

Cabinet Minutes

16 April 2009



The left hand column indicates the item number of the report on the Cabinet agenda. The middle column contains the decisions made, the reason for such decisions and also any alternatives options considered or rejected. The right hand column indicates the name of the officer(s) responsible for implementing/following up the decisions in each case.

		Officer contact
	<p>Cabinet Members Present – Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Ray Puddifoot (Leader of the Council and Chairman) • Jonathan Bianco (Cabinet Member for Finance and Business Services) • Keith Burrows (Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation) • Sandra Jenkins (Cabinet Member for Environment) • Philip Corthorne (Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Housing) • Henry Higgins (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and Leisure) • Scott Seaman-Digby (Cabinet Member for Co-ordination and Central Services) <p>Apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Douglas Mills (Cabinet Member for Improvement, Partnerships and Community Safety) • David Simmonds (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education and Children’s Services) <p>Other Councillors present:</p> <p>Anthony Way, Tony Eginton, George Cooper, Judith Cooper, David Yarrow, Andrew Retter, John Riley, Mary O’Connor, Edward Lavery and Kay Willmott-Denbeigh, Elizabeth Kemp and Peter Kemp.</p>	
	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>No interests were declared.</p>	
	<p>DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE</p> <p>The reports on items 1-9 were considered in public.</p>	

	<p>CABINET MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 March 2009 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
1	<p>POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MAJOR REVIEW: DEVELOPING A SHORT BREAKS PROVISION 2008/09</p> <p><i>The Chairman of the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee presented the Committee's report providing recommendations which seek to build upon the Borough's approach and strategy to short breaks provision. Cabinet praised the report and the Committee for its work. It was noted that this report was developed in conjunction with Item 2 on the Cabinet agenda which aimed to deliver the Policy Overview Committee's recommendations.</i></p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome the report from the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee and note the general consensus it found in favour of improving the Short Breaks Provision; and 2. Accepts the recommendations of the Policy Overview Committee report as reflected below: <p><u>Policy Overview Recommendations accepted by Cabinet</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. That the Cabinet consider the following ways to improve the Short Breaks Provision in the borough. b. Review signposting of services to ensure clear and consistent information is available via both our own information services including the contact centre, schools and via our partner agencies including the PCT. c. The demand of extra services within the Extended Schools programme to be assessed. Provision of inclusive services with mainstream setting to be reviewed together with the expansion of specialist provision via the special schools. This would build on the current excellent work undertaken by Moorcroft School. d. To expand the current flexible payment arrangements ensuring that parents / carers can access the types of provision that best suits their needs. e. Ensure that suitable transport is available to enable all children to access extended school services. f. Provide clear information to all users on appeal process. g. Review management of outreach service to ensure that cover is available when regular workers are absent. Methods of communication to parents to be reviewed. h. The Fiesta booking process to be reviewed to ensure ease of access for all users. 	<p>Charles Francis, Deputy Chief Executive's Office</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The current residential provision needs to be reviewed to see if it is practical and cost effective to replace the current inadequate Howletts Lane provision with an expanded and purpose built provision at the Merrifields site. j. Further work to be undertaken to ensure that there is a smooth transition between child and adult services in particular for the most needy users. k. To improve the range of services improve and develop links with the voluntary sector. Investment in services such as HomeStart appears to provide good services at a cost effective price. l. Use the existing expertise of voluntary sector providers to provide additional breaks for families. <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The recommendations are aimed at building upon Hillingdon's approach to the delivery of a comprehensive Short Breaks Provision. Improved Short Breaks services will contribute to residents' satisfaction and the aim of catering to the needs of families of children with disabilities.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>The Cabinet could decide to reject or amend the Committee's recommendations.</p>	
2	<p>DISABLED CHILDREN'S STRATEGY 2009-11</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Approve the Disabled Children's Strategy; (b) Delegate authority to the Director of Education and Children's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, to make decisions on how the ring-fenced Short Breaks 2009/10 revenue grant funding from the Department for Children Schools and Families should be deployed; and (c) Approve a study to assess the costs and technical feasibility of converting the first floor of Merrifields Children's Home for Disabled Children through the use of the Short Breaks Capital Grant. Cabinet approval for the capital project will be sought following completion of the study. <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The Disabled Children's Strategy has been developed to respond to:</p>	<p>Julian Wooster, Education and Children's Services</p>

- (a) a determination by local agencies in Hillingdon to respond positively and effectively to the recent feedback provided by parents/carers of disabled children highlighting the need for a step change improvement in the services and support provided to them and their children; and
- (b) national developments such as the publishing of Aiming High for Disabled Children and more specific developments such as the major step changes in funding available for Short Breaks and the rollout of the Early Support programme.

The Strategy is recommended for Cabinet approval to enable the Council to respond effectively to these developments and deliver the many recommendations from the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee's related review (item 1).

The recommendation to delegate authority to the Director of Education and Children's Services on the deployment of the Short Breaks revenue grant is being made on the assumption at this stage that no single revenue expenditure item will exceed the financial authority limits where Cabinet approval is required. Cabinet approval will be sought if this initial assumption changes.

The recommendation to undertake a full feasibility study on the use of the short breaks capital grant to develop Merrifields, reflects consultation feedback from parents on short breaks provision which has positively endorsed this recommendation.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Officers considered developing the short breaks programme as a specific task outside of the development of a broader Disabled Children's Strategy (an approach which some other boroughs have adopted). However, this approach generates risks that:

- (a) short breaks activity is not positioned effectively as part of a broader package of support to disabled children and their families; and
- (b) that short breaks activity is not co-ordinated with wider policy objectives, for example, an effective short breaks programme with targeted support and intervention can reduce the risk of family breakdown – and reduce the need for costly out of Borough residential provision. The need to tackle this latter area was identified as a priority for action in the Education and Children's Services Service Review

No viable or desired alternatives to the development of Merrifields have been put forward by officers or parents as a use of a significant proportion of the Short Breaks capital grant and which also meets the grant's rules.

<p>3</p>	<p>HILLINGDON'S CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2009 - 2012</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet adopts the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2009-2012.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>As a signatory of the Nottingham Declaration, the Council is committed to addressing the issue of climate change at the local level. Signatories of the Declaration commit themselves to producing a Strategy or Action Plan, which sets out how the issue will be tackled by the local authority. A commitment to produce a Climate Change Strategy was also contained within the Council's Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2007-10.</p> <p>New national indicator 185 requires the Council to report on the carbon emissions arising from its own operations and to set a target in 2009 for emissions reductions. Hillingdon has accepted the indicator as a "below the line" target in our LAA 2008-2011, that is one which we regard as important and will report on but which does not formally form part of the LAA.</p> <p>A draft strategy was developed during 2008 across all Council directorates. Public and external stakeholder consultation was undertaken between 15 December 2008 and 20 February 2009. Incorporating the comments received where appropriate, officers have made minor amendments to the consultation draft and are now seeking Cabinet's endorsement of the Strategy to enable adoption by the Council.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>Not to endorse the Climate Change Strategy: this would not be in keeping with the Council's commitment as a signatory to the Nottingham Declaration, nor would it acknowledge the extensive work being undertaken across Council services to deliver initiatives and projects which have contributed to the development of a Climate Change Strategy for the Borough, LAA targets and the enhancement of Hillingdon's environment.</p>	<p>Kristen Webster, Planning and Community Services, and, Kevin Byrne, Deputy Chief Executive's Office</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>HILLINGDON COUNCIL'S CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet agree:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the outline Carbon Management Plan including the setting of a target of reducing the Council Carbon footprint for its Council operations by 40% by 2015. 2. to further minor drafting or presentational changes as necessary to give effect to the plan, to be agreed by the 	<p>Kristen Webster, Planning and Community Services, and Kevin Byrne, Deputy Chief Executive's</p>

	<p>Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environment.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>Agreeing the Carbon Management Plan (CMP) will enable officers to drive forward the detailed projects identified for fuller consideration and set a clear vision for reducing carbon and ensuring better use of resources. It will deliver of priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council plan and provide value for money.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>i) A different target. The Council's steering group on this recommends 40% to provide an ambitious yet achievable target by 2015. The draft plan of indicative projects adds up to about 25% reduction leave a further 15% to be identified in the latter years of the scheme. The option of an even more stretching target was rejected at this stage as it was not clear that investment to achieve, say 50% carbon reduction, would necessarily provide value for money in the 5 year payback period.</p> <p>ii) Not setting a target or rejecting the CMP would fail to meet the Council's declared position on climate change and forgo the opportunity to achieve better value for money in use of resources.</p>	
5	<p>BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE 21st CENTURY PROGRAMME: APPROVAL OF STRATEGY FOR CHANGE PART 1</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note that the Building Schools for the 21st Century Programme is a Hillingdon Improvement Programme (HIP) project directed by the HIP Steering Group and approved by the Cabinet; 2. Approves the draft Strategy for Change (Part 1) and submission to Partnership for Schools; 3. Approves the delegation of authority to the Director of Education and Children's Services and the Leader of the Council, to approve amendments the draft Strategy for Change (Part 1) prior to submission to Partnership for Schools on the 23 April 2009; 4. Notes that a further Strategy for Change (Part 2) will be presented to Cabinet in due course for approval; and 5. Approves the delegation of authority to the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services to publish statutory notices for all future school reorganisations under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. 	Russell Eacott, Education and Children's Services

	<p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The Strategy for Change (Part One) document is the first of three early documents that have to be approved by Cabinet. SfC1 will be followed by Strategy for Change (Part 2) and finally, by the Outline Business Case. The formal procurement processes may only commence following approval by Partnerships for Schools Agency (Pfs) of the Outline Business Case. Each phase and document is subject to rigorous consultation and time scales laid down by Pfs.</p> <p>Any amendments to the draft document following consultation would need to be approved within time scales laid down by Pfs.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>The submission is a legal requirement. No other options were considered.</p>	
6	<p>ALLOCATION OF 2009/2010 SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES FUND</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet approve the allocation of the 2009/10 Safer and Stronger Communities Fund.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The allocation includes grants of more than £10,000 to external organisations.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>To not allocate funding to projects set out in the report.</p>	Teresa McKee, Planning and Community Services
7	<p>DISABLED PEOPLE'S PLAN – UPDATE ON PROGRESS</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Notes the progress made so far in the development of the Disabled People's Plan and the changes that disabled people consider would make living in Hillingdon better; and b) Instructs officers to complete the Plan as proposed in the report and bring to the July 2009 Cabinet meeting for approval. 	Gary Collier, Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

	<p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The Disabled People’s Plan will seek to address some of the challenges facing disabled people of all ages in Hillingdon by identifying what the Council can do directly, or through its influence with others, to improve the lives of disabled people and to maximise their health and wellbeing. It will cover the three year period 2009 – 2012 and is a reflection of the Council’s commitment set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2018 to work with its partners and other stakeholders to ensure that all of the Borough’s residents, whatever their skills or abilities, have the opportunity to enjoy life in Hillingdon to the full.</p> <p>This report makes Cabinet aware of the development of the Plan, explains how it is being developed, advises what disabled people have identified as key issues and describe the next steps.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>The alternative option considered was not to develop the Plan. This would not assist in meeting the Council’s objectives as set out in the Single Equality Scheme and the Sustainable Community Strategy.</p>	
8	<p>LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT REFRESH</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet approve the refreshed targets for each National Indicator which constitute Hillingdon’s Local Area Agreement.</p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>As part of the annual ‘refresh’ process, it is proposed to amend 14 reward targets in the Local Agreement. Cabinet approval is required to amend the Local Area Agreement as set out in the in Hillingdon’s Constitution and Part V of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>Cabinet Members could decide not to confirm any of the targets included within the Local Area Agreement (LAA).</p>	<p>Ian Edwards, Deputy Chief Executive’s Office</p>

9	<p>COUNCIL BUDGET – MONTH 11 2008/9 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING</p> <p>DECISION</p> <p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the forecast budget position for revenue and capital as at Month 11. 2. Agree to the purchase of the Northwood Boys Club site for £120k and for this cost to be funded from the Youth Centres capital budget for 2009/10. 3. Agree to fund this cost from capital contingency if it cannot be contained within the current Youth Centres capital budget. <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The reason for the monitoring recommendation is to ensure the Council achieves its budgetary objectives. The report informs Cabinet of the latest forecast revenue and capital position for the current year 2008/9.</p> <p>ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>There are no other options proposed for consideration.</p>	Paul Whaymand, Finance and Resources
	The meeting closed at 7.25pm	

DECISIONS ON ALL ITEMS CAME INTO EFFECT ON 5pm, 24th APRIL 2009