

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MINUTES

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 12 October 2016

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.35 pm

Members Present: C Whitbread (Chairman), S Stavrou (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett, W Breare-Hall, A Grigg, H Kane, J Philip, G Mohindra and G Waller

Other Councillors: N Bedford, R Brookes, L Girling, S Heap, J Lea, A Mitchell, G Shiell, D Stallan, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

Apologies: A Lion

Officers Present: G Chipp (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), C O'Boyle (Director of Governance), R Palmer (Director of Resources), K Durrani (Assistant Director (Technical Services)), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), D Newton (Assistant Director (ICT and Facilities Management)), P Pledger (Assistant Director (Housing Property)), D Bailey (Head of Transformation), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), G J Woodhall (Senior Democratic Services Officer), R Linford (Transformation Apprentice) and P Seager (Chairman's Secretary)

60. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Leader of Council made a short address to remind all present that the meeting would be broadcast on the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Member Code of Conduct.

62. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

There were no verbal reports from Portfolio Holders on current issues concerning their areas of responsibility.

63. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE CABINET

There were no questions or requests to address the Cabinet received from the public for the Cabinet to consider.

64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Cabinet noted that there was nothing to report by the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as the Committee had not met since the last regular meeting of the Cabinet on 1 September 2016.

65. ASSET MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 22 AUGUST 2016

The Portfolio Holder for Asset Management & Economic Development presented the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management & Economic Development Cabinet Committee, held on 22 August 2016.

The Cabinet Committee had made a recommendation to the Cabinet concerning a Car Parking and Affordable Housing Plan at Vere Road in Loughton; however, this had been the subject of a separate report to the Cabinet on 1 September 2016 and had already been agreed. The Cabinet Committee had also considered a progress report on the Epping Forest Shopping Park.

Decision:

(1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Asset Management & Economic Development Cabinet Committee, held on 22 August 2016, be noted.

Reason for Decision:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had fully addressed all the relevant issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had considered all the relevant options and that there were no further options to consider.

66. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 15 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Finance Portfolio Holder presented the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee, held on 15 September 2016.

The Cabinet Committee had made recommendations to the Cabinet concerning the Annual Outturn Report on Treasury Management & Prudential Indicators 2015/16, and updates to the Corporate Risk Register. Other issues considered by the Cabinet Committee included: a monitoring report on the Key Performance Indicators for Quarter 1 of 2016/17; a drafting of a response to the public consultation on future Business Rates Retention; a monitoring report on the capital and revenue budgets during the first quarter of 2016/17; and the Annual Governance Report from the External Auditors.

Decision:**Annual Outturn Report on the Treasury Management & Prudential Indicators 2015/16**

(1) That the following minor changes to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy be recommended to the Council for approval:

(a) an increase in the group limit for Local Authorities from £20million to £25million;

(b) an increase in the group limit for Money Market Funds from £15million to £20million; and

- (c) an increase in the limit for NatWest (the Council's banker) from £2.5million to £5million; and

Risk Management – Corporate Risk Register

- (2) That the Existing Control, Effectiveness of Control and Key Date within the Action Plan for Risk 1 – Local Plan - be updated;
- (3) That the Effectiveness of Controls/Actions and Required Further Management Action for Risk 2 – Strategic Sites - be updated;
- (4) That the Existing Control and the Required Further Management Action for Risk 5 – Economic Development - be updated;
- (5) That an additional Required Further Management Action for Risk 6 – Data/Information - be added;
- (6) That the Risk Score for Risk 7 – Business Continuity - be amended;
- (7) That the Risk Score for Risk 10 – Housing Capital - be amended; and
- (8) That the amended Corporate Risk Register be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had fully addressed all the relevant issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had considered all the relevant options and that there were no further options to consider.

67. COUNCIL HOUSEBUILDING CABINET COMMITTEE - 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the minutes of the meeting of the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee, held on 22 September 2016.

The Cabinet Committee had not made any recommendations for the Cabinet to consider, and the only issue considered was the recovery package for the contract for Phase I of the Council Housebuilding Programme.

Decision:

- (1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee, held on 22 September 2016, be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had fully addressed all the relevant issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Cabinet was content that the Cabinet Committee had considered all the relevant

options and that there were no further options to consider.

68. CONSTRUCTION OF OFF STREET PARKING ON HOUSING LAND - REVIEW OF RANKINGS FOR FUTURE SCHEMES AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FOR 2016/17

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented a report on the review of rankings for future schemes and capital expenditure during 2016/17 for the construction of off street parking schemes on Housing land.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that 182 off street parking bays had been provided since 2009 at 12 streets across the District with the greatest need for off street parking, at a total cost of approximately £800,000 split between the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and General Fund Capital Programmes. The completed schemes had resulted in very high resident satisfaction, reduced the parking congestion in those streets and were used by residents free of charge.

The Portfolio Holder stated that, against the backdrop of the need to make savings or generate additional income across the Council's budgets, it was clear there would need to be savings made to the HRA and General Fund Capital Programmes in future years. Therefore, it was proposed that future schemes would only be constructed where residents had clearly indicated they would be prepared to pay for use of the spaces, thereby generating an income to offset the high construction costs. Charges would be made for the use of the parking bays by way of Parking Permits, rented bays with lockable bollards or through a Pay and Display arrangement. The Council already operated a Residents Parking Policy, and where parking spaces were rented by residents then the charge would be £500 for the first year and £250 per annum thereafter, with an annual review. Any costs for monitoring Controlled Parking Zones would be met from the Off Street Parking Budget, and any income received would be used to fund future maintenance costs and/or the construction of future schemes.

The Portfolio Holder informed the Cabinet that it was being proposed that the Council should only undertake the currently committed off street parking schemes for the time being and that any future off street parking schemes would be considered in 2017 during the next annual review of the Programme. It was highlighted that there were ten schemes which had already been agreed which the Council was committed to constructing where charging would not be introduced. These were in Loughton, Abridge, Epping, Buckhurst Hill and Waltham Abbey.

The Portfolio Holder explained that off street parking for seven sites had been agreed by the Cabinet in February 2015; however, the schemes at Watermans Way in North Weald, Sycamore House in Buckhurst Hill, and Tillingham Court in Waltham Abbey had failed to gain the necessary support or surveys had established that there was insufficient Council-owned land available. Appendix 1 of the report listed all the schemes that had been registered, assessed and ranked.

The Portfolio Holder added that, in respect of the proposed scheme at Torrington Drive in Loughton, 72% of residents had been in favour of a scheme and 57% had been in favour of the scheme that had been submitted for planning approval. The contract for the construction of the scheme had been let and work would begin at the site next week, although the scheme had been slightly amended to provide 58 spaces and not the original 64 spaces proposed.

Cllr Philip welcomed the report as it represented a sensible balance, however he felt that residents should be charged for the use of spaces at the ten sites listed in

recommendation 1 as well, this would also protect the spaces for their use. The Portfolio Holder understood the need to protect spaces for residents, but felt that it was fair not to charge residents for the use of spaces at these ten sites as it had not been declared during the planning approval process. Cllr Philip highlighted that charging for parking spaces was not a planning consideration, and that the two sites at Springfield in Epping and Loughton Way in Buckhurst Hill were replacing garages which the Council had previously rented out. The Portfolio Holder accepted this and requested that the recommendations be amended accordingly.

Cllr Wixley requested that Pyrles Green be added to the list of potential schemes, and whether the current level of on street parking in Pyrles Lane encouraging 'road rage' incidents could be added to the list of criteria? Cllr Stallan also expressed his disappointment that Queens Road in North Weald had been removed from the list of future potential schemes. The Portfolio Holder reassured both Councillors that the list of schemes would be reviewed again in 2017, possibly as early as April, but there were no plans currently to review the criteria for ranking potential future schemes.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the cost for the provision of a parking space with a lockable bollard was higher in the first year to contribute towards the cost of installing the bollard. The Council would review whether residents who rented the space in future years would also pay £500 in their first year of leasing; the Leader reminded the Cabinet that all fees levied by the Council were reviewed annually. Cllr Philip suggested that residents should pay £500 in the first year after both installation and re-instatement.

Cllr Brookes was concerned that the first year cost of £500 would be too much for some residents, and Cllr Waller suggested that the additional cost for the first year could be regarded as unfair; could not the cost be spread over future years, for example £275 per annum. The Portfolio Holder understood the concerns raised by the Councillors, but residents would be accustomed to paying for parking at every other location and the exact payment details could be reviewed, possibly with the provision of staggered payments. Cllr Philip added that £500 was not unreasonable, payment for which could easily be spread over 10 or 12 months, and it would contribute to the construction cost of £4,400 per space.

In response to further questions from the Members present, the Portfolio Holder stated that possible measures to prevent resident parking spaces being sub-let to commuters, and whether electric charging points would be added to a small number of spaces would be considered, and also that The Gladeway in Waltham Abbey was on the list of possible schemes and would be ranked accordingly.

Decision:

(1) That, for the foreseeable future, off street parking schemes be only constructed at the following sites, which were already committed, and funded from the existing 5-year combined Housing Revenue Account and General Fund Off Street Parking Capital Programme Budget (which currently had a budget provision of £1,855,000 available):

(a) The four sites agreed by the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee in February 2015 which had all progressed to the point of planning applications being submitted and if approved, would commit around £605,000 from the Off Street Parking Capital Programme Budget, namely:

(i) Paley Gardens, Loughton;

- (ii) Torrington Drive, Loughton;
- (iii) Etheridge Green, Loughton; and
- (iv) Alderwood Close, Abridge;

(b) The two sites where the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee had already agreed to fund the cost of demolishing the existing garages and to create off street parking spaces at an estimated cost of £40,000:

- (i) Springfield, Epping; and
- (ii) Loughton Way, Buckhurst Hill

(c) The four sites within Phases 1 and 3 of the Council Housebuilding Programme, for which the relevant Area Planning Sub-Committees had attached a condition to the planning consent to undertake a parking study and to provide off street parking (if there was sufficient local resident support and planning approval granted) at an estimated cost of £235,000:

- (i) The Roundhills Red Cross Site, Waltham Abbey;
- (ii) Roundhills Site 4, Waltham Abbey;
- (iii) Stewards Green Road, Epping; and
- (iv) Centre Avenue, Epping;

(2) That, for future off street parking schemes (not including the above schemes in 1(a) and 1(c)), charges be made for the use of the off street parking bays through either one, or a combination, of the following options (as considered appropriate by the Director of Communities, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder):

(a) the sale of Residents Parking Permits in line with other Controlled Parking Zones in the District;

(b) the provision of a hinged lockable bollard, rented to local residents at a cost of:

- (i) £500 in the first year after implementation or re-instatement; and
- (ii) £250 per annum thereafter; or

(c) through a Pay and Display Scheme, in line with other similar schemes on Highway Land around the District;

(3) That the charges for the use of parking bays at future off-street parking schemes be added to the Annual Schedule of Fees and Charges for Housing Related Services and reviewed annually;

(4) That the additional cost of monitoring the Controlled Parking Zones and/or Pay and Display bays for future schemes be met from the Off Street Parking Budget, with the income used to help fund any future maintenance costs or the construction of future schemes;

(5) That any further off street parking schemes to be undertaken in the future be considered by the Cabinet on an annual basis;

(6) That, prior to any Council Housebuilding planning application being submitted, transport studies be undertaken to assess the parking stress in the locality caused by any loss of garages and, because each planning application had to be determined on its own merits, the provision of separate off street parking schemes in the locality only be considered where transport studies had identified a lack of parking provision as a result of the new development, and that this previous automatic link between the two programmes be discontinued; and

(7) That the following sites were unable to proceed be noted, since they had either failed to gain the support of local residents or there was insufficient Council-owned land available in the vicinity to develop a scheme:

- (a) Watermans Way, North Weald;
- (b) Sycamore House, Buckhurst Hill; and
- (c) Tillingham Court, Waltham Abbey.

Reasons for Decision:

To comply with the Cabinet's wish to receive an annual report on the progress made in delivering the off street parking programme, and to agree the next set of sites to progress to the design, consultation, planning and then build stage. However, with a need to make savings or generate additional income across the Council, it had been identified that income could be generated that would benefit both the General Fund and the HRA in funding future off street parking schemes.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not charge for parking spaces at future schemes.

To charge for the use of parking bays in the committed schemes listed in the recommendations

To not undertake any of the schemes previously committed.

To set a different charge for the parking spaces on HRA land other those already established elsewhere in the District, or the proposed charges for renting individual parking bays.

69. CONTAMINATED LAND - PROGRAMME OF INSPECTION AND BUDGET ALLOCATION

The Environment Portfolio Holder presented a report on a programme of inspection and budget allocation for contaminated land within the District.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the Council had carried out four major investigations to date, three on former landfill sites and an emergency investigation on a former gas works site. It was now necessary to review and formalise the inspection regime and allocation of budget for these investigations. Given the significant cost associated with such investigations and the number of sites that the Council had to investigate, it was proposed that the Council aimed to investigate one site every two years.

Although, it was highlighted that there might be circumstances where this could not be achieved.

The Portfolio Holder reported that there was an existing Continuing Services Budget (CSB) allocation which had been used to cover the contaminated land, pollution and water quality work; however, this had been insufficient to cover the cost of one contaminated land investigation. As each potential contaminated land site could be considered as a separate project, it was felt to be more appropriate to fund these investigations from the District Development Fund (DDF). This would allow greater flexibility between financial years as determined by each site under investigation, and approval was sought to allocate £50,000 per annum for the next two years from April 2017 from the DDF. It was also intended to review the budget allocation with a further report to the Cabinet in September 2019.

In response to questions from the Members present, the Portfolio Holder reiterated that the Council had a statutory responsibility to investigate potentially contaminated land sites, and would endeavour to recover the costs of such investigations wherever possible. The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods (Technical Services) added that Officers had a list of potentially contaminated sites which had been risk assessed, and some investigation work had been performed for some of the sites. The legal advice had been to not publish the Council's list of potentially contaminated sites.

The Finance Portfolio Holder, Cllr Mohindra, requested that the second recommendation be amended to request £100,000 in total for two years from the DDF from April 2017, and this was agreed. Cllr Philip also requested that the further report be received by the Cabinet during the budget setting process for 2019/20. It was agreed that this could be done but it was emphasised that the Council would only have investigated one site by December 2018.

Decision:

- (1) That, subject to staff resources, capacity and competing priorities, one potentially contaminated land site be investigated every two years;
- (2) That a growth bid of £100,000 be made from the District Development Fund to cover the two year period from April 2017, to carry out the required investigations; and
- (3) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in December 2018, as part of the budget setting process for 2019/20, to agree future budget allocation to investigate potentially contaminated land sites within the District.

Reasons for Decision:

The Council was obliged to investigate potentially contaminated land sites within the District, as required by the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA and in line with the Council's Contaminated Land Strategy.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not carry out any site investigations; however, this would contravene the Council's obligations under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part IIA and the Council's Contaminated Land Strategy.

To reduce or increase the frequency of site investigations; however, this would require more or less further resources to be allocated as appropriate.

70. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME - MONITORING REPORT AUGUST 2016

The Leader of Council presented a report highlighting the progress with the Transformation Programme during August 2016.

The Leader stated that regular monitoring reports on the progress of the Transformation Programme were being presented to the Cabinet, and this was the report for August 2016. It was anticipated that the format of the report would evolve over time in order to remain an effective tool for highlighting progress, slippage and remedial actions being undertaken. This particular report included progress for all 36 chartered projects of Medium and High Risk potential, as well as progress on key aspects of the Transformation Programme, and also highlighted the level of resources involved in the Programme.

The Leader reported that, overall, progress indicators for 'cost', 'delivery / outcomes / outputs' and 'benefits' remained 'Green'. The status indicator for 'time' was reported as 'Amber' to highlight that 12 actions (from a total of 169) were overdue, but Project and Programme Managers had actions in place to deal with any potential negative effects. Progress would be kept under review and it was anticipated that the status of the majority of these items would return to Green in the next report.

The Cabinet was concerned that for a number of the projects, the 'Remedial Actions' were exactly the same as the 'Actions Overdue'; project P20 (Legal Document Scanning) was offered as a good example as the text was different. It was felt that the matrix should indicate why the action was overdue and provide confidence that the proposed remedial action would be undertaken. The Director of Neighbourhoods highlighted that for project P112 (Operating Partner for North Weald Airfield), the Officers concerned were currently working on the competitive dialogue process for the new Leisure Management Contract and would be available for this project in early 2017.

Decision:

(1) That the progress of the projects within the Transformation Programme for August 2016, alongside the planned actions for September 2016, be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To inform the Cabinet of progress with the Transformation Programme, including work streams, programmes and projects.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

None, as failure to monitor and review the progress of the Transformation Programme and to consider corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for the Council's reputation, and might mean the opportunities for improvement were lost.

71. KEY ACTION PLAN 2016/17 - QUARTER 1 PROGRESS

The Leader of Council presented a report on the progress made during the first quarter of the municipal year with the Corporate Plan Key Action Plan for 2016/17.

The Leader stated that the Corporate Plan was the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out its priorities over the five-year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20.

The priorities or Corporate Aims were supported by Key Objectives, which provided a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for these five years. The Key Objectives were delivered by an annual Action Plan, with each year building upon the progress made in previous years. The annual Action Plans contained a range of actions designed to achieve specific outcomes, to ensure the actions remained relevant and appropriate, and to identify opportunities to secure further progress or improvement.

The Leader reported that, at the end of the first quarter of 2016/17, progress was as follows:

- 32 (64%) of the actions had been achieved or were on target for completion;
- 7 (14%) of the actions were under control;
- 2 (4%) of the actions were behind schedule; and
- 9 (18%) of the actions were pending, as they were dependent upon the prior completion of other actions or external factors outside the control of the Council.

Decision:

(1) That progress on the achievement of the Council's Key Action Plan for 2016/17 at the end of Quarter 1 be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

It was important that relevant performance management processes were in place to review progress against the key objectives, to ensure their continued achievability and relevance, and to identify proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of slippage or under-performance.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review performance against the key objectives, and to consider corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for the Council's reputation, and might mean that opportunities for improvement were lost.

72. ICT CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS 2017-18

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Technology & Support Services who had tendered his apologies for the meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy presented a report on the ICT Capital Requirements for 2017/18.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that, following the revision of the Capital programme, all proposed ICT projects were considered on an annual basis and funding was made available where appropriate. A number of projects had been scheduled for progress in 2017/18 and it had been estimated that a sum of £414,075 should be included in the Capital Programme. These were broken down as follows:

(i)	Priority ICT projects	£88,525;
(ii)	Onsite Mobile/Flexible Working projects	£51,050;
(iii)	Desktop Hardware projects	£100,000;

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| (iv) | Other ICT Miscellaneous projects | £97,500; and |
| (v) | Other Directorate ICT projects | £77,000. |

The Cabinet noted that the other Directorate ICT projects included an allocation of £22,000 for a Pay-to-Stay capability for the Council's rented properties, which was contingent upon the Government's current policy not changing.

The Portfolio Holder emphasised that a failure to maintain and update the Council's ICT infrastructure could potentially disrupt the day-to-day operations of critical systems, which would then significantly impact the ability of staff to carry out their normal duties.

Decisions:

(1) That the projects to be scheduled for the financial year 2017/18 be noted and that a sum of £414,075 be included in the Capital Programme for 2017/18 for the following ICT projects:

- (a) £88,525 for Priority ICT projects;
- (b) £51,050 for Onsite Mobile/Flexible Working projects;
- (c) £100,000 for Desktop Hardware projects;
- (d) £97,500 for other ICT projects; and
- (e) £77,000 for Directorate projects requiring capital expenditure, including a £22,000 sum for Pay to Stay capability for the Council Rented properties which was contingent upon no change in Government policy.

Reasons for Decision:

The listed ICT Projects were necessary to maintain the current ICT infrastructure, improve business continuity within the Council and allow staff to fully utilise the benefits available from ICT systems.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To refuse funding for the critical projects identified; however, this would impact on the reliability of the ICT infrastructure, could result in the inability to make payments and limit the ability of the Council to support remote workers.

To refuse funding for the other projects identified; however, this would adversely impact on the implementation of the ICT Strategy and the Transformation Programme.

73. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Cabinet noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration at the meeting.

74. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**Decision:**

(1) That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below as it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of the Act indicated and the exemption is considered to outweigh the potential public interest in disclosing the information:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Paragraph Number</u>
17	Transformation Programme – Provision of Funding	1

75. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME - PROVISION OF FUNDING

The Leader of Council presented a report on the future resourcing and provision of funding for the Transformation Programme.

The Leader reminded the Cabinet that the Council had initiated a Transformation Programme in 2015, led by the Chief Executive and Management Board, championed by the Leader and the Cabinet and supported by a Head of Transformation and the Programme Improvement Officer. These two posts were funded within the 2016/17 budget and were on fixed-term contracts, with the Head of Transformation's contract running to the end of April 2017 and the Programme Improvement Officer's contract to the end of August 2017.

The Leader reported that significant progress had been made in transforming the Council over the last eleven months, including the delivery of savings and establishment of improved ways of working, which would help the authority to be 'a Council fit for the twenty-first century'. It was clear that, for the Council to sustain the momentum and benefits flowing from the Transformation Programme, both posts need to be extended. Therefore, it was proposed that both contracts be extended, by 18 months for the Head of Transformation and by 12 months for the Programme Improvement Officer, with the supporting growth bids from the District Development Fund.

Members of the Cabinet expressed their support for the proposals, and the Transformation Programme, and highlighted that it would cost the Council more if the staff costs were met by the Continuing Services Budget rather than the District Development Fund. The Cabinet agreed that it would be correct to extend the current fixed term contracts at this point, in order to evaluate the results from the Programme over the next 18 months. The Leader added that some substantial projects would have been completed by then, and the Council would be in a better position to make further decisions concerning the future of the Programme.

Decision:

(1) That a fixed term contract extension of eighteen months be offered to the Head of Transformation and a fixed term contract extension of one year be offered to the Programme Improvement Officer; and

(2) That amounts of £90,340 for 2017/18 and £59,010 for 2018/19 be earmarked in the District Development Fund to pay for the contract extensions.

Reasons for Decision:

A decision on the future state of the Transformation Programme team was required to ensure effective management and delivery of the programme as, through the Corporate Plan 2015-20, the Council was committed to both the improvement of services to residents as well as robust financial management to keep Council Tax low.

It was necessary to limit the extension for the Programme Improvement Officer to avoid the combined periods of his contracts exceeding four years and inadvertently creating a permanent post.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To procure the specialist and technical skills required for the successful management of change from outside the Council. However, this would be both less efficient than the current arrangement and more costly.

To add the posts to the establishment and include them in the Continuing Services Budget (CSB). However, this would require CSB growth of £90,340 in 2017/18 and £20,360 in 2018/19.

To fail to maintain an ongoing review of the Council's processes and procedures. However, this would result in stagnation and, against a backdrop of financial constraints, there was a risk that this would lead to reduced services and/or increases in Council Tax.

CHAIRMAN