

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 24 April 2006

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Knapman

Item: 8 (d)

1. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND CAPITAL PROVISION

Recommending:

- (1) That a DDF supplementary capital estimate of £15,000 be approved to meet the cost of a survey of Birchfield, Epping Lane, Stapleford Tawney, including a land contamination survey; and
 - (2) That a supplementary capital estimate of £920,000 (including £670,000 for works and £250,000 for contingencies, unforeseen and professional fees) be approved for the Bobbingworth Tip – Landfill Remediation Project;
 - (3) That capital provision be increased from £2.5 million to £2.89 million in order to undertake the Loughton Broadway – Town Centre Enhancement Scheme; and
 - (4) That additional budget provision in the sum of £550,000 be provided within the HRA Capital Programme in relation to the Springfields Improvement Scheme.
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Supplementary Capital Estimate – Birchfield, Epping Lane, Stapleford Tawney

- 1.1 A separate report is being submitted on planning enforcement action in relation to this site. This report relates to a request for a supplementary estimate in order to carry out a survey of the land prior to the undertaking of any works by the Council.
- 1.2 In order to remedy the harm caused to this site and prevent further exacerbation of that harm it is necessary to take steps to secure compliance with the enforcement notice and return the land to its original condition. Given the harm that has been caused to this part of the Green Belt and the exacerbation of that harm that is now being caused together with the associated harm to the environment there is a case for the Council to take direct action to ensure compliance with the enforcement notice.
- 1.3 However, in order to establish the extent of the works required it is necessary for a survey to be undertaken, including a land contamination survey. A supplementary capital estimate is requested for that purpose.

Supplementary Capital Estimate – Bobbingworth Tip – Landfill Remediation Project

- 1.4 The Cabinet has received a presentation from Cleanaway, the contractor appointed by the Council to propose a solution for the landfill remediation project at Bobbingworth Tip in Moreton.

- 1.5 Cleanaway has developed a design that will address both remediation and restoration of the site.
- 1.6 Atkins Consultants Limited appointed by the Council to provide independent advice on the design and cost proposals put forward by Cleanaway have concluded that the proposed design offers a good solution to the former landfill site that will minimise the Council's future risk liability and provide a safe and attractive environment for local residents. They have also advised that the estimated budget for the project is realistic but have pointed out that it would be prudent to allow for a contingency sum.
- 1.7 The capital cost of the project is estimated to be £1.35 million, including a £250,000 contingency fund. An additional sum of £920,000 is required, therefore, to implement the proposed solution.

Capital Provision - Loughton Broadway – Town Centre Enhancement Scheme

- 1.8 The Cabinet has received a short presentation from Robert West Consulting on the outcome of the design guide review for Loughton Broadway Town Centre Enhancement Scheme. It was agreed in June 2005 to undertake a Phase 1 enhancement scheme for Loughton Broadway in accordance with the original 1998 design guide. Steering and Focus Groups were requested to consider the details of the scheme and to report to the Cabinet.
- 1.9 The Steering and Focus Groups completed their work in November 2005 and the scheme proposed reflects the original 1998 design. However, some additional works had been identified including demolition of the garages in Vere Road, the provision of a traditional public convenience and extended CCTV and lighting to include the alleyway that links Burton Road and Torrington Drive with Debden Underground Station. The Cabinet has accepted the proposed additional works except for the idea of providing a traditional public convenience.
- 1.10 Robert West Consulting have revised the original estimate of £2.5 million for the scheme to £2.87 million. The additional works proposed by the Focus and Steering Groups in respect of the garages in Vere Road and the extension of CCTV and lighting increase the total cost to £2.89 million.
- 1.11 The plan has been produced in close consultation with the local council and town centre partnership and an increase in capital provision is sought from £2.5 million to £2.89 million.

HRA Capital Programme – Springfields Improvement Scheme

- 1.12 It was agreed in November 2004 to undertake a major improvement scheme at Springfields in Waltham Abbey and a budget of £4 million was agreed within the Housing Capital Programme.
- 1.13 A consultation exercise was undertaken with local residents and the results used to undertake a feasibility study. The feasibility study resulted in 19 proposed design options being identified and Stace were appointed as consultant quantity surveyors. Stace have advised that a scheme involving all 19 proposals would cost in excess of the agreed £4 million budget. The Council also appointed consultants Beha Williams Norman to undertake a detailed financial analysis in order to compare the cost of the Council undertaking the works with the costs of undertaking the works through a small-scale stock transfer to a registered social landlord. They have concluded that the retention option is more financially viable for the Council than the stock transfer option.

- 1.14 The Cabinet has agreed to proceed with an improvement scheme based on the menu of improvements recommended by the project team in the estimated sum of £4,033,000 inclusive of fees.
- 1.15 However, there are nine leaseholders within the blocks planned for improvement that have a financial liability towards the cost of the improvements under the terms of their leases. Their contributions have been calculated and found to be considerable, ranging from £27,000 to £55,000 and this would almost certainly lead to the individuals concerned having to remortgage their properties. Following consultations with other local authorities who have undertaken similar schemes, options for action have been identified and following individual interviews with the leaseholders, the majority have indicated a preference for the Council to buy back their properties.
- 1.16 Additional budget provision in the sum of £550,000 is sought within the HRA Capital Programme in order to purchase up to six leasehold properties where the leaseholders have indicated a preference for the Council to buy back their properties.