

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MINUTES

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 7 September 2017

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 8.20 pm

Members Present: C Whitbread (Chairman), A Grigg, H Kane, A Lion, J Philip and S Kane

Other Councillors: R Bassett, R Brookes, R Morgan, S Murray, C C Pond, C P Pond, C Roberts, D Roberts, D Stallan, H Whitbread and J M Whitehouse

Apologies: S Stavrou, W Breare-Hall and G Mohindra

Officers Present: G Chipp (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), C O'Boyle (Director of Governance), R Palmer (Director of Resources), S Hill (Assistant Director (Governance)), P Pledger (Assistant Director (Housing Property)), N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)), D Bailey (Head of Transformation), O Shaw (Head of Customer Service), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), G J Woodhall (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and A Rose (Webcasting Officer)

30. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Leader of Council made a short address to remind everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet, and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Member Code of Conduct, Councillor S Murray declared an interest in agenda item 13, Relocation of Housing Repairs and Housing Assets to Oakwood Hill Depot, by virtue of being the Chairman of the Oakwood Hill Senior Citizen Club. The Councillor had determined that his interest was non-pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

32. MINUTES

Decision:

(1) That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on 11 July 2017, be taken as read and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

33. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Safer, Greener & Transport

The Portfolio Holder reported that fishing line had been tied at knee height between fences and posts in Waltham Abbey with the deliberate intention of tripping and hurting people, which had resulted in an injury to a small child. Consequently, a temporary dispersal order had been put in place, and plans of action drawn up with

Essex Police were being put into effect now. Information regarding the identity of the perpetrators had been passed to Essex Police and, as the plan of action went into effect, the situation in the locality was expected to improve significantly.

34. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE CABINET

The Cabinet heard from a local resident, Mr B Wait, who made representations against the Council's plan to build a staff / public car park adjacent to Oakwood Hill Depot, as part of the proposal to relocate the Housing Repairs and Housing Assets teams to the Oakwood Hill Depot. The Cabinet also noted that the resident had a petition against the Scheme which would be handed into Officers at the end of the meeting.

35. RELOCATION OF HOUSING REPAIRS AND HOUSING ASSETS TO OAKWOOD HILL DEPOT

In the absence of the Housing Portfolio Holder, who had given her apologies for the meeting, the Leader of Council presented a report on the relocation of the Housing Repairs Service and Housing Assets Team to the Oakwood Hill Depot.

The Leader reminded the Cabinet that it had previously agreed to relocate the Housing Repairs Service and the Housing Assets Team to a new purpose-build hub at Blenheim Way in North Weald, at an estimated cost of around £3.2million. However, it was subsequently identified that, subject to some alterations to the building along with the provision of off-site staff parking, the Oakwood Hill Depot could be used to accommodate the Housing Repairs Service and the Housing Assets Team, co-located with the Grounds Maintenance and Fleet Operations Services. The costs of achieving the co-location had been estimated at £755,000 inclusive of a contingency sum, but excluding fees and office fit-out costs for agile working.

The Leader stated that it was originally planned for the Council's CountryCare and Nursery Teams to relocate to the depot at Oakwood Hill; however, this would not be possible if the Housing Repairs Service and Housing Assets team relocated to the Depot. An alternative option had been identified at Townmead Depot and it had previously been agreed to find the cost of this relocation from the capital receipt generated by the sale of Pyrles Lane Nursery.

The Leader reported that it would be necessary to provide an area of off-street parking for staff vehicles and an assessment had been made that a minimum of 75 parking spaces would be required. A suitable area of land had been identified on the Oakwood Hill Housing Estate, adjacent to but not in the Roding Valley Nature Reserve, but planning permission would be required and it was recommended that a planning application be submitted. It would be necessary to introduce a controlled parking zone restricting use of the spaces to Council staff vehicles during normal working hours, but outside of these hours it was proposed to allow residents and visitors to the Nature Reserve to use these spaces without charge.

Cllr Murray was disappointed that there had been no prior consultation with the Residents Association - who were a recognised consultee - Essex Wildlife Trust or ward Members. He felt that there would have been informal discussions with ward Members if this proposal had been in a different part of the District. The Oakwood Hill Estate was densely populated but the Council proposed to remove the only large green in the vicinity. The Roding Valley Nature Reserve was a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the only one within the District, and the majority of visitors did not access the site from this location. The parking issues were at the top end of the estate, not the bottom end where the Depot was, and therefore neither the estate

nor the Nature Reserve required further parking at this location. The Council had not liaised with the local residents on this issue and Cllr Murray requested that an additional recommendation be agreed to involve the Essex Wildlife Trust in the planning of the proposed staff car park.

Cllr C Roberts informed the Cabinet that the residents of Oakwood Hill Estate were concerned that they would lose their green open space if the plans for the staff car park went ahead, and a petition with 498 signatures on it would be handed in at the end of the meeting. The Green was the largest on the Estate, it was well used by residents and they did not want to lose it. The existing pay-and-display parking spaces were under used and therefore Residents did not need this extra parking at evenings and weekends.

Cllr Philip, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Governance, reminded the Cabinet that the proposed car park was but one recommendation out of nine, and that planning permission would be required before it could be built. Cllr Philip felt that the proposed relocation was a perfectly sensible approach for the Council to take, but was happy to examine other options, and would also be content not to take the green space for staff parking if it was not required.

Cllr C C Pond accepted that the relocation of the two teams to the Oakwood Hill Depot was desirable, but objected to the unnecessary taking of green space to provide staff parking. The cost of building this car park would be approximately £200,000 and the Councillor suggested that all other options should be examined before the planning application was submitted, including the extension of the existing on-street parking.

The Leader reaffirmed that the proposal to relocate the Housing Repairs Service and Housing Assets Team to the depot at Oakwood Hill had been carefully thought through and was a more sensible option than building a Hub in North Weald. The Leader would be happy to preserve the green space and save the cost of building the car parking if there were other options. The Council should perform a proper transport assessment, and the Leader reassured the residents that a proper consultation would form part of the planning application process.

Decision:

- (1) That the Housing Repairs Service and the Housing Assets Team be relocated to the Oakwood Hill Depot, Loughton to co-locate with the existing Fleet Operations and Grounds Maintenance Services at an estimated cost of the works (excluding fees) of £755,000 funded from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA);
- (2) That the Capital costs of the relocation be funded from the existing budget allocation of £3.2million for the provision of the Repairs and Maintenance Hub;
- (3) That, once assessed by Price Waterhouse Coopers as part of the Stage 2 Accommodation Review, the fit-out costs of the open plan area, based on an agile working environment, be also funded from the existing capital budget provision;
- (4) That the remaining existing capital budget provision be deleted from the Capital Programme to realise a capital saving;
- (5) That a separate report be considered by the Housing Portfolio Holder on the appointment of a multi-discipline Consultancy Service to oversee the detailed design, procurement process and contract management, with any fees being funded from the existing capital provision;

(6) That the Council's CountryCare Service and the Nursery Service no longer be relocated to the Oakwood Hill Depot as previously planned and that an alternative venue be sought elsewhere in the District for these services;

(7) That a planning application be submitted for the required off-site parking for staff and visitors at the Oakwood Hill Depot during working hours;

(8) That the off-site parking be made available to residents of the Oakwood Hill Estate and visitors to the Roding Valley Nature Reserve free of charge outside office hours; and

(9) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet by the Director of Neighbourhoods on the most appropriate future use for the Council's land at Blenheim Way in North Weald.

Reasons for Decision:

The decision that was reached by the Cabinet in December 2015 was to construct a new Repairs and Maintenance Hub at a cost of approximately £3.2million at Blenheim Way, North Weald. Co-locating the Housing Repairs Service and Housing Assets Team within an existing Council asset at the Oakwood Hill Depot would cost far less and save the need to construct the new Hub building.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To revert to the original decision to construct a Repairs and Maintenance Hub at Blenheim Way, North Weald in line with the Planning Approval already granted; however, this would cost approximately £3.2million.

To retain the fourth Service Bay for future business expansion by Fleet Operations and MOT Service and to construct a stand-alone Repairs Store elsewhere on the site; however, this would incur an estimated additional cost of £450,000.

To keep the Housing Repairs Service at the Epping Depot, thus saving the Council having to spend any money on relocation costs. However, this would prevent, or at the very least significantly harm, the future redevelopment opportunity on the St John's School redevelopment site and be contrary to the Council's previous decision, although it would allow for the Council's CountyCare Service and Nursery Service to relocate to the Oakwood Hill Depot as previously planned.

36. LEGAL SERVICES - STAFFING RESOURCES

The Portfolio Holder for Technology & Support Services presented a report on staffing resources within Legal Services.

The Portfolio Holder reported that there were two aspects to the report. Firstly, to secure the Contracts Officer post on a permanent basis from the beginning of the next financial year. The member of staff currently in post was now trained, undertaking a full caseload and had only six months left on the temporary contract. The need for this post had been demonstrated to address the continued client requirement for contract work, both large scale and routine. In addition, consultancy agreements and EU procurement advice and Framework contracts remained areas of high demand. Therefore, it was felt to be important to secure the current temporary member of staff, as to lose this resource entirely and to have to begin again to train a new, temporary officer was not a sustainable use of resources.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the second aspect of the report was to transfer the Lexcel aspects of the practice management role away from the Senior Lawyer post to create some additional time for specific planning work in anticipation of increased demand as the Local Plan progressed. This would not be the entire answer to the problem but was a step in the right direction.

The Portfolio Holder added that it was likely the Legal Service would require further review as part of the Corporate People Strategy as it sought to pursue service sharing arrangements. However, the need for the Contracts Officer post was a long term requirement and could not await that larger project.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Governance reminded the Cabinet that the Local Plan process did place demands on Legal Services, especially as it was probable that quinquennial reviews of the Local Plan would be required in the future. Therefore, it was right that the Council took steps to retain its trained staff.

Decision:

(1) That a Continuing Services Budget growth bid in the sum of £31,000 for 2018/19 be made to convert the existing temporary Contracts Paralegal post to a permanent Contracts Officer post, effective from 1 April 2018, at Grade 6 subject to job evaluation; and

(2) That the transfer of certain practice management duties from the Senior Lawyer to the Senior Legal Officer and Contracts Officer, effective from 1 April 2018, be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

The number and complexity of contracts had justified a temporary post to assist with the more routine work. The current post holder had been employed for two years and there was a continuing need for this resource. Building and Consultants' contracts for the redevelopment of the Council garage sites, the contracts for the works to be carried out to the Civic Offices as part of the Transformation Programme and Local Plan consultancy contracts were the areas currently identified as being additional to the various day to day workload.

Lexcel and procurement of on-line library services was currently managed by the Senior Lawyer, a post predominantly undertaking specialist planning work. By locating this work with the Senior Legal Officer, supported by the Contracts Officer post, it would release some resource in anticipation of increased demand arising from the Local Plan.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To do nothing; however, contract and other work would not be completed within acceptable timescales and the additional planning resource would not be available, which could result in delays and a potential increase in the need for outsourced contracts.

To extend the temporary contract; however, this would only be possible for a further two years before the staff member became permanent anyway. The post holder was seeking a permanent position and would undoubtedly secure a post elsewhere.

37. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that the following items of business had been considered at its meeting held on 18 July 2017:

- (a) the Council's current Key Decision List, incorporating Proposed Private Decisions, dated 5 July 2017;
- (b) the draft Corporate Plan for the period 2018-23; and
- (c) the Committee's future scrutiny of external organisations, including Transport for London and Barts Health NHS Trust.

The Cabinet's agenda was reviewed but there were no specific issues identified on any of the items being considered.

CLlr C C Pond highlighted that further reductions in services were planned for the Central Line loop which included the Grange Hill and Chigwell stations, and the Council should make representations to Transport for London when they next attended a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Vice-Chairman agreed that the Council should do this.

38. ASSET MANAGEMENT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 6 JULY 2017

The Portfolio Holder for Asset Management & Economic Development presented the minutes from the meeting of the Asset Management & Economic Development Cabinet Committee, held on 6 July 2017.

There were no recommendations for the Cabinet to consider. Other issues discussed at the meeting included: a progress report from the Economic Development Team; a progress report on the ongoing Asset Management Development projects; and a progress report on the development of the Epping Forest Shopping Park.

Decision:

- (1) That the minutes from the meeting of the Asset Management & Economic Development Cabinet Committee, held on 6 July 2017, be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had fully addressed all of the relevant issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Cabinet was content that the Cabinet Committee had considered all of the relevant options and that there were no further options to consider.

39. FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 20 JULY 2017

In the absence of the Finance Portfolio Holder, who had tendered his apologies for the meeting, the Leader of Council presented the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee, held on 20 July 2017.

The Cabinet Committee had made recommendations to the Cabinet concerning: the Financial Issues Paper; and the Corporate Plan 2018-23. There were no other issues considered by the Cabinet Committee.

Decision:

Financial Issues Paper

(1) That the establishment of a new budgetary framework, outlining the budget guidelines for 2018/19 be set, with the following elements:

(a) the ceiling for Continuing Services Budget net expenditure to be no more than £12.92million including net growth;

(b) the ceiling for District Development Fund expenditure to be no more than £929,000;

(c) balances to continue to be aligned with the Council's net budget requirement and be allowed to fall no lower than 25% of the net budget requirement; and

(d) the District Council Tax not be increased with the charge for a Band 'D' property remaining at £148.77 per annum;

(2) That a revised Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period to 2020/21 be developed accordingly;

(3) That communication of the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy to staff, partners and other stakeholders be undertaken; and

(4) That the reductions in the Parish Support Grants in equal stages to achieve complete removal by 2019/20 be continued; and

Corporate Plan 2018-23

(5) That the revised Corporate Plan for the period 2018-23 be recommended to the Council for approval.

Reasons for Decision:

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Cabinet Committee had fully addressed all of the relevant issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

The Cabinet was content that the Cabinet Committee had considered all of the relevant options and that there were no further options to consider.

40. NATIONAL POLICE AIR SERVICE - POTENTIAL RELOCATION TO NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD

The Portfolio Holder for Asset Management & Economic Development presented a report on the potential relocation of the National Police Air Service to North Weald Airfield.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the National Police Air Service (NPAS) provided air support to the 43 Police forces of England and Wales from a network of 15 bases. NPAS had been given notice to leave their current location at Lippitts Hill when their lease expired on 31 March 2018. They were looking initially for a temporary site to relocate their operation in the short-term with a view to establishing a permanent base. North Weald as an active operational Airfield, geographically well located to suit their operational requirements, had been identified by NPAS as a potential site to re-base and discussions had been opened with the Council.

The Portfolio Holder reported that NPAS wanted to operate three helicopters and a fixed wing aircraft from the airfield at North Weald, and they would initially require one acre of land to construct a hangar of 1,225 sq m as well as some portable office accommodation for support staff. Subject to planning approval, NPAS would then seek to build a more permanent facility of a similar scale, and a suitable site which would not adversely affect other users had been identified by the Airfield management. NPAS would require 24 hour operation, 365 days a year, and it was estimated that the average air movements would be approximately 20,000 per annum (in comparison to 1,300 for the Air Ambulance).

The Portfolio Holder informed the Cabinet that a number of environmental assessments had been carried out. These studies had concluded that the proposal could be progressed without significant adverse effects for the local community or environment, and to ensure that this was the case, it was proposed that a number of noise monitoring stations should be installed in sensitive locations around the Airfield.

The Portfolio Holder explained that negotiations with NPAS had reached provisional agreement on the terms of the lease, for a period of 25 years with an initial annual payment of £120,000 split between rent and landing rights for a maximum of 20,000 movements per year. NPAS would meet the capital costs of their hangar and office accommodation; full details had been included in the report.

The Portfolio Holder concluded that the Cabinet would need to balance the likely environmental impact against the potential revenue benefits to the Council of the proposal, which was in line with the Council's stated objective of intensifying aviation activity at the Airfield, and considered alongside the Council's role as a public body in supporting the Police in ensuring community safety and crime reduction.

The Cabinet generally welcomed the report and the preservation of aviation at the Airfield. Cllr Stallan, one of the local ward Members for North Weald Bassett, also supported the report and the views of residents had been generally favourable. In response to questions from Cllr Stallan, the Portfolio Holder stated that NPAS would provide extra security for their site, any complaints from local residents should be made to either the Council or the Control Tower at the Airfield, and there would be regular noise reports to the Asset Management & Economic Development Cabinet Committee from the Police presence at the Airfield. The Director of Neighbourhoods clarified that the Airfield Management or Estates Officers would deal with any complaints at Stage I, with any breaches reported to the Cabinet Committee.

One of the Pilots from NPAS who was in attendance reassured the Cabinet that Pilots did not have to follow the exact routes indicated in the report, and it could be modified to avoid noise sensitive areas. Generally, the height of the aircraft would be between 500 and 2,500 feet after take-off, and any aircraft would be at a minimum height of 2,000 feet heading south from the Airfield.

The Leader of Council reminded the Cabinet that planning permission would be required before NPAS could complete their move to the Airfield, which would entail

further public consultation. The Director of Neighbourhoods added that there was no immediate operational synergy from the Air Ambulance and NPAS sharing facilities.

Decision:

(1) That a lease, under the proposed general terms outlined within the report, be entered into with the National Police Air Service for an operational base at North Weald Airfield; and

(2) That agreement of the final detailed terms of the lease be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Asset Management & Economic Development, in consultation with the Director of Neighbourhoods.

Reasons for Decision:

To formally respond to the request from NPAS to relocate to North Weald Airfield, and ensure the retention of aviation activities at the Airfield.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

As a public sector partner, it would be unreasonable to not consider the NPAS request; however, this was an option available to the Council.

Additionally it would be possible to reduce the length of the potential lease, although it should be noted that a considerable amount of capital was to be invested.

Similarly to restrict flying times might render the proposal impossible for operational reasons.

41. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT - JUNE & JULY 2017 & THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

The Leader of Council presented a report outlining the progress made with the Transformation Programme during June and July 2017, the programme initiation for the People Strategy, and an update on the progress with the Customer Service Programme.

The Leader reminded the Cabinet that regular highlight reports on the progress of the Transformation Programme were presented to each meeting of the Cabinet. This was the monitoring report for June and July 2017 and covered progress for all chartered projects of Medium and High Risk Potential, as well as the key aspects of the Transformation Programme. Overall, progress indicators for 'cost' and 'benefits' were Green for this period. The status indicator for 'time' was Amber to highlight that two actions (from a total of 219) were overdue. The status indicator for 'delivery / outcome / output' was also Amber to highlight that six projects required progress report updates.

The Leader stated that the Programme Definition Document for the People Strategy was presented, which had followed workshops with Staff, Managers and Councillors. The programme detailed a set of projects to ensure the Council met future challenges and adapted to new ways of working. The programme would change the way the Council was organised, removing the current Directorates and creating a new organisational structure, known as the Common Operating Model. Approval was sought to allocate £25,000 from the Transformation Programme Prototype Fund to produce the proposed Common Operating Model.

The Leader explained that the Customer Service Programme had reached a number of key milestones since the Head of Service had joined the organisation in November 2016 and implementation had begun in earnest. A Customer Programme Board had been created, along with a revision of the projects that formed the programme. In particular, the development of the corporate Customer Service Team and activity to promote digital self-service for customers had made good progress.

The Leader added that there were dependencies with other Transformation projects, particularly the Accommodation Review and forthcoming People Strategy, which could provide challenges around capacity in key service areas and timely decision making. Issues with systems infrastructure had impacted on some project timelines but not the delivery of benefits from the overall programme.

Cllr C C Pond highlighted that 67% of the Council's employees travelled to work by driving on their own, and only 14% of the Council's employees car shared when travelling to work.

Decision:

- (1) That the progress of Projects and Programmes within the Transformation Programme for June & July 2017, alongside the planned actions for August 2017, be noted;
- (2) That the definition of the People Strategy Programme be noted and the initiation of the projects within the Programme be agreed;
- (3) That, in order to fund the external support for the production of the Council's new Common Operating Model, an allocation of £25,000 from the Transformation Programme Prototype Fund be agreed; and
- (4) That the progress of the Customer Service Programme be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To inform the Cabinet of progress on the Transformation Programme, including workstreams, programmes and projects.

To agree the objectives of the People Strategy and approve funding to initiate the programme.

To provide the Cabinet with an update on the progress of the Customer Service Programme, and highlight any risks or issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

No other options were available for the Transformation and Customer Service Programmes as failure to monitor and review progress and to consider corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for the Council's reputation, and might mean the opportunities for improvement were lost.

The Cabinet could decide not to progress the People Strategy or to progress the programme but fund it in some other way. However, if the programme was not progressed then it would mean foregoing the opportunity to transform the Council's workforce and working practices.

Revenue funding could be provided through a supplementary estimate for the production of the Council's new Common Operating Model, although this was not recommended as sufficient resources existed within the current Transformation Programme Prototype Fund.

42. STAFFING STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENTS WITHIN DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Governance presented a report on staffing structural adjustments within the Development Management section.

The Portfolio Holder reminded the Cabinet that the Development Management fee income had increased by over 50%, generating an additional £300,000 per year from 2014/15. Further additional income of £100,000 per annum had been created by the provision of Planning Pre-Application advice. In addition, although the levels of planning applications in the last ten years had increased by 33%, the establishment structure of Development Management had not increased accordingly. Whilst the Planning Officers and Support Staff within Development Management had absorbed greater workloads through process changes and greater use of technology, temporary contracts had been granted to handle the sustained demand for planning applications and advice. However, it was clear that this demand was not of a temporary nature.

The Portfolio Holder stated that investment in training and experience gained by the current temporary staff would be a loss to this Council. The staff occupying the temporary posts were looking for permanent positions and had acquired skill sets to be marketable. Losing the resources or having to devote senior staff time again to train new, temporary recruits was not a sustainable use of resources. Therefore, there was an urgent need to ensure that the Development Management team was both resilient and robust enough to sustain the current increased levels of Planning Applications, including Planning Pre-Applications, as a secure base for the future. Consequently, the proposed adjustments to the staffing establishment were required to support the effective management of planning applications and to meet the statutory timescales for the processing of planning applications.

The Portfolio Holder added that, in January 2017, management of Local Land Charges had transferred from Legal Services to Development Management. In addition to addressing the time taken to process searches, one of the key drivers for this change had been the Land Registry's plans to create a single Local Land Charges (LLC) register. The team would be supported to adopt and implement further electronic records improvements by the Electronic Information Team in Development Management. The Council was statutorily required to deliver digital spatially based LLC records to the Land Registry. The timescale was not certain but the task was significant as if the Council was unable to comply then there was a risk of potential financial penalties and loss of reputation.

The Cabinet generally supported the proposals, but some Members highlighted the lack of enforcement action throughout the District and hoped that the proposals would alleviate some of these issues. The Portfolio Holder reassured the Cabinet that although there would not be any new staff for the Enforcement Team, the burden on the Enforcement Team would be reduced by the proposed Compliance Officer post being proactive. The Compliance Officer post would have the same tools available to them as the Enforcement Team to prevent any deviations from the approved plans in construction.

Decision:

(1) That a Continuing Services Budget growth bid in the sum of £25,820 be made for 2018/19 for the establishment of a new post of Compliance Officer commencing on 1 April 2018;

(2) That a revenue supplementary estimate in the sum of £109,760 be recommended to the Council for approval to convert the existing temporary posts of Technical Officer (Validations), Technical Officer (Systems) and two Assistant Planning Officers to permanent posts, effective from 1 October 2017; and

(3) That District Development Funding in the sum of £40,720 be re-allocated for the temporary Local Land Charges Officer post, Grade 5 on a fixed term basis for 18 months, and the Clerical Officer post, Grade 2 on a fixed term basis for 12 months.

Reasons for Decision:

To secure a stable, adequately trained and resourced structure to deliver the Development Management and Local Land Charges services in a professional and timely manner; bearing in mind the sustained high demands.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To do nothing. However, this would mean the loss of the temporary posts in which the Council had invested and the workloads would not be deliverable within the required timescales.

Without the temporary resource in Local Land Charges, the need to convert records and processes to electronic working while seeking to improve the turn round time for searches would not be achievable.

To simply increase the planning fees without appropriately applying the resource generated by those fee increases was not an option as the increased income had to be applied to the delivery of the Planning Service.

43. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Cabinet.

44. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Cabinet noted that there was no business which necessitated the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting.

CHAIRMAN