

Supplementary Council Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Council Monday, 24th April, 2006

Place: Civic Offices, Epping
Room: Council Chamber
Time: 7.30 pm
Committee Secretary: Council Secretary: Ian Willett
Tel: 01992 564243 Email: iwillett@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

8. REPORTS OF THE CABINET (Pages 3 - 6)

To consider the following reports of the Cabinet:

- (d) Supplementary Estimates and Virement

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Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2006

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Knapman

Item: 8 (d)

2. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENT

Recommending:

- (1) That a virement in the sum of £25,000 from the Capital Contingency Fund be approved in order to secure the refurbishment of the Epping Drinking Fountain;
 - (2) That an increase in the annual budget for Disabled Adaptations from 2006/07 in the sum of £30,000, from £300,000 to £330,000 per annum be approved;
 - (3) That a DDF supplementary estimate of £50,000 be approved to meet the cost of the clearance of rubbish, caravans and mobile homes from the site of Birchfield, Epping Lane, Stapleford Tawney;
 - (4) That a DDF supplementary estimate of £200,000 be approved to meet the costs of terminating the waste management contract with South Herts Waste Management through a negotiated settlement and the initial costs of service re-provision;
 - (5) That provision within the Capital Programme for 2006/07 be increased by £500,000 for increasing the amount of affordable housing within the District; and
 - (6) That provision within the Capital Programme for the Loughton Broadway Regeneration Scheme be increased by £100,349 from £2,890,000 to £2,990,349.
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Epping Drinking Fountain

- 2.1 In 1989, the Council funded the recovery and reinstatement of the Epping Drinking Fountain, which was originally erected by the people of Epping in 1887, to celebrate, the 50th year of the reign of Queen Victoria. The reinstatement included a recyclable water trough system, a drinking water tap and a bespoke designed electric lighting system to replicate the original gas lighting.
- 2.2 The drinking water and the recyclable water trough were ceased during 2002 due to high maintenance costs and vandalism. However, the lighting system has remained operational and provides an attractive contribution to Epping High Street, which forms part of a Conservation Area.

- 2.3 Routine electrical and structural testing of the lighting component has revealed the need for a major overall and structural improvements, the cost of which has been estimated at £25,000. The Epping Town Council has responsibility for maintaining the fabric of the fountain, but the District Council continues to have responsibility for the routine and non-routine maintenance of the lighting component.
- 2.4 Following completion of the proposed refurbishment works, it is proposed that ownership and responsibility for all future maintenance be transferred to Epping Town Council.

Increase in Disabled Adaptations Budget

- 2.5 The annual budget for Disabled Adaptations is currently £300,000 per annum set in July 2004 following the Housing Best Value Service Review.
- 2.6 Since that time the number of adaptations received from Social Services has continued to rise year on year, which results in a number of adaptations being held over on a waiting list until the next financial year when the new budget becomes available.
- 2.7 The Housing Appeals Panel, at its meeting on 16 February 2006, recommended an increase in the annual budget for disabled adaptations to take account of building cost increases over the last two years. This equates to approximately £30,000 in total based on a 5% increase each year.
- 2.8 We agree with the recommendation of the Housing Appeals Panel and are seeking an increase in the budget of £30,000. In future, it is proposed that the budget be increased year on year in line with building cost increases to keep up with inflation.

Birchfield, Epping Lane, Stapleford Tawney

- 2.9 Separate reports are being submitted to the Council on planning enforcement action and a supplementary capital estimate to meet the cost of a survey of this site.
- 2.10 This report seeks a supplementary estimate of £50,000 to meet the cost of clearance of rubbish, caravans and mobile homes from the site.
- 2.11 These works are required to remedy the harm already caused to the site and to prevent further exacerbation of that harm. The works will create the conditions for the lawful use of the land to resume.

Waste Management Contract

- 2.12 Following consideration of the recommendations of the Waste Management Contract Cabinet Committee, steps are being taken to terminate the contract with South Herts Waste Management through a negotiated settlement.
- 2.13 It is difficult to be precise about the costs associated with a negotiated settlement and the initial costs of service re-provision but a sum of £200,000 is sought at this stage.

Affordable Housing in the District

- 2.14 The Housing Scrutiny Panel has held detailed discussions on ways of increasing the amount of affordable housing in the District. This was in the light of concerns expressed about the relatively low level of affordable housing being provided in the District, compared with the increasing need. The Housing Needs Survey (2003) estimated that 665 new affordable houses were required per annum to meet the current and arising need over the five years.

- 2.15 The Panel considered a number of options and recommended:
- (a) that additional one-off budget provision of £1 million be made within the Council's Capital Programme for 2006/07, funded as follows:
- £500,000 – by reducing the budget(s) of one or more existing projects within the Capital Programme by an equivalent amount as determined by the Cabinet (either in 2006/07 or later years);
- £500,000 – as additional expenditure to the Capital Programme.
- 2.16 The Panel further recommended that the Cabinet undertakes a formal review each year on whether or not further budget provision should be included in the Capital Programme to fund social housing grant(s), and if so, how much should be included and when.
- 2.17 We have adopted the recommendations and are seeking additional provision in the Capital Programme for 2006/07 of £500,000.

Loughton Broadway Regeneration Scheme

- 2.18 The Loughton Broadway Regeneration Scheme was approved earlier this calendar year, to be procured through a "Design and Build" contractual arrangement.
- 2.19 Consultants have advised that the estimated cost of the works is £3,736,475. Following determination of the anticipated costs, the contractor was invited to develop a target cost incorporating a number of design revisions structured to achieve cost savings.
- 2.20 Following detailed discussions with the contractor, the target cost has been determined at £2,611,349. However, a number of cost headings still need to be quantified, in particular statutory undertaker diversions, guard railings and soft landscaping. As a result the anticipated overall cost of the project is £2,990,349.
- 2.21 We are recommending additional capital provision of £100,349 in order for the scheme to proceed.

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