

MINUTES OF THE CABINET HELD ON

27 March 2025

7.00 - 7.40 pm

PRESENT

Committee Members

Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of the Council and Chair of Personnel Committee

Councillor David Carter, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing

Councillor Danielle Brown, Portfolio Holder for Community and Wellbeing

Councillor Joel Charles, Portfolio Holder for Public Protection

Councillor Hannah Ellis, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services and Transformation

Councillor Michael Hardware, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development

Councillor Alastair Gunn, Portfolio Holder for Garden Town and Planning

Councillor James Leppard, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Councillor Nicky Purse, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability

Other Councillors

Councillor Linda Clark

Councillor Jodi Dunne

Councillor Tony Durcan

Councillor Tony Edwards

Councillor Michael Garnett

Councillor Dr. Emma Ghaffari

Councillor James Griggs

Councillor Michael Houlihan

Councillor Luke Howard

Councillor Kay Morrison

Councillor Stefan Mullard- Toal

Councillor Matthew Saggars

Councillor Lanie Shears

Councillor Jake Shepherd

Councillor Clive Souter

Councillor Nancy Watson

Officers

James Gardner, Managing Director

Niel Churchill, Communications Manager

Daniel Dickinson, Assistant Director - Legal and Democratic Services (Interim)

Rebecca Farrant, Assistant Director - Corporate Services and Improvement

Paul Keen, Communications Officer

Adam Rees, Senior Governance Support Officer

Jacqui Van Mellaerts, Assistant Director - Finance

Alan Townshend, Executive Director

149. WEBCAST INTRODUCTION

The Leader said the meeting was being webcast live and would be available for repeated viewing after the meeting has ended. By continuing to attend the meeting, you were consenting to being filmed and to appearing in the webcast.

150. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

151. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

Cabinet agreed to consider the Housing Regulator – Update as the next item.

152. **HOUSING REGULATOR - UPDATE**

Cabinet received an update report on works agreed with the Regulator of Social Housing.

Proposed by Councillor David Carter (seconded by Councillor Dan Swords) it was:

RESOLVED that:

- A** Cabinet noted the progress being made against the actions agreed with the Regulator of Social Housing to manage and improve our ongoing social housing compliance.
- B** Cabinet endorsed the draft Improvement Plan for all compliance areas as set out in Appendix A and notes the ongoing work with the Regulator of Social Housing to finalise the Improvement Plan.
- C** Cabinet noted that progress against the draft Improvement Plan will be reported to Cabinet on a monthly basis.
- D** Cabinet keep under review the option of making a voluntary undertaking to the Regulator of Social Housing as work on finalising and implementing the improvement plan continues.

153. **HARLOW QUARTER - ACQUISITION / COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER**

Cabinet received a report on the acquisition, or use of a Compulsory Purchase Order, for the site known as Harlow Quarter.

Proposed by Councillor Dan Swords (seconded by Councillor James Leppard) it was:

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended to Full Council to:

- A** Delegate authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to finalise proposals for the purchase of Harlow Quarter by private treaty.

- B** Delegate authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to, in parallel with negotiations to acquire by private treaty, finalise proposals to acquire Harlow Quarter using compulsory purchase powers.
- C** Allocate the maximum budget set out in confidential Appendix B to the report, to fund the acquisition of Harlow Quarter including all costs associated with the acquisition and/or compulsory purchase process, and delegate authority to the S151 Officer to amend the Council's Capital Strategy and Treasury documents accordingly.
- D** Note that final authority to proceed with an acquisition by private treaty (pursuant to A above) or to exercise compulsory purchase powers (pursuant to B above) will be subject to a future Cabinet decision.

154. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL