MINUTES OF THE CABINET
HELD ON

11 December 2014 7.30 - 8.50 pm

PRESENT

Cabinet Members
Councillor Jon Clempner, Leader of the Council
Councillor Tony Durcan, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration & Enterprise
Councillor Jean Clark, Portfolio Holder for Governance
Councillor Emma Toal, Portfolio Holder for Youth & Community
Councillor Rod Truan, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Mark Wilkinson, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Additional Attendees
Councillor Dennis Palmer
Councillor Edna Stevens

Apologies
Councillor Mike Danvers
Councillor Maggie Hulcoop

Officers
Malcolm Morley, Chief Executive
Graham Branchett, Chief Operating Officer
Simon Freeman, Head of Finance
Brian Keane, Interim Head of Governance
Andrew Murray, Head of Housing
Maureen Pearman, Community, Leisure and Cultural Services Manager
Joel West, Governance Support Officer

Other Councillors
Councillor Joel Charles
Councillor Simon Carter
Councillor Eddie Johnson
Councillor Sue Livings
Councillor Linda Pailing
Councillor David Carter
Councillor Bill Pryor

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.
78. **MINUTES**

    **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2014 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

79. **MATTERS ARISING**

    None.

80. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

    The questions submitted and responses provided are appended to these minutes.

81. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

    None.

82. **PETITIONS**

    None.

83. **FORWARD PLAN**

    **RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan is noted.

84. **RECENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER, DEPUTY OR PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)**

    None.

85. **DISCRETIONARY SERVICES TRANSFERRED TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

    The Cabinet received a report proposing that the Council agree grant funding to two partner providers of discretionary services for the next three years.

    Proposed by Councillor Emma Toal (seconded by Councillor Mark Wilkinson) Cabinet:

    **RESOLVED** that:

    A Grant funding for discretionary services is made available for up to the next three years (2015/16-2017/18) on the basis outlined in paragraph 30 of the report submitted, totalling £261,000 over the period.

    B Arrangements are entered into (where necessary) to reflect all or any revised grant funding and property holdings/interests.
Delegated authority for the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community as set out in paragraph 29 of the report submitted is approved.

86. **GARAGE STRATEGY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Cabinet received a report that proposed a Garage Strategy and Improvement Plan and also a change to the way some garages are funded.

Proposed by Councillor Rod Truan (seconded by Councillor Tony Durcan) Cabinet:

RESOLVED that:

A Cabinet note the increase in investment in Council owned garage stock and approve the revised Garage Strategy and Improvement Plan outlined in Appendix 1 of the report submitted.

B Garages let to non-Council housing tenants are transferred (appropriated) to the General Fund with effect from 1 April 2015.

87. **CONTRACT AWARD - INSURANCE CONTRACTS**

The Cabinet received a report that advised of the outcome of a tender exercise for insurance services.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Tony Durcan) Cabinet:

RESOLVED that:

A Cabinet notes the outcome of the insurance tender process as detailed in the (revised) report submitted.

B Authority is delegated to the Head of Finance in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Resources to make final contract awards following the outcomes of minor clarifications, which are not expected to materially affect the evaluation.

C Lot 2 (Residential Leasehold Buildings Insurance Contract) will be awarded subject to the outcome of the 2nd leaseholder consultation.

D The Council notes that Arthur J Gallagher & Co. will be retained as insurance brokers for the duration of the Long Term Agreement.
Quoted premiums are subject to review based on claims experience as at 31 January 2015 and any portfolio changes since submission of the ITT. If the Council exercises its right under Instructions to Insurers section 3.5 of the ITT to seek revised terms from unsuccessful tenderers, award of contract is delegated to Head of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

88. **ICT STRATEGY 2014-16**

The Cabinet received a report that proposed a number of strategies and policies to secure the future operation of the Council’s ICT Service.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Tony Durcan) Cabinet:

RESOLVED that:

A The ICT Strategy is approved.

B The Data Security Breach Management Policy is approved.

C The Corporate Information Security Policy is approved.

D The Conditions of Acceptable Use Personal Commitment Statement is approved.

89. **JOINT FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 2 2014/15**

The Cabinet received a report that reviewed performance against the Council’s approved General Fund Budget and Corporate Plan for Quarter Two 2014/15 and proposed the creation of a new earmarked reserve.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Jean Clark) Cabinet:

RESOLVED that:

A Cabinet acknowledges the projected outturn position set out in the appendix to the report submitted for the second quarter (July – September) of 2014/15 as follows:

(i) A projected under-spend on controllable budgets of £206,000, representing -0.31 per cent of the gross General Fund Budget.

(ii) A total projected under-spend of £346,000 representing -0.52 per cent of the gross General Fund Budget.

(iii) The Council performed on target or above target for 40 out of 48 (83 per cent) of performance indicators.
The contribution to a new earmarked reserve (Regeneration and Enterprise Reserve), as set out in paragraph 6 of the report submitted, be recommended to Council.

90. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME QUARTER 2 FINANCE REPORT**

The Cabinet received a report that reviewed the Council’s performance against its approved Housing and Non-Housing Capital Programmes for Quarter Two 2014/15.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Rod Truan) Cabinet:

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

A Notes the progress made in the delivery of the Council’s Housing and Non-Housing Capital Programmes as at 30 September 2014 detailed as follows:

(i) Housing Capital Programme expenditure of £5,133,000 against profiled expenditure of £5,405,000 and the projected outturn for 2014/15 of £24,813,000.

(ii) Non-Housing Capital Programme expenditure of £827,000 against profiled expenditure of £788,000 and a projected outturn for 2014/15 of £3,708,000.

B Acknowledges the performance in delivering the capital programmes.

C Approves the Housing Capital Programme revised outturn at Quarter 2.

D Approves the inclusion of capital business cases in the Non-Housing Capital Programme as detailed in paragraphs 28 – 31 of the report submitted.

The Cabinet adjourned for approximately five minutes after consideration of this item. Councillor Jean Clark left the meeting at this point.

91. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT, QUARTER 2 FINANCE REPORT**

The Cabinet received a report that reviewed the Council’s performance against its approved Housing Revenue Account for Quarter Two 2014/15.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Rod Truan) Cabinet:
RESOLVED that:

A  The forecast net underspend of £1,300,000 (representing a variance of 2.53% of the total budget) composed of operational variances of £354,000 (0.69%) and non-operational variances of £946,000 (1.84%) at 28 September 2014, as identified in Appendix A to the report submitted, are noted.

B  The forecast balances at 31 March 2015, of £6,000,000 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and £3,786,000 in respect of the Major Repairs Reserve (as identified in Appendix C to the report submitted) are noted.

92. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/PARTIES AND PANELS

a) Referral from Cabinet Overview Working Group - Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2015/16

The Cabinet received a report from its Overview Working Group proposing a Council Tax Support Scheme for 2015/16.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mark Wilkinson) Cabinet:

RESOLVED that:

A  It is RECOMMENDED to Full Council that the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2015/16 be unchanged from the 2014/15 scheme.

B  The proposal to introduce penalties as detailed in paragraph 25 of the report submitted to the Overview Working Group be agreed.

93. MINUTES OF PANELS/WORKING GROUPS

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meeting are noted.

a) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 11 September 2014 of Harlow Local Highways Panel

94. MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
Agenda item 5 refers

1. **David Devine, 16 Copse Hill, Harlow to the Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community, Councillor Emma Toal**

In the light of the imminent end of the contract between the Council and Science Alive, the Friends of Harlow Museum are concerned about the future of the museum service. Is the Council satisfied that all the performance criteria have been achieved by Science Alive in the past three years, specifically: exhibitions; education and outreach work?

*Reply from Councillor Emma Toal, Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community*

Yes, Science Alive has achieved the requirements of the balanced scorecard which monitors the performance of the contract.

2. **David Devine, 16 Copse Hill, Harlow to the Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community, Councillor Emma Toal**

As reported on page 17 of tonight’s agenda, the Council contract to provide a museum service has resulted in the handing over of £364,434 to Science Alive between 2012 and 2015. Does the Council feel that this large sum of public money is money well spent?

*Reply from Councillor Emma Toal, Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community*

Yes, the partnering arrangement has resulted in savings of £161,013 compared to the service operating in-house, in addition to other enhancements to the service.