. Councillor McLennan (Lead Member, Housing and Regeneration) drew members' attention to the procurement process and the costs of permanent expansion.

In considering the report, members welcomed the proposals in the light of the expanding cohort and shortage of school places. The Chief Finance Officer drew attention to the uncertainty over funding for capital projects and it was noted that plans for expansion did not include secondary schools due to the number of Free Schools opening in the borough. Councillor McLennan advised that the Community Asset Strategy was under consideration and would include schools. Councillor Shafique Choudhary expressed concern at the over concentration of schools opening in the Wembley area in the vicinity of the Civic Centre.

The Cabinet also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following category of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the proposal to rebuild and expand Islamia Primary School (subject to necessary approvals) noting the potential for increased capital costs for the project and consultation timescales described in paragraphs 3.3 - 3.6 of the joint report from the Strategic Directors, Regeneration and Growth and Children and Young People and authority to approve the fully costed and detailed proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing. A detailed report on proposals for Winkworth Hall would be provided in September 2015;
- (ii) that approval be given to the proposal to expand Byron Court Primary School as described in the report at paragraphs 3.7 - 3.9;
- (iii) that approval be given to the proposal to expand Oakington Manor Primary School on the terms described in paragraph 3.10 of the report and authority to approve the fully costed and detailed proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing;
- (iv) that approval be given the proposal to expand Leopold Primary School to become a 4FE split site primary school using the Gwenneth Rickus Building as described in paragraph 3.11-3.14 of the report and authority to approve the fully costed and detailed proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing;
- (v) that approval be given to the invitation to tender for three works contracts for the schools detailed in (ii) to (iv) above on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.16 of the report;
- (vi) that officers evaluate the tenders referred to (v) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.16 of the report;
- (vii) that approval be given to the updated Schools Capital Portfolio financial profile as set out in paragraph 3.17-3.22, section 4 and Appendix 1, including the revised project/programme allocations;
- (viii) that approval be given to the criteria for developing new school expansion projects described in paragraph 3.23-3.25 and Appendix 5.

10. **Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation**

Councillor McLennan (Lead Member, Housing and Regeneration) introduced the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth which sought authority pursuant to the council's Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89 to invite tenders for a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the Procurement and Management of

Temporary Accommodation in accordance with the Council's Private Sector Accommodation Scheme. The procurement exercise was designed to provide a sufficient supply of temporary accommodation in the right places to adequately respond to the recent welfare changes and current overheated Housing Market in London. The proposed system would commence in July 2015 for the duration of two years with an option to extend for up to two years.

Councillor McLennan stressed the importance of increasing the stock of private housing so that people would not have to be re-housed outside the borough. She was pleased the tender would have two distinct lots to meet the council's requirements for affordable cost effective and good quality temporary accommodation one inside the M25 that was within Brent's geographical boundaries or as close as possible and Lot 2 Accommodation outside the M25 affordable to people in receipt of benefits, without increasing the costs to the Council Tax payer.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Butt, while welcoming the proposals, drew attention to the increasing gap between local housing association and market rents in the borough contributing to the collapse of the Housing Benefit rental market in the borough and Councillor Mashari expressed concern at the impact on young working people who could no longer afford to live in the borough.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders for a Direct Purchasing System for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation as set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth;
- (ii) that approval be given to the invite of expressions of interest, agreement of shortlists, the invite Tenders for a DPS for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation and their evaluation in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria referred to in (i) above;
- (iii) that authority be delegated to the Operational Director for Housing and Employment, as and when required, to appoint new service providers onto the DPS where they meet the selection criteria set out by the council;
- (iv) that authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth to agree annual changes to the management fee.

11. **Award of Contract for procurement and management of Temporary Accommodation for Housing Association Leasing Scheme**

The report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth detailed the competitive tendering process of the contract for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation for Housing Association Leasing Scheme and made a recommendation as to award pursuant to Contract Standing Orders 88(c). The cabinet noted that authority to tender for the contract was given at the meeting of the Cabinet on 21 July 2014.

Councillor Butt (Leader of the Council) drew attention to the Equalities Impact Assessment and the anticipated adverse impact in relation to disability. Councillor McLennan assured that each case would be considered on its own merits.

The Cabinet also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following category of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:

that approval be given to the recommendation of the evaluation panel to award the contract for Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation for HALS to the three Providers listed below for an initial period of three years, with an option to extend up to a further two years: Genesis Housing Association, London Strategic Housing Association and Shepherds Bush Housing Association.

12. South Kilburn Regeneration Programme - energy supplier for decentralised energy solution

Councillor McLennan (Lead Member, Housing and Regeneration) introduced the report which provided an update in respect of the South Kilburn Decentralised Energy System, which recommended that an Energy Service Company contract tender process be re-started. Councillor McLennan advised the Cabinet that as the decision to procure a contract to bring forward a decentralised energy system was first taken in 2011 it was felt necessary to review whether it was appropriate for commercial reasons given the time elapsed and the likelihood that the market would have developed with new entrants now available.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the tender process for the procurement of the South Kilburn decentralised energy system be re-started, noting the risks associated with this as set out in paragraph 3.13 of the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth;
- (ii) that approval be given to the invite of tenders for the procurement of the South Kilburn Regeneration decentralised energy system on the basis of the pre-tender considerations as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (iii) that tenders referred to in (ii) above be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

13. South Kilburn Regeneration Programme - Gloucester House and Durham Court, Chippenham Gardens secure tenancies for Phase 4

The report before the Cabinet from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth set out the approvals required by the Cabinet to firstly further progress the Gloucester House and Durham Court redevelopment site (being part of 'Phase 2b' of the South Kilburn regeneration programme and as shown edged red on Plan A at

Appendix 1 to the report); secondly further progress 4 to 26 Stuart Road and 5 to 9 Chippenham Gardens which included the Kilburn Park Post Office (together defined as the 'Post Office Plus Site' and as shown edged red on Plan B at Appendix 1); and finally serve demolition notices on Phase 4A of the South Kilburn regeneration programme (being Craik Court, Austen House, Neville House, Winterleys and 113 to 128 Carlton House.

Members welcomed the progress towards the next phases of the South Kilburn regeneration programme and Councillor Mashari particularly welcomed requirement for the developer, once appointed, to submit and gain approval for an employment and training action plan to deliver education links, apprenticeships and local labour outcomes in accordance with a Section 106 agreement for Gloucester House and Durham Court.

RESOLVED:

Gloucester House and Durham Court

- (i) that the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to undertake a mini competition under the Greater London Authority (GLA) London Development Panel subject to confirmation by the Director of Legal and Procurement that participation in the GLA London Development Panel is legally permissible, to procure a developer partner for the redevelopment of Gloucester House and Durham Court and report back to the Cabinet to secure approval for award of the contract;
- (ii) that approval be given to set rent levels for the affordable homes at Gloucester House and Durham Court once complete, at a rent equivalent to the Homes and Communities Agency Target Rent levels;

Post Office Plus Site

- (iii) that it be noted that within the main body of this report that, on 19 December 2014, the Council entered into a collaboration agreement with Woodville Properties Limited, the landowner of 5 to 9 Chippenham Gardens which includes the Kilburn Park Post Office, to bring forward the comprehensive redevelopment of 5 to 9 Chippenham Gardens which includes the Kilburn Park Post Office with the Council's adjoining land at 4 to 26 Stuart Road (together defined as the Post Office Plus Site') as shown edged red on Plan B at Appendix 1;
- (iv) that approval be given to the acquisition by agreement pursuant to section 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the making of a compulsory purchase order (CPO) pursuant to section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to acquire all non-Council interests in the area shown edged red on Plan B attached at Appendix 1 ('the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land') being the Post Office Plus Site together with any new rights which may be required under section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1976 to facilitate the development of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land in furtherance of the regeneration of the Post Office Plus Site (and such CPO being referred to in this report as 'the Post Office Plus Site CPO')

- (v) that the following be authorised, the:
- (a) Submission of the Post Office Plus Site CPO, once made in respect of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land, to the Secretary of State for confirmation whilst at the same time seeking to acquire the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land by private negotiated treaty on such terms as may be agreed by the Operational Director Property and Projects;
 - (b) Operational Director Property and Projects, on behalf of the Council, to enter into agreements with and give undertakings to the holders of all interests in the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land or parties otherwise affected where such agreements or undertakings are appropriate. These agreements or undertakings will set out the terms for the withdrawal of the objections to the confirmation of the Post Office Plus Site CPO and may include granting rights over or offering back any part of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land which is not required by the Council following completion of the development.
 - (c) Making of one or more general vesting declarations or the service of Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry (as appropriate) pursuant to the Compulsory Purchase (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981 and the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 respectively should the Post Office Plus Site CPO be confirmed by the Secretary of State or otherwise in order to gain possession of the Post Office Plus Site;
 - (d) Serving of all requisite notices on the holders of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land relating to the making, confirmation and implementation of the Post Office Plus Site CPO;
 - (e) Operational Director Property and Projects to remove from the Post Office Plus Site CPO any plot (or any interest therein) no longer required to be acquired compulsorily for the Post Office Plus Site redevelopment to proceed and to amend the interest scheduled in the Post Office Plus Site CPO (if so advised) and to alter the nature of the proposed acquisition from an acquisition of existing property interests to an acquisition of new rights (if so advised);
 - (f) Operational Director Property and Projects within the defined boundary of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land, to acquire land and/or new rights by agreement either in advance of the confirmation of compulsory purchase powers, if so advised, or following the confirmation of compulsory powers by the Secretary of State;
 - (g) Operational Director Property and Projects, if so advised, to seek to acquire for the Council by agreement any interest in land wholly or partly within the boundary of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land for which a valid blight notice has been served.
- (vi) that agreement be given to set rent levels for the affordable units at the Post Office Plus Site once complete, at a rent equivalent to Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Target Rent levels;
- (vii) that agreement be given to proceed with securing vacant possession of the residential and non-residential properties within the Post Office Plus Site through negotiation and private treaty and then, if necessary, via possession proceedings based on Ground 10A of Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1985

(‘Ground 10A’) in relation to the secure tenants and then CPO of all interests remaining following the confirmation of the CPO;

- (viii) that the Operational Director of Property and Projects (where the Operational Director of Property and Projects in conjunction with the Chief Finance Officer considers applicable) be authorised to acquire third party interests and rights within the Post Office Plus Site as necessary to progress the project by way of negotiation;
- (ix) that the Cabinet authorise the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth to seek Secretary of State’s consent to appropriate for planning purposes all interests in the Post Office Plus Site;
- (x) that approval be given to the serving of demolition notices and the suspension of secure tenants’ Rights to Buy in relation to secure tenancies in 4 to 26 Stuart Road and authorise the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth to issue all and any notices required to be issued in connection with such demolition;

Phase 4A Demolition Notices

- (xi) that approval be given to the serving of demolition notices and the suspension of secure tenants’ Rights to Buy in relation to secure tenancies in blocks Craik Court, Austen House, Neville House, Winterleys and 113 to 128 Carlton House (all numbers inclusive) (together defined as ‘Phase 4A’ of the South Kilburn regeneration programme) and authorise the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth to issue all and any notices required to be issued in connection with such demolition.

14. London Councils Grants 2015/2016

Councillor Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council) presented the report from the Chief Finance Officer which sought agreement to London Councils Grants Committee budget for 2015/16 and the associated level of contribution by Brent Council to the London Borough Grants Scheme. He pointed out that Brent’s contribution was less than the previous year but that participation in the future would be kept under review.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the recommendations made by the London Councils Leaders Committee summarised in section 3 and attached at Appendix 3 to the report from the Chief Finance Officer be noted;
- (ii) that agreement be given to the recommended budget for the London Councils Grant Scheme and the contribution of £339,278 to be paid by the Council towards the London Boroughs Grants Scheme for 2015/16.

15. Authority to tender a contract for Healthwatch

The Cabinet considered the report from the Chief Executive which concerned commissioning arrangements for Local Healthwatch as set out in part 5 of the

Health and Social Care Act. The current Local Healthwatch contract was due to expire on 31 March 2015 and the report outlined the Council's statutory responsibilities and the business need to meet the statutory requirement in 2015/16. The report requested approval to invite tenders in respect of the Local Healthwatch contract as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

Councillor Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council) introduced the report in his capacity as Chair of the Health and Well Being Board and stressed the importance of Healthwatch as a strong independent voice. The intention was to put in place an interim contract to ensure continued provision of a Local Healthwatch service whilst the procurement process for a new contract was being undertaken by the council. Attention was drawn to the new criteria against which tenders would be evaluated which Councillor Pavey stated were designed to attract the best organisations.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the invite of tenders for a Local Healthwatch service contract on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report from the Chief Executive;
- (ii) that the new contract be let for a term of one year with the option to extend for a further 12 months;
- (iii) that approval be given to the evaluation of the tenders referred to in (i) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report;
- (iv) that approval be given to an exemption from the usual tendering requirements of Contract Standing Orders and the approval of the direct award of an interim contract to the current provider, Healthwatch Brent, for a three month period from 1 April 2015 for the operational reasons set out in paragraph 3.8. of the report.

16. **Financial Report - November 2014**

Councillor Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council) introduced the report from the Chief Finance Officer which set out the overall financial position of the Council for 2014/15 as at November 2014 and included, a budget monitoring summary, Council Tax and NNDR collection rates, debt analysis, capital programme summary and financial control. He drew attention to the reasons for projected underspends and overspends particularly within the Registrars Service of £0.3m due to a forecast reduction in income from Citizenship Ceremonies and the Nationality Checking Service. He noted that capital expenditure was currently as forecast. The HRA debt was attributed to the non-payment of rent and schools would be asked to take on additional services in the light of their surplus. Councillor Pavey drew lead members' attention to the audit reports with limited assurances where lessons needed to be learned.

Councillor Denselow expressed regret at the lack of information from the Home Office regarding policy changes which would lead to a loss of income and increased the financial burden on the council.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Finance report be noted;
- (ii) that approval be given to the revenue budget virements in section 7 of the Financial Report appendix.

17. **Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committee**

None.

18. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

M BUTT
Chair