

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON  
TUESDAY 9 MARCH 2010, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A P Jackson (Chairman/Leader)  
Councillors M R Alexander, M G Carver,  
L O Haysey, T Milner, R L Parker and  
M J Tindale

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, W Ashley,  
R Beeching, D Clark, N P Clark,  
R N Copping, J Demonti, A D Dodd,  
R Gilbert, M P A McMullen, V Shaw,  
J Warren and B M Wrangles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

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|--------------------|--|
| Anne Freimanis     | - Chief Executive                                      |
| Simon Drinkwater   | - Director of<br>Neighbourhood<br>Services             |
| Caroline Goss      | - Communications<br>Officer                            |
| Philip Hamberger   | - Programme<br>Director of Change                      |
| Martin Ibrahim     | - Senior Democratic<br>Services Officer                |
| Alan Madin         | - Director of Internal<br>Services                     |
| George A Robertson | - Director of<br>Customer and<br>Community<br>Services |

604 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor N Clark declared a personal interest in the matters referred to at Minutes 607 - 608, as they related to Local

Development Framework (LDF) matters and he was Secretary of the Stop Harlow North Campaign. He also declared a personal interest in the matter referred to at Minute 614 – Monthly Corporate Healthcheck, in that the risk registers referenced LDF matters and he was Secretary of the Stop Harlow North Campaign.

### RESOLVED ITEMS

#### 605 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 606 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY

The Executive received a report detailing those issues referred to the Executive by the Scrutiny Committees. Issues relating to specific reports for the Executive were considered and detailed at the relevant report of the Executive Member.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

#### 607 HARLOW OPTIONS APPRAISAL TECHNICAL STUDY

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport submitted a report on the recommendations emerging from the technical study entitled “Generating and Appraising Spatial Options for the Harlow Area” (the “Harlow Options Appraisal”), prepared for the Council by consultants Scott Wilson. The report also proposed that the Study form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Evidence Base and be taken into account in preparing the East Herts LDF.

The Executive Member detailed the context of Scott Wilson’s appraisal and its relationship with the Council’s development of its Core Strategy. In preparing the Core Strategy, the Harlow Options Appraisal will be considered alongside a range of other evidence and technical studies. The Harlow Options Appraisal was scheduled for consideration at the LDF

Executive Panel meeting on 28 January 2010. However, due to a delay in the production of the final report, this had not been possible. Therefore, the Executive Member had submitted this report for consideration directly to the Executive.

Five spatial options had been identified through a criteria-based approach and each had been independently tested using reasonableness and sustainability tests. These options had then been refined in light of the identified constraints and sustainability implications to produce the recommended spatial approach to delivering the strategy described in Policy HA1 of the East of England Plan for Harlow.

The Executive Member responded to various Members' questions and advised that the next LDF Executive Panel meeting would consider the Appraisal in detail. He invited all Members to attend and contribute. He also proposed an amendment to recommendation (A) by the inclusion of the word "total" before the word "opposition".

The Executive approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) East Herts Council maintains its total opposition to any development north of Harlow, in East Hertfordshire District, as contained in the 2008 approved East of England Plan, and Harlow's implied continual growth into East Hertfordshire, as set out in the September 2009 Regional Plan Review Consultation document;

(B) East Herts Council acknowledges the requirements of the 2008 East of England Plan Policy HA1 – Harlow Key Centre for Development and Change – that an appraisal of planning and transport options be undertaken, to inform the preparation of joint or co-ordinated Local Development Documents;

(C) the Harlow Options Appraisal Technical Study (January 2010), undertaken jointly with Harlow and

Epping Forest Councils and other partners, in accordance with Policy HA1, form part of the Local Development Framework Evidence Base, and be taken into account in preparing the East Herts Local Development Framework;

(D) it be noted that there remains a significant amount of outstanding technical work which will need to be completed in relation to Harlow before the Preferred Options stage of the Core Strategy, in particular a Green Belt Review and further work on infrastructure testing and transport;

(E) it be emphasised to GO-East and the East of England Regional Assembly (and its successor body) that the Harlow Options Appraisal Study highlights the need for appropriate infrastructure funding in order to deliver the suggested spatial approach.

## 608 PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICE LDF DIAGNOSTIC REPORT

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport submitted a report on the Local Development Framework (LDF) diagnostic report prepared by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

PAS was a government agency which operated as part of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and offered a range of services to assist Local Planning Authorities in delivering their planning function. Toward the latter part of 2009, PAS had approached the Authority to undertake an assessment of the skills and support available to deliver the LDF.

This assessment work had also been undertaken in the neighbouring Authority areas of Harlow and Epping Forest, although not as a joint exercise. The resulting diagnostic report was detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report now submitted. This set out the full details of the assessment and the recommendations for action to be taken

by the Council.

The Executive agreed to receive the report and agreed that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to consider a course of action in relation to the recommendations set out in it.

RESOLVED - that the LDF Diagnostic report be received and the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to consider a course of action in relation to the recommendations set out in it.

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609 TOWN CENTRE ENHANCEMENTS CAPITAL PROPOSALS 2010/11

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport submitted a report on proposals for town centre enhancements which sought approval to the principles and proposed capital schemes.

The Executive recalled that a list of such schemes had been approved in May 2009 (Minute 27 refers) as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted. The Executive Member now proposed that future schemes be prioritised on the basis of contributing to the economic well-being of towns and/or generating added value. He proposed a set of principles as detailed at paragraph 2.2 of the report now submitted.

The Executive Member outlined the budgetary position and advised that £137k would be available for 2010/11. He proposed that this be allocated to the three schemes which had been developed and met the proposed criteria. These were detailed in Table 1 of the report now submitted.

In response to Members' questions, the Executive Member commented that other schemes would be considered for future funding as and when developed according to their merits and the extent to which they satisfied the criteria.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the principles for the use of the Town Centre Enhancement Capital Budget as set out at paragraph 2.2 of the report submitted, be approved; and

DCCS

(B) the following proposals be funded, subject to detail being agreed by the Director of Customer and Community Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport:

- Market improvement scheme, Bishop's Stortford - £47k
- Riverside access and towpath refurbishment scheme, Bishop's Stortford - £25k
- Environmental improvements, Hertford Castle grounds and The Wash - £65k

610 TEMPORARY CAR PARK AT FORMER POLICE STATION, WARE ROAD, HERTFORD

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport submitted a report proposing a charge of £2.50 a visit for the use of a temporary car parking facility at the former police station on Ware Road, Hertford.

The Executive noted that with Gascoyne Way car park due to be closed for major capital refurbishment for six months from May 2010, a need for alternative provision had been identified.

The Executive approved the proposal as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the proposed charge of £2.50 for the use of the temporary car park at the former police station, Ware Road, Hertford, be approved. DCCS

611 EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Housing and Health submitted a

report reviewing the current Empty Homes Strategy and associated action plan. He proposed a revised strategy and action plan for the period 2010 – 2015.

The Community Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 26 January 2010, had agreed with the reasoning behind the suggested change to the service's target figure for the coming year and commented on the need to ensure that adequate resources were made available to support the new strategy and action plan.

The Executive Member detailed the proposed amendments to the strategy in the report now submitted.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the comments of Community Scrutiny Committee be received; and

(B) the revised Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan, as now submitted, be approved.

## 612 SERVICE PLANS 2010/11

The Leader of the Council submitted a report on the planned service activity for 2010/11.

The Executive noted that service plans were produced every year and set out the key actions that needed to be undertaken to deliver corporate priorities and objectives, in line with the budget. Activity would be monitored and reported to the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees, at their meeting held on 16 February 2010, had made a number of detailed comments and these were set out in the "Issues Arising from Scrutiny" report.

The Executive approved the service plans for 2010/11.

RESOLVED - that (A) the comments of the joint

meeting of Scrutiny Committees be received; and

(B) the service plan activity for 2010/11, as now submitted, be agreed.

## 613 2009/10 ESTIMATES AND FUTURE TARGETS

The Leader of the Council submitted a report setting out the performance indicators that the Council was required to monitor and publish annually. He advised the Executive of the estimated performance for 2009/10 and the proposed targets for the next three years.

The joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees, at their meeting held on 16 February 2010, had made a number of comments as detailed in the "Issues Arising from Scrutiny" report.

The Leader drew attention to the improved performance on the payment of invoices. In view of the need to assist local businesses as far as possible, he referred to the Prompt Payment Code and requested Officers to look at the possibility of the Authority signing up to it.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the estimates that are available for 2009/10 be noted;

(B) no resources be redirected to improve the 2009/10 position in respect to the indicators listed in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of the report submitted and the comments and recommendations made by the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees be received;

(C) the targets set out in paragraphs 4.1 – 4.3 of the report submitted that will either improve, retain or reduce performance be noted and the comments and recommendations made by the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees be received;

(D) the adoption of the new local measures set out

in paragraph 5.1 of the report submitted be supported;

(E) the data quality spot checks that are currently being undertaken as detailed in paragraph 6.3, of the report submitted be noted; and

(F) where data is still outstanding (as detailed in paragraphs 7.1 and 7.3 of the report submitted) further updates be included in the 2009/10 Outturn Report due to be presented to Executive on 15 June 2010.

614 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - JANUARY 2010

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on the finance and performance monitoring for the month of January 2010.

RESOLVED - that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.4 of the report submitted be noted;

(B) the key points when using iQuanta as a measure of comparison for the crime performance indicators in Paragraph 2.10 of the report submitted, be noted;

(C) a virement of £25.5k from the Council Chamber Enhancements project to the Network, Servers and Storage Upgrade budget, as detailed in paragraph 2.39 of the report submitted, be approved; and

(D) the Capital Programme be re-profiled as set out in paragraphs 2.40 to 2.42 of the report submitted.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm

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| Chairman | ..... |
| Date     | ..... |