

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET OVERVIEW WORKING GROUP
HELD ON**

10 March 2016

7.30 - 8.28 pm

PRESENT

Overview Working Group Members

Councillor Ian Beckett (Chair)
Councillor Maggie Hulcoop (Vice-Chair)
Councillor David Carter
Councillor Simon Carter
Councillor Clive Souter
Councillor John Strachan

Other Councillors

Councillor Tony Durcan

Officers

Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing
Cara Coxhead, Area Housing Manager
Wendy Makepeace, Area Housing Manager
Lisa Purse, Corporate and Governance Support Officer

39. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Manny Doku, Muriel Jolles and Danny Purton.

40. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

41. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

42. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

43. **REVIEW OF COUNCIL HOUSING EMPTY PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

The Overview Working Group received a report that reviewed council housing empty property management. Wendy Makepeace, Area Housing Manager outlined the detail within the report which included significant

improvements made in the number of vacant properties at any one time and turnaround times.

The Group discussed various issues including recharges, the Council's bidding process and regeneration of The Briars, Copshall Close and Ayletts Field.

RESOLVED that the Overview Working Group noted the work to date to improve empty property management and the proposed actions to further improve performance, as explained in paragraphs 19 to 22 of the report.

44. **REVIEW OF FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF PETS CORNER**

The Overview Working Group received a scoping report that detailed a review of the financial sustainability of Pets Corner. Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing summarised the recommendations contained within the report and explained the remit of the proposed Pets Corner Working Party.

RESOLVED that the Overview Working Group:

A agreed the scope for the Review of the Financial Sustainability of Pets Corner as set out in the report.

B agreed that a working party be established, with terms of reference as set out in Appendix A of this report, to examine options and make recommendations for the long term financial sustainability of Pets Corner.

C Councillors David Carter, Maggie Hulcoop and John Strachan, be appointed to the Pets Corner Working Party.

45. **FUTURE OF THE TOWN CENTRE**

The Overview Working Group received a report which detailed background, current progress and future progress and activity to revitalise Harlow Town Centre. Jane Greer and Councillor Tony Durcan provided an update on work to date including funding and the appointment of a dedicated Officer, different types of markets, new signage and new lighting as well as medium to long term market analysis work that would underpin a masterplan exercise.

The Group discussed the large number of landlords and owners within Harlow Town Centre and the importance of coordinating and communicating with local businesses.

RESOLVED that:

A the Overview Working Group considered whether there is further added value, through research and guidance, that it can provide in addition to the existing work being carried out by the cross-party working group and Council Officers.

B a further report is provided to the Overview Working Group in six months' time, on progress as detailed in the report.

46. **WORK PLAN**

The Overview Working Group received a report that outlined its Work Plan for the current year.

RESOLVED that the 2015/16 Work Plan is noted.

47. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW
WORKING GROUP