

EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MINUTES

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 3 February 2014

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 8.55 pm

Members Present: C Whitbread (Chairman), Ms S Stavrou (Vice-Chairman), W Breare-Hall, Mrs A Grigg, D Stallan, H Ulkun, G Waller and Mrs E Webster

Other Councillors: K Angold-Stephens, K Avey, Ms J Hart, Ms H Kane, Mrs J Lea, A Lion, A Mitchell MBE, R Morgan, Mrs M Sartin, Ms G Shiell, Mrs J H Whitehouse and J M Whitehouse

Apologies: R Bassett

Officers Present: G Chipp (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive), I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), J Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene), C O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), J Preston (Director of Planning and Economic Development), P Maddock (Assistant Director (Accountancy)), A Mitchell (Assistant Director (Legal)), P Pledger (Assistant Director (Property and Resources)), R Wilson (Assistant Director (Operations)), S Mitchell (PR Website Editor), D Newton (Assistant Director (ICT)), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

Also in attendance: L Attrill (WYG Environmental)

113. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman made a short address to remind all present that the meeting would be broadcast on the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor S A Stavrou declared a personal interest in agenda item 17, Funding for Epping Forest ReUse Project, by virtue of having been involved with the charity in the past. The Councillor had determined that her interest was not pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors G Shiell and J H Whitehouse declared a personal interest in agenda item 17, Funding for Epping Forest ReUse Project, by virtue of being trustees of the charity. The Councillors had determined that their interest was pecuniary and would leave the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

(c) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors W Breare-Hall, A Grigg, H Kane, A Lion, R Morgan, D Stallan, S A Stavrou, H Ulkun, E Webster and J M Whitehouse declared a personal interest in agenda item 20, Council Budgets 2014/15, by virtue of being a Town or Parish Councillor. The Councillors had

determined that their interest was not pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

115. MINUTES

Resolved:

(1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2013 be taken as read and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

116. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

There were no verbal reports from the Portfolio Holders present at the meeting.

117. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions received from the public for the Cabinet to consider.

118. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that the following items of business had been considered at its meeting held on 28 January 2014:

- (a) a presentation from the Essex Probation Service;
- (b) the annual review of Officer Delegation;
- (c) the annual review of Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
and
- (d) a review of the appointment process for the Vice-Chairman of Council.

The Cabinet's agenda was reviewed and the Committee wished to make the following comments:

- Establishment of an Economic Development Strategy – support for funding for health centres;
- Review of Licensing – the Constitution & Member Services Scrutiny Panel had fully endorsed the report;
- Historical Planning Records Microfiche Project – noted that the proposed solution was expensive but it had to be done now or access to the microfiche files would be lost;
- WAN Contract Renewal – support for the proposed solution; and
- Council Budgets 2014/15 – the Chairman of the Housing Scrutiny Panel added his support for the proposal to let vacant properties at their target rent from April 2014.

119. FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 14 NOVEMBER 2013

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology presented the minutes from the meeting of the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee held on 14 November 2013.

The Cabinet Committee had made recommendations to the Cabinet regarding the proposed Fees and Charges for 2014/15 and the Triennial Valuation of the Pension Scheme. Other issues that the Cabinet Committee had also considered included the Quarter 2 performance of the Key Performance Indicators in 2013/14, the Annual Audit Letter, the Council Tax Freeze Grant, the mid-year report on Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators for 2013/14, the Financial Monitoring Report for the first quarter of 2013/14, and the draft General Fund Continuing Services Budget and District Development Fund Lists and Savings update.

As part of the report on the Quarter 2 Performance of the Key Performance Indicators in 2013/14, the Cabinet Committee had suggested that the service level agreement with the Citizens Advice Bureau should be reviewed to address some concerns that had been raised at the meeting. The Council was providing additional funding for debt advisors, but repeated requests for information on the service had been disregarded.

Decision:

Fees and Charges 2014/15

- (1) That the £150,000 General Fund Savings target for 2014/15 be met through additional income from an increase in fees and charges;
- (2) That options to increase the 10 pence charge currently levied in the District's pay-and-display car parks to 20 pence be investigated by Officers;
- (3) That the proposed fees and charges for 2014/15, as attached to the report considered by the Cabinet Committee, be approved; and
- (4) That the proposed schedule of Housing Revenue Account fees and charges for 2014/15, as attached to the report considered by the Cabinet Committee, be approved;

Triennial Valuation of Pension Scheme

- (5) That the option to fund the deficit over 22.5 years be approved; and
- (6) That, as set out in the Essex County Council consultation, deficit payment option B (full increase with no stepping, year-on-year deficit increase of 4.5%, with one annual payment in April each year) be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

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

120. ASSET MANAGEMENT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 5 DECEMBER 2013

The Portfolio Holder for Asset Management & Economic Development presented the minutes from the meeting of the Asset Management & Economic Development Cabinet Committee held on 5 December 2013.

The Cabinet Committee had made a recommendation to the Cabinet regarding the Licence Fee for North Weald Market. Other issues that had been considered by the Cabinet Committee included the Asset Management Coordination Group report, the London Southend Airport Consultation, income generation for North Weald Airfield, and the main runway at North Weald Airfield.

Decision:**Licence Fee for North Weald Market**

(1) That the request from Hughmark Continental Limited for the continuation of the reduced fee arrangement, subject to a review after the first quarter of 2014, be agreed.

Reasons for Decision:

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

121. REVIEW OF THE STANDARD TENANCY AGREEMENT

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented a report on the review of the Standard Tenancy Agreement.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that it had agreed the Conditions of Tenancy which now applied to all new Flexible (fixed-term) Tenants at its meeting in July 2013. The Cabinet further agreed that, in accordance with the Housing Act 1985, the Council should serve a Preliminary Notice on all its Secure Tenants to undertake a consultation exercise on the proposal to vary its Standard Tenancy Agreement for all existing and future Secure Tenants. The intention was that the draft Conditions of Tenancy relating to Flexible (fixed term) Tenancies would also generally apply to all existing and future Secure Tenancies. The Cabinet was requested to consider the responses received from the Secure Tenants to the consultation and agree the suggested amendments.

The Portfolio Holder added that it was also recommended that the Director of Housing be authorised to serve a Notice of Variation on all the Council's Secure Tenants who were served with the Preliminary Notice to vary the Tenancy Agreement, with the new Agreement taking effect from 1 April 2014. In addition, it was further recommended that the Director of Housing be authorised to complete the Tenancy Variation process for tenants whose tenancies commenced between 16

November 2013 and 17 February 2014 and therefore were unable to be included in the process.

Decision:

- (1) That the responses received from the Council's Secure Tenants in respect of the consultation exercise on the proposed new Standard Tenancy Agreement be noted;
- (2) That the suggested amendments to the Agreement, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed;
- (3) That the Director of Housing be authorised to:
 - (a) serve a Notice of Variation on all of the Council's Secure Tenants who were served with the Preliminary Notice to vary the Tenancy Agreement in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 1985, with the new Agreement taking effect for existing Secure Tenants from 1 April 2014;
 - (b) serve a Preliminary Notice on all Secure Tenants whose tenancies commenced between 16 November 2013 and 17 February 2014 and deal with any minor changes which result from the consultation exercise and serve the Notice of Variation at the appropriate time;
 - (c) submit a further report to the Cabinet and the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation for consideration, should the outcome of the consultation exercise set out in Recommendation 3(b) result in any major changes; and
 - (d) require all new Tenants to sign up to the new Tenancy Agreement from 18 February 2014, following the expiry of the Cabinet call-in period;
- (4) That the Council's Standard Tenancy Agreement for new Flexible (fixed-term) Tenants be amended, so that generally the same conditions of tenancy apply to all of the Council's tenants; and
- (5) That no changes could be made to the Standard Tenancy Agreement for a small number of existing Flexible (fixed-term) Tenants be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that the same Conditions of Tenancy were applied to all of the Council's Secure and Flexible (fixed-term) Tenants. Furthermore, the revised Conditions of Tenancy would give the Council greater powers when proceeding to Court on breaches of tenancy conditions.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not implement the proposed new Standard Tenancy Agreement for the Council's existing and future Secure Tenants and continue with the current documentation.

To implement the proposed new Standard Tenancy Agreement for Secure Tenants with different conditions. However, if further material amendments were agreed then it would be necessary to carry out a further consultation exercise with all Secure Tenants and seek the comments of the external legal advisor prior to serving the Notice of Variation, and submit a further report to the Cabinet.

122. ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND THE GREEN DEAL

The Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Transport introduced a report on Energy Efficiency and the Green Deal.

The Portfolio Holder reported that, originally, the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) required an annual report to be produced on all the projects undertaken by the Council to improve energy conservation in all housing sectors. This was underpinned by collecting and collating extensive data from all the Council Services concerned, but also liaison with a variety of agencies both inside and outside the Council. Initially, this required the Council to devote significant efforts to gather that data, both within specific teams (particularly within the Housing Service) but also from the then Environmental Coordinator, and subsequently an Assistant Environmental Coordinator as well. In more recent years, similar information was collected to provide National Indicator information (NI187); the gathering of the information was less intensive and was able to be contained within the role of a single Environmental Coordinator, albeit still assisted by colleagues in other Directorates. Therefore, the re-introduction of a more extensive regime of data gathering from April 2013 was surprising, and had raised resourcing issues. The work involved in coordinating schemes and compiling the required data would entail greater Officer resource than was currently available, which would result in proposals being considered by the Cabinet at a future meeting.

The Government had introduced new energy conservation arrangements, known as the “Green Deal,” and the Portfolio Holder explained the various ways in which the Council could support the Green Deal and work in partnership with others, such as the Essex Energy Efficiency Partnership and Carbon Reduction Essex. However, some caution was necessary because of the less than satisfactory arrangements which had existed in a former such partnership. Under the Green Deal, Councils could operate in three main ways as either promoters, producers or providers. At the current time, it was recommended that the Council operate as a ‘Promoter’ to encourage residents to work with chosen Green Deal providers, as this would minimise the Council’s expenditure and exposure to financial risk.

Finally, the Portfolio Holder drew the Cabinet’s attention to a proposal to change the definition of ‘Fuel Poverty.’ The current definition was that a family had to spend more than 10% of its average weekly income on maintaining a reasonable level of warmth. However, the Department of Energy and Climate Change had been consulting on a new definition to include dual indicators to separate the number of people affected from how badly people were affected, and the Cabinet was requested to note this process.

Decision:

(1) That in order to comply with the Council’s revised obligations under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) and related initiatives:

- (a) the role of ‘Promoter’ be taken by this Council in respect of the Green Deal;
- (b) proposals for suitable permanent staffing arrangements be brought forward for subsequent Cabinet consideration; and
- (c) the Department of Energy and Climate Change’s (DECC) proposal for a changed definition of ‘Fuel Poverty’ be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

The Council needed to respond to, and resource accordingly, a number of high profile energy conservation initiatives, not least the reintroduction of HECA reporting and the Green Deal, a government scheme to provide energy efficiency measures to homes and businesses, which was being implemented nationally from 28 January 2013.

The coordination of energy efficiency measures across the Council was currently the responsibility of the part-time Environmental Coordinator in the Planning and Economic Development Directorate. It was considered that these resources might be insufficient to provide the response to these high-profile issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To continue with the existing arrangements for coordinating and carrying out various functions concerned with energy efficiency and carbon reduction. However, a number of initiatives that had been, or were being, introduced, such as The Green Deal and the re-introduction of Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) reporting, demonstrated that there had been a change in thinking on these issues at Government level.

To continue with the current staffing arrangements. However, this was considered to likely be insufficient to effectively coordinate energy efficiency and carbon reduction functions across the Council.

123. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Portfolio Holder for Asset Management & Economic Development introduced a report on the establishment of an Economic Development Strategy for the District.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Council had been undertaking many economic development initiatives for quite some time. The importance of the local economy could not be understated, as it had quite a number of unusual features, and an up-to-date analysis needed to be added to the Local Plan Evidence Base to supplement earlier work. The Council lacked a formal up-to-date Economic Strategy, but the importance of economic development was recognised in its corporate priorities, key objectives and in many decisions it had taken. It was now considered opportune to agree the high level themes for such a Strategy and then to compile a document that supported and amplified those themes. Consequently, ten points were listed for the Cabinet to agree as the high level themes for the Strategy, which would be used as the starting point for a more detailed strategy to link with other plans such as the Economic Plan for Essex produced by Essex County Council.

The Portfolio Holder stated that, below Assistant Director level, there was currently an Economic Development Officer post supported by an Assistant role for which short term funding had been obtained. If the Council wished to increase the profile of economic development both within and without then it needed to be resourced adequately. A number of alternatives had been outlined for consideration, but the preferred solution was to convert the current temporary Assistant post into a permanent post at grade 4 (subject to job evaluation) with an anticipated cost of £21,170 per annum.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that the Council had established a Town Centres Fund in 2013/14 to support the local main high streets. £35,000 had been

provided which had financed a number of projects as outlined in the report. It was suggested that a further £35,000 be provided by the Council in 2014/15. A Food Task Force had also been set up in conjunction with the London Borough of Enfield and the Borough of Broxbourne. To put together a bid for European and Local Enterprise Partnership funding, compile new business models and progress other opportunities for growth, it was proposed that the Council should contribute £30,000 from the District Development Fund; contributions would also be sought from Enfield and Broxbourne. Finally, a Tourism Task Force had been set up by the Council during 2012 and had reported with a number of recommendations. To implement these recommendations, it was proposed for £25,000 to be provided from the District Development Fund for a one-year part-time post.

In response to questions from the Members present, the Portfolio Holder stated that the Strategy would bring a number of separate documents together, which would be particularly useful when applying for funding from the European Union. It was accepted that Town Centres were not explicitly mentioned as one of the high level themes, but it was felt that they would probably be covered by point (f) – analysis of what businesses already exist, and what support they want to develop. The Director of Planning & Economic Development added that the District's Town Centres were probably covered by a number of the proposed high level themes, and that the Government was considering permitting Councils to retain more of the business rates collected for their area.

It was highlighted that there was a lack of public conveniences at tourist sites throughout the District, and could their provision be considered under point (b) – tourism next steps, marketing of what the area has to offer visitors. It was pointed out that there were a number of excellent public facilities in Waltham Abbey and High Beach.

Decision:

(1) That the continuation of work on the detailed nature of the local economy as part of the Local Plan Evidence Base be noted;

(2) That the following points listed (a) to (j) below be agreed as the high level themes to form the basis of an Economic Development Strategy for the Epping Forest District:

(a) policies and approaches for productive landscapes including glasshouses and pack houses;

(b) tourism next steps - marketing of what the area has to offer visitors;

(c) infrastructure including transport and high speed broadband;

(d) the skills agenda - in particular the role of Epping Forest College and the opportunities at Stansted airport;

(e) further opportunities at North Weald Airfield for employment, aviation and events;

(f) analysis of what businesses already exist, and what support they want to develop;

(g) links to supply chain from growth of West Essex Enterprise zone, in particular Medical Technologies;

- (h) promotion of the unique selling points of the District, i.e. special character, great place to live, work and do business, links to London;
 - (i) plans for other Epping Forest District Council assets; and
 - (j) links with those making significant inward investment;
- (3) That these high level themes be taken as the starting point for a more detailed Strategy, which would then be produced having regard to the Evidence Base gathered so far, and that contained within other up to date plans such as the Economic Plan for Essex;
- (4) That, to boost the Economic initiatives being undertaken, the Council be requested to add one post to the establishment, namely a grade 4 Economic Development Assistant (subject to job evaluation), with a cost of £21,170 as a Continuing Services Budget growth item; and
- (5) That District Development Funding be requested from the Council to:
- (a) continue the Town Centres fund for 2014/15 in the sum of £35,000;
 - (b) support the Food Task Force in the sum of £30,000; and
 - (c) provide for a post to follow through the recommendations of the Tourism Task Force in the sum of £25,000.

Reasons for Decision:

The Government had been stressing the importance of growing the economy; achieving growth whilst protecting the area, including the Green Belt, was important in a District of this nature and there were special characteristics of the local economy, which probably warranted greater recognition.

The Local Strategic Partnership had recognised seven themes over the past year, but it was timely for the Council to agree high level themes for an up to date strategy, setting out what the Council wanted and how that fitted with the aims of others. Having a proper strategy would be a pre-requisite to attracting and using funding effectively.

The Council had used resources from many Officers and Partners to undertake much good work over the past few years, and it would continue to work in partnership; however, it needed to devote more resources to these issues to deliver the required outputs.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To do nothing.

To continue with present efforts, where much was being done.

To not agree that the recent research should be added to the Local Plan Evidence Base.

To adopt different high level themes or different ways of securing additional resources.

124. CONSTRUCTION OF OFF STREET PARKING ON HOUSING LAND - REVIEW OF RANKINGS FOR FUTURE SCHEMES AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented a report on the review of rankings for the future construction of off street parking schemes on Housing-owned land, as well as an evaluation of the capital expenditure.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that, commencing in April 2011, it had approved a succession of off street parking schemes on Housing land across the District, undertaken in priority order based on an approved list of sites. At its meeting in December 2012, the Cabinet had agreed to undertake feasibility studies, consult residents, submit planning applications and construct a number of schemes (where planning approval was granted), all subject to the cost per bay being less than £5,000. The Cabinet noted the progress achieved in delivering the programme to date.

The Portfolio Holder proposed that if a particular site had no council-owned properties remaining then this site should be excluded from the programme in future and removed from the ranking list. In addition, it was also proposed that the funding for future schemes should be split between the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund based on the actual percentage between Council and private properties as assessed when the works commenced on site. The Cabinet noted that the programme could finish in 2017/18 and before the programme was completed if the General Fund budget was exhausted. It was noted that the proposed schemes at Centre Avenue/Green and Western Avenue in Epping had been deferred for the time being, pending the outcome of a consultation by Essex County Council on resident parking. Both schemes would retain their place on the priority list.

The Portfolio Holder requested approval for the updated priority list attached at Appendix 1 of the report, with feasibility studies to be undertaken on the next ten schemes on the priority list, and they be constructed subject to planning approval being granted, the average cost per bay being no more than £5,000 and the works being delivered within the existing Capital Programme budget. It was also requested that the Council's policy of not allocating bays to individual properties at completed sites be confirmed.

One of the local ward Members for Loughton Broadway expressed concerns about the proposal to exclude sites with no Council-owned properties from the programme and made representations on behalf of Chester Path in Loughton. The Cabinet was reminded that all residents contributed to the General Fund, and that bays provided at sites with some Council properties could still be used by residents of non-Council properties. It was felt that the inclusion of Chester Path in the programme would not set a precedent for other 'private' roads to request funding from the Council for off-street parking.

The Portfolio Holder accepted that all residents contributed to the General Fund, which was then used to provide off-street parking bays at certain sites, but it was not accepted that right-to-buy owners were being penalised when there were no Council-owned properties left in the street. The current scheme provided a resolution to some of the parking problems throughout the District, and no scheme that was wholly funded by the General Fund would not be proposed for inclusion in the programme. There was some Council-owned Housing land at Chester Path, and there was weighting within the Ranking Table for the proportion of Housing tenants at each site. There was currently no proposed funding for Chester Path in the budget and it was not possible for any tenant contribution to be made for the provision of parking.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology added that the programme was originally set up to alleviate some of the parking problems experienced by Council tenants, and that the Council simply did not have the funding available to alleviate all of the parking problems throughout the District. The Leader of the Council also reminded the Cabinet that there was no further funding set aside to perform area-wide parking reviews once the current review at Buckhurst Hill was completed.

Decision:

- (1) That the updated ranking table for future off-street parking schemes, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be agreed;
- (2) That the outcome of the post-construction review of the most recently completed schemes in Loughton at Barfields Gardens and the scheme at Avenue Road, Theydon Bois be noted;
- (3) That sites with no Council-owned properties be excluded from the programme and removed from the list;
- (4) That detailed feasibility studies be undertaken on the next ten schemes in the updated ranking table at:
 - Queens Road, North Weald;
 - Ladyfield Close, Loughton;
 - St Peters Avenue, Ongar;
 - Roxwell House, Buckhurst Hill;
 - Stanway Road, Waltham Abbey;
 - Paley Gardens, Loughton;
 - Fullers Close, Waltham Abbey;
 - Woodford Court, Waltham Abbey; and
 - Badburgham Court, Waltham Abbey;
- (5) That planning applications be submitted for the sites listed above and they be constructed, subject to:
 - (a) the successful grant of planning consent;
 - (b) the average cost per bay being no more than £5,000; and
 - (c) the works and fees being able to be delivered within the existing Capital Programme budget;
- (6) That, following on from Decision (3) above, schemes with a score of 14, including Park Square in Lambourne End and Pyrles Lane in Loughton, be added to the list instead;
- (7) That each scheme be funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the General Fund based on the percentage split between Council and private properties respectively as assessed at the time of the works commencing on site;
- (8) That the finite resources within the General Fund budget be noted, with the possibility the programme might come to an end in 2017/18 and before the list attached at Appendix 1 of the report had been completed;
- (9) That the scheme at Centre Avenue/Green, Epping be retained on the priority list pending the outcome of the Essex County Council (ECC) Consultation on

Residents Parking in the future;

(10) That the scheme at Western Avenue, Epping be deferred and retained on the priority list pending the same ECC Consultation on Residents Parking as Centre Avenue/Green, Epping above; and

(11) That the Council's Policy of not allocating bays to individual properties at completed sites be confirmed.

Reasons for Decision:

To approve schemes only after assessing the effectiveness of the work undertaken on previously approved schemes, taking account of the costs incurred and benefits accrued. In order to progress with any further schemes and divert adequate resources to manage the Off-Street Parking Programme, which was one of the most resource intensive programmes within the Housing Assets Section, a decision was sought to commit to both the updated ranking table and the capital expenditure.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not undertake the construction of further off street parking bays. However, this would not resolve the parking problems recognised during recent parking surveys.

To progress with a different number of schemes. However, a lesser number of schemes could mean reporting back to the Cabinet sooner, as it was likely that some schemes would not actually be feasible for any number of reasons.

To seek approval from the Cabinet on a stage by stage basis. However, this would lead to an increase in the frequency of future reports to the Cabinet.

To include schemes where there were no longer any Council properties. However, this would open up the whole of the District for assessment.

To continue to fund the works based on the average 51:49 ratio split between the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund, irrespective of how many Council-owned properties there were in each street.

125. REVIEW OF LICENSING - STAFFING AND BUDGET

The Portfolio Holder for Safer, Greener and Transport presented a report concerning the staffing and budgetary implications of the recent review of the Council's Licensing arrangements.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that a trial in respect of new licensing arrangements had been approved by the Council in April 2013. This trial had involved: new processes for consulting the public on premises licences submitted to the Council involving notifications to householders within 150 metres of the premises concerned; and new member meeting arrangements so as to make licensing hearings more accessible to the public by holding them in the evening on a regular basis. The trial period was designed to operate for a year, effective from the date on which the new arrangements came into operation, with a review after nine months.

The Portfolio Holder added that two additional posts - a Licensing Officer and a Democratic Services Assistant - were approved in order to cover the additional work generated by the trial. These posts were temporary and budgetary provision was initially made to the end of the financial year only. However, on 2 December 2013,

the Cabinet had agreed in principle to these posts becoming permanent. A provisional Continuing Services Budget growth item in the sum of £54,780 was included in the draft budget for 2014/15. This was subject to reviews of the trial being undertaken by the Licensing Committee and the Constitution and Member Services Scrutiny Panel.

The Portfolio Holder reported that both reviews had now been completed with the following outcomes:

- (i) evening licensing meetings would be discontinued unless there were special reasons for doing so: with the Chairman deciding if an evening meeting was needed in conjunction with the relevant ward members;
- (ii) licences for scrap metal dealers would be heard at the daytime meetings; and
- (iii) the wider neighbourhood consultation on licensing applications introduced in the trial had now been approved by the Licensing Committee on a permanent basis and this might increase the number of public responses and the need for meetings.

The Cabinet noted that the Licensing Section had also taken on responsibility for processing temporary road closures from Essex County Council, and that two senior members of Democratic Services were due to retire later in 2014 as a result of the Directorate restructure. Therefore, it was recommended that both temporary posts should be added to the establishment as permanent posts and the necessary provision made in the budget for 2014/15.

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee advised that monitoring and compliance visits to premises within the District could recommence, as there was now sufficient resources available with the demise of evening Licensing Sub-Committee meetings. The wider consultation arrangements for licensing applications had also been welcomed by the Licensing Committee. The Portfolio Holder believed that sufficient resources were available within the Licensing section to process requests for licence extensions during the forthcoming football World Cup in the summer.

Decision:

- (1) That the following outcomes of the review of the trial licensing arrangements be noted:
 - (a) Constitution & Member Services Scrutiny Panel/Overview & Scrutiny Committee - evening meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee should only be held when desirable; and
 - (b) Licensing Committee – Licensing Policy to continue to be operated on the wider basis introduced as part of the trial;
- (2) That the additional duties of the Licensing Section as result of the Council taking responsibility for scrap metal dealer licensing and temporary road closures be noted;
- (3) That the staffing situation within Democratic Services as result of the Council adopting a new Directorate structure be noted;

(4) That a growth item for the 2014/15 Continuing Services Budget (CSB) in the sum of £55,000 be approved in respect of:

(a) one additional permanent post of Licensing Officer at a cost of £28,800 per annum (including on costs);

(b) one additional post of Democratic Services Assistant at a cost of £21,600 per annum (including on costs); and

(c) other associated costs (allowances, printing and GIS expenses) of £4,500 per annum; and

(5) That the existing temporary positions of Licensing Officer and Democratic Services Assistant approved by the Council at its meeting on 23 April 2013 be made permanent.

Reasons for Decision:

The increase in workload for the Licensing section and the imminent retirement of two senior members of Democratic Services.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To continue the post in Democratic Services for a further additional period, say of one or two years by means of a District Development Fund (DDF) growth item for 2014/5.

To recruit to the new Licensing Officer position on a temporary basis by means of DDF growth item for 2014/5.

To fund other incidental costs by a DDF growth item instead of as a Continuing Services Budget (CSB) item.

To approve no additional staffing for either Democratic Services or Licensing Sections and authorise the appropriate estimated redundancy payment of £1,500.

126. TRANSFER OF HRA CAR PARKS TO THE GENERAL FUND

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology introduced a report on the transfer of car parks currently allocated within the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Council owned a number of Car Parks within the District, most of which were accounted for within the General Fund. However, there were two car parks at Burton Road and Vere Road in Loughton that were accounted for within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This was purely historical as, similar to the commercial properties nearby, the Car Parks were transferred during the 1970's when the whole Estate including a substantial number of HRA dwellings were acquired from the former Greater London Council. It was proposed that these Council assets be transferred from the HRA to the General Fund with effect from 1 April 2014.

Decision:

(1) That, with effect from 1 April 2014, the transfer of the car parks at Burton Road and Vere Road in Loughton from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to the

General Fund be recommended to the Council for approval.

Reasons for Decision:

On the introduction of HRA self-financing it was resolved that the HRA be maintained predominantly as a landlord account and HRA assets that were not held for social housing purposes should be accounted for within the General Fund. The Commercial Properties were transferred to the General Fund on 31 March 2011 and the two Car Parks at the Broadway were similarly unrelated to the social housing activity of the HRA.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Car Parks could remain within the HRA but this would be inconsistent with the previous decision to transfer commercial properties and land to the General Fund, and would also fail to comply with the Government requirement that the HRA be maintained as a landlord account.

127. HISTORICAL PLANNING RECORDS MICROFICHE PROJECT

In the absence of the Planning Portfolio Holder, the Leader of the Council presented a report on the historical Planning Records Microfiche Project.

The Leader of the Council reported that the Planning and Economic Development Directorate had in place long term plans to progressively reduce its dependency on microfiche records. A recent project to convert over one million pre-1974 historical planning images was carried out in 2012/13 and Officers across the Directorate were now able to access these records quickly and easily, which was a significant step forward compared to the previous slow and cumbersome access procedure.

The Leader stated that the remaining 71,000 microfiche jackets contained over four million images which were now over thirty years old. There was a very real risk of deterioration and subsequent loss of these important historical planning records, due to their continued handling and exposure to light of these microfiche records. Consequently, the Cabinet was requested to approve a project to convert these remaining microfiche records to electronic format. The cost of this project was estimated to be £75,000, with £20,000 being provided from the 2013/14 and 2014/15 Document Archiving budgets within the Planning & Economic Development Directorate respectively; for the remaining £35,000, approval was being sought for a District Development Fund growth item for the 2014/15 Document Archiving Budget.

Decision:

- (1) That, to avoid significant deterioration and/or loss of important historical planning records, a project to convert historical planning microfiche records containing approximately four million images to electronic format and estimated to cost £75,000 be approved; and
- (2) That the funding for this project be met by:
 - (a) £20,000 from the 2013/14 Document Archiving Budget in Planning & Economic Development;
 - (b) a further £20,000 from the 2014/15 Document Archiving Budget in Planning and Economic Development; and

(c) the remaining £35,000 to be provided as an additional District Development Fund growth item for the 2014/15 Document Archiving Budget.

Reasons for Decision:

These microfiche records were over thirty years old and in many instances had been exposed to light, which in turn reduced their expected shelf life. In addition, the current system in accessing this microfiche information was cumbersome, slow and only accessible via one Officer at a time.

There was a high level of interest in this historical planning information from members of the public, and the conversion of these records would also assist Planning and Enforcement Officers to make better informed decisions as well as support research by other sections such as the Forward Planning Team and Contaminated Land Section.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To do nothing would mean that the Directorate might lose valuable historical planning information. In addition, the current access arrangements to view these records was a very time intensive process which required a significant staff resource.

128. FUNDING FOR EPPING FOREST REUSE PROJECT

The Environment Portfolio Holder introduced a report about funding for the Epping ReUse Project.

The Portfolio Holder stated that Epping Forest ReUse was a social enterprise furniture exchange scheme and had been in operation in Epping since April 2013. Financial figures supplied for the first four months of trading at the scheme showed a slightly above budget turnover for the period of £44,061 in sales, which plus further credits and net of cost of goods, repairs and refunds brought the net income for the period to £30,099. Deduction of trading expenditure had resulted in a net trading deficit of £9,531. Assuming budgeted sales for the remaining months of the year were met and budgeted expenses for the period were not exceeded, the forecast end of year position was a deficit of £17,161.

The Portfolio Holder reported that a bid for funding in the sum of £76,500 had been submitted to the London-Stansted-Harlow Programme of Development Growth Fund to support the scheme in a number of ongoing initiatives as well as some of its day-to-day running costs. However, there was no guarantee that this application would be successful, either in total or in part. Pending the outcome of this bidding process, it was therefore requested that District Development Funding in the sum of £20,000 for 2014/15 be agreed to strengthen the scheme in its ability to enhance and further develop the good work it had already achieved. The decision to release the funding would be dependent upon the outcome of the bid to the London-Stansted-Harlow Programme of Development Growth Fund, and would be taken by the Environment Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Finance & Technology Portfolio Holder.

The Council's Monitoring Officer (Director of Corporate Support Services) suggested an amendment to the recommendations. The Finance & Technology Portfolio Holder had been open and honest about her association with the project, and therefore it was suggested that the Environment Portfolio Holder should consult with the Director of Finance & ICT instead before deciding whether to release the funding.

Decision:

- (1) That a District Development Fund growth item in the sum of £20,000 be approved for 2014/15 to assist with the ongoing development of the furniture exchange scheme known as Epping Forest ReUse;
- (2) That the funding not be released until such time as the result of the London-Stansted-Harlow Programme of Development funding bid be known; and
- (3) That the decision to release the funding be delegated to the Environment Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Director of Finance and ICT, and with regard to the outcome of the bid by Epping Forest ReUse to the London-Stansted-Harlow Programme of Development.

Reasons for Decision:

The project had an important role to play in the District both as a supporter of those families that found themselves in severe financial hardship and as a recycling outlet for large items of furniture that otherwise might be consigned to landfill. Disadvantaged people were able to source good quality essential furniture at minimal cost, improving quality of life and contributing directly to increasing self-esteem, family harmony community integration and improved prospects of training and employment.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To refuse to provide £20,000 of funding and leave the project to rely on its own funds and the outcome of the bid to the London-Stansted-Harlow Programme Of Development Growth Fund. However, failure to secure sufficient funding from that bid could have the double impact of preventing the scheme from exploring new initiatives and opportunities to develop whilst also putting its ongoing operation and financial stability at risk.

129. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2014/15 - 2016/17

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology presented a report on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy for the period 2014/15 to 2016/17.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that the Council was required to approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators, as well as a statement on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) before the start of each financial year. The Strategies, as amended if necessary, would be scrutinised by the Audit and Governance Committee on 6 February 2014 prior to consideration by Council on 18 February 2014.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Strategies had been produced following advice from the Council's Treasury Advisors, Arlingclose. There had been no major changes to the Strategies since its previous approval in March 2012, but a number of issues was drawn to the Cabinet's attention. The first of these was Minimum Revenue Provision. Following the borrowing of £185.456million to pay for the Housing Revenue Account self-financing initiative, the Council would normally be required to charge Minimum Revenue Provision to the General Fund. However, the Department of Communities & Local Government had produced regulations last year whereby the Council could ignore this borrowing, and therefore, for Minimum Revenue

Provision purposes only, the Council was still classed as debt-free. If the Council undertook further borrowing to support its capital expenditure then Minimum Revenue Provision would be required in 2015/16.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the Council had inter-fund borrowed between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account for many years, and the interest rate charged had been based upon the average investment interest earned for the year. Draft regulations issued by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) had proposed that this interest rate should now be approved by the Council before the start of the financial year, and it was suggested that the average investment interest continue to be used as the rate for any inter-fund borrowing.

The Portfolio Holder advised that, in respect of the council's current investments, all were denominated in Sterling and the Council received regular advice from Arlingclose regarding the use of counterparties. The Council currently had an investment portfolio of approximately £61million, of which £51million was invested in the United Kingdom, £2million in Money Market Funds that were based in Ireland for tax purposes, and £8million in Sweden. The maturity profile ranged from £16million available for instant access to £10million with a maturity date exceeding one year. The continued low interest rates, the use of fewer counterparties and the shorter durations of the Council's investments had reduced the estimated income for 2014/15 to £399,000.

Decision:

- (1) That the following be recommended to the Council for approval:
 - (a) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2014/15 to 2016/17;
 - (b) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy;
 - (c) the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2014/15 to 2016/17;
 - (d) the average interest earned for the year on investments as the rate of interest to be applied to any inter-fund balances; and
 - (e) the Treasury Management Policy Statement.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that the Council complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To request additional information about the Treasury Management Strategy, or decide that alternative indicators were required.

130. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Decision:

- (1) That, as agreed by the Leader of the Council and 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 following item of urgent business be considered following the publication of the agenda:

- (a) Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee – 20 January 2014.

131. FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 20 JANUARY 2014

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology presented the minutes from the meeting of the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee held on 20 January 2014.

The Cabinet Committee had made recommendations to the Cabinet regarding the Detailed Directorate Budgets, the Corporate Risk Register Update, the Local Council Tax Support Grant and the draft Council Budget for 2014/15. Other issues that the Cabinet Committee had considered included the Recharge of Support Services, and ICT Facilities for Councillors.

The issue of Council email addresses for Members was highlighted. The Portfolio Holder emphasised the estimated cost of providing all Councillors with Council email addresses, and that the response from the consultation for Councillor email addresses was very low. It was acknowledged that Members had to be encouraged to become more knowledgeable about the benefits that Information & Communications Technology could bring them, and that the situation would be reviewed again in the future. It was also emphasised that a pilot scheme of the Good and Mod.Gov applications had been agreed.

Decision:

Detailed Directorate Budgets

- (1) That the detailed Directorate budget for the Chief Executive be approved;
- (2) That the detailed Directorate budget for Communities be approved, including:
 - (a) an average rent increase for Council dwellings of 4.91%; and
 - (b) vacant Council properties to be re-let at their Target (Formula) Rent from 7 April 2014, and not the rent necessarily charged to the previous tenant;
- (3) That the detailed Directorate budget for Governance be approved;
- (4) That the detailed Directorate budget for Neighbourhoods be approved; and
- (5) That the detailed Directorate budget for Resources be approved;

Corporate Risk Update

- (6) That Risk 1, Local Plan, be redefined to promote a more comprehensive overview;
- (7) That the rating for Risk 6, Information/Data, be reduced to a score of C2 (Medium Likelihood, Moderate Impact);

(8) That a new risk, Risk 9 – Safeguarding, be included in the Corporate Risk Register with a rating of B2 (High Likelihood, Moderate Impact); and

(9) That, incorporating the above changes, the amended Corporate Risk Register be approved;

Local Council Tax Support Grant

(10) That the Local Council Tax Support Grant available to Town and Parish Councils be reduced in line with the reduction in their Council Tax income as set out in Appendix 1 of the report considered by the Cabinet Committee; and

Draft Council Budget 2014/15

(11) That, in respect of the Council's General Fund Budgets for 2014/15, the following guidelines be adopted:

(a) the revised revenue estimates for 2013/14 and the anticipated reduction in the General Fund balance of £160,000;

(b) a reduction in the target for the 2014/15 Continuing Services Budget (CSB) from £14.07million to £13.77million (including growth items);

(c) an increase in the target for the 2014/15 District Development Fund (DDF) net spend from £142,000 to £1.6million;

(d) no change in the District Council Tax for a Band 'D' property to retain the charge at £148.77;

(e) the estimated reduction in General Fund balances of £243,000 in 2014/15;

(f) the four-year capital programme 2014/15 – 2017/18;

(g) the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18; and

(h) General Fund Revenue Balances to be allowed to fall no lower than 25% of the Net Budget Requirement;

(12) That, including the revised revenue estimates for 2013/14, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2014/15 be agreed and incorporating:

(a) the application of rent increases and decreases in accordance with the Government's rent reforms and the Council's approved Rent Strategy by an average overall increase of 4.91% in 2014/15; and

(b) the renting of vacant properties at the target rent from 5 April 2014; and

(13) That the Chief Financial Officer's report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's budgets in 2014/15 and the adequacy of the reserves be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

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

132. COUNCIL BUDGETS 2014/15

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology introduced a report on the Council's proposed budgets for 2014/15.

The Portfolio Holder set out the detailed recommendations for the Council's budget for 2014/15. The proposed budget would use £243,000 of the reserves but the Council's policy on the minimum level of reserves could still be maintained throughout the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Over the course of the Strategy, the use of reserves to support spending would peak at £931,000 in 2015/16 and reduce to £340,000 in 2017/18. The budget was based on the assumption that the District Council Tax would be frozen and that Housing Revenue Account rents would increase by 4.91% on average in 2014/15.

The Portfolio Holder also highlighted the Chief Financial Officer's report on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2014/15 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves within the budget report. It stated that the estimates as presented were sufficiently robust for the purposes of the Council's overall budget for 2014/15. In addition, the Council's reserves were adequate to cope with the financial risks facing the Council in 2014/15, but that further savings would be required in future years to bring the budget back into balance in the medium term.

The Cabinet noted that the target for District Development Fund expenditure in 2014/15 had increased to £1.863million since the publication of the agenda due to some items being carried forward from 2013/14. Charges for the Council-owned car parks were also being increased for the first time in five years. The Portfolio Holder concluded that Epping Forest was a low Council Tax authority with healthy reserves. The Leader of the Council highlighted the proposed 0% increase in the District Council Tax, along with the planned investment in Economic Development activities.

Decision:

(1) That the following guidelines for the Council's General Fund Budget in 2014/15 be recommended to the Council for adoption:

- (a) the revised revenue estimates for 2013/14, which were anticipated to reduce the General Fund balance by £160,000;
- (b) a reduction in the target for the 2014/15 Continuing Services Budget (CSB) from £14.07million to £13.77million (including growth items);
- (c) an increase in the target for the 2014/15 District Development Fund (DDF) net spend from £142,000 to £1.863million;
- (d) no change in the District Council Tax for a Band 'D' property, to remain at £148.77;

- (e) the estimated reduction in General Fund balances in 2014/15 of £243,000;
 - (f) the four-year Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2017/18;
 - (g) the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013/14 – 2017/18; and
 - (h) the Council's policy on General Fund Revenue Balances to remain that they be allowed to fall no lower than 25% of the Net Budget Requirement;
- (2) That the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2014/15, including the revised revenue estimates for 2013/14, be recommended to the Council for approval;
- (3) That the Council be requested to approve:
- (a) the proposed rent increases and decreases for 2014/15 to give an average overall increase of 4.91%; and
 - (b) that vacant Council properties be re-let at the property target rent from 5 April 2014; and
- (4) That the Chief Financial Officer's report to the Council on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2014/15 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves be noted.

Reason for Decision:

To determine the budget that would be placed before the Council for final approval on 18 February 2014.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To decide not to approve the recommended figures and instead specify which growth items should be removed from the lists, or ask for further items to be added.

133. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- (1) That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on the grounds they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Paragraph Number</u>
22	Wide Area Network Contract Renewal	3
23	Procurement of Waste Management Contract – ISDS Tenders	3

134. WIDE AREA NETWORK CONTRACT RENEWAL

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Technology presented a report about the contract renewal for the Council's Wide Area Network (WAN).

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Wide Area Network (WAN) supplied data and voice connectivity to eight of the Council's satellite offices. The current contract with

the incumbent supplier would terminate in April 2014 and quotes had been obtained from all the major companies. The initial renegotiated quote from the current supplier had generated a saving of £27,000 in comparison to the current contract, with the potential to be increased further. Therefore, it was felt that the use of negotiated tendering in accordance with Contract Standing Order C9 was appropriate in this instance and would provide the most economic means of procuring the contract.

Decision:

(1) That the use of Contract Standing Order C9 (Negotiated Tendering – Contracts in Excess of £50,000) for the procurement of Wide Area Network connectivity be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

The WAN was a vital component of the Council's data network, even more so now that it also carried the telephone communications to these remote sites. Remaining with the current supplier would ensure the continued supply of a proven and reliable solution in this critical area and the avoidance of considerable disruption in the event of replacement. Negotiation had also had the advantage of reducing the current cost substantially.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To undertake a full and comprehensive procurement process. However, this would be time consuming and was unlikely to result in savings.

135. PROCUREMENT OF WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT - ISDS TENDERS

The Environment Portfolio Holder presented a report regarding the current progress with the procurement of the Waste Management Contract, following the Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions.

The Portfolio Holder clarified the position following the second stage of competitive dialogue completed in November 2013, and the analysis of the tenders received at the Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions stage on 23 December 2013. The competitive dialogue process now required the number of contractors to be reduced from five to three, who would then participate in the final stage of the procurement, the Invitation to Submit Final Tenders (ISFT). However, four of the contractors were so closely matched that it was suggested that four, rather than three, should go forward to the final stage of the procurement process.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the four selected contractors would participate in a further round of competitive dialogue in mid-February. However, after the ISFT stage, the procurement would be effectively undertaken using the restricted procedure, and therefore the Council had to be clear at this stage about the exact service specification that it wished to procure, based upon what had been learnt during the previous stages of dialogue. Therefore, the proposal was for the service to be tendered "as is" with options for collections spread over either five days (Monday to Friday) or four days (Tuesday to Friday).

The Portfolio Holder presented some proposals for the format of the Member Interview Panel, scheduled for 1 and 2 May 2014, with the outcome of the interviews accounting for 10% of the Quality assessment with the other 40% allocated to the Technical assessment; the remaining 50% being allocated to the assessment of the tendered price. Finally, the Cabinet noted that the existing budget figures for 2013/14

had been used to prepare the budget for 2014/15, and any changes would be managed through the outturn reporting throughout the year.

Decision:

(1) That the following four contractors be approved to progress to the final stage of the procurement process:

- (i) Biffa;
- (ii) Serco;
- (iii) Sita; and
- (iv) Urbaser;

(2) That an additional wheeled bin for dry recyclates not be introduced as part of the core service and the core service to be procured at the final stage of procurement (Invitation to Submit Final Tenders – ISFT) be the “as is” service level, to be tendered as two options:

- (i) residual waste and recycling collected Monday to Friday (5 day week); and
- (ii) residual waste and recycling collected Tuesday to Friday (4 day week);

and, in accordance with the revised Descriptive Document, the most economically advantageous solution (from whichever option) be accepted;

(3) That the Member Interview Panel be comprised of 5 Members to include the Leader of the Council, Environment Portfolio Holder, Finance & ICT Portfolio Holder and a Member from each of the Loughton Residents’ Association and Liberal Democrats, and the scheduling of the interviews for 1 and 2 May 2014 be noted;

(4) That the assessment of tenders at the final stage of procurement be undertaken on the basis of 50% price and 50% quality, but with the 50% quality component being allocated 40% to the technical assessment and 10% to the Member Interview Panel; and

(5) That, for the purposes of establishing the 2014/15 budget, the inclusion of the existing 2013/14 figures in the budget preparation papers be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To determine which contractors should proceed to the final stage of procurement and the precise service specification to be procured.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To reject the proposed approach and revert to the process within the Descriptive Document, which states that only three contractors should proceed to the final stage.

CHAIRMAN