

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MINUTES

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 5 June 2006

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 8.00 pm

Members Present: Mrs D Collins (Chairman), C Whitbread (Vice-Chairman), A Green, Mrs A Grigg, S Metcalfe, Mrs M Sartin, D Stallan and Ms S Stavrou

Other Councillors: Councillors K Angold-Stephens, R Church, M Colling, Mrs A Cooper, Mrs A Haigh, J Hart, D Jacobs, R Morgan, S Murray, Mrs J H Whitehouse and J Wyatt

Apologies: Councillors J Knapman

Officers Present: P Haywood (Joint Chief Executive), J Gilbert (Head of Environmental Services), D Macnab (Head of Leisure Services), R Palmer (Head of Finance), J Preston (Head of Planning and Economic Development), A Scott (Head of Information, Communications and Technology), T Tidey (Head of Human Resources and Performance Management), I Willett (Head of Research and Democratic Services), C Crudgington (Environmental Services), P Pledger (Assistant Head of Housing Services (Property and Resources)), M Tipping (Assistant Head of Legal, Administration and Estates (Administration)), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), C Overend (Policy & Research Officer), S Mitchell (PR & Internet Assistant) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

PUBLICATION DATE:	7 July 2006
DECISIONS TO TAKE EFFECT:	14 July 2006

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the following meetings be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record:

- (a) 10 April 2006; and
- (b) 5 May 2006.

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (a) **Capital Outturn 2005/06 and Use of Transitional Relief in 2006/07**

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs (6) and (24) of the Council's Procedure Rules, the Leader of the Council had permitted consideration of this report in view of the need to close the accounts a month earlier this year. On behalf of the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder, the Leader of the Council invited the Head of Finance to present a report concerning the Capital Outturn for 2005/06 and the Use of Transitional Relief in 2006/07. The Head of Finance stated that the report had identified a small number of under and over spends on some schemes as well as changes in the timing and phasing of other schemes, which only represented a movement of estimates between financial years rather than amendments to total scheme estimates.

The Head of Finance informed the Cabinet that there had been a net under spend of £1,203,000 on the capital programme for 2005/06, with £925,000 related to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and £278,000 related to the General Fund. The majority of this had been caused by ICT projects, Youth Sports Facilities and Housing projects falling behind schedule, with expenditure re-phased into 2006/07. The proposed carry forwards were £873,000 for the General Fund and £1,435,000 for the HRA. In contrast, some projects had been progressed ahead of schedule, and it had been proposed to bring forward £598,000 of General Fund expenditure as well as £500,000 of HRA expenditure.

With respect to funding for the Capital Programme, the Head of Finance reported that only £13,000 of the IEG Grant had been spent during 2005/06, primarily due to the Electronic Records and Document Management System project falling behind schedule. Leaseholder funding, the reimbursable costs of capital works on leaseholder properties, had been higher than expected. In addition, capital receipts had been higher than anticipated, as Council house sales had increased during the second half of the year along with the average sale price per property, which had also resulted in an increase for the Council's entitlement to transitional relief. All transitional relief generated during 2005/06 had financed the expenditure approved by the Cabinet on 11 July 2005. The use of capital receipts for the General Fund had been lower than predicted due to the under spend on this fund. The Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO) had been lower than anticipated as the under spend on the HRA plus the increased funding from other sources had reduced the monies spent from the Major Repairs Reserve.

The Head of Finance concluded by outlining the areas of expenditure proposed for the transitional capital receipts generated during 2006/07. The Leader of the Council reminded the Cabinet that the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder disliked underspent items within the Capital Programme being carried forward and requested that officers endeavoured to spend their allocated capital budget within the agreed financial year.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Capital Outturn for 2005/06 be noted;
- (2) That retrospective approval be given for the under and over spends in 2005/06;
- (3) That, relating to schemes on which slippage has occurred, approval be given to the carry forward of unspent capital estimates in to 2006/07;

- (4) That, in respect of schemes which had progressed more rapidly than expected, approval be given for the bringing forward of estimates into 2005/06; and
- (5) That the following areas of expenditure be funded from the transitional capital receipts generated in 2006/07:
- (a) Contribution to Affordable Housing (General Fund);
 - (b) Disabled Facilities Grants;
 - (c) Double Glazing;
 - (d) Kitchen Renewals;
 - (e) Heating Replacement;
 - (f) Disabled Adaptations;
 - (g) Bathroom Renewals;
 - (h) Roofing;
 - (i) Structural Schemes;
 - (j) Water Replacements; and
 - (k) Doors to Affordable Housing (General Fund) Entry Systems.

Reasons for Decision:

The proposed action was intended to make the best use of the Council's capital resources that were available to finance the Capital Programme in 2005/06.

Other Options Considered but Rejected:

The HRA Capital expenditure in 2005/06 could have been financed partly from the use of usable capital receipts. However, according to current predictions, the RCCO level was affordable within the HRA, and any use of usable capital receipts for HRA purposes would have reduced scarce capital resources available for the General Fund.

(b) Broadway Town Centre Enhancement – Garages in Vere Road

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs (6) and (24) of the Council's Procedure Rules, the Leader of the Council had permitted consideration of this report on the grounds of urgency in order to avoid any undue delay in proceeding with the scheme. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder presented a report regarding the Cabinet's decision in February 2006 to demolish the garages in Vere Road as part of the Broadway Town Centre Enhancement Scheme; these garages had been let to local people, tenants and business users through short-term leases or business leases.

The Portfolio Holder reported that, following preliminary action to repossess the garages, a number of individuals and the Town Centre Partnership had expressed concerns regarding the proposals and had requested that the matter be

reconsidered. Business users and tenants claimed that they had not been properly consulted prior to the Cabinet's decision and that they would be seriously inconvenienced if the garages were demolished. As it was considered important that the scheme had the support of local residents and business users, it had been proposed to request the Focus Group to reconsider the issue in light of the concerns expressed.

The Portfolio Holder accepted that numerous businesses used the garages for storage, and that the proposed demolition would have an adverse effect. However, the Portfolio Holder stated that it might be possible to relocate the existing tenants into a third block of garages in Vere Road, which had not been scheduled for demolition. The Portfolio Holder reiterated that the decision would be taken after the completion of the consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, following the decision of the Cabinet on 6 February 2006, the Loughton Broadway Focus Group be requested to comment upon the proposed demolition of the garages in Vere Road, Loughton as part of the Broadway Town Centre Enhancement proposals;
- (2) That the views of the Focus Group be reported back to the next meeting of the Cabinet; and
- (3) That, for the time being, no further action be taken in respect of terminating the garage leases or tenancies.

Reasons for Decision:

It was considered appropriate to request the Focus Group to re-examine this element of the scheme design and report back to the Cabinet, given their previous involvement in the design of the scheme.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To reaffirm the existing decision to demolish the garages without any further consultation.

(c) Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee Minutes – 3 April 2006

The Cabinet considered the minutes of the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee meeting held on 3 April 2006. The Leader of the Council highlighted to the Cabinet that the items concerning detailed reports of the Audit Commission and Risk Management issues had contained recommendations for the Cabinet's consideration.

RESOLVED:

(a) Audit Commission – Detailed Reports

- (1) That the contents of the following reports be noted:
 - (a) Annual Audit and Inspection Letter;
 - (b) Use of Resources Audit Score Feedback; and

- (c) Audit and Inspection Plan 2006/07;
- (2) That the areas for improvement be noted; and
- (3) That the proposed Audit Plan for 2006/07 be agreed;

(b) Risk Management

- (4) That the Corporate Risk Register produced by Zurich Municipal be adopted;
- (5) That action plans be submitted to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee for approval; and
- (6) That, twice a year, the Corporate Risk Register be submitted to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee for review.

Reasons for Decision:

The Cabinet were satisfied that the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee had fully addressed all the relevant issues in relation to the recommendations and that these should be endorsed.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Cabinet were satisfied that the Finance and Performance Management Committee had considered all the relevant options in formulating their recommendations. The Cabinet did not consider that there were any further options.

4. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

(a) Community Wellbeing

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Essex Resilience Forum on 19 May 2006 had received presentations upon the Buncefield Oil Depot fire and possible flu pandemics. Crucial Crew had held a series of thematic workshops at North Weald Airfield over a two-week period for local schoolchildren, focusing upon child safety and accident prevention. The Voluntary Service Celebration had taken place at Theydon Bois Village Hall on 2 June 2006.

The first meeting of the new municipal year for the Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership had taken place on 5 June 2006. The topics under discussion had included:

- Domestic Burglaries;
- Violent Crime;
- Robbery; and
- Anti-Social Behaviour.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Partnership had not yet met its target to reduce crime within the District by 16%.

The Leader of the Council added that Inspector Adams of Essex Police had been requested to report back to Overview and Scrutiny on the role of the Community Support Police Officers within the District. These officers were partly funded by the Council but there was a perception that they were not being deployed on Friday and Saturday evenings when it was felt that they were most needed.

(b) Customer Services, Media, Communications and ICT

The Portfolio Holder informed the Cabinet that a report would be submitted to the next meeting regarding the Customer Services Transformation Programme, following consideration by the ICT Scrutiny Panel on 12 June 2006.

5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny reported that at its meeting on 25 May 2006, members had been formally appointed to the various Panels, who would now consider their individual work plans and report back on 6 July 2006.

A presentation had been received from Epping Forest College in respect of their proposals for the redevelopment of the site, which was dependant upon the sale of development land, external loans, as well as funding from the Learning and Skills Council. An analysis of the student body based upon geography, ethnicity and ability was received, and a discussion ensued as to how the college could attract more students from secondary schools within the District.

An interim review of the operation of Overview and Scrutiny had been undertaken and it was intended to submit a report to the next meeting of the Cabinet on 10 July 2006. It was also intended to keep a record of any recommendations to the Cabinet in order to provide evidence of the Scrutiny function's achievements throughout the year and monitor implementation.

The Chairman requested that members of the Cabinet attend the July meeting of Overview and Scrutiny in order to outline their plans for the year ahead. Portfolio Holders were also requested to attend the relevant Scrutiny Panel meetings in order to discuss any items that related to their portfolio. The Leader of the Council reassured the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny that members of the Cabinet would endeavour to attend Scrutiny Panel meetings.

Finally, the Cabinet were informed that Overview and Scrutiny were shortly to consider a call-in received in respect of the recent report considered by Cabinet regarding Car Parking within the District. It had been confirmed that the call-in related specifically to the Council's policy in respect of the length of vehicle crossovers.

6. CIVIC OFFICES - ATRIUM VENTILLATION

On behalf of the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder, the Leader of the Council presented a report concerning the ventilation of the atrium at the Civic Offices. The Cabinet were informed that an integral part of the fire management strategy for the atrium area of the Civic Offices was the ability to automatically ventilate smoke and fumes through pneumatic ventilators located at the head of the atrium. Following the failure of a number of the ventilators and a subsequent inspection, it was no longer possible to procure replacement parts due to the age of the equipment. Thus, it had been proposed to install replacement pneumatic ventilators at an estimated cost of £15,000.

RESOLVED:

That, in order to facilitate the replacement of the atrium ventilators, a supplementary DDF estimate in the sum of £15,000 be recommended to the Council for approval.

Reasons for Decision:

It was considered essential that the current situation be rectified with the utmost expediency.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To do nothing, which would compromise the fire management strategy for the atrium area of the Civic Offices.

7. CIVIC OFFICES - CLEANING AND WINDOW CLEANING CONTRACT

The Leader of the Council presented a report on behalf of the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder in respect of the Cleaning and Window Cleaning Contract for the Civic Offices, following the completion of a formal tendering process. The Cabinet were informed that Essex County Council Procurement Services had assisted the Council in revising the specification of works and developing a performance-based contract. Tender documents had been issued to six companies, from which four replies were received. Post-tender interviews were held with the two lowest tenders in order to satisfy officers that the companies could perform the specification for the price quoted. Lewis and Graves Partnership had submitted the lowest tender, for which satisfactory assurances were received on a number of issues relating to their tender, and it had been proposed to offer them a three-year contract commencing on 1 August 2006.

The Leader of the Council further reported that since the last tender of the contract, a number of factors had changed that had had a direct impact upon the price of the contract. Hence, the Cabinet had been requested to recommend a supplementary estimate of £4,340 for 2006/07 to the Council for approval, and approve a growth bid for the 2007/08 budget allocation of £6,510.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, commencing on 1 August 2006, a three-year contract for office and window cleaning at the Civic Offices be awarded to Lewis and Graves Partnership, being the lowest of four tenders received in the sum of £69,131;
- (2) That, in order to finance the shortfall between the lowest tender price and the budget allocation for 2006/07, a supplementary CSB estimate in the sum of £4,340 be recommended to the Council for approval; and
- (3) That a CSB growth bid in the sum of £6,510 for 2007/08 be made.

Reasons for Decision:

The Civic Offices needed to be cleaned and the recommendations would provide a suitable standard of cleaning for a prestigious building of this size.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To continue with the current arrangements, which would not offer the required quality or value for money, or to discontinue outsourcing and invest in staff and equipment to provide the service directly. Neither option was considered to be a viable alternative to the proposed course of action.

8. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2006/07

The Leader of the Council presented a report on behalf of the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder regarding the Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/07. The Cabinet were informed that the production of an annual Best Value Performance Plan was a statutory requirement that: summarised the Council's successes in meeting its key priorities, objectives and targets for the previous year; highlighted where these priorities, objectives and targets were not met; and detailed the key priorities, objectives and targets for the forthcoming year.

The Cabinet were reminded that the Best Value Performance Plan had been produced in two different versions. In accordance with a recommendation from the Audit Commission, a summary was distributed to all households in the District with the annual Council Tax demands every March. This had been agreed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 6 February 2006. The detailed version was primarily prepared for the Council itself, the Government, the Audit Commission and other bodies involved in the evaluation and assessment of the Council's performance. It was highlighted to the Cabinet that both versions reflected the Portfolio structure of the Council that was in operation prior to the recent annual meeting.

The Leader of the Council further added that to reduce the overall length of the Best Value Performance Plan, much of the non-statutory detail had been removed, and the corporate and strategic information previously included in the Best Value Performance Plan had been transferred to the revised Council Plan. The Leader of the Council also detailed a number of amendments that would be made to the BVPP, following the changes to the composition of the Council at the recent elections. The Leader also stated that, following its consideration at the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 25 April 2006, the Council meeting on 29 June 2006 would be the final opportunity for non-members of the Cabinet to discuss the proposed amendments.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, subject to the further additions requested by the Leader of the Council, the Council's draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/07 be approved;
- (2) That, at its meeting on 29 June 2006, the draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/07 be recommended to the Council for adoption; and
- (3) That, to incorporate any outstanding details in relation to the Council's performance for 2005/06, the Joint Chief Executive (Resources) be authorised to amend the draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/07 as necessary prior to its adoption by the Council.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan to meet the prescribed timescale; failure to adopt and publish the Best Value Performance Plan by 30 June 2006 would result in the qualification of the Plan by the Audit Commission.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

No other options were available. The Council was statutorily required to publish its BVPP for 2006/07 by 30 June 2006, whilst adoption of the BVPP was a matter reserved to the Council.

9. TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented a report in relation to the proposed Tenant Satisfaction Survey. The Portfolio Holder informed the Cabinet that Government guidelines required that, at least every three years, a survey of tenants should be carried out in order to provide the information required for Best Value Performance Indicators BV74 (overall tenant satisfaction) and BV75 (satisfaction with opportunities for participation). The survey had to be carried out in accordance with the National Housing Federation (NHF) STATUS standard tenant satisfaction methodology; this was a postal survey sent to a sample of tenants and a 10% sample response was considered adequate for the size of the Council's housing stock.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the last survey had been carried out by the NHF in 2003 for approximately £9,500, and the NHF had been very efficient in its conduct of the survey, analysis of results and provision of reports. The response rate had been extremely good with 70% of the sample responding. The NHF had provided a quotation of £9,993 to repeat the survey in 2006/07, which represented an increase of approximately 5% on their tender for 2003. In order to award the contract to the NHF, Contract Standing Order C4 would have to be waived in respect of seeking at least two separate quotations for works valued between £5,001 and £10,000. The Assistant Head of Housing (Property and Resources) added that officers were satisfied with the quotation that had been received from NHF and felt it was not excessive.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, as specialist work, the National Housing Federation be appointed to undertake the Council's triennial Tenant Satisfaction STATUS survey of Council tenants in the sum of £9,993; and
- (2) That Contract Standing Order C4 be waived in respect of seeking at least two separate quotations.

Reasons for Decision:

In view of the expertise and knowledge of the National Housing Federation and that all such surveys had to meet the standard criteria set by the STATUS system used by the National Housing Federation, it had seemed appropriate to negotiate agreeable terms and request that they conduct the survey on behalf of Housing Services.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Council could obtain two further quotations from organisations to carry out the work, but this would be time consuming, requiring specifications to be written that met the revised guidelines that had been issued. The Council was obliged to carry out the survey, as it was a Government requirement.

10. PROPOSALS FOR RE-TENDERING THE CAR PARKING CONTRACT

The Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder presented a report about proposals for re-tendering the Council's car parking contract. The Cabinet were

reminded that in 2002, the Council had entered into an agency agreement with Essex County Council in respect of Decriminalised Parking and, following a tender exercise, Vinci Park Services Limited had been appointed as the Council's Car Parking Contractor in April 2003. The contract was for five years with the option of an extension subject to agreement between both parties and Cabinet approval. Vinci Park Services Limited had been approached about a possible contract extension but had only been willing to replace 14 digital cameras and provide uniforms for the Parking Shop staff in order to add value to the contract. This was not considered sufficient to justify an extension.

The Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder stated that as the value of the contract was approximately £670,000 per annum, it would be necessary to follow the Public Contracts Regulations for the re-tender of the contract. Within the regulations, it was proposed to follow the Restricted Procedure, whereby the contract was advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union and any interested parties would be selected to tender by the Head of Environmental Services based upon their response to the Pre-qualification Questionnaire. It was intended to offer a five-year contract with the option of a further two-year extension.

The Civil Engineering and Maintenance Portfolio Holder added that it was proposed to appoint Parking Associates as consultants to assist in developing the specification and contract. The estimated cost of this appointment was £30,000 and it had been proposed to meet this cost with a virement from the revenue generated by Off-Street parking within the District. The Portfolio Holder requested that the Cabinet set aside Contract Standing Orders C6, C7 and C11 in order to follow the proposed methodology.

The Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny expressed concern that the Council's Scrutiny function had not been consulted over this issue, and requested that the Portfolio Holder attend the Town Centres and Car Parks Scrutiny Panel at the earliest possible opportunity in order to give details of the proposals for the new contract. The Head of Environmental Services informed the Cabinet that the current contract would expire in October 2007, and with no notice period stipulated within the terms, there would still be sufficient time for the Scrutiny Panel to complete their work without extending the contract. The newly appointed Chairman of the Town Centres and Car Parks Scrutiny Panel expressed support for the contract to not be renewed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the request by Vinci Park Services UK Limited for the existing car parking contract to be extended for one year be refused;
- (2) That the Restricted Procedure under the Public Contract Regulations 2006 be approved as the methodology to be employed in re-tendering the car parking contract;
- (3) That, in order to assist the Council in the development of the specification and contract for the new car parking contract, the Head of Environmental Services be authorised to appoint Parking Associates as specialist consultants;
- (4) That, in order to meet the cost of professional fees associated with the appointment of Parking Associates, a virement of £30,000 be approved from Off-Street Parking revenue; and
- (5) That Contract Standing Orders C6, C7 and C11 be set aside.

Reasons for Decision:

The car-parking contract was an extremely important one for the Council and had to be effectively structured in order to meet the demands made by e-Government and the anticipated growth of On-Street parking schemes.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To extend the existing contract for a further year as requested by the current contractor.

11. LOUGHTON LEISURE CENTRE - TEACHING POOL GALLERY

The Leisure and Young People Portfolio Holder presented a report regarding the Teaching Pool Viewing Gallery at Loughton Leisure Centre. The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that £2,000 had previously been approved for low cost works to alleviate the overheating of the Teaching Pool Viewing Gallery at Loughton Leisure Centre. However, a detailed design study had established that the proposed works had potential health and safety implications, and would not be sufficient to achieve acceptable environmental conditions; hence a comfort cooling solution had now been proposed. The cost of the works had been estimated at £12,000 and in order to expedite the works a virement of a further £10,000 from the Capital Contingency Fund had been requested.

RESOLVED:

That, in order to provide comfort cooling to the Teaching Pool Viewing Gallery at Loughton Leisure Centre, a virement of £10,000 from the Capital Contingency Fund be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

It was essential for this uncomfortable situation to be rectified as soon as possible.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

If the proposed works were not undertaken then the Teaching Pool Viewing Gallery would be rendered unusable due to the uncomfortable environmental conditions experienced during the summer months, which in turn could expose the Council to the risk of a compensation claim being made by the Leisure Management Contractor.

12. SINGLE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER - ESSEX SNEN PARTNERSHIP

The Customer Services, Media, Communication and ICT Portfolio Holder presented a report concerning the Government's proposals for a Single Non-Emergency Number and the work of the Essex SNEN Partnership. The Portfolio Holder informed the Cabinet that this was intended to be a new national service that would provide the public with direct access to community safety advice, information and action through a new three-digit number, '101', whilst releasing '999' services to exclusively handle genuine emergency incidents. SNEN was a joint initiative between the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The cost of the new service would be fixed at 10p per call from both landlines and mobiles in order to deter inappropriate calls to the service, but would be reviewed following the wave 1 implementation.

The Portfolio Holder added that the service would initially be launched in five wave 1 areas, and implemented across the country in wave 2 and wave 3 by 2008. The initial scope of the service would cover:

- Vandalism and graffiti.
- Noisy neighbours.
- Intimidation and harassment.
- Abandoned vehicles.
- Rubbish or litter.
- Drunk and disorderly public behaviour.
- Drug related anti-social behaviour.
- Street lighting.

The Portfolio Holder reported that both Essex Police and Essex County Council felt strongly that it would benefit all local authorities in Essex to participate in wave 2 as: there was Home Office funding available for both the development of proposals and implementation stages; local authorities had already invested in e-Government infrastructure that SNEN could utilise; and it would assist in the joint services proposals being developed for Essex local authorities. All District Council Chief Executives within Essex had been asked to sign up to the 'expression of interest' stage as this would allow the partnership to gain access to Home Office funding to develop their proposals. The final proposal would also need agreement by each District Council prior to submission to the Home Office.

The Portfolio Holder concluded that a further report regarding the Essex Partnership's draft SNEN proposals would be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration at the September meeting for agreement to either fully participate in the scheme or to maintain a 'watching brief' for later participation. However, the Government intended to make local authority involvement with SNEN mandatory by 2008.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the decision by the Joint Chief Executives to support the Essex SNEN Partnership by participating in the wave 2 'expression of interest' process be endorsed; and
- (2) That the Joint Chief Executives be requested to report back to the Cabinet in September 2006 on the draft SNEN implementation proposals and resource implications for the Council.

Reasons for Decision:

The Home Office and the DCLG were committed to a national implementation of the SNEN programme, with the intention to make local authority involvement mandatory by 2008. Participation in the 'expression of interest' stage could secure Home Office funding to develop detailed proposals for submission in October 2006.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

Non-participation in the 'expression of interest' stage would effectively block all Essex local authorities from participating in a wave 2 bid.

13. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE 2005/06

On behalf of the Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder, the Leader of the Council presented a report regarding the

Annual Report of the Executive for 2005/06. The Leader commented that the report provided a summary of the decisions that had been taken by the Cabinet during the course of 2005/06, and also highlighted the progress that had been made in respect of the Council's key priorities during 2005/06.

The Policy and Research Officer reported that a three-year programme had been put in place to deliver the programmed schedule of new youth facilities for town and parish councils within the District, and that the establishment of a new integrated system for delivering community policing in partnership with Essex police had been delayed due to other conflicting priorities.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report of the Executive for 2005/06 be endorsed.

Reasons for Decision:

It was a requirement of the Constitution that the Executive provided an annual report upon its activities for the previous municipal year at the first Cabinet meeting of the new municipal year.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not provide an annual report of the Executive.

CHAIRMAN