



DECISIONS

Committee:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 5 February 2007

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This document lists the decisions that have been taken by the Cabinet held on Monday, 5 February 2007, which require publication in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000. The list specifies those decisions, which are eligible for call-in and the date by which they must be called-in. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact:

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Call –in procedure

If you wish to call-in any of the decisions taken at this meeting you should complete the call-in form and return it to the proper officer before the expiry of five working days following the publication date. You should include reference to the Item title. Further background to decisions can be found by viewing the agenda document for this meeting at: www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/local_democracy

Agenda item:

4. CAPITALISATION OF PENSION DEFICIT PAYMENTS

Decision:

That this item be deferred until the Council Budgets for 2007/08 is considered.

**7. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE -
29 JANUARY 2007**

Decision:

**(a) Internal Audit - Monitoring Report October/December 2006 and
Work Programme January/March 2007**

(1) That the reports issued and significant findings between October and December 2006 be noted;

- (2) That the Audit Follow-Up Status Report be noted;
- (3) That the Work Plan for January-March 2007 be noted; and
- (4) That the 2006/07 Audit Plan Status Report be noted;

(b) Sundry Income and Debt Policy

(5) That, subject to the views of the Housing Scrutiny Panel, the draft Sundry Income and Debt corporate policy be adopted, subject to:

(a) paragraph 8.6 being amended to read:

"In order for a debtor to receive more than three months' credit, a detailed income and expenditure sheet should be completed for their case to be considered. The Senior Finance Officer should be consulted on all these cases."; and

(b) Appendix A paragraph 1.3(c) being amended to read:

"If the debtor breaches the agreement, they will receive one reminder letter. If a further breach of the agreement is then made, the agreement will be terminated and passed back to the service for them to instruct Legal to take action (copy of the agreement should be forwarded to the service)."

(c) Council Budgets 2007/08

(6) That the Council's 2007/08 General Fund budgets be noted and that further consideration be given to these budgets at the Cabinet meeting on 5 February 2007;

(7) That the 2007/08 Housing Revenue Account budget, including the revised revenue estimates for 2006/07, be agreed;

(8) That the intention to apply rent increases and decreases for 2007/08, in accordance with the Government's rent reforms and the Council's approved rent strategy, be noted;

(9) That the increase in deficiency payments to the Pension Fund again be capitalised in accordance with the capitalisation direction request made to the Department for Communities and Local Government, and these payments be funded from the Pension Fund Capital Reserve that was established with a transfer of £2.5million from the usable capital receipts account;

(10) That the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy for 2007/08 be agreed; and

(11) That the Chief Financial Officer's report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2007/08 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves be noted.

8. COUNCIL BUDGETS 2007/08

Decision:

(1) That the Council's 2007/08 General Fund Budgets be recommended to the Council for approval, including:

- (a) the revised revenue estimates for 2006/07;
- (b) the draft CSB budgets for 2007/08 (excluding growth items);
- (c) the draft CSB growth items list;
- (d) the draft DDF items list;
- (e) an increase in the District Council Tax of 3.5%, representing an increase for a Band 'D' property from £134.73 to £139.50;
- (f) the estimated use of surplus General Fund balances;
- (g) the four-year capital programme 2007/08 – 10/11;
- (h) the four year financial forecast 2007/08 – 10/11; and
- (i) the Council's future policy on the maintenance of General Fund Revenue Balances;

(2) That, including the revised revenue estimates for 2006/07, the 2007/08 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget be recommended to the Council for approval;

(3) That the Council be requested to note that rent increases and decreases for 2007/08 are to be applied in accordance with:

- (a) the Government's rent reforms; and
- (b) the Council's approved rent strategy;

(4) That, in respect of 2006/07, the Capitalisation Directions issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government for 2006/07 were for 57% of the amounts requested be noted;

(5) That the subsequent £269,227 shortfall on the General Fund capitalisation be met from the General Fund revenue contributions that had been previously moved to the Pension Deficit Earmarked Reserve;

(6) That for the subsequent £126,230 shortfall on the HRA capitalisation:

- (a) £20,520 be met from the HRA revenue contributions that had been previously moved to the Pension Deficit Earmarked Reserve; and
- (b) the balance of £105,710 be met from HRA revenue balances;

(7) That, as the amount that can be capitalised in 2007/08 is not necessarily linked to the amount for 2006/07, no adjustment be made to the Council's 2007/08 budgets;

(8) That the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy for 2007/08 be recommended to the Council for approval, including:

- (a) an increase of the limit on funds invested for more than 364 days from

£15million to £30million;

(b) an increase of the maximum investment limit with the highest rated counter parties from £8million to £12million;

(9) That the Chief Financial Officer's report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2007/08 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves be noted.

9. PROCUREMENT OF BED & BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

Decision:

(1) That, in accordance with Contract Standing Orders (C6 and C11 refer), a Notice be placed in the local papers seeking expressions of interest from suitable bed and breakfast establishments to accommodate homeless applicants;

(2) That the list of hotels from whom tenders will be invited be agreed by the Housing Portfolio Holder from the expressions of interests provided;

(3) That the contract period with the bed and breakfast establishments be for a period of three years (with a contract price given for the first year and annual inflationary increases for Years 2 and 3);

(4) That, generally, hotels be used to accommodate homeless applicants based on the most economically advantageous option, with regard to room rates, availability, the needs of the applicant and other management reasons;

(5) That, in accordance with Contract Standing Order C20(2), officers be authorised to place homeless applicants in bed and breakfast accommodation not provided by the lowest tenderer, in cases where the accommodation provided by the lowest tenderer is not available, not suitable for the applicant or should not be used for management reasons; and

(6) That, the Housing Portfolio Holder be authorised to accept and approve the room rates submitted by the tenderers.

10. OUTCOME OF THE 2003-06 DECENT HOMES CONTRACT - KITCHEN, BATHROOM AND REWIRE PROGRAMME

Decision:

That in accordance with Contract Standing Order C29(2) – Contract Monitoring of Contracts in excess of £250,000 – the following key outcomes of the Decent Homes Kitchen, Bathroom and Rewire Partnering Contract be noted:

(a) By accelerating the contract, the Contractor's preliminaries were reduced, resulting in £185,400 being available to recycle into the contract;

(b) Through the reduced Contractor's preliminaries, an additional 62 properties benefited from having a new kitchen, bathroom or electrical rewire through the programme;

(c) Tenants benefited from receiving their improvements up to 2 years earlier than originally planned;

(d) The contractor achieved very good tenant satisfaction results for the programme overall with 92.5% of tenants pleased with the works; and

(e) From the lessons learnt, (employing specialist sub-contractors for electrical rewiring direct), the Council could realise significant cost savings on future electrical rewiring works by as much as £3,050 per typical 3-bed house.

11. DOOR ENTRY SECURITY PROGRAMME - 2007

Decision:

That, being the lowest tender received, Alpha-track Systems Limited be awarded the contract for the 2007 Door Entry Security Programme at various blocks in Loughton and Buckhurst Hill in the sum of £69,700.64.

12. DEVELOPMENT OF COUNCIL HOUSING SITES & LAND TO THE REAR OF 30-36 POUNDFIELD ROAD, LOUGHTON

Decision:

(1) That the two areas of Council-owned land adjacent to the Pyrles Lane shops and opposite 33/37 Oakley Court, Loughton be leased to Estuary Housing Association, in advance of the transfer of the remaining Council sites being pursued for development by Estuary, on the same terms as previously agreed by the Cabinet;

(2) That social housing grant of £732,000 be provided to Estuary Housing Association, from the £1 million allocated to Estuary within the Housing Capital Programme, to develop 13 affordable properties for rent on these two sites; and

(3) That a decision regarding the future of the land to the rear of 30-36 Poundfield Road, Loughton be deferred and considered at a later date.

13. GRANGE HILL BYE-ELECTION

Decision:

That, for costs incurred in respect of the District Council bye-election for the Grange Hill Ward held on 14 December 2006, a revenue DDF supplementary estimate in the sum of £4,299.50 be recommended to the Council for approval.

14. YOUTH INITIATIVES SCHEME - WORK PROGRAMME

Decision:

(1) That the arrangements for the Youth Initiatives Scheme programme,

including the specific schemes at Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Matching and Roydon in 2007/08, be approved;

(2) That the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services be authorised to release funds for approved schemes on an ongoing basis in accordance with the timetables of works provided by the Parish/Town Councils; and

(3) That an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the Youth Initiatives Scheme be carried out by the appropriate Scrutiny Panel, as determined by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in accordance with the arrangements set out in this report.

15. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Decision:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business:

- (a) Top Management Cabinet Committee – 11 January 2007; and
- (b) Top Management Cabinet Committee – 31 January 2007.

16. TOP MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 11 JANUARY 2007

Decision:

That the minutes of the Top Management Cabinet Committee, held on 11 January 2007, be noted.

17. TOP MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 31 JANUARY 2007

Decision:

That a report be submitted to the Council with the following recommendations:

(1) That, with effect from 1 August 2007, the structure at Chief Executive level be amended by the deletion of the posts of Joint Chief Executive (Community) and Joint Chief Executive (Resources) and the creation of a single post of Chief Executive;

(2) That, under the terms of the Council's severance scheme as applicable at that time, the departure of the Joint Chief Executive (Community) from the Council's service on 31 July 2007 on grounds of redundancy and early retirement be agreed, subject to the financial implications being considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Top Management Cabinet Committee; and

(3) That John Scott, the Joint Chief Executive (Community), be thanked for his valuable contribution to the work of the Council.

