

Supplementary Council Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Council Tuesday, 24th April, 2007

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

5. PUBLIC QUESTION (Pages 5 - 6)

To answer the attached question asked after notice in accordance with the provisions contained in paragraph 9.3 of the Council Procedure Rules of the Constitution on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District:

(c) to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.

6. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET (Pages 7 - 10)

To receive the attached reports from members of the Cabinet on matters falling within their areas of responsibility:

(c) Report of Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder;
(d) Report of Community Wellbeing Portfolio Holder.

8. MOTION (Pages 11 - 12)

To consider the attached motion, notice of which has been given under Council Procedure Rule 11.

10. REPORTS OF THE CABINET (Pages 13 - 16)

To consider the following attached reports of the Cabinet:

(d) Supplementary Estimates (cont)
(e) Local Business Growth Incentive Scheme

14. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - RECRUITMENT OF CO-OPTEES (Pages 17 - 18)

To consider the attached supplement.

Telecommunications Mast – Waltham Abbey

Question by Mr and Mrs D Brooks to Councillor Mrs A Grigg, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

“We strongly object to the recent sighting of the O2 mast at the junction of Honey Lane and Stonyshotts which was erected by default due to incompetence by Epping Forest District Council.

Also, in our opinion not only is the mast unsightly but it is extremely hazardous to the health of the local residents. It has also devalued the properties in the close proximity.

Will the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development give the residents an assurance that the mast will be removed at the earliest opportunity?”

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Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2007

Subject: Civil Engineering & Maintenance Portfolio **Item:** 6(c)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Green

Recommendation:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder be noted.

Parking reviews

The Epping, Buckhurst Hill and Loughton TCE traffic orders are all now in place. Work is proceeding with Essex County Council to implement the orders on the ground. It is currently proposed to commence with Epping and then move on to Buckhurst Hill, the latter being more complex and having engineering works associated with it (a mini-roundabout). Epping will commence in earnest after the May elections. Ahead of that time all residents and businesses will receive leaflets and other information on how the scheme will work, where permits etc can be purchased. We are looking at implementing the High Street Epping as soon as possible since this will provide much sought after parking for those who visit and use the town centre.

The preparatory work for the Waltham Abbey and wider Loughton reviews are underway, with inventory analyses and beat surveys. The area immediately around the Broadway has also been included in order to deal with the possible displacement effects of the TCE parking controls.

Car park tariffs

The new tariffs are in place and operative from 1 April 2007. The exception is the Burton Road car park at The Broadway, where the TROs are yet to be advertised to implement them on the former free car park. Free Saturday car parking is also in place in the long and mixed stay car parks. As requested by members, once the 'settling in' period has passed, the use will be monitored.

Sponsored roundabouts

This process was unfortunately delayed because the County Council needed to revisit the arrangements to ensure consistency of approach so that road safety was not compromised. The final version of the agreement is awaited, and then the County Council's appointed consultants can commence the task of seeking sponsors for roundabouts within the district.

Local highways service agreement (LSA)

The County Portfolio Holder has circulated the latest version with a request that it be signed by the Leader of Council. There is however some concern in the Essex District regarding the LSA given the delay between its original formulation and now, and indeed whether to LSA should be entered into. This matter will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting in June.

Parking enforcement contract

The procurement is proceeding well. This is an EU driven procurement process, so will follow the same procedures as for the waste management contract. Pre-qualification questionnaires have been issued and returned, and I have, through a Portfolio Holder decision, agreed the select of tenderers who will be invited to submit tender proposals. Tenders were sent out on the 13th of April with a return date of the 25th of May. The new enforcement contract is scheduled to commence on the 1st of October 2007.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2007

Subject: Community Wellbeing Portfolio

Item: 6(d)

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ms S-A Stavrou

Recommendation:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder be noted.

Crime and Disorder

The Joint Action Group (JAG) meetings being held weekly at Epping Police Station appear to be working well. This is a weekly meeting which tries to multi agency problem solve emerging problems in the district. JAGs will eventually be fed by Neighbourhood Action Panels (NAPs) once they are up and running. Members will see that over the past few weeks there have been a number of anti social behaviour problems in certain areas. The specifics of these incidents, and the steps taken to remedy them, are outlined in the JAG minutes. These minutes are not restricted and are available for perusal in the members' room.

Three training modules for Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) have been prepared; these are - Policing and Partnerships, Domestic Home Security Surveys and Intelligence Gathering. Once the documents have been printed, the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator will prepare the training package and deliver it to the PCSOs.

The official launch of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel website and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Panel Induction Handbook was held at 12 noon, at Theydon Bois Village Hall, on Thursday 19 April.

Concessionary Fare Travel 2008

The Concessionary Bus Travel Bill has continued to make good progress through Parliament. The Third Reading, the final stage in the Bill's initial passage through the House of Lords, took place on Monday 5 February. On Tuesday 6 February the Bill transferred to the House of Commons for the First Reading. No date has yet been finalised for the Bill's Second Reading.

All authorities have been advised to check and update databases of existing concessionaires, as well as capturing photographs of their eligible concessionaires. This was undertaken at Epping during the last bus pass issue in February 2006 and is being finalised during February 2007.

Pandemic Flu

Building on the work the Council has already undertaken to implement its on business continuity arrangements for pandemic flu, we continue to work with our partner agencies on

this subject and in early May 2007 officers will be taking part in a multi agency exercise being organised by the West Essex Primary Care Trust.

Other agencies involved in the exercise will include the Princess Alexander Hospital Acute Trust, East of England Ambulance Trust, East and North Herts Primary Care Trust and the District Councils of Harlow Uttlesford and East Herts.

Bell Common Tunnel

Continuing the theme of multi Agency Working, officers from the Council's Emergency Planning and Response Team participated in "Exercise Alexander" on 28 February.

This exercise, organised by the Highways Agency was designed to examine the issues that would arise from a serious incident occurring on the M25 motorway in the Bell Common Tunnel Epping.

Arising from the exercise the Council will be involved in further detailed planning work in relation to receiving and caring for evacuees following a serious incident.

Business Continuity Management

Part of the Council's obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act is to offer advice to local businesses on business continuity management. As a starting point it is intended to publish an advice booklet and distribute it to all businesses in the District.

The first draft of a booklet is nearing completion and it is hoped that the final version will be available for issue later this year.

Training

With the expansion of the Council's role in emergency preparedness and response, training becomes an increasingly important aspect of emergency planning work.

Training needs to be provided for members of the Emergency Response Team, staff volunteers and Councillors. We also need to build on the existing liaison arrangements with Parish and Town Councils.

The first awareness session for District and Parish and Town Councillors was held in November 2006 and it is intended that this becomes a regular component of the Member's annual training prospectus.

We will also be looking at other ways of keeping members more regularly updated on emergency planning and business continuity matters.

Motion

(b) Climate Change

“That this Council:

(a) acknowledges:

- evidence shows climate change is occurring;
- climate change will have far reaching effects on the UK’s people and places, economy, society and environment;

(b) welcomes:

- the social, economic and environmental benefits which come from combating climate change;
- the emissions targets agreed by central government and the programme for delivering change, as set out in the UK Climate Change Programme;
- the opportunity for local government to lead the response at a local level, encouraging and helping residents, local businesses and other organisations
- to reduce their energy costs, reduce congestion, adapt to the impacts of climate change, improve the local environment, and deal with fuel poverty;
- the endorsement of this declaration by central government, the Local Government Association and other councils across the country;

(c) commits itself:

- to work with central government to contribute, at a local level, to the delivery of the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the target for carbon dioxide reduction by 2010;
- to participate in local and regional networks for support;
- to develop plans with our partners and local communities to address the causes and impacts of climate change, according to local priorities and securing maximum benefits for our communities;
- to achieving a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchasing of goods and services.
- to assess the risks associated with climate change and the implications for our services and our communities of climate change impacts and adapt accordingly;
- to encourage our local community to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse emissions and make public their commitment to take action;
- to monitor the progress of our plans against the actions needed and publish the results; and

(d) acknowledges the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community during the 21st century and commits to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate on our district”.

Mover: Councillor J M Whitehouse

Seconder: Councillor D Jacobs

(Supported by Councillors R Frankel, D Kelly, Mrs P K Rush, P Spencer Mrs J H Whitehouse)

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2007

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Knapman

Item: 10 (d)

1. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Recommending:

(1) That a supplementary capital estimate in the sum of £800,000 be approved for the purchase of the fleet of former South Herts Waste Management refuse and street cleansing vehicles; and

(2) That a revenue DDF supplementary estimate in the sum of £15,000 be approved to enable remedial works to be carried out to the boundary wall between the Council's land and 4 and 6 Buttercross Lane, Epping.

Waste Management – Procurement of Vehicles

- 1.1 The Council's former waste management contractors, South Herts Waste Management were placed in administration by their bankers in April 2006. At that time the Council agreed temporary arrangements for the continued leasing of the refuse and street cleansing vehicles.
- 1.2 It is clear from discussions with waste management contractors, that it is economically advantageous for the Council to provide the refuse fleet and therefore negotiations have been taking place with the bank regarding the purchase of the vehicles.
- 1.3 The negotiations have been concluded and the Council's waste management consultants have advised that the proposed settlement offers good value for money for the Council.
- 1.4 A supplementary capital estimate of £800,000 is sought to purchase the vehicles.

Boundary Wall between Civic Offices Site and 4 and 6 Buttercross Lane, Epping

- 1.5 A section of boundary wall between the newt pond and car park of the Civic Offices site and the rear gardens of 4 and 6 Buttercross Lane, Epping is estimated to be approximately 100 years' old. The wall acts as a retaining wall for the rear gardens of the residential properties.
- 1.6 During the gale force winds in January 2007 a section of the wall collapsed into the newt pond area. A survey has been undertaken and it has been established that remedial works are required to stabilise the wall, strengthen it and make it safe.
- 1.7 The cost of the work is estimated to be £15,000 including site clearance and a contingency against unforeseen problems.

- 1.8 The Council's deeds and those of the owners of the residential properties are silent as to responsibility for the maintenance of the wall and there is no indication as to ownership. However, we do not consider that further legal advice/action to resolve responsibility would be money well spent.
- 1.8 We are proposing, therefore, that full responsibility for the total cost of the works be met by the Council and are recommending a supplementary estimate as set out at the commencement of this report.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2007

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Knapman

Item: 6(e)

1. LOCAL AUTHORITY BUSINESS GROWTH INCENTIVE SCHEME

Recommending:

That £25,000 of the additional funding received be allocated to a programme of minor enhancement works in Waltham Abbey.

- 1.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government has announced details for the second year of Local Authorities' Business Growth Incentive Scheme.
- 1.2 The current local government finance structure does not fully recognise or reward local authorities' contribution to economic growth. Local authorities bear many of the costs of economic development although they do not benefit from the increased revenues it generates. Since 1990, business rates revenues have been paid into a central pool so that local authorities get no direct individual or local benefit.
- 1.3 The Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme gives local authorities a direct financial incentive to encourage business in their areas, while allowing them to retain a proportion of revenues created by increasing business growth above a pre-determined floor.
- 1.4 In year one of the scheme, this Council received £475,518 in Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme revenue. For year two, the amount received has risen to £802,925. This increase is due to the fact that the calculation for year two retains the majority of the growth achieved in year one. This added to the continued increase in the rateable value within the District led to the high level of income achieved. The scheme will operate for a third year but the possibility of amendments to the terms of the scheme by the Department for Communities and Local Government cannot be ruled out.
- 1.5 In setting the budget for 2007/08 a prudent view was taken on the likely amount of income from this scheme. The sum that will be received for 2006/07 is £302,925 more than the budgeted £500,000. For 2007/08, £200,000 of income has been budgeted and, subject to any changes, which may be made this figure may also be exceeded.
- 1.6 One of the published principles of the scheme is that it provides local authorities with additional revenue to spend on their own priorities and as the money is allocated to DDF funding amongst competing bids from different portfolios it is clear that DDF monies are spent on this Council's own priorities.
- 1.7 The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development, has been approached by Waltham Abbey Town Council and District Councillors representing Waltham Abbey wards requesting a programme of minor enhancement works. These works include visually attractive railings to replace vandalised fencing, installation of CCTV at the Cornmill Car Park and landscaping improvements to the front and side of the

Abbey Church Yard. In total these works can be contained within a limit of £25,000. As these works may assist in promoting economic development in Waltham Abbey, it is recommended that some of the additional income received from the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme be used for this purpose.

Council Meeting (24.4.07)

Item 14 (Supplement) – Audit and Governance Committee

Since the publication of the agenda, a late application for a position of co-opted member has been received. As the applicant is eligible for consideration it is suggested that the following resolution be passed under item 14:

- "(1) That the late receipt of an application for one of the co-optee seats on the Committee be noted;
- (2) That a panel be reappointed to interview and make a recommendation to the Council at the Annual Council meeting;
- (3) That, in order to facilitate the timetable under (2) above, a meeting of the Panel be convened on 10 May 2007 (4.00 p.m.);
- (4) That the existing Panel be reappointed with the same terms of reference to deal with the late application; or
- (5) That a new Panel be reappointed with those same terms of reference; and
- (6) That an appointment to the second co-optee seat be dealt with by the Audit and Governance Committee once established.

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