

PROPOSED BUDGET AMENDMENT FROM THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY AND EAST HAVERING RESIDENTS GROUP

(Proposer Cllr Keith Prince)

(Seconded Cllr Martin Goode)

The Conservative Party and East Havering Residents Group propose the following budget amendments:

That the planned feasibility work on the Romford masterplan is stopped which would release a reserve of **£0.200m** which could be re-directed

That the following amendments are made to the Capital Programme for 2024/25

1. Deferral of the £2.934m Capital budget for Hornchurch Police Station to 2025/26
2. Deletion of the £1.000m Capital budget for the Romford Ring Road

These two items would reduce the financing costs of the Capital programme in 2024/25 by **£0.098m**

It is recognised that the Romford ring road budget is funded by CIL so it is proposed to redirect the released CIL to fund Highways schemes currently funded by borrowing thereby releasing the financing saving

It is also proposed to increase the target of houses to be purchased within the HRA by 10 in order to help manage the general fund temporary accommodation pressure.

This would reduce the budget pressure set aside for temporary accommodation by **£0.150m** in 2024/25.

This will release **£0.448m** of revenue budget for 2024/25 and it is proposed to use this to reverse the following savings proposals

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| 1. Place 13 - Cease Trading on Sunday at Romford Market | (0.125m) |
| 2. Place 13 - Increase Market stall fees by 10% | (0.030m) |
| 3. Reduce pitch fees on Romford Market by 15% | (0.045m) |
| 4. Freeze pitch fees for football pitches | (0.007m) |
| 5. Place 9 - Freeze cost of residents permits | (0.040m) |
| 6. Reverse Home to school transport saving | (0.200m) |

It is recognised that reversing the Home to School transport saving will have an impact rising to £1.3m by 2026/27 and that utilising the feasibility reserve is for one year only.

It is proposed that the ongoing pressure is offset by purchasing further homes and modular units which will be ready from 2025/26 onwards and will therefore reduce the ongoing temporary accommodation pressure built into the budget.

Financial Implications from acting S151 officer

If a decision was taken to purchase Hornchurch police station within 2024/25 a new Capital budget would need to be identified to fund the purchase and be agreed at full Council

With regard to ceasing the feasibility and development of the Romford Masterplan the Council has already invested over £500k in developing the plan to date.

The Romford ring road Capital budget is funded by CIL. Appropriate Highways schemes currently funded by borrowing that fully meet the CIL criteria would need to be identified to redirect the released CIL in order to realise the financing cost revenue saving.

With regard to the Housing proposal. The Council has 50 house purchases planned in the HRA for 2024/25. In addition to this there is also an additional 150 units to be acquired by the Chalkhill scheme. This means that 200 properties are already identified in the budget and officers believe this is very near the maximum number that can realistically be delivered of the correct bed size and standard needed.

The additional 10 properties would need to be funded from the HRA which is already exceeding its financing cap in the early years of the 30 year business plan.

The Council also has a further 50 properties planned and assumed in the budget for 25/26 and 2026/27.

The proposal identifies purchase and development of modular housing to offset the future year impact of reversing the home to school saving. There will be a number of dependencies and risks to this proposal including identification of suitable sites, planning permission, provision of drainage and utilities apart from the procurement process. The purchase would be from the HRA which as stated has already exceeded the finance cap in those years.