



## SUMMONS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE HART DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HARLINGTON WAY, FLEET ON THURSDAY 28 JANUARY 2016 AT 7.00 PM

Joint Chief Executive

CIVIC OFFICES, HARLINGTON WAY  
FLEET, HAMPSHIRE GU51 4AE

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## AGENDA

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BRAILLE ON REQUEST**

### **1 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 10 December 2015.  
**Paper A**

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To declare disclosable pecuniary, and any other, interests.

### **4 STAGECOACH SOUTH**

Presentation by the Managing Director of Stagecoach South, Mr Michael Watson.

### **5 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 – QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

To receive any questions from members of the public submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12.

*Note: The text of any question under Council Procedure Rule 12 must be given to the Chief Executive not later than **Noon on Friday, 22 January 2016.***

## 6 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

To receive any questions from Members submitted pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.

*Note: The text of any question under Council Procedure Rule 14.3 must be given to the Chief Executive not later than 5.00 pm on Monday, 25 January 2016.*

*The text of any question under Council Procedure Rule 14.4 must be submitted to the Chief Executive before 10.00 am on Thursday, 28 January 2016.*

## 7 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 8 CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 9 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

## 10 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The Minutes of the following Committees, which met on the dates shown, are submitted.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.1, Members are allowed to put questions at Council without Notice in respect of any matters in the Minutes to the Leader of the Council or any Chairman of the relevant meeting at the time those Minutes are received by Council.

Meeting	Date	Page Numbers	For Decision
Cabinet	7 January 2016	30-31	
Audit Committee	8 December 2015	7-8	
Overview & Scrutiny	15 December 2015	16-18	
Licensing Committee	5 January 2016	4-7	
Planning Committee	9 December 2015	107-112	
Planning Committee	13 January 2016	113-119	
Staffing Committee	18 January 2016		<b>Minute 17 - Pay Policy Statement Financial Year 2016-17</b>
Overview and Scrutiny	19 January 2016 <i>To follow*</i>		
Cabinet	21 January 2016 <i>To follow*</i>		<b>Joint Procurement of Services</b>

*\* Please note - because of timing issues these minutes are to follow.*

**Date of Despatch: 19 January 2016**

## **COUNCIL**

**Date and Time:** Thursday, 10 December 2015 at 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

## **COUNCILLORS –**

Oliver - (Chairman)

Ambler	Collett	Leeson
Axam	Crampton	Makepeace-Browne
Bailey	Crookes	Morris
Billings	Dickens	Neighbour
Blewett	Forster	Parker
Burchfield	Gray	Radley JE
Butler	Gorys	Radley JR
Clarke	Harward	Southern
Cockarill	Kennett	Wheale

### **Officers Present:**

Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Gill Chapman	Committee Services

## **66 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Crisp, Kinnell, Renshaw and Woods.

## **68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

## **69 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 – QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

Questions had been received from Mr Meyrick Williams, details of which are set out in Appendix I attached to these Minutes.

## **70 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

No questions received.

## 71 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had attended the following events on behalf of the Council.

30 Nov	WE Charity Dinner at WE The Restaurant, Fleet
1 Dec	Launch of Hart Reception

The Vice Chairman recommended seeing the Pelly Orchestra, who were appearing in concert at Elvetham Heath on 19 December. He would be going and would recommend it to members.

The Chairman thanked members who attended the dinner at WE Restaurant, which had raised over £1700 for the foodbank. He hoped to give them a cheque before Christmas as this was their busiest time of year. He and the Vice Chairman wished everyone a very Merry Christmas.

## 72 CABINET MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council, **Councillor Parker**, announced:

I have received a letter from the Fleet Festivities Committee which states in part: "On behalf of Fleet & District Festival Committee, I want to pass on our grateful thanks to Hart District Council for the generous support we received for the 2015 Christmas Festival. Your sponsorship is essential in supporting all the elements of the event.

Once again, the footfall counter in the Hart Shopping Centre registered a whopping 19,000 which just shows what a major item this has become in Fleet's calendar! I am sure you are aware how hard our volunteers, the management team in the Shopping Centre, the Lions and the Town & District Councils work to put on this show and it is great that we can all work together to bring some Christmas sparkle to the town."

I have replied:

" Thank you for this letter which is very much appreciated. I thoroughly enjoyed the event – including my dinner, which was a street curry – and whilst there are undoubtedly lessons to be learned, 19,000 people means that it was an unqualified success.

Please pass my thanks to your committee and thence to your contributing organisations and volunteers for facilitating a fabulous evening."

The consultation on development options has been started, and we have received several hundred responses on the website. As yet I do not know what any of them are saying, and I have asked the officers not to tell me; it will be an interesting surprise for January. I am aware that a number of groups are responding, and advising their own members on responding.

Finally, there is a new consultation out from the Department for Communities and Local Government on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. It only came out on Tuesday, but it is picking up on the new Starter Home category of Affordable Housing, suggesting that some could be placed in Greenbelt,

supporting new settlements and expanding the range of low cost housing options. The consultation closes on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016, so there is time to absorb its key messages.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, **Councillor Burchfield**, reported

"I attended the Hampshire Partnership on 9th December which is a quarterly meeting of the 11 Hampshire Borough/District Council Leaders as well as the Leader of the County Council. One of the questions I asked was around the timing of the bid for devolution and when they anticipated implementing the start of devolution. I was told by HCC Leader Roy Perry that they expected an answer from Greg Clark in late January to early February as the Minister is keen to push this forward. There will be months of negotiation so realistic timelines for a final settlement would be sometime in June 2016. If all goes to plan, the first realisation of devolution would be in April 2017, at the start of the new fiscal year.

### **Syrian Vulnerable Persons Scheme**

This effort is being coordinated with the Government by Hampshire County Council. Ian Hault, Head of Emergency Planning and Resilience, mentioned in our meeting that Hampshire will be taking two families this year from the refugee camps as per Government policy. The first of these is a family of four which has settled in Winchester this past week; the second family will be flown over next week to settle in Basingstoke. Hampshire County Council anticipates that it will take approximately 20 families per annum through 2020. This figure is based on the proportion of Hampshire's population relative to the UK total population and is then multiplied by the figure the Government has promised to resettle into the UK. That means each borough/district will need to take in 2 families per annum. For clarity sake, these families will not be put on the housing register. They will only be provided accommodation by private landlords altruistically volunteering to rent their properties to these families at a reduced rate."

Lastly, there is a 5-Council Procurement Board meeting on the 7th January to take the final decision on which vendors will be awarded Lot 1 and the Lot 2 bids. There will be a special cabinet meeting that will take place on 21st January to agree to proceed to final contracts and Council will be informed on the 28th January."

The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, **Councillor Crampton**, announced that she had been asked to clarify the position with mental health services after the media coverage of failures at Southern Health Trust. She confirmed that mental health services in Hart were covered by Surrey and Borders Mental Health Trust and not Southern Health.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, **Councillor Crookes**, reported:

I recently addressed a meeting of members of the North Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, a joint meeting with Rushmoor BC. I was subsequently invited to join the Area Committee of the Chamber, an invitation which I have accepted. This will help to build relationships with local businesses.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, **Councillor Forster**, announced:

I would like to remind everyone that the Christmas Calendar for waste collections starts from 21 December, and will in general be 2-3 days late. Our staff will be working through the holidays to catch up.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, **Councillor Gorys**, reported

Nicola Harpham, Alison Smithen and Katy Herrington have been working with Thames Valley Housing Association to market and support the allocations of shared ownership units on the Crookham Park development (previously known as QEB). Members will hopefully be aware already following Phil Turner's email of 2 December that we are accommodating representatives from Thames Valley Housing in the Civic Offices between 10am and 4pm on Friday 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> December, and 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January. If you know any residents who may be interested, please point them in this direction for information.

Phil Turner has been working with the government funded National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS) on a special edition of their national publication "Housing Matters". Phil has acted as guest editor for this December edition, which is intended to deliver a local authority perspective and was sent to all local authorities in England on 1<sup>st</sup> December (plus across a wide range of voluntary sector organisations). In his own time, Phil approached colleagues from around the county to source material, undertook the editing process, and wrote a feature article highlighting aspects of Hart's own good practice locally.

The team continues to deliver our Housing Services and Housing Service Board has been engaged in the formulation of the Service Plan for next year.

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services, **Councillor Kennett**, reported:

Members may be interested to know that there was an announcement to the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel that Chief Constable Andy Marsh is probably leaving. I say probably because he has been named as the preferred candidate for the position of Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset, but the appointment has not been definitely confirmed, although it is highly likely to be. Accordingly the timing has not yet been finalised either.

The Cabinet Member for Town and Village Regeneration, **Councillor Morris**, reported:

Blackwater regeneration continues to be planned, with the deep clean of all footpaths first on the agenda. We have received 3 quotes for this specialist work and once a decision is made which company is to carry out the clean the residents and retailers will be informed of the details.

On 10 December I attended a symposium discussing the topic "The next Steps in Transforming our Villages and Towns" held at the Plaza Hotel Waterloo in London. This event discussed similar issues we are facing in Hart with respect to high street footfall and the emotive subject of parking. Also discussed was the Business Improvement District (BID) process and how high street vitality can gain from this

initiative. It requires huge retailer inputs for this to succeed and I will pass on to those dealing with Fleets BID information and contacts from these discussions. The whole event was very enlightening and has opened my eyes to some initiatives which hopefully I can bring forward.

### **73 JOINT CHIEF EXECUTIVES' REPORT**

Daryl Phillips reported that the consultation on the housing options paper had now started and would run through to 15 January 2016. He reminded members that the Council will close at lunchtime on Christmas Eve and will open again on Wednesday 30 December and Thursday, 31 December. The offices will be closed on New Years Day and will reopen again on Monday, 4 January 2016.

Mr Phillips added that Ms Hughes was working hard on the procurement project and thanked her for her efforts in the very intensive process.

### **74 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Overview and Scrutiny</b> No questions asked.	<b>17 November 2015</b>

<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>18 November 2015</b>
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Minute 77 - Hart District Local Plan

Councillor Collett asked the Leader if he was satisfied that Hart is giving enough time for the Local Plan consultation, as the timing includes the holiday period when Parish and Town Councils may not have meetings to consider their response.

The Leader responded that, as the consultation was mostly aimed at residents, they would be more likely to be available and have the time over Christmas. He added that if any parish or town council found it hard to meet the deadline they should let the Leader, Joint Chief Executive or Planning Policy team know and we would try to accommodate them.

<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>3 December 2015</b>
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#### **Minute 88 - Review of Implementation of Current Plan and Consideration of Draft New Corporate Plan**

Councillor Collett asked why the objective to reduce dog fouling in the previous Corporate Plan had not been continued, as had the target for reducing anti-social behaviour.

The Leader responded that the Dog Warden team were still working very hard on the dog fouling issue, as were the Community Safety team working on anti-social behaviour. Priorities had changed, but work would continue on all issues previously targeted, and not stop because they were not now noted as a priority. The Leader recommended that Members respond in the consultation period.

An updated version of the Corporate Plan 2016-18, which included Cabinet's recommended amendments, had been circulated. The resolution was therefore amended.

Members discussed the draft Corporate Plan, and the implementation plan which would come forward in March/April 2016.

**RESOLVED**

That Council undertake public consultation on the Draft Corporate Plan for the period 2016-2018.

The meeting closed at 8pm

## COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

### QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

Questions from **Mr Meyrick Williams**:

#### **Question 1**

At the briefing session on 2 Dec the Joint CEO stated that HDC will complete the consultation process before determining the weighting criteria, how will the LPSG members ensure that the weighting criteria will not be biased so as to engineer a preferred and subjective outcome rather than an analytical and objective assessment of the public's wishes?

#### **Response:**

My original response to this question was that the suggestion that Hart officers or members would contemplate falsifying the results of a consultation is deeply offensive. However, on further reflection I remembered my comments at a speaking engagement a couple of weeks ago, that people affected by such potential development feel both frightened and threatened, and may lash out in ways they would not normally contemplate. I shall thus limit my answer to assuring Mr Williams that no Hart member, of any political allegiance, and no Hart officer, will seek to apply bias in order to engineer any particular outcome, and any intimation otherwise is inappropriate and unsupported by evidence.

#### **Supplementary Question:**

Who will devise the weighting criteria and when will the criteria be made public so as to allay any concerns ?

#### **Response:**

This council will publish the evaluation when we have the responses available. It will then be transparent exactly how we are viewing the contributions made and make sure we are even handed in the way in which we do it.

#### **Question 2**

When planning a New Town a rule of thumb for Master Planning is that you halve the housing capacity of SHLAA sites to make allowance for schools, shops, medical centres, car parks, SANGs, sewage works, let alone railway lines and motorways, so if the housing capacity of all the SHLAAs shown in Fig 13 on page 44 of the Refined Options Paper is 7500, it means that their capacity for a New Town is only going to be about 3750, so would the Council agree that you will need even more land than that shown for a New Settlement?

#### **Response:**

Planning officers know of no such generally accepted 'rule of thumb'; even if there were it would be difficult to apply in Hart's situation where in addition to the usual stuff we have to provide for SANGs, not common elsewhere. In the case of the proposed new settlement currently under consultation in Winchfield, there is much more detail including specific SHLAA site capacities and indicative sites for other infrastructure items.

Just to be clear, we are consulting on the possibility of bring forward a new settlement "...which could ultimately be designed to accommodate **up to 5,000** new homes" (page 41

of the Housing Options Paper) and we have seen nothing yet that makes that not deliverable within the land that has so far been prompted by local landowners for development. Mr Williams' 'rule of thumb' thus fits within the consultation option currently before residents.

**Supplementary Question:**

When will the Council share this risk with the public and admit that coalescence of existing settlements is inevitable if a new settlement is adopted?

**Response:**

The way you plan a new settlement includes planning the green spaces around it exactly to plan out the coalescence going forward.

**Question 3**

The letter from Peter Village QC dated 2 Apr 15 and delivered to the Council said "There has been no regulation 18 consultation at all on issues such as employment, retail, transport, infrastructure or, indeed, anything other than housing distribution. It is inconceivable that a coherent and sound local plan could emerge without addressing most of these issues" so when will the Council consult on these important issues?

**Response:**

We've published our timetable which shows that we will consult on a full draft local plan in Summer 2016. Residents will be able to comment on all the draft policies for all topic areas. This will be a formal consultation under Regulation 18 to inform the version that we propose to submit to the Inspector.

**Supplementary Question:**

How will the Council avoid the concern expressed by the QC and I quote "The Council appears to be in a hopeless position if it maintains its current course... proceeding with a plan that does not address fundamental matters"?

**Response:**

The process under the NPPF is to have a consultation under Regulation 18 to cover all matters required forms the local plan. This is designed to inform the submission plan, itself subject to consultation.

**Question 4**

Based on your Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement at 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015, can you please explain why 900 units from developable or deliverable sites have been missed from your calculation of the remaining housing requirement presented in the 'Developing a Local Plan' consultation document, and why many of them have not been included in the New Homes booklet for consultation by residents?

**Response:**

Officers have looked into this and we have not 'missed out' 900 units in reaching the remaining housing requirement.

If you think there are deliverable or developable sites that we have not included in our calculations then please let us know through a response to the consultation. However, I would urge you first to read paragraph 57 of the Refined Housing Options Paper, and to

look at the list of brownfield sites at Appendix I which have been accounted for in reaching the residual housing target. Also check the SHLAA information itself in case any corrections have been made regarding the sites you are looking at.

As for the parish maps in the consultation documents we deliberately do not show all sites that are deliverable or developable because we are not consulting on those sites and they would over-complicate matters. However, we have shown the larger sites that are to be developed on the parish maps.

**Supplementary Question:**

In The New Year, how will the Council avoid making the assumption that a new settlement will just be a matter of concreting over a few fields in Winchfield, and address the real issues that a new settlement will result in - starvation of infrastructure funding, extra traffic and congestion, lack of affordable homes and destruction of amenity space or will the Council put the priority on a focused brownfield strategy?

**Response:**

We are not going to pre-empt the consultation. If it turns out to be a new settlement we will address it and more, in hopefully a satisfactory way. This is a consultation not a referendum and we will be looking at the reasons people put forward and evaluating the responses. It is the easiest thing to put forward the numbers, but we need a quality result and a quality way forward.

## **COUNCIL**

**Date and Time:** Thursday, 28 January 2016 at 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

## **COUNCILLORS –**

Oliver - (Chairman)

Ambler	Crisp	Makepeace-Browne
Axam	Crookes	Morris
Bailey	Dickens	Neighbour (7.05 pm)
Billings	Forster S	Parker
Blewett	Gray	Radley JE
Burchfield	Gorys	Radley JR
Butler	Kennett	Renshaw
Clarke	Kinnell (7.30 pm)	Southern
Cockarill	Leeson	Wheale
Crampton	Lewis	Woods

### **Officers Present:**

Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Gill Chapman	Committee Services

## **75 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2015 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Collett, Harward and Radley JE.

## **77 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

## **78 PRESENTATION**

Mr Michael Watson, Managing Director of Stagecoach South, gave members an overview of the challenges facing Stagecoach South and its plans for the future.

Stagecoach were planning to invest in technology, generate passengers - especially younger travellers, improve reliability and grow the network to meet passengers needs, all whilst still being commercially viable. Unreliability impacted on passenger

retention, especially things like congestion and roadworks. Community engagement was ongoing and local help was needed. Bus services were of great value to the community, especially in rural areas, but funding cuts were impacting on people socially and commuting.

Members asked questions around passenger growth, services at Fleet Station, younger travellers, lack of services into the evening, Odiham services, the need for a Frimley Park hospital service, The lack of Yateley services were of especial concern to Members, who asked that Stagecoach look particularly at a link to Fleet Station and an evening service on route 3.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Technical Services encouraged members to let him know of any issues that could be taken to the Blackwater Valley Advisory Committee for Public Transport. He added that reliability was key, and looked forward to meeting with Stagecoach to pursue the issues highlighted.

Mr Watson thanked Council for the opportunity, adding that Members could take issues up him direct. The Chairman thanked Mr Watson for his attendance.

## **79 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 – QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

Questions had been received from Mr Chris Cornwell and Mr David Turver, details of which are set out in Appendix A attached to these Minutes.

## **80 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 – QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

Questions put by Councillors are detailed in Appendix B attached to these Minutes.

## **81 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had attended the following events on behalf of the Council.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 12 December | Basingstoke Deane BC Carol Concert, St Michael's Church, Basingstoke                   |
| 13 December | St John Ambulance Hampshire Christmas Celebration 2015 at Holy Trinity Church, Fareham |
| 19 December | Pantomime at The Harlington - Aladdin  |
| 21 December | Festive visit to the Royal Mail Delivery Office, Waterfront Business Park, Fleet       |
| 24 December | Christmas Eve Carol Singing round the wards at Frimley Park Hospital                   |
| 19 January  | Lions WE Charity Dinner  |
| 23 January  | Eastleigh Burns Night Supper, Hedge End  |
| 27 January  | Havant BC Holocaust Memorial Day service at Havant Cemetery,                           |

The Vice-Chairman had attended the Pelly Christmas Concert at the Church on the Heath.

## **82 CABINET MEMBERS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader of the Council, **Councillor Parker**, announced:

Devolution - Discussions about housing and governance, the matters most exercising the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in October, have been progressing. We also need to reassure the Government that a Hampshire solution without a mayor will have adequate democratic accountability. There is a further meeting tomorrow which will hopefully bottom this out. Housing however is potentially more difficult, particularly at our stage in the Local Plan process. I have informed Hampshire Leaders that there is little support amongst Hart members for the accelerated delivery which is being discussed. More news on this as it breaks.

Planning Policy - As mentioned during Questions, officers have made arrangements for the East Hampshire District Council to host and manage the plan making process in the future. Their planning team have recently completed a Local Plan through to adoption, which is highly relevant experience, and they also enjoy first class project management skills. Our own planning policy staff will work with them, in some cases co-locating with them. I am confident that this will strengthen our approach and processes, and help us to bring a plan in on time.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, **Councillor Burchfield**, reported:

With our contract for a range of outsourced services coming up for renewal in 2017, last year the Council started to consider its options for the future. We were approached by South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse who were seeking partners to procure the services in a way that would deliver good customer service along with better economies of scale. After some time, further partners were brought into the discussion, notably Mendip and Havant – all of whom had existing contracts with Capita which were due to expire around a year of each other.

Following Cabinet approval to test the market based on a single specification, a project team was formed and guided by a Project Board consisting of Portfolio Holders/Leaders and Chief Execs. The team has since gone through an iterative procurement process through to the identification of preferred bidders.

Today I am happy to announce to members that Hart's Cabinet have agreed to go forward with this joint-council outsourcing deal. The other councils such as Mendip have already agreed; South Oxfordshire and Vale Councils decide tonight, and Havant (who are speaking for East Hampshire as well), will decide early next week. Upon Havant's approval next week, a joint press statement will be released to the general public.

To recap, the benefits to all Councils are as follows:

- **Better economies of scale** - The savings to the public purse are in the region of £50 million over the life of the contract with an improvement to our service.
- **The savings are the minimum guaranteed – not the maximum.** We have only counted the savings that underpin by the current proposal. Commercially this means that savings can exceed the underwritten amounts (which might for example in appropriate cases be encouraged through gain share mechanisms). I have done used these types of mechanisms in the private sector – they truly work. There are also mechanisms for additional savings and other financial incentives by adding more Councils to the programme.

- **Focus on us** - Hart will go from being one of the smallest contracts for Capita, to a contract that puts us well into the top 10 contracts for Capita Local Government Services – aligned with other contracts such as Birmingham, the largest Council in Europe.
- **Cheaper services returning to us** – When the contracts come back to us at the end of 9 years, there will be an **operational cost reduction of 25%**.
- **Our partners will invest** – with a contract of this size, both Vinci and Capita intend to invest heavily in new IT, which we anticipate will lead to an improvement of services to our residents, for instance helping many people who want to do things on line - to self-serve which is where we want to be as a Council in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

At a time of continued austerity within Local Government, it is comforting to know that through collaborative working, Hart will see savings in the region of £5 million over a 9 year period as a result of the bold decisions taken by this Council. I would like to once again thank and congratulate all those involved for their dedication and hard work. We will soon see the cash benefits of our labour.

The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, **Councillor Crampton**, had no announcements.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development, **Councillor Crookes**, had no announcements.

The Cabinet Member for Environment, **Councillor Forster**, announced:

The CCTV service continues to work effectively, and we have received praise for the ease and helpfulness of our officers from Hampshire Police, and the CCTV service should be commended on that.

We have been working on the Clean for the Queen project - a campaign to clear up Britain in time for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, officially celebrated in June. Councillor Morris is involved on the Blackwater front and we are looking to work with other parishes. Fleet Town Council already have something happening in April.

I would like to draw your attention to two consultations and one survey at this time. There is a train franchise survey around the potential rebid by SW Trains, and I encourage everyone to take part, particularly around the enhancements. I met staff working on the new bid from Stagecoach. Some of the other bidders have good ideas, and they would value suggestions from public for that survey. There is a consultation on bus services that are in the Blackwater Valley area and adjacent to Hart by Surrey CC, and as some of services come into our area residents' views would be relevant. In Hart news, coming out in March, we will be including a bus survey and would encourage residents to feed back so we have evidence to give to Stagecoach to say what we need.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, **Councillor Gorys**, reported

The Housing team continues to be busy across the service. There are ongoing viability challenges on a range of sites and as discussed at O&S on 19<sup>th</sup> January – where members considered this in the context of our Affordable Housing Policy and

achieving the right level of affordable housing with the right mix of tenure (or the right amount of off-site financial contribution where necessary).

An 'empty homes reporting tool' has been developed and included on the Council's website. This will enable anyone with an empty home, or who is aware of one, to notify Housing Services. This accompanies revised literature that draws together the expertise within the Private Sector Housing and Housing Options Teams in a way that we hope will encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use and accept tenants put forward by the Council's Housing Options Team. Well done to Louise Lyons and Vicky Atkinson for their work to make this happen.

The team have also opened up their housing options and homelessness casework for scrutiny by an experienced officer from Rushmoor Borough Council who is currently seconded in to the service to coordinate our sub-regional "Help for Single Homeless Project". The 'case-audit' has developed a range of recommendations that the housing management team will be considering. This will be with a view to contributing to the continuous improvement of the service and in the context of our commitment to the HART values (and the national "Gold Standard Challenge!"). Thanks to Claire Leivers for her help in providing us with a further healthy external challenge!

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services, **Councillor Kennett**, reported:

At a meeting of the Hampshire Police and Crime Panel last Friday the Commissioner, Simon Hayes, presented his budget for next year. He proposed a 1.99% increase in the precept, and this was agreed by the Panel.

The increase will yield about £2 million whereas the grant from the Government for next year will be cut by about £10 million and the separate grant for the Marine Division will be abolished, so the Police will still have find considerable economies.

The Home Office is encouraging them to promote the PREVENT anti-extremism programme and I am going to a detailed briefing on this tomorrow.

They are rationalising their properties and the Estates Manager said he plans to sell the Fleet Police Station for redevelopment early in the new financial year (which should add to our SHLAA). Yateley station will be kept and will benefit from a minor upgrade.

The Cabinet Member for Town and Village Regeneration, **Councillor Morris**, reported:

All may have noticed that within Hart's Courtyard car park there are now 3 Police designated parking bays. These bays were negotiated under the contract between Hart and the Police to lease part of the ground floor area of Hart's Civic offices. No revenue is being lost as the police are paying the current season ticket costs for the privilege.

As mentioned by Councillor Burchfield, Cabinet on 21st January 2016 agreed to the Joint Procurement of Services and part 2 of this agreement involves outsourcing car park revenue collection. Further negotiations and questions will be brought about at

a future Preferred Bid Stage between the 5 Districts involved where items like Car Park Maintenance and Ticket machines will be discussed. As members are aware the refurbishment of Church Road car Park and the facilitating of upgraded ticket machines were put on hold awaiting the outcome of outsourcing decisions. It is hoped as soon as the Preferred Bid discussions have been finalised that these essential previously planned works can be carried out by who ever takes on the responsibility be it Hart or the outsourced company.

As part of the regeneration conversations I'm having with organisations within Fleet, I recently attended a Fleet Future meeting where much was discussed about initiatives to bring about better shopper footfall for retailers and the possible development opportunities along and around Fleet High Street. I was also able to update them regarding my conversations with the Hart centre management and how further progress has been made to revitalise the centre with additional empty units being leased.

The first formal Blackwater Retailer Association meeting will take place on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 in a local Blackwater Restaurant where I aim to form a committee with an elected Chairman. This will allow the retailers to take control of this association.

The deep clean of Blackwater's pavements adjacent to the shopping areas has now been agreed for 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016. The short delay has been due to legal agreements, funding and tendering for the best contractor. I'm pleased to announce that the company who will carry out this work are specialists in this field and I'm sure on completion will be the start of uplifting the condition of this area. Retailers and nearby Residents will shortly be informed of the planned work which will take place after 6 pm for 2 to 3 nights so that there is minimum disruption to normal daily trading. Much other work is continuing to regenerate Blackwater and as and when final details come about I will enlighten members.

### **83 JOINT CHIEF EXECUTIVES' REPORT**

The Joint Chief Executives' report is attached as Appendix C to these Minutes.

### **84 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>7 January 2016</b>
No questions asked.	
<b>Audit Committee</b>	<b>8 December 2015</b>
No questions asked.	
<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>15 December 2015</b>
No questions asked.	

**Licensing Committee****5 January 2016**

After a question from Councillor Wheale on changes to the policy, Councillor Forster confirmed that there were no substantive changes to the on street collections policy.

**Planning Committee****9 December 2015**

No questions asked.

**Planning Committee****13 January 2016**

No questions asked.

**Staffing Committee****18 January 2016**

No questions asked.

**Minute No 17 - Pay Policy Statement Financial Year 2016-17****RESOLVED**

That the Pay Policy be approved.

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee****19 January 2016**

No questions asked.

**Cabinet****21 January 2016**

Councillor Southern made a statement on the awarding of the procurement contract to the successful bidder.

**Minute No 103 - Joint Procurement of Services**

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Burchfield.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the following be agreed:

- 1 The establishment of a Joint Committee in accordance with the details outlined in Appendix 3 and to delegate authority to the Joint Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, to be authorised to seek any minor changes to the Joint Committee terms of reference as necessary and be delegated to sign this agreement on behalf of the Council.
- 2 The establishment of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee with details outlined in Appendix 4 and to delegate authority to the Joint Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services, be authorised to seek any minor changes to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny

Committee terms of reference as necessary and be delegated to sign the agreement on behalf of the Council

- 3 The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of Standards Committee and the Three Group Leaders be delegated to amend the constitution accordingly

*NB Para 25.1 of the Constitution states that 'Any motion to change the Constitution will, when proposed and seconded, be referred without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.' This item will therefore be deferred for discussion and decision until the next meeting, scheduled for 25 February 2016.*

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

## COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12

### QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

**Mr Chris Cornwell** asked:

What is Hart District Council's transport strategy?

**Councillor Forster** responded:

Hart District Council does not have a transport strategy, as responsibility for development of the Local Transport Plan rests with Hampshire County Council, who are the Transport Authority for Hampshire. Chapter 5 of the plan details the Transport Strategy and challenges for North Hampshire which includes the district of Hart. A copy of this strategy can be found on Hampshire County Council's website.

Hart worked with the County Council on the development of the strategy and fully supports and endorses its contents. The Local Transport Plan is referenced from Hart's Local Plan.

Whilst Hart doesn't have a transport strategy, and being mindful of the current financial restrictions, the Council is keen to promote and support transport improvements. Examples include:

- Use of developers contributions to part fund additional parking at Fleet Station
- Co-ordinating a response to recent cuts to bus services and working with the operators and the County Council on development of an improved solution.
- Use of developers' contributions to fund a new cycle path in Blackwater.

Hart also promotes improved transport across the district by choosing to deliver certain services these include:

Highways Traffic Management - implementation and management of on street parking restrictions and road closures

Highways Development control - Providing comment on highway proposals for new developments.

Maintenance of Highway verges - Grass cutting and maintenance of roundabouts

On street parking enforcement - Control of on street parking restrictions

Provision of off street parking - To minimise on street parking and reduce traffic congestion.

I have also recently asked officers to investigate opportunities for installing Electric Vehicle charging points in Hart's car parks and will be taking a report to Cabinet in March considering this.

As can be seen whilst Hart has no strategic responsibilities for managing transport, the council does do a lot to support and promote improved transport around the District.

**Mr Cornwell** asked a supplementary question:

District Councils may not have direct responsibility for the strategic transport plan but most provide financial support for community transport initiatives. Hart were doing this until 2009/10 to the tune of around £50,000 pa. If the community can find what the District Council would regard as cost effective measures to improve the network, could they provide direct financial support?

**Councillor Forster** responded:

We do encourage sustainable transport for new developments, and often offer 'seed money' for new bus services, but this is always time limited - typically after five years commercial routes have to stand alone. Stagecoach would be delighted if we could help fund bus routes on an ongoing revenue basis, but financially we can't do that. We will look at any request, but bearing in mind the restrictions on our income this year we can consider, but I don't hold out too much hope.

*NB Mr Cornwell clarified that his questions were around community transport initiatives. Councillor Forster suggested they meet and discuss the detail.*

**Mr David Turver** asked:

- 1) Given that a) in October 2013, you were quoted as saying we would submit a new version of the Local Plan to the Inspector in Autumn 2014 and b) in each subsequent year this has slipped by a further year, with the current LDS indicating a local plan ready for submission in Winter 2016, will you now publish the detailed project plan to support this target, so we can be assured that project management processes have improved?

**Response:**

It was our intention to proceed with a revised Core Strategy after the withdrawal of the 2013 version. However, as many will well know, the Government changed the nature of Local Plans and we also had to address the issue of a new SHMA to overcome the defects found through the lack of cooperation of our housing market partners. At the time we explained to everyone that we had decided to take a more reflective approach to delivering what is now to be a more comprehensive Local Plan and given the SHMA implications, we could not now rely upon the previous Core Strategy approach in that the housing need had effectively doubled.

We recognised also that in light of the Governments change from the original Core Strategy concept to a full Local Plan approach we must now make our new Plan explicitly clear about **what** is intended to happen in the area over the life of the plan, **where** and **when** this will occur and **how** it will be delivered.

We also made the decision that rather than simply identify broad areas for growth as suggested in the original Core Strategy we would now take a much more comprehensive approach to identify a supply of specific and developable sites for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15. This is in line with the approach as outline in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 47.

This now is a far more complex and challenging piece of work not least of which is because we recognise that the Plan must now explicitly meet the objectively assessed development and infrastructure needs of the area, including potential unmet needs of neighbouring areas where this is consistent with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework as a whole. A failure to deal properly with the latter is now shown right across the country to be a failure of many Local Plans.

The Local Development Scheme is the council's three-year project plan that identifies which local development documents will be produced, in what order, and when. We do not propose to publish more background information on internal workings because that offers no practical advantage to anyone. There is already proper scrutiny of the Local Plan progress with all members of the Council having the opportunity to be actively engaged.

We also last summer enlisted the support of Chris Dorn to lend project management support. His work has been invaluable and he gave positive and independent feedback to the Hart District Association of Parish and Town Councils.

Finally, we have now full project management arrangements from our neighbours at East Hampshire District Council, who have recent and relevant experience of bringing a local plan through Examination to adoption.

- 2) Given that in January 2015, HDC commissioned work to test the proposed new settlement and urban extensions with the objectives to test the “deliverability of a new settlement and/or urban extension (ie [sic] suitability, availability and achievability)”, including a land use budget; provide “indicative costing of the major infrastructure items needed”; and consider viability including the “infrastructure requirements of sites to identify likely infrastructure impacts, subsequent costs and potential funding sources”, can you explain if these objectives have been met, and say when the results will be published?

**Response:**

The current position on testing is set out in the Refined Housing Options Paper. It specifically highlights and comments on where we have got to with the issue of testing. As paragraph 12 we say:

“The testing we decided to undertake is still ongoing as is the testing of all other options. The testing will go on in some form or other right up until we finalise the submission Local Plan. There is still much work to be done, but we have reached a point where we can now ask you if we are on the right track”.

We then go on to summarise on pages 9 and 10 what outcomes have been received from the testing that we have carried out so far.

The outcome of the testing will therefore, inform both the draft Local Plan and will inform the submitted Local Plan in that it will comprise part of the evidence base. All these documents will be published at the appropriate time and everyone will have the right to comment upon them when the Local Plan is independently examined by an Inspector appropriated by the Secretary of State.

**Mr Turver** asked a supplementary question:

All of the sites identified to make up the new town are listed in the SHLAA as “Not currently developable”, we have no costing of roads, bridges, railway improvements, sewage, sports or community facilities and we have no land use budget SANG, so why are you consulting on a new town that is not deliverable, as well as excluding brownfield sites for the same reason?

**Response:**

This is part of the consultation. Brownfield sites are only deliverable if the landowner puts them forward for development. Brownfield sites may not be deliverable for other reasons, but once they are put forward as a SHLAA site they can be considered.

- 3) Given that an FOI request to elicit the evidence to support the assertion made at cabinet (Paper E 5.2) in September 2015, and in Hart news (p2), that brownfield capacity for the district was 1,800 units has failed, are we to conclude that the council and public were misled in September, or will you now produce the evidence and ensure that any new consultation includes a proper stand-alone option for brownfield sites?

**Response:**

Nobody was misled by this council. The FOI request did not fail.

The Freedom of Information requests were dealt with openly and properly in accordance with the legislative context that was sought to obtain information held by the Council and the questioner is mistaken in his interpretation of that response. The answers properly explained the background to the Council's answers and nothing more should be interpreted from those answers other than the legal context of the answers to the question.

The Refined Housing Options consultation document also makes it absolutely clear that brownfield land development is a priority. We totally disagree with downgrading it to merely an option. Our position on the priority approach to brownfield land development is referenced throughout the Refined Housing Options Paper but if there is any doubt I refer you to paragraph 49 on page 27 which says:

*"We think that whatever future approach for growth is adopted the emphasis should firmly be first on using previously developed land (the 'brownfield land' approach) but only where it is suitable for homes, where it can be viably developed and the necessary infrastructure can be provided. It must be accompanied by robust infrastructure delivery to make sure that adequate provision for schools, open space, community, health care, transport and other support services are already or can be put in place."*

One key point that seems to be missed in the question is that there can be no standalone option for “brownfield sites” because the evidence suggests that there is not enough deliverable ‘brownfield land’ available to meet all our need for new homes because too few suitable sites are being promoted as being available by developers or landowners.

We have made this point a number of times but we can only count sites that are deliverable and that means the site must be available for development now or in the

near future, where we have evidence that the **owner would be willing** to make the land available for new homes. We cannot therefore promote something that is simply not supported by evidence. We make this point specifically clear that and it reflects government 2015 proposals. It is also specifically addressed in paragraph 54 of the Refined Housing Options Paper where we say:

*“We can say with some certainty that at least 450 new homes will be built on brownfield sites with a further 116 potential new homes already counted as ‘deliverables’. In practice there will be much higher delivery (perhaps up to 1,800 new homes) but it cannot be reasonably quantified with any certainty for the time being because additional sites are not being promoted by developers or landowners so there is no way of demonstrating that the sites are both deliverable or developable. In our view we think that it would be unacceptable to a planning inspector to give a misleading impression that we can deliver something that we cannot guarantee. More work is needed but we are already positively planning for greater brownfield land development. We are pursuing a new initiative whereby we are looking to identify ‘zones of residential opportunity’ on land that landowners and developers may be otherwise unaware that we would support the principle of residential development.”*

Until the point of deliverability is dealt with I think most members would agree with me that discussion on the brownfield option has been explored to its full extent and is now only a discussion of academic interest rather than an informed discussion that will deliver a practical and deliverable land supply. However, we continue to engage with landowners where we believe there may be a potential for residential development, and in any event I remain open to ideas regarding additional brownfield sites – hence the call for sites in the consultation document – and constructive contributions to development of such sites consistent with good planning practice.

- 4) You will recall that I wrote to you on 20 November 2015, highlighting discrepancies between the consultation materials and SHLAA, the most important point being point 4 (and appendix) showing the very different site capacities in the New Homes Booklet compared to the official evidence base, the SHLAA; can you now give an explanation of those discrepancies and will they be corrected before any new consultation is carried out?

**Response:**

I understand from the Council’s Planning Policy Manager that you have already received an explanation about the differences between the SHLAA and the New Homes Sites Booklet regarding site capacities (email from the Planning Policy Manager sent on 23rd December 2015).

That response explained that:

"In preparing the consultation papers we drew on not only the SHLAA but also more recent information where it was available. Such information includes the high level site assessments prepared by Adams Hendry and the shortlisting exercise work (available at <http://www.hart.gov.uk/Evidence-base> ), pre-application plans, recent planning permissions, and any recent changes to site boundaries. These can all influence the sites that are shown in the documents. The SHLAA itself will be updated next year."

The plan is to publish an updated SHLAA in the summer of 2016 to reflect the best information available at that time including data on annual completions which becomes available around June each year.

- 5) Given that the SHMA (section 9.33) calls for 60-70% of our 7,534 housing need (or around 4,900) to be met from 1 & 2-bed properties, can you give a breakdown by number of bedrooms, of the 4,500 or so dwellings built or permitted since 2011 and tell us how many more 1 & 2 bed homes need to be built out of the remaining ~3,000 to be permitted to meet the need expressed in the SHMA?

*The Chairman responded:*

This is a technical research question and does not form part of any current Council workstream. This is not the proper forum to be used to elicit the use of Council resources in pursuit of your own personal research. I say this because the information that you seek is already published.

You can obtain the information by accessing all the planning application details of applications submitted and determined which is published on the online Public Access system.

I would also point out that section 9.33 of the SHMA relates to affordable housing and not general housing mix. It may be you have missed out a few words which fundamentally alters the meaning of your question

- 6) Given that the SHMA (Figure 10.15) calls for around 2,500 specialist units for the elderly, split into various categories to be built in Hart under the Local Plan, can you tell us how many of these units have been built or permitted since 2011, how many remain to be permitted and what you consider to be the best types of location for these types of accommodation?

**Response:**

The part of the question seeking statistics is appropriate to an FOI request and thus specifically outside the scope of a question at council. I have therefore asked that this request is handled under FOI rules. You will thus receive a formal response under that protocol.

As for the last part of your question about locations, we will ensure that our Local Plan policies recognises the diverse types of housing needed from across the housing market area and, where appropriate, identify specific sites for all types of housing to meet the anticipated housing requirement. This could include sites for older people's housing including accessible mainstream housing such as bungalows and step-free apartments, sheltered or extra care housing, retirement housing and residential care homes.

The current Refined Housing Options Paper specifically seeks Hart's residents' views on these specific issues and gives local communities an opportunity to identify local sites for developments that may be acceptable. Local parish councils also have a role to play. Through the Neighbourhood Plan process local communities can direct what form the growth local communities should plan for and how that should meet local needs. Neighbourhood Plans are being prepared in the Parishes: of Winchfield, Hartley

Wintney, Fleet, Hook. Odiham, Crookham Village, Dogmersfield and Rotherwick, and we understand that both Yateley and Blackwater & Hawley are considering going down the potential Neighbourhood Plan route too.

Where local communities through the Neighbourhood Plan process do not consider it appropriate to allocate such sites, we will ensure that there are sufficiently robust criteria in place in our Local Plan to set out when such homes will be permitted. This might be supplemented by setting appropriate targets for the number of these homes to be built.

This approach is exactly in accordance with government policy as set out in Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 12-003-20140306 of the updated September 2015 National Planning Policy Guidance.

**Mr Turver** asked a supplementary question:

How can the young who need the affordable 1 & 2-bed dwellings and elderly have confidence in the Local Plan process when the leader doesn't know what we need to build to meet their needs?

**Response:**

This will be dealt with under the FOI request.

- 7) What are the risks that a second consultation "anticipated to be run again from late January", will be a further waste of Hart residents' money, when the revised SHMA is due in "early in 2016" and a revised employment land review is also being prepared, thus meaning that the evidence base is likely to change significantly during the consultation, leading to a further consultation being required?

**Response:**

It would be premature to speculate on the outcome of the refresh of the SHMA. Data sets change all the time and all we are looking at is one single snap shot of a combination of changing data sets at one particular moment in time. There can never be anything other than a degree of uncertainty. Whatever the case we do not believe that changes to the current data sets mean that the implications for the objective assessed housing need will change to the extent that we can rely upon brownfield land alone. Indeed, the need for new homes can rise as well as fall.

The consequences are that any development that cannot be built on 'brownfield land' will have to be delivered elsewhere. This will essentially be on new 'greenfield' sites outside of our towns and villages. Important choices need to be made about how and where the 'greenfield' growth should be distributed. Questions 4 and 5 of the Refined Housing Options Paper identify some possible approaches but they may have to be combined if we are to meet all our need for new homes. That is the practical reality of the current housing need position within a Hart.

- 8) Who instigated, who authorised and who will take responsibility for each decision to repeatedly change the materials in the recent consultation part way through?

*The Chairman responded:*

I am directing that this question is not to be answered. This is because, as Mr Turver knows, it forms the basis of a separate investigation by Overview and Scrutiny and

indeed, Mr Turver has been party to representations made pursuant to that investigation. It would therefore be wholly inappropriate to enter into discussions in public without all the facts surrounding the events that resulted in the early curtailment of the Refined Housing Options consultation having first been investigated by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Mr Turver** asked a supplementary question:

We've heard tonight that you have failed with the last consultation, haven't got a grip on, the timeline, project management or the quality and content of the outputs, isn't it time that you and the rest of the Local Plan Steering Group did the decent thing and resigned?

The **Leader** responded:

I do intend to do the decent thing and deliver the local plan.

## **COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14**

### **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

**Councillor Blewett** asked:

Leaving aside the impact to the Council's reputation (such as it is under this administration) and the cost/inconvenience to third parties of engaging/re-engaging the public in this pre-consultation process; what is the estimated financial cost to the Council of withdrawing this pre-consultation and re-launching it later this month?

**Councillor Parker** responded:

I will not "leave aside" this council's reputation to a side-swipe such as this. I am sure that Cllr. Blewett regularly canvasses residents' views across the Hart area as I do. So far this year I have done so in Yateley East and West, Fleet Central and Crookham West & Ewshot. Whilst a few residents have raised the issue of the consultation, all agree that the Council's reputation generally is high, expressing satisfaction with the way it is run and the services provided. Members on all sides of this chamber can take credit for the generally amicable way we all seek to serve the residents' interests. As for the cost of rerun, I am advised it is of the order of £13,000.

**Councillor Blewett** asked a supplementary question:

If question 4 on the website had not been corrected would the consultation have been valid?

**Councillor Parker** responded:

Yes it would have been.

**Councillor Blewett** asked:

What was the system for reviewing by administrative and political management important prepared information and questions to be published for public participation, which everyone depends on for accuracy?

**Councillor Parker** responded:

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Bailey, is conducting an investigation into the processes around the local plan consultation. During the course of that he will review both the processes in place, their adequacy and whether they were followed. I do not intend to comment until he has completed this piece of work.

**Councillor Blewett** asked a supplementary question:

I do not believe it is fair to members of staff who make an honest mistake not to be protected by the system. Do you agree?

**Councillor Parker** responded:

I certainly agree that staff should be protected from undue scrutiny from outside, and will wait for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review.

**Councillor Wheale** asked:

Would the Cabinet Member for Regeneration support me in continuing to allow the organising committee of 4 volunteers who run the Hype disco in the Harlington which attracts hundreds of young people from Fleet and the surrounding Hart area, to continue to use the storage container which is situated next to the Harlington in the Victoria Road car park. The container is used for storing their equipment which is necessary until a more appropriate and closer location can be found. The project has been running for 17 years and has to continue to be self sustaining.

I understand the Committee has used this container for many years. Over this period the event cost has risen to £2,600 and this month by a further £70.

Hype has supported young people by offering teenagers a regular social event in a safe and friendly environment, and have developed a good relationship with the local police. Over the years Hype has relied very much on volunteers including some former attendees.

The role for Volunteers after the disco finishes at 11pm is to ensure the hall is cleared by midnight. Therefore, the container needs to be close enough for volunteers to clear heavy equipment, signage, barriers and first aid equipment safely at night in all weathers. Many of the original volunteers are older now, and carrying heavy equipment any significant distance is difficult.

Without the container being close by, the Committee would have to hire a vehicle each month on a Friday and then return it on a Saturday. This would be unfair to the volunteers who have already worked all evening.

Having to pay an additional £3,000 a year for the use of the parking space would, I believe, make this event unsustainable and consequently, result in a great loss to the community. Any small profit Hype makes is earmarked for the Lea project and the summer project on the Views.

**Councillor Morris** responded:

I thank Councillor Wheale for the question and enlightening me to the circumstances that has brought about her concerns. I also thank her for her personal perseverance regarding the resolution of this matter.

I am fully aware of the good work over the last 17 years Hype Fleet has done for our young community and how this well attended club event is managed by enthusiastic volunteers. Their professionalism ensures a safe and welcoming environment for those who attend from all over the district. I am also aware of the need for the volunteers to store essential event equipment safely and in close proximity to the Harlington Centre. To this end, myself and the Joint Chief Executive, Mrs Hughes, have agreed to allow the container to remain in its position under the current agreement until a more permanent arrangement can be found.

**Chief Executives' Report to Council  
28 January 2016**

January has been a busy time at the Council;

Following on from the provisional budget settlement on the 17<sup>th</sup> December, the Joint Chief Executives, supported by the Head of Finance have spent considerable time understanding the impact on the Council and the opportunities to ameliorate the impact. Council will consider the budget for 16/17 at February's meeting, but Members may be aware that it is, in broad terms, a balanced budget. Following this, Officers working with Members will be looking at opportunities for further savings.

The joint procurement, which was subject to the Cabinet report which appears on your agenda, came to head this month with final evaluation of the various bids. News is travelling fast on this, with the LGA tweeting about it on Tuesday.

In other news, Members may be aware that the transfer of the Leisure Services to Everyone Active takes place next Monday, and the main structure of the new leisure centre is now 'rising from the ground'.

Additionally, earlier this week we received confirmation that HDC and Fleet Pond Society have been successful in a bid to the Environment Agency for £50K towards additional works as part of the Fleet Pond Restoration Project. We anticipate that this will be the final grant aid and that this will bring the project to an end in the next six months

And finally, we were pleased to find that we have been identified as one of the most accessible and mobile enabled local authority websites, by the SOCITM, the society for IT practitioners.