

Minutes**RESIDENTS' AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

18 January 2011



**Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Michael Markham (Chairman), Shirley Harper-O'Neil (Vice-Chairman), Janet Duncan (Labour Lead), Judy Kelly, June Nelson and Susan O'Brien.</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Jean Palmer (Director) Planning, Environment & Community Services Bill Ogden (Deputy Director) Corporate Landlord James Rodger (Head of Service) Planning & Enforcement Andy Evans (Head of Service) Finance & Business Services Ed Shaylor (Senior Manager) Community Safety Natasha Dogra, Democratic Services Officer</p>	
1.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>	Action by
2.	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>	Action by
3.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT ANY ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items on the agenda were marked Part 1 and therefore were considered in public.</p>	Action by
4.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of the RESPOC meeting held on 7 December 2010 were agreed as an accurate record.</p>	Action by
5.	<p>HILLINGDON'S KHAT CONSULTATION PAPER (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Committee considered the consultation paper on Khat which had been circulated to previous witnesses and had been formally submitted to the Deputy Mayor of London. The deadline for comments on the paper was Friday 21 January 2011. Members asked officers how many people the paper had been sent to for comments. Officers informed Members that 80 past witnesses and external agencies had been sent</p>	Action by

	<p>the Consultation paper. The Committee were pleased that so many people had been given the opportunity to take part in Hillingdon's review of Khat, as it allowed those affected by Khat and senior officials to put forward their array of views on Khat to help the Committee with their review.</p> <p>Members considered some options for possible conclusions and recommendations to present Cabinet with. The Committee agreed that all witnesses had suggested that Khat needed to be classified, but no one knew what it needed to be classified as. Members discussed classifying Khat as a food stuff, but agreed that this would lead to Khat becoming a legitimate substance. Classifying Khat as a vegetable could seem as though it had some nutritional value. Members said calling Khat a good may send out a message to young people that Khat was fine for consumption, which was not what the Committee wished to do.</p> <p>The Committee likened Khat to chewing tobacco, as it had health affects yet was available for buying and selling. Members suggested that Khat should be classified in its own group as this would allow for health warnings and age restrictions to be enforced. Members agreed that this would form a final recommendation, as the Committee agreed that Khat needed to be classified as something.</p> <p>Members also agreed that classifying Khat would ensure an authority would be responsible for it and therefore take responsibility for health and safety checks on Khat imports at the Port of Entry. The Committee agreed that the Port of Health should hold this responsibility.</p> <p>Members were also informed that Senior Health Officials had been sent the Consultation Paper and may request a special meeting to discuss the Committee's findings next month.</p> <p>Noted: The Committee noted the Khat update and would discuss conclusions and recommendations at the meeting in February.</p>	
6.	<p>PLANNING, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES BUDGET PROPOSALS 2011 (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>Officers presented Planning, Environment and Community Services' budget report to the Committee.</p> <p>The budget report to Council for Council Tax setting for 2010/11 contained an initial savings requirement of £20.3m for 2011/12. As part of the continuing work on the HIP Business Improvement Delivery project, a budget strategy was devised to address this gap. Each group was given a specific savings target for 2011/12 to deliver through their BID programme, with the initial total savings target set at £10.5m. In addition groups were tasked with reviewing and reducing all pressures and a review was also started on all corporate pressures</p>	Action by

The revenue budget proposals had been developed to deliver a zero increase in Council Tax for 2011/12 whilst maintaining balances and reserves at £12m over the medium term.

The real challenge in delivering a balanced budget for 2011/12 was the development of significant savings of around £22m, more than double the £10.3m required in 2010/11. Those savings proposals had been developed alongside the in-year challenge of responding to a £3.6m government grant cut to funding in 2010/11. The main pressure for the Council to deal with was the income from Government Formula Grant reducing by an estimated £10.8m. This was partially offset through an additional central government grant enabling a freeze in Council Tax in 2011/12.

In addition to the £22m savings proposals are £3.8m of corporate pressures, £7.5m of service pressures, an allowance of £2m for inflation, proposals for £0.3m of growth and a reduction to the contingency requirement of £0.5m.

The development of savings proposals had concentrated on more efficient delivery methods and the new operating model and focusing on core services; and on not creating new pressures by providing services no longer funded by Central government, but instead seeking to avoid local impact as far as possible by new ways of working.

The draft capital programme for 2011/12 and indicative allocations for the following three years were detailed. The draft capital programme over four years was worth £256.5m with £105m of capital expenditure in 2011/12. This included funding for new General Fund projects of £8.3m for the development of Yiewsley Pool site which includes a new health centre, and a major refurbishment of the Central Library.

In addition, the capital programme provided almost £9m of funding for key ongoing programmes including the Chrysalis programme, the Leader's Older Peoples Initiative and the upgrade of local town centres; and £19m of funding for ongoing major projects such as the Libraries refurbishment programme, Highgrove Pool Phase II and the South Ruislip Development

The initial approach to the delivery of savings within Planning Environment & Community Services Group had been largely driven by the delivery of efficiencies through the merger of the former 2 groups of Planning & Community Services and Environment & Consumer Protection. The savings programme development had also focused on a rigorous review and questioning of expenditure across the combined Group, and has reviewed the scale of fees and charges. The work to date had identified savings of £3.45m in 2011/12. The savings had been developed within 3 main categories.

BID Efficiencies – The creation of 4 new service heads within the combined group had enabled large scale reorganisation, restructuring and removal of duplication. The next stage in the development of these

	<p>new service groupings would focus on the roll out of the Council's operating model in order to identify further savings opportunities.</p> <p>Expenditure Review – With the formation of the new Group the opportunity had been taken at a strategic level to question the need for services and method of service delivery in all areas. At an operational level the expenditure review process had also generated savings opportunities.</p> <p>Fees & Charges – Opportunities exist within the Group to review the scale of fees and charges, and a number of savings proposals had been developed on this theme.</p> <p>The Committee thanked Officers for a well presented report. Members thanked officers for taking a compassionate stance to job losses and understood the reasons for the proposed savings.</p> <p>To Note: The Committee noted the budget projections and combined budget proposals put forward by the Planning Environment & Community Services Group, within the context of the corporate budgetary position.</p>	
7.	<p>FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Noted: The Committee noted the Forward Plan.</p>	Action by
8.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME 2011 (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>The Committee discussed the Work Programme for 2011 and thought it would be timely to formally agree their Town Twinning final report, as the report had been circulated for comments to the Committee prior to the meeting. Members were content with the final report and agreed for the report to be presented to Cabinet in February.</p> <p>Agreed: The Committee agreed the Review of Town Twinning final report.</p> <p>Noted: The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2011.</p>	Action by
<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 6.45 pm.</p>		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Nadia Williams on 01895 277 488. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.