

## **Report to the Cabinet**

**Report reference: C/106/2007-08.**  
**Date of meeting: 4 February 2008.**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services.**

**Subject: Civic Offices- Tower Passenger Lift.**

**Officer contact for further information: Mike Tipping (01992-564280).**

**Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992-564470).**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- (1) That a capital growth bid in the sum of £25,000 be approved for 2008/09 for the acquisition and installation of a new lift controller and ancillary components to the main passenger lift in the Civic Offices;**
- (2) That Contract Standing Order C5 be waived in relation to obtaining 3 quotations and the contract for the supply, installation and commissioning of this equipment be placed with Amalgamated Lifts Limited;**
- (3) That, in view of the urgency to restore the lift to working order, authority be given to place an immediate order for this equipment due to the long lead time for its manufacture; and**
- (4) That, if recommendation (3) above is approved, the irrevocable commitment of this funding for the 2008/09 budget be noted and accepted.**

### **Report:**

1. The main passenger lift located in the tower of the Civic Offices Building is approximately 20 years old. There is a regular maintenance contract in place for the inspection and servicing of the lift, and it is also subjected to two safety inspections per annum by the Council's insurers.
2. The lift has been out of service since mid October 2007. The maintenance contractor, Amalgamated Lifts Limited, has traced the fault to the main motor drive control unit but all attempts to repair it have proved unsuccessful, including importing several new components from Europe.
3. The only option now is to replace the lift control system itself. This is not a standard item that can be bought off the shelf; it has to be manufactured to order to match the lift installation. The lift control system consists of a computerised electronic controller, which manages all functions of the lift including the motor drive unit.
4. The cost of a new control system is £22,330. A small contingency has been added to the funding requested just in case any complications arise whilst the new control system is being installed, tested and commissioned.
5. Normally for a contract of this value competitive quotations would be obtained, received and opened in accordance with contract standing orders C5 and C16.
6. The original manufactures of the lift and the current control system have both ceased to trade. The lift maintainers have been able to find only one company that can manufacture a new control system to match the lift installation.

7. The new control system will be manufactured to appropriate standards and, once installed, will have a life expectancy in excess of 20 years. The new control system will represent an enhancement over the system it is replacing, not only in terms of the technology but also providing compliance in other areas described in the next paragraph.

8. As a separate issue some work would have to be undertaken to the lift to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and new European Union (EU) regulations. It is fortuitous that this work will automatically be undertaken as part of the remedial works described above, which will in the long run save time, further disruption and cost.

9. Assuming the budget request is approved it will take approximately 12 weeks from the date of order to complete the remedial works and have the lift back into operation. Again, assuming that the final approval of the Budget for 2008/09 will not be given until the Council meeting on 19 February 2008, the lift will not be back in operation until during the week commencing 12 May 2008.

10. Therefore authority is sought to place an order immediately so that the manufacturing process can commence. This will achieve an estimated back in service date of the week commencing 21 April 2008.

11. If this authority is given, it must be accepted that the required finance of £25,000 will become an inescapable commitment for the budget 2008/09.

**Statement in Support of Recommended Action:**

12. The recommended course of action is the most cost effective and technically sound way of repairing the lift, bringing it back into full working order and achieving compliance with DDA and EU regulation requirements.

**Other Options for Action:**

13. To do nothing and leave the lift out of action. This is not a viable option as it would mean the Council would be in contravention of the Disability Discrimination Act in relation to not making reasonable provision for access by the public to the first and second floors of the building.

14. To completely strip out the existing lift and all associated control equipment and install a brand new lift at a likely cost of £120,000. This would be a far more costly and disproportionate solution to solve the problem and would take considerably longer before the lift would be put back into service.

**Consultation Undertaken:**

15. None.

**Resource Implications:**

**Budget Provision:** Request for capital funding of £25,000 for 2008/09.

**Personnel:** Within existing resources.

**Land:** Nil.

**Council Plan 2006-10/BVPP Reference:** No specific reference.

**Relevant Statutory Powers:** Non-compliance with the DDA if repairs not carried out.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:** N/A.

**Key Decision Reference (if required):** Not a key decision.