

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee **Date:** Thursday, 12 November 2015

Place: Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 9.10 pm

Members Present: Councillors S Stavrou (Chairman), A Lion, J Philip, D Stallan and C Whitbread

Other Councillors:

Apologies:

Officers Present: R Palmer (Director of Resources), D Bailey (Head of Transformation), A Hall (Director of Communities), R Wilson (Assistant Director (Housing Operations)) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer)

28. Declarations of Interest

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor S Stavrou declared a personal interest in agenda item 5, Invest to Save proposal – Hillhouse Masterplanning Exercise by virtue of being a Waltham Abbey Town Councillor. The Councillor had determined that her interest was not prejudicial and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor C Whitbread declared a personal interest in agenda item 11, Fees and Charges 2016/17. The Councillor had determined that his interest was prejudicial and would leave the meeting for the consideration of Lettings Agencies and Property Managers Fees and Charges of this item.

29. Minutes

Resolved:

(1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

30. Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 Quarter 2 Performance

The Director of Resources presented a report on the Quarter 2, Key Performance Indicators 2015/16.

The Director of Resources reported that the Council was required to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions and services were exercised, whilst having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. As part of the duty to secure continuous improvement, a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relevant to the Council's service priorities and key objectives was adopted each year and performance against all of the KPIs was reviewed on a quarterly basis.

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A range of thirty-six Key Performance Indicators (KPI) was adopted for 2015/16. The KPIs were important to the improvement of the Council's services and comprise a combination of former statutory indicators and locally determined performance measures. The aim of the KPIs was to direct improvement effort towards services, the national priorities and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the District.

Progress in respect of all the KPIs was reviewed by Management Board and Overview and Scrutiny at the conclusion of each quarter, and service Directors reviewed KPI performance with the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) on an on-going basis throughout the year. The Select Committees were each responsible for the review of quarterly performance against specific KPIs within their areas of responsibility.

The position with regard to the achievement of target performance for the KPIs at the end of the second quarter (30 September 2015) was as follows:

- (a) 26 (72%) indicators achieved target at the end of Q2;
- (b) 10 (28%) indicators did not achieve target at the end of Q2; although 1 (10%) of these KPIs performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator; and
- (c) 27 (75%) of indicators were currently anticipated to achieve the cumulative year-end target.

The Director of Resources advised that RES001 – Sickness absence had reduced compared to this time last year and further training for Managers had been arranged in relation to stress and mental Health awareness, which had been highlighted by further investigation into this KPI. RES002 – Invoice payments also looked like it would reach its target as well.

The Committee was asked to note the second quarter of 2015/16 in relation to the KPIs for 2015/16.

Councillor D Stallan asked whether there was any reason for the slippage in KPI RES002 – Invoices payments. The Director of Resources advised that there was no one reason, although factors such as annual leave may of possibly impacted the figure but only for a short period and was quickly recovered. The Assistant Director of Accountancy also monitored this KPI monthly and the introduction of e-invoices should also improve the performance.

Councillor A Lion advised that he had concerns for NEI011 – Commercial Rent Arrears. The Director of Resources advised that the figure was slightly behind, although it was improving and if required further details could be obtained from estates.

Resolved:

- (1) That the performance in respect of the second quarter of 2015/16 in relation to the Key Performance Indicators be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

The KPIs provide an opportunity for the Council to focus attention on how specific areas for improvement would be addressed, and how opportunities would be exploited and better outcomes delivered. It was important that relevant performance management processes were in place to review and monitor performance against the key objectives, to ensure their continued achievability and relevance, and to identify

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proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of slippage or under performance.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

No other options were appropriate in this respect. Failure to review and monitor performance could mean that opportunities for improvement were lost and might of had negative implications for judgements made about the progress of the Council.

31. "Invest to Save" Proposal

The Director of Resources presented a report on Invest to Save proposals, which were schemes that would reduce the Continuing Service Budget (CSB) in future years.

The Director of Resources advised that in setting the budget for 2015/16, the Council decided that, as the balance on the General Fund Reserve exceeded the minimum requirement and further savings were required, £0.5 million should be transferred from the General Fund Reserve into an Invest to Save earmarked reserve. A further three proposals had been brought forward which included Rental Loans and Landlord Deposits for Homeless Applicants, Hillhouse Masterplanning Exercise and to appoint a consultant to review the management of off street car parks by the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP). It was appropriate at this stage to seek Member approval for the proposals and give Members the opportunity to put forward additional or alternative proposals.

1. Rental Loans and Landlord Deposits for Homeless Applicants

The Assistant Director (Housing Operations) advised that Management Board had asked him to make a brief presentation to Members in order to explain the increased pressures on the Council due to homelessness. It was reported that the Council's Hostel at Norway House was full, along with Hemnall House, Epping and 20 Housing Association leasing direct properties for homeless applicants. London Boroughs were now placing their homeless applicants in our District and paying private landlords incentives of between £1,000 to £3,000 which had made it difficult for the Homelessness Prevention Team to place our own homeless applicants in the private rented sector accommodation and Private landlords were now reluctant to accept Epping Forest Housing Aid Scheme (EFHAS) damage deposit bonds. The numbers in bed and breakfast accommodation was also increasing and the Council's housing stock was being increasingly used to house homeless applicants on non-secure tenancies. The Council also had very few of its own properties becoming available to let. Finally, the further risk to the Council was explained, whereby we were yet to hear from the Government if any grant would be provided next year for the Homelessness Prevention Service.

The invest to save proposal was for £90,000 over a 3 year period (£30,000 per year) for rental loans for homeless applicants and landlord deposits for homeless applicants where there were larger households. This would assist the Council in trying to secure private rented sector accommodation in these cases. Applicants would repay the loans on interest free basis over a 24 month period, consequently recycling the budget and enabling others to benefit from the Scheme in the future.

Councillor J Philip was concerned about the proportion of loans that were going to be received back. The Assistant Director of Housing Operations advised that recovery was very disappointing and around 10%. Various methods were used to recover the

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loans but the general nature of a homeless applicant meant that they moved around a lot and were very hard to trace.

Councillor D Stallan advised that as the Portfolio Holder for Housing, he was looking into other various solutions for accommodation and that the problems would probably get worse because of the London Boroughs using large incentives, which was not an option for this Council. He advised that other solutions to increase capacity were being considered for Norway House as well.

The Cabinet Committee commented that other solutions would be required, alongside the rental loans and landlord deposits. It was agreed that although rental loans could be provided, the budget should be used predominately for landlord deposits as these were more likely to be recovered. The Cabinet Committee also agreed that the Scheme would need to be reviewed.

2. Hillhouse Masterplanning Exercise

The Director of Resources advised that Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), Essex County Council (ECC) and NHS England would be looking to bring forward a mixed use proposal in the future, which potentially could provide a replacement facility for Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool, a new GP Surgery and an independent living elderly persons' residential facility at Hillhouse, Waltham Abbey. To enable this proposal, a Masterplanning exercise was required along with specialist external consultants to support the process and the costs of which would be split between the interested parties with EFDC contributing £26,000.

The Cabinet Committee discussed the proposal and whether it was a business case for the Invest to Save budget, considering it was part of the Leisure Management Contract and a Masterplanning exercise which also tied in with the Local Plan. The Director of Resources advised that if it was to be incorporated into the Local Plan budget, there would be a draft report coming to Cabinet on 3 December 2015, for around £900,000 and the cost of the masterplanning consultants for Hillhouse it could be included within the Local Plan Budget.

3. Appointment of a consultant to review the management of off street car parks

The Director of Resources advised that £15,000 had been proposed for the appointment of a consultant to review alternative arrangements for the management of off street car parks by NEPP.

Recommended:

1. That the proposal for Rental Loans and Landlord Deposits for Homeless Applicants be recommend to Cabinet with the following conditions;

- (a) That the scheme was reviewed within the three year period; and
- (b) That deposit loans be investigated and used in future with no further rental loans.

2. That the proposal for the appointment of a consultant to review the management of off street car parks by NEPP be recommended to Cabinet.

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3. That the proposal for Hillhouse Masterplanning Exercise would be included within the DDF for the Local Plan, which would be submitted to Cabinet on 3 December 2015; and

4. That the progress on the other proposals previously reported to this Cabinet Committee be noted.

Reasons for Decisions:

To seek Member approval for Invest to Save proposals before they were implemented.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

Members may decide not to support the proposals and suggest additional or alternative uses for the Invest to Save Fund.

32. Funding of two Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advisors

The Assistant Director of Housing Operations presented a report on the funding of two Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Debt Advisors following the CAB District Manager making a presentation to the Grant Aid Review Task and Finish Panel on 29 October 2015.

The Assistant Director of Housing Operations advised that the Cabinet Committee had agreed to a moratorium on spending from the HRA's Housing Improvements and Service Enhancements Fund for 2016/2017 and agreed in principle that £42,000 could be used in 2016/2017 to extend the funding of the Citizens Advice Bureau's (CAB) two existing Debt Advisors for a further year from 1 April 2016 subject to the CAB Manager attending an appropriate meeting, in order to explain the use and outcomes of all the Council's grant funding received by the CAB.

The CAB had provided the Grant Aid Review Task and Finish Panel with a report setting out the work of the two Debt advisors, which showed that during the first 6 months of the financial year (2015/16) that the advisors had managed debts of around £713,000 and assisted 304 clients to date with around 32% (97) of these clients being Council tenants. The CAB was required under the agreement to have one Debt Advisor based at the Limes Centre, Chigwell for one half day each week, which had been extended to 2 half days per week. The CAB had reported that around 120 (40%) of the clients assisted were first seen at the Limes Centre during the 6 month period and had made repeat visits. There were also other drop-in clients that could not be predicted or controlled, which were seen for a much lesser period of time.

The Cabinet Committee commented on the responsibilities that were now falling upon the Council and that the Council was the largest contributor of funding to the CAB. The Cabinet Committee agreed that future funding would be reviewed and that another presentation would be required in 2016.

Recommended:

1. That an exception (already agreed in principle by the Cabinet Committee) be made to the moratorium for 2016/17 on the HRA service improvements and service enhancements fund and £42,000 be used from the Fund in order to extend the funding of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) two existing Debt Advisors for a further year from 1 April 2016 subject to the following conditions;

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- (a) that the CAB's District Manager attends an appropriate meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to make a presentation on the use and outcomes of all of the Council's Grant Funding to the CAB in 2016/17; and
- (b) That a review of the funding be undertaken in 2016.

Reasons for Decision:

To agree to extend the funding of the CAB's two existing Debt Advisors for a further year from 1 April 2016, in order to provide support to residents with personal budgeting and debt advice

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

- (a) Not to agree to extend the funding of the CAB's two existing Debt Advisors for a further year from 1 April 2016;
- (b) To only extend the funding for one CAB Debt Advisor; or
- (c) To provide funding for more than two CAB Debt Advisors.

33. Mid-Year Report on Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2015/16

The Director of Resources presented a report on the mid-year Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2015/16.

The Director of Resources advised that the mid-year treasury report was a requirement of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and that the report covered the treasury activity for the first half of the financial year 2015/16. The Council had continued to finance all capital expenditure from within internal resources although borrowing was likely to be required to finance other capital developments. The original estimate, along with expenditure to month 6 (30 September 2015) was £14.222m, which included the land purchase at Langston Road for which Council agreed a supplementary capital estimate. The original Capital Programme for the three years to 2017/18 totalled £72.0m and was fully funded. It had been predicted that at the end of 2017/18 there would be still £3.0m available in Capital Receipts and £2.0m in the Major Repairs Reserve.

The Director of Resources confirmed that there were no breaches of the Authorised Limit (£230m), the Operational Boundary (£219m) and the Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing during the period to 30 September 2015. It was anticipated that all borrowing would be repaid on maturity and the capital programme would be financed through internal resources, although the Council had intended to borrow later in 2016/17, to finance approved capital projects such as the Langston Road Retail Development.

The Treasury position as of 30 September 2015 was that the short term investments of £45.5m were in fixed rates, £2.6m in variable rates and £5.0m in long term investments. The Semi-annual Treasury Outturn Report 2015/16 reported that the counterparty credit ratings for 30 September 2015 remained above target with the value weighted average credit risk score A+.

The Director of Resources advised that the Council had received a further dividend from the administrators of the Heritable Bank which had taken total dividends so far

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to 98% of the value of deposits. No further update had been received from Ernst and Young.

Resolved:

(1) That the management of the risks associated with the Council's Treasury Management for the first half of 2015/2016 be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

The report was presented for noting as scrutiny was provided by the Audit and Governance Committee who made recommendations to this Committee when necessary.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

Members could ask for additional information about the CIPFA Codes or the Prudential Indicators.

34. Annual Audit Letter

The Director of Resources presented a report on the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter, which would be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 30 November 2015. The report had been placed on this agenda to ensure that Members of this Committee were aware of the key issues raised.

The Director of Resources advised that the Annual Audit Letter (AAL) confirmed that the Financial Statements gave a true and fair view of the Council's financial affairs and that the Annual Governance Statement contained in the Financial Statements was not misleading or inconsistent with other information. The external auditors were able to satisfy themselves that the Council had proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, which enabled them to issue an unqualified value for money conclusion. The AAL confirmed that the auditors had not needed to exercise their statutory powers and that they had no matters to report. An audit certificate to close the audit for the year ended 31 March 2015 had been issued on 30 September 2015.

Resolved:

(1) That the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that Members were informed of any significant issues arising from the annual audit.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The report was for noting, no specific actions were proposed.

35. Quarterly Financial Monitoring

The Director of Resources presented the quarterly Financial Monitoring report for the period 1 April to September 2015, which provided a comparison between the original profiled budgets for the period ended 30 September 2015 and the actual expenditure or income. The report provided details of the revenue budgets for both the Continuing

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Services Budget and the District Development Fund and the capital budgets including details of major capital schemes.

The Cabinet Committee noted that the salaries budget showed an underspend of £287,000 or 2.7%. A vacancy allowance of 1.5% had been allowed for but clearly vacancies were running at a rather higher level at the moment within all directorates (except Chief Executive) and showed a degree of underspend. Investment interest levels were below expectations at Month 6 by £45,000 and this was likely to continue as the second half of the financial year should see the start of the construction of the retail park which would deplete the cash balances further.

The Resources and Neighbourhoods Directorates had the largest underspend of £114,000 and £98,000 respectively. The former related mainly to Revenues, Benefits and to a lesser degree Accountancy and the latter to Grounds Maintenance and Estates.

The Director of Resources reported that the non-domestic rate estimated at the end of September 2015 had reduced by £576,602 and as the Council retained the 40% of gains and losses it would mean a reduction in funding of £230,641. Cash Collections was £19,093,976 and payments out were £17,076,138, which meant that the Council held £2,017,838 of cash and so the Council's overall cash position was benefitting from the effective collection of non-domestic rates.

Within the Neighbourhoods Directorate the Public Hire licence income was in line with expectations but other licensing was below expectations and Income from MOT's carried out by Fleet Operations was £3,000 above expectations. The Car Parking income was £41,000 below the estimate with the telephone payments being two months behind and accounting for £12,000 of the shortfall. Also the Season ticket income was £8,000 down. Local Land Charge income was £14,000 below expectations because of a reduction in searches undertaken and the waste management contract recycling credits were behind expectations due to late billing.

Within the Governance Directorate Development Control income was £179,000 higher than the budget to date and pre-application charges were £12,000 higher. Building Control income was £31,000 higher than the budgeted with the ring-fenced account showing an in-year surplus of £51,000.

Within Communities the Housing Repairs Fund showed an underspend of £314,000. There was also a significant variance on HRA Special Services which relate partly to heating and lighting and some savings were also due in part to the work undertaken by Smith Bellerby.

There were three projects included on the Major Capital Schemes schedule which were related to the Museum redevelopment, the House Building package 1 and the Epping Forest Shopping Park.

Resolved:

(1) That the Quarterly Finance Monitoring Report for the period 1 April to 30 September 2015 be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To note the second quarter financial monitoring report for 2015/16.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

No other options available.

36. Charging Plan for Housing Related Support Services

The Director of Communities presented a report on a proposed Charging Plan for Housing Related Support Services covering the Council's Careline Service, Scheme Management Service and Intensive Housing Management Support.

The Director of Communities advised that although the Careline Service currently broke even when the income was compared to the expenditure, there was currently a deficit on the income and expenditure for the Council's Scheme Management Service. The Council was dependent on funding for Housing Related Support (HRS) services from Essex County Council (ECC), which was reducing in 2016/17 and was likely to reduce further in future years. Therefore the Cabinet had previously agreed that the Housing Portfolio Holder should come forward with a Charging Plan on how HRS charges could be increased each year from April 2016, until the cost of the Scheme Management Service became self-funded, taking account of any annual reductions in HRS funding from Essex County Council. Both the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation and the Resources Select Committee had been consulted and supported the proposals suggested.

The Cabinet Committee considered the current deficit for providing the Scheme Management Service which was approximately £50,250 per annum and the plan put forward to recover the debt over 10 years. The Cabinet Committee had concerns over the time period for the recovery of costs and that the service would need to be self financing sooner and felt that a target of 5 years would be more appropriate, without any cap on the maximum percentage increase on charges made to tenants but to look at the figure increase instead.

The Housing Portfolio Holder commented that further reductions in ECC funding were not known and that if/when further reductions were made this would also increase the cost of the service to residents.

The Leader asked what the future was for the service. The Director of Communities advised that a report would be brought forward to the Housing Select Committee in 2016 on options for the future of the service including the possibility of providing the service to non Council residents.

Recommended:

(1) That the separate charges for the Council's Careline Service, Scheme Management Service and Intensive Housing Management Support be increased annually in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) The expected amount of reduction in ECC funding for the forthcoming year should be added to the current service deficit (or subtracted from the current service surplus) - this is the total deficit/surplus to be recovered/repaid;
- (b) The deficit for the Scheme Management Service should be recovered over a 5 year period and should therefore be divided by the number of years remaining between April 2016 and April 2021 - this is the service deficit to be recovered in the forthcoming year;

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- (c) Any deficit/surplus for the Careline Service should be recovered/repaid in the following year - this is the service deficit/surplus to be recovered/repaid in the forthcoming year;
- (d) The prevailing level of annual pay increases, as calculated by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), should then be applied to the total current income received from current charges and added/deducted to/from the service deficit/surplus to be recovered/repaid, in the forthcoming year - this results in the total amount to be recovered/repaid in the forthcoming year;
- (e) The total amount to be recovered/repaid should then be spread across service users, in the same proportions as currently, as follows:
- Scheme management and intensive housing management charges - Sheltered tenants and area tenants; and
 - Careline charges – Council tenants and private users;
- (f) The resultant monetary increase (but not the percentage increase) for those both in receipt and not in receipt of housing benefit should be the same; and
- (g) The methodology used to calculate the increases in accordance with the above principles should be as set out at Appendices 2 and 3 attached;
- (2) That only 50% of the expected ECC HRS funding reduction in 2016/17 be taken into account when calculating HRS charges for 2016/17; and
- (3) Accordingly, using the above principle and the methodology at Appendices 2 and 3 attached, the HRS charges for 2016/17 be set as follows:

Careline

Council tenants:

<i>Self-funders</i>	- £3.60 per week
<i>In receipt of housing benefit</i>	- £0.55 per week
Private users	- £112 per annum

Scheme Management

Sheltered tenants:

<i>Self-funders</i>	- £8.61 per week
<i>In receipt of housing benefit</i>	- £1.57 per week

Area tenants:

<i>Self-funders</i>	- £2.16 per week
<i>In receipt of housing benefit</i>	- £0.39 per week

Intensive Housing Management (not paid by those in receipt of housing benefit)

Sheltered tenants	- £1.52 per week
Area tenants	- £0.38 per week

Reasons for Decision:

To approve a Charging Plan that would be used to calculate charges for Housing Related Support Services in 2016/17 and future years.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

- (1) Not to seek to eradicate the current deficit for the Scheme Management Service over time.
- (2) To reduce the current service deficit over a different period than the 5 years.
- (3) To take into account the expected ECC funding reduction in full when calculating next year's charges.
- (4) Not to take into account any expected funding reduction when calculating next year's charges
- (5) Not to include an annual increase for average pay increases within the charges for the following year.
- (6) To use RPI, CPI or another index for inflationary increases instead of average pay increases.
- (7) To spread the total amount to be recovered across service users in a different way than proposed.
- (8) To increase charges for tenants both in receipt and not in receipt of housing benefit by the same percentages, rather than the same monetary amounts.
- (9) To apply a cap, above which charges should not be increased.

37. Fees and Charges 2016/17

The Director of Resources presented a report on the fees and charges to be levied by the Council in 2016/17 and what, if any scope there was to increase particular charges.

The Director of Resources advised that the Medium Term Financial Strategy identified the need to find savings of £1m over the four year period with £150,000 falling in 2016/17. The traditional use of the September Retail Prices Index (RPI) or Consumer Prices Index (CPI) as a guide for inflation had been replaced by the labour inflation rate because of employee costs representing the largest element of expenses when carrying out the services for which a charge was made. The latest figure available was 2.8% and this had been used as a guide for any proposed increase in fees and charges.

The Director of Resources stated that it had been proposed to increase the fees and charges within the Communities Directorate by rounding up charges to the nearest 10 pence, 50 pence or pound, with the exception of charges already agreed earlier in the agenda in relation to Housing Related Support Services. A review of museum related fees and charges would be reported to Cabinet in February 2016 in readiness for the opening of the Museum in March 2016 and following a discussion at the Resources Select Committee about the hire charges at The Limes Centre, Registered Charities had been moved into Scale 1, although as there were none currently using the facilities there would be no loss of rental income to the Council. The bed and breakfast accommodation rates for 2016/17 were also not included because of a competitive tender process being completed and a charge of £26.20 for Care gardening service had been applied and for benefit recipients the first visit would be free of charge.

Within the Governance Directorate, the situation regarding Land Charge income was still very uncertain and the fee income had dwindled, although it was not proposed to increase the fees as this might drive more people to do personal searches which were free. The Development Control fee levels were controlled by Central Government and the levels of income were somewhat dependant on the economic climate and the number and size of planning applications. With regard to pre-application charges that applied to major applications, income was buoyant at the

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moment and the budget had been exceeded substantially. The work required to generate the fee was quite labour intensive and it was felt that an increase was appropriate. The Building Control Fee levels were felt to be reasonable and income levels had improved.

Within the Neighbourhoods Directorate the MOT income was subject to a maximum charge set by the Vehicle Operating Service Agency (VOSA) which was currently £54.85 and the Council's fee was set at £49.00. With regard to Car Parking charges, the recent changes to the fee structure had only just come into effect and it was a little premature to review these again. From 1 October 2015 there was a change to the fee structure for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver's licences and operator's licences which were issued for three years and operators for five years and no proposed increases as they were set based on cost recovery. With regard to other forms of licensing, some fell under the 2003 Licensing Act which prescribed the level of fee and others varied subject to a maximum level or on a cost recovery basis. Licence Fees were generally below the prescribed level and had not recovered the cost of provision; therefore they were increased where appropriate. The fees relating to the collection of bulk waste varied, depending on the number of items being collected and was specified under the new waste management contract. The fees and charges related to the Leisure Centres were specified as being in line with the retail prices index within the leisure contract and any variance from this had to be agreed with the Council in advance of the increase.

The Director of Resources advised that the report sought Members views on the level of fees and charges for 2016/17.

The Cabinet Committee advised that when amendments were made to the 'Promotion of a City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill', commercial activity within the Forest by the Council would have to be considered but in the meantime there was a view to have all the activities around the same cost. The fees and charges had been considered by the relevant Select Committees and although costs had been increase by 2.8%, the Cabinet Committee felt that this should be a minimum and that perhaps increases should be rounded up to the nearest £5.00. It was also felt that the charge for the Play in the Forest Scheme should be inline with other activities and increased to £3.00.

The Cabinet Committee also commented on the provision of Environment Health Training and whether it was cost effective, made any revenue and whether there was a need to provide it. Further details were requested from the Neighbourhoods Directorate on this before a decision could be made for 2016/17. There were also comments on whether there was any further information on the Hemming case, which affected the fees and charges surrounding Sex Shops and Cinemas and Sexual Entertainment Venues.

Recommended:

(1) That the use of Labour Inflation Rate (2.8%) as a guide for any proposed increases of the Council's fees and charges for 2016/17 be agreed;

(2) That the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17, as set out in the Appendices attached to the report be approved subject to the following proposed increases within the Communities Directorate for Play in the Forest and Neighbourhoods directorate for application events for the following;

- a) Play in the Forest - £3.00
- b) Basic food hygiene course - £75.00

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- c) Animal boarding - £310.00
- d) Dog Breeding - £310.00
- e) Pet Animals Act - £310.00
- f) Dangerous wild animals - £675.00
- g) Riding establishment - £675.00
- h) Zoo's - £550.00

(3) That the proposed schedule of Housing Revenue Account fees and charges for 2016/17 be approved subject to the following;

(i) Careline

Council tenants:

Self-funders - £3.60 per week

In receipt of housing benefit - £0.55 per week

Private users - £112 per annum

(ii) Scheme Management

Sheltered tenants:

Self-funders - £8.61 per week

In receipt of housing benefit - £1.57 per week

Area tenants:

Self-funders - £2.16 per week

In receipt of housing benefit - £0.39 per week

(iii) Intensive Housing Management (not paid by those in receipt of housing benefit)

Sheltered tenants - £1.52 per week

Area tenants - £0.38 per week

Reasons for Decision

As part of the annual budget process changes to fees and charges needed to be agreed.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

Where the Council had discretion on the level of fees and charges that were set and there were many possible options open to the Council ranging between no increases up to applying quite large increases where justifiable.

38. Any Other Business

Resolved:

(1) That, in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs (6) and (24) of the Council Procedure Rules, the Chairman had permitted the following item of urgent business to be considered following the publication of the agenda:

- (a) Draft General Fund CSB and DDF lists and Savings Update.

39. Draft General Fund CSB and DDF lists and Savings Update

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The Director of Resources presented a report on the first draft Continuing Services Budget (CSB) and District Development Fund (DDF) schedules for 2016/17 and the savings achieved so far.

The Director of Resources stated that the Financial Issues Paper was considered by the Cabinet Committee on 20 July 2015, which highlighted a number of financial uncertainties and risks facing the Authority including the reductions in Central Government funding, Retention of Business Rates, Welfare reform and the Leisure Management Contract Renewal.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which formed part of the Financial Issues Paper, identified that savings of around £1 million, which were required over the forecast period. The savings required in 2016/17 were identified at £150,000 after savings of £410,000 had been taken into account. Since then there had been a number of other items identified which included an increase to the employers national insurance contributions of approximately £0.5 million from 1 April 2016 and a lost investment income as a result of the Construction of the Shopping Park, St Johns Development, Oakwood Hill and the North Weald Housing depot construction estimated at £200,000 over the next two years. Although offsetting this was the Grant income from Central Government, given to Local Authorities in recognition of the lost Business Rates due to the various government led reliefs given to businesses, which was expected to be around £700,000 in 2015/16.

The current contract for the North Weald Market ends on the 31 December 2015 and it was unclear what would be replacing it at the moment but whatever the outcome was, it was likely to affect the CSB in some way.

Resolved:

- (1) That the draft of the Continuing Services Budget and District Development Fund schedules for 2016/17 be noted; and
- (2) That the savings achieved to date as part of the 2016/17 budget process be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

Members were asked to note the first draft of these schedules and make comments as appropriate.

Other options Considered and Rejected:

No other options applicable.

CHAIRMAN

Community Services and Safety – Proposed fees and charges for 2016/17

Appendix 1

Service/Activity	2015/16 Fees	Proposed 2016/17 Fees	Comments
New Horizons Yoga session Indoor Bowls (Epping & Waltham Abbey) David Lloyd Bowls Badminton Boccia Table Tennis	£5.00 £3.50 £4.00 £3.50 £3.50 £3.50	£5.50 £3.60 £4.00* £3.60 £3.60 £3.60	*No increase as feel this is the maximum we can charge at present for this session
Lifewalks	£2.00 per walk £28.50 privilege card for 6 months	£2.00* per walk £29.00 privilege card for 6 months	*Easy money for leaders to collect, gets complicated when dealing in pence plus feel this is a premium we can charge for a walk, most walkers purchase a privilege card
Cycling for Health	£3.00 just ride £6.00 hire & ride	£3.50 £7.00	
Term time Sessions: Badminton Futsal	£4.60 £3.00	£4.75 £3.00*	*Still being developed therefore keep at same price
Holiday Provision Sport Sessions	£4.00	£4.50	
High Beech Youth Mountain Biking Session Club Membership Members (Pay as you go) Own Bike Hiring a Bike Unlimited Monthly Attendance Own Bike Hiring a Bike	£25 £5 £8 £20 £32	£30 £5 £8 £20 £32	

Non-member fees (Pay as you go)			
Own Bike	£7	£8	
Hiring a Bike	£10	£10	
Parent Fees			
Hiring a Bike	£8	£8	
Bike hire for races			
Members	£10	£10	
Non-members	£20	£20	
Legs n Lungs - Running	£2.50	£3.00*	£2.50 was an introductory fee therefore can raise to £3.00
Get Active Sessions	£2.00	£3.00*	£2.00 was an introductory fee therefore can raise to £3.00
Playschemes/Activity Camps			
Full Price	£16.00	£16.50	
Concessions	£8.50	£9.00	
Play in the Forest	£2.50	£3.00*	*Easy for Leaders to collect on site, minimal increase would create too much work in a forest setting.

Fees and Charges 2015/16 - HOUSING RELATED SERVICES

Service	2015/16		2016/17	
	Amount	Period	Amount	Period
Older People's Housing				
Communal Halls: Pelly Court Hall, Epping Oakwood Hill Hall, Loughton Barrington Hall, Loughton	£9.65 £135.00 £7.85	per hour per annum per session	£9.90 £138.80 £8.10	per hour per annum per session
Guest Rooms - Sheltered Housing	£8.90	per person per night	£9.15	per person per night
Scooter Stores: Rental Electricity	£3.80 £1.95	per week per week	£3.90 £2.00	per week per week
Sheltered Housing Charges: Scheme Management Charge: <i>Tenants not in receipt of housing benefit</i> <i>Tenants in receipt of housing benefit</i> Intensive Housing Management Charge <i>(Note: Charge not payable by HB claimants)</i>	£8.04 £1.00 £1.24	per week per week per week	£8.61 £1.57 £1.52	per week per week per week
Area Housing Charges: Scheme Management Charge: <i>Tenants not in receipt of housing benefit</i> <i>Tenants in receipt of housing benefit</i> Intensive Housing Management Charge <i>(Note: Charge not payable by HB claimants)</i>	£2.03 £0.26 £0.32	per week per week per week	£2.16 £0.39 £0.38	per week per week per week
Careline Charges (Council tenants): Tenants not in receipt of housing benefit Tenants in receipt of housing benefit	£3.58 £0.53	per week per week	£3.60 £0.55	per week per week
Telecare Packages (Private users): Alarm and up to 4 sensors (Monitoring only) Monitoring of additional sensors (per sensor)	£109.32 £11.00	per annum per annum	£112.00 £11.30	per annum per annum
Monitoring of alarms for other organisations (per speech module)	£105.80	per annum	£108.75	per annum
Careline Service to Home Group for Wickfields sheltered housing scheme, Chigwell	£239.65	p/a per speech module	£246.35	p/a per speech module
Large Button Telephone	£21.00	per telephone	£21.60	per telephone
Use of Jessopp Ct Lounge by Essex CC as a Day Centre	£9,766	per annum (wef 12.7.15)	£10,039	per annum (wef 12.7.14)
Lease for Jessopp Ct Office to Family Mosaic	Increased each October by the Sept RPI increase			
Home Ownership and Sales				
Leasehold Vendors' Enquiries	£141.75	per enquiry	£145.70	per enquiry
Certificates of Buildings Insurance - Leaseholders	£45.10	per copy	£46.35	per copy
Small Land Sales Valuation Charge	£361.50	per sale	£371.60	per sale
Valuation & Legal Charge - Re-sale of RTB Property within 5 years / Sale of property to EFDC within 10 years	£365.00	per application	£375.20	per application
Consideration of Right to Re-purchase Former RTB Property within 10 years of Original Purchase	£63.50	per application	£65.30	per application
Housing Management				
Hire of Halls for Elections	£88.10	per day	£90.60	per day
Garage rents	£8.10	per week	£8.35	per week
Hardstandings	£83.90	per annum	£86.25	per annum
Mortgage references	£44.50	per enquiry	£42.50	per enquiry

Request for covenant and leasehold approvals	£65.95	per request	£67.80	per request
Licences for vehicular access across housing land	£109.75	per annum	£112.80	per annum
Dishonoured cheques	£25.60	per cheque	£26.30	per cheque
Homelessness				
Homeless Hostel Accommodation:				
One Room	£46.55	per week	£47.85	per week
Two Rooms	£72.70	per week	£74.75	per week
Three Rooms	£97.90	per week	£100.65	per week
Chalets	£84.80	per week	£87.15	per week
Bed and Breakfast Accommodation (Contracted rates):				
Single Room	£38.15	per night	Subject to outcome of tender	
Double Room	£50.23	per night		
Repairs and Maintenance				
Condition surveys to respond to Party Wall Act Notices	£74.60	per Notice	£76.70	per Notice
Copies of Structural Reports on RTB Properties	£36.85	per report	£37.90	per report
Rechargeable repairs	Recharged in accordance with the Rechargeable Repairs Schedule		2.8% increase in all charges	
Replacement Door Entry and Suited Keys	£13.90	per key	£14.30	per key
Sewerage charges for individual sewerage systems	Set charges for each site		No increase - due to contractor keeping charges at Oct 2014 levels	
Caring and Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Service				
Caring And Repairing in Epping Forest (CARE) Fees:				
Disabled facilities grants and Decent Homes loans	15%	of works cost	15%	of works cost
Small Works Repayable Assistance	10%	of works cost	10%	of works cost
C.A.R.E Handyperson Service:				
<i>Clients in receipt of means-tested benefits:</i>				
General jobs	£31.00	Maximum charge per visit	£31.90	Maximum charge per visit
Falls prevention and home safety checks/works	Free		Free	
Garden maintenance - First visit	Free	per visit (up to 2 hours)	Free	per visit (up to 2 hours)
- Second visit	Free	per visit (up to 2 hours)	£26.20	per visit (up to 2 hours)
<i>Clients <u>not</u> in receipt of means-tested benefits:</i>				
General jobs	£51.00	Maximum charge per visit	£52.45	Maximum charge per visit
Falls prevention and home safety checks/works	£25.50	Maximum charge per visit	£26.20	Maximum charge per visit
Garden maintenance	Free	per visit (up to 2 hours)	£26.20	per visit (up to 2 hours)
Private Sector Housing				
Licences - HMOs (Initial & Renewal):				
3 storey HMO with up to 5 units of accommodation	£682.00	per licence	£700.00	per licence
Additional units of accommodation	£63.50	per additional unit	£65.30	per additional unit
Discount for Essex Landlord Accredited landlords	-£80.00	per licence	-£80.00	per licence
Landlord Accreditation Scheme for Student Accom:				
Bed-sit	£50.00	per property accredited	£51.40	per property accredited
1-2 bedroom flats	£100.00	per property accredited	£102.80	per property accredited
House/bungalow with up to 6 bedrooms	£150.00	per property accredited	£154.20	per property accredited
3 storey houses (non-licensable)	£175.00	per property accredited	£179.90	per property accredited
Park Homes Licensing Fees:				
Site licence fees	In accordance with EFDC's Fees Policy for Licensing Residential Park Home Sites			
Depositing of site rules	£133.00	per deposit	£136.70	per deposit
Fine for Lettings Agencies and Property Agencies failing to join a Government-approved Redress Scheme	£5,000	per incidence (unless extenuating circs.)	£5,000	per incidence (unless extenuating circs.)
Enforcement of private sector housing conditions - Housing Act 2004 and Mobile Homes Act 2013	Cost of officer time to undertake enforcement action + 10% administration cost			
General percentage uplift for next year	2.8%			

Governance

Proposed fees & charges for 2016/17

Service area	Current	Proposed
Development Control		
All figures include VAT at 20%		
Major development schemes of 100 and over new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use of 10,000 square metres floorspace and over, or changes of use of land or earth movement on land 2 hectares or more.	£3,600	£3,700
Major development schemes of 10 - 99 new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use between 1,000-9,999 square metres, or changes of use of land or earth movement on land 1 hectares or more.	£1,800	£1,850
Minor development schemes of 2 - 9 new residential units, or the creation of commercial development or changes of use between 100 - 999 square metres or changes of use of land or earth movement on land under 1 hectares.	£850	£870
Minor development schemes of 1 new or replacement residential unit or the creation of commercial development or changes of use up to 100 square metres.	£300	£310
All other cases, including householder additions, adverts, other commercial development alterations.	£48	£50

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Neighbourhoods

Appendix 4

Proposed fees & charges for 2016/17

Service area	2015/16		Proposed 2016/17		Notes
	Application/ Event	Renewal	Application/ Event	Renewal	
Environmental Health					
Training					
Basic food hygiene course	£70.00		£75.00		6 courses 10 per course
Basic health & safety course	£60.00		£62.00		Nil done.
Animal welfare					
Animal boarding	£299.00	£205.00	£310.00	£211.00	
Dog breeding	£299.00	£205.00	£310.00	£211.00	
Pet Animals Act	£299.00	£205.00	£310.00	£211.00	
Dangerous wild animals	£653.00	£443.00	£675.00	£455.00	
Riding establishment	£653.00	£549.00	£675.00	£564.00	
Stray dog	£78.00				Set by Waltham Forest as part of contract with them
Zoo's	£527.00		£550.00		
Licensing.					
Hackney Carriage/Private Hire					
Annual Vehicle Licence	£277.00	£277.00	£277.00	£277.00	Subject to Statutory consultation
Annual Driver's Licence	£186.00	£186.00	£186.00	£186.00	Subject to Statutory consultation 3 year licence
Vehicle plate	£30.00		£30.00		Initial fee, refundable on return
Driver badge	£10.00		£10.00		
Drivers Test	£40.00		£40.00		Refundable if 2 days notice of cancellation given
Drivers re-sit of test	£21.00		£21.00		Refundable if 2 days notice of cancellation given

Service area	2015/16		Proposed 2016/17		Notes
	Application/ Event	Renewal	Application/ Event	Renewal	
Private Hire Operators					
Annual operator licence (1 vehicle only)	£105.00		£105.00		Subject to Statutory consultation, 5 year licence
Annual Operators (> 1 vehicle)	£405.00		£405.00		Subject to Statutory consultation, 5 year licence
Plate exemption	£88.00	£88.00	£88.00	£88.00	
Miscellaneous					
Special treatment premises	£155.00		£159.00		
Special treatments person	£83.00		£85.00		
Small Society Lotteries	£40.00	£20.00	£40.00	£20.00	Set by Statute
Sex Shops and Cinemas	£515.00	£515.00	£529.00	£529.00	Hemming case going to Supreme Court
Sexual Entertainment Venues -	£4,000.00	£2,000.00	£4,110.00	£2,060.00	Hemming case going to Supreme Court
Street Trading Consents	£375.00	£375.00	£390.00	£390.00	If not successful at sub-committee then half fee refunded
Scrap Metal Dealers	£375.00		£385.00		3 year licence
Scrap Metal Sites	£225.00		£231.00		3 year licence
Road Closure Notices	£170.00		£173.00		
Licensing Act 2003					All fees set by statute based upon premises rateable value plus occupancy for premises holding more than 5,000 people. Personal licences valid for 10 years EFDC cannot amend these charges, therefore not included in this table

Gambling Act 2005

Betting Premises	New application		Annual fee		Variation, Transfer, Re-instatement	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
Betting premises (not tracks)	£1,200.00	£1,200.00	£600.00	£600.00	£1,200.00	£1,200.00

Betting Premises	Licence copy		Notification of change	
	Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed
Betting premises (not tracks)	£29.00	£29.00	£29.00	£29.00

Waste management

Bulky household waste

Item	Current	Proposed	Notes
1 to 3 items	£23.00	£24.00	50% concession for pensionable age
4 to 7 items	£35.00	£36.00	50% concession for pensionable age
8 to 10 items	£46.00	£47.00	50% concession for pensionable age
11 to 15 items	£58.00	£60.00	50% concession for pensionable age
More than 15 items	Assessment	Assessment	50% concession for pensionable age

Trade waste

Item	Current	Proposed	Notes
Commercial properties (per collection)	£14.30	£14.70	Service provided on request
Schools and Community premises (per collection)	£9.20	£9.50	Service provided on request

Street Numbering and Naming Charges

Item	Current	Proposed	Notes	
House Name Change/ Addition	£51.50	£52.50	Per property	
Development of 1+ properties	£51.50	£52.50	For first property	
	£17.00	£18.00	Per additional property	
Changes in initial development after initial notification	£51.50	£52.50	For first property	
	£17.00	£18.00	Per additional property	
Renaming of street at residents request	£51.50	£52.50	For first property	
	£17.00	£18.00	Per additional property	
Confirmation of postal address details	£2.80	£2.85	Per certificate issued	
	£17.00	£18.00	Per property involved	

The Limes Centre

Limes Avenue, Chigwell, IG7 5LP

SCALE OF HIRE CHARGES – from 1st April 2016

The Limes (Main) Hall

	Charges per hour	
	Scale 1	Scale 2
Monday to Friday		
9.00am – 6.00pm	£12.00	£24.00
6.00pm – 10.00pm	£17.00	£34.00
Saturday		
10.00am – 6.00pm	£17.00	£34.00
6.00pm – 11.00pm	£27.00	£47.00
10.00am – 11.00pm	£250.00	£450.00
Sunday		
10.00am – 9.00pm	£27.00	£47.00

Limes Activity Room

	Charges per hour	
	Scale 1	Scale 2
Monday to Friday		
9.00am – 6.00pm	£8.00	£18.00
6.00pm – 10.00pm	£13.00	£23.00
Saturday & Sunday (9pm only)		
10.00am – 6.00pm	£13.00	£18.00
6.00pm – 11.00pm	£18.00	£28.00

Limes Meeting Room

	Charges per hour	
	Scale 1	Scale 2
Monday to Friday		
9.00am – 6.00pm	£5.00	£10.00
6.00pm – 10.00pm	£11.00	£22.00
Saturday & Sunday (9pm only)		
10.00am – 6.00pm	£10.00	£20.00
6.00pm – 11.00pm	£15.00	£25.00

Appendix 6

Charging Bands	Scale 1	Scale 2
	This rate is specifically for Epping Forest Council House Tenants and EFDC Residents on Income Support/ Housing Benefit. This will be strictly applied and evidence will be required, also registered charities	Non Residents, Weddings, not for profit organisations

PAYMENTS

- A deposit of 25% of the hire fee is payable with the application
 - The balance must be paid at least **ONE MONTH** before the letting
 - If the letting is less than one month from the booking date, the full amount must be paid at the time of booking
 - A refundable damage deposit fee of £500 for adult parties and £100 for children's parties
- Cheques should be made payable to Epping Forest District Council and crossed a/c Payee Only. Credit/Debit card payments are also taken**

CANCELLATIONS

- Booking deposits are **not** refundable
- For general bookings, the balance is refundable only if more than **four week's notice** of the cancellation is given **or**, if shorter notice is given, the hall can be let to another hirer for the cancelled period
- For Wedding cancellations, a scale of cancellation fees applies according to period of notice given

Bookings may be made by telephone on
 01992 564561

A completed application form and a non-returnable