

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet 14 September 2006
AUTHOR/S: Chief Executive /Electoral Services Manager

USE OF CABINET CONTINGENCY FOR THE ABINGTONS WARD BY-ELECTION

Purpose

1. To request that the cost of the by-election in the Abingtons Wards be paid from the Cabinet Contingency budget. The estimated cost is £2,613.70.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.	Quality, Accessible Services	N/A
	Village Life	N/A
	Sustainability	N/A
	Partnership	N/A

Background

3. After the Council was capped in 2005 officers were told to remove contingencies from their budgets and instead rely upon a central contingency fund should the need arise.

Considerations

4. The Electoral Services budget has been reduced as far as possible. Central Government gave £43,000 to be used to implement the new Electoral Administration Bill. £10,000 of this was allocated to fund the new requirement to conduct a personal canvass and the remaining £33,000 added to central funds. Subsequently it transpired that a further £4,250 would be required to enable the Council to meet its statutory requirement surrounding postal vote checks. This budget was found by using underspend from the election budget from May 2006.

It is also proposed that a budget for by-elections be added to the precautionary items from next April to alleviate the need to ask Cabinet.

Options

5. (a) To permit the cost of the by-election to come from the Cabinet Contingency
(b) For the 2006/7 Elections budget to be overspent.

Financial Implications

6. The estimated cost is a relatively small amount and should not cause any particular financial impact.

Legal Implications

7. The election must be run in accordance with legislation, therefore the funds will have to be made available.

Staffing Implications

8. None.

Risk Management Implications

9. None.

Consultations

10. N/A.

Conclusions/Summary

11. The budget for by-elections was removed on the understanding that any costs would be covered from a central contingency.

Recommendations

12. To recommend that money be vired from Cabinet Contingency to fund the Abingtons Ward by-election.

Contact Officer: Laura Lock – Electoral Services Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713287