



### NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL to be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 26 July 2016 for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen Chipp'.

Glen Chipp  
Chief Executive

Democratic Services  
Officer:

Council Secretary: Simon Hill  
Tel: 01992 564249 Email:  
democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

#### WEBCASTING/FILMING NOTICE

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site - at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. The meeting may also be otherwise filmed by third parties with the Chairman's permission.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Therefore by entering the Chamber and using the lower public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for web casting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the upper council chamber public gallery area or otherwise indicate to the Chairman before the start of the meeting.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Public Relations Manager on 01992 564039.

## **BUSINESS**

### **1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

1. This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking.

2. The Assistant Director of Governance and Performance Management will read the following announcement:

“I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet (or filmed) and will be capable of repeated viewing (or another use by such third parties).

If you are seated in the lower public seating area it is likely that the recording cameras will capture your image and this will result in the possibility that your image will become part of the broadcast.

This may infringe your human and data protection rights and if you wish to avoid this you should move to the upper public gallery.”

### **2. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 40)**

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 26 May 2016 and 6 June 2016. (attached)

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Chief Executive) To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

### **4. FORMER DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ANDREW O'BRIEN**

The Council is invited to stand for a minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Former District Councillor Andrew O'Brien who passed away on Sunday 26 June 2016.

Andrew O'Brien served as a Conservative District Councillor representing the Epping (Epping Lindsey) Ward from 1976 to 1999. He served on various Committees including, Environment Health & Control Committee, Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee, Recreation and Amenities Committee, Libraries and Museums Sub-Committee, Leisure Services Committee, Plans Sub- B, public Health, North Weald Airfield Sub-Committee, Public Health Committee, Joint Staff Committee. He also served as the Leader of the Epping and Area Residents' Association Group from 1991 until 1999.

### **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(a) **Apologies for Absence**

(b) **Chairman's Announcements**

### **6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

To answer questions asked after notice in accordance with the provisions contained within Part 4 of the Council Rules of the Constitution on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District:

- (a) to the Leader of the Council;
- (b) to any Portfolio Holder; or
- (c) to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Questions, if any, will follow if not received in time to be incorporated into the agenda.

## **7. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE**

To answer questions asked after notice in accordance with the provisions contained within the Council Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District:

- (a) to the Chairman of the Council;
- (b) to the Leader of the Council;
- (c) to any Member of the Cabinet; or
- (d) the Chairman of any Committee or Sub-Committee.

The Council Rules provide that answers to questions under notice may take the form of:

- (a) direct oral answer;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

Answers to questions falling within (a) and (b) above will be made available to the member asking the question one hour before the meeting. Answers to questions falling within (c) above will be circulated to all councillors.

Questions, if any, will follow if not received in time to be incorporated into the agenda.

## **8. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET (Pages 41 - 76)**

To receive reports and any announcements from the Leader and members of the Cabinet on matters falling within their area of responsibility:

- (a) Report of the Leader;
- (b) Report of the Assets and Economic Development Portfolio Holder; (attached)
- (c) Report of the Environment Portfolio Holder; (attached)
- (d) Report of the Finance Portfolio Holder; (attached)
- (e) Report of the Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder; (attached)

- (f) Report of the Housing Portfolio Holder; (attached)
- (g) Report of the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder; (attached)
- (h) Report of the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder; (attached)
- (i) Report of the Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder; (attached) and
- (j) Report of the Technology and Support Services Portfolio Holder (attached).

## 9. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

The Council Rules provide for questions by any member of the Council to the Leader or any Portfolio Holder, without notice on:

- (i) reports under the previous item; or
- (ii) any other matter of a non operational character in relation to the powers and duties of the Council or which affects all or part of the District or some or all of its inhabitants.

Council Rules provide that answers to questions without notice may take the form of:

- (a) direct oral answer from the Leader or, at the request of the Leader, from another member of the Cabinet;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication;
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner; or
- (d) where the question relates to an operational matter, the Leader or a member of the Cabinet will request that a response be given direct to the questioner by the relevant Chief Officer.

In accordance with the Council Rules, a time limit of thirty minutes is set for questions. Any question not dealt with within the time available will receive a written reply. The Chairman may extend this period by up to a further 10 minutes at their discretion.

## 10. MOTIONS

To consider any motions, notice of which has been given under Council Rules.

### (a) **The condemning of racism, xenophobia and hate crimes**

Proposed by: Councillor S Neville

Seconder: Councillor S Heap

“As a Council we are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country. Our council condemns racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate against others to become acceptable.

We will continue to work to ensure that local bodies and programmes have the support and resources they need to fight and prevent racism and xenophobia.

We reassure all people living in this area that they are valued members of our community.”

To consider any further motions, notice of which has been given under Council Procedure Rule 13.

**11. REPORTS OF CABINET**

To consider any reports that may arise from the Cabinet meeting on Thursday 21 July 2016.

**12. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (Pages 77 - 80)**

1. (Leader) To note the attached Leader appointment to the Essex Flood Partnership; and
2. (Leader) To consider the attached report.

**13. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16 (Pages 81 - 88)**

(Chairman of Audit & Governance) To note the attached Audit & Governance Annual Report 2015/16.

**14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (Pages 89 - 152)**

- (a) To consider the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report to Council (attached);
- (b) To note the progress report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- (c) To answer any questions without notice asked in accordance with Council Rules.

**15. CALL-IN AND URGENCY - PURCHASE OF STREET PROPERTIES (Pages 153 - 154)**

To note the attached decision taken by the Chairman of the Council to waive the call-in provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules.

**16. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (Pages 155 - 156)**

- (a) To receive the attached report from Councillor H Kane, as the Council's representatives for the Royal Gunpowder Mills;
- (b) To receive from Council representatives any other reports on business of joint arrangements and external organisations and to receive answers to any questions on those bodies which may be put without notice; and
- (c) To request written reports from representatives on joint arrangements and external organisations for future meetings.

**17. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**Exclusion:** To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

| <b>Agenda Item No</b> | <b>Subject</b> | <b>Exempt Information Paragraph Number</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| Nil                   | Nil            | Nil  |

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

**Background Papers:** Article 17 of the Constitution (Access to Information) define background papers as being documents relating to the subject matter of the report which in the Proper Officer's opinion:

- (a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and
- (b) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report and does not include published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

The Council will make available for public inspection for four years after the date of the meeting one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers.

## EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

**Committee:** Council

**Date:** 26 May 2016

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices,  
High Street, Epping

**Time:** 7.30 - 9.25 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors E Webster (Chairman), J Lea (Vice-Chairman), R Baldwin, R Bassett, A Beales, N Bedford, A Boyce, W Breare-Hall, R Brookes, R Butler, G Chambers, D Dorrell, R Gadsby, L Girling, A Grigg, S Heap, L Hughes, R Jennings, J Jennings, S Jones, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Knapman, Y Knight, M McEwen, L Mead, A Mitchell, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, A Patel, J Philip, C P Pond, C C Pond, C Roberts, B Rolfe, D Roberts, B Sandler, M Sartin, G Shiell, D Stallan, S Stavrou, B Surtees, G Waller, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley

**Apologies:** Councillors N Avey, H Brady, K Chana, A Lion, G Mohindra, L Wagland and S Watson

**Officers Present:** G Chipp (Chief Executive), D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), C O'Boyle (Director of Governance), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), P Seager (Chairman's Secretary), S Kits (Social Media and Customer Services Officer) and A Hendry (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

### 1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant Director of Governance and Performance Management reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

### 2. DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS - 5 MAY 2016

The Chairman welcomed the newly elected and re-elected Members of the Council following the election held on 5 May 2016;

| Councillor:     | Ward:                                  |
|-----------------|--|
| Simon Heap      | Buckhurst Hill East                    |
| Gavin Chambers  | Buckhurst Hill West                    |
| Brian Sandler   | Chigwell Row                           |
| John Knapman    | Chigwell Village                       |
| Jon Whitehouse  | Epping Hemnall                         |
| Holly Whitbread | Epping Lindsey and Thornwood Common    |
| Alan Lion       | Grange Hill                            |
| Maggie McEwen   | High Ongar, Willingale and the Rodings |
| Debra Roberts   | Loughton Alderton                      |
| Leon Girling    | Loughton Broadway                      |
| David Wixley    | Loughton Fairmead                      |
| Amy Beales      | Loughton Forest                        |

|               |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Roger Baldwin | Loughton Forest          |
| Rose Brooks   | Loughton Roding          |
| Caroline Pond | Loughton St John's       |
| Judy Jennings | Loughton St Mary's       |
| Tony Boyce    | Morton and Fyfield       |
| Heather Brady | Passingford              |
| John Philip   | Theydon Bois             |
| Glynis Shiell | Waltham Abbey Honey Lane |
| Jeane Lea     | Waltham Abbey North East |
| Helen Kane    | Waltham Abbey South West |

The Chairman presented declaration of acceptance of office certificates to the newly elected Members, Councillors A Beales, R Brooks, S Heap, J Jennings, D Roberts and H Whitbread.

### 3. RETIRING CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL - YEAR OF OFFICE

Councillor L Webster addressed the Council on her year of office. She thanked everyone that had attended functions across the Epping Forest District Council with her and that £4,600 had been raised for her chosen charity, the British Legion.

Councillors C Whitbread, S Murray, C P Pond and the Chief Executive, G Chipp on behalf of the staff, expressed their appreciation for her hard work and dedication she had shown during her term of office.

### 4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The nomination of Councillor J Lea for the Office of Chairman of the Council having been moved formally by Councillor S Stavrou and seconded by Councillor C Whitbread, it was:

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor J Lea be elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor J Lea thereupon made a Declaration of Acceptance of Office of the Chairman of the Council and thanked the Council for the honour. Councillor J Lea stated that the Chain of Office represented a great responsibility that had been placed upon her, which she hoped to live up to and that she wanted to communicate to the Districts Residents.

Councillor J Lea announced that her chosen charity for her term of office would be the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance.

#### **Councillor J Lea in the Chair**

### 5. PAST CHAIRMAN'S BADGE

The new Chairman presented Councillor L Webster with a past Chairman's badge of office.

### 6. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN



The nomination of Councillor D Stallan for the Vice-Chairman of the Council having been moved formally by Councillor A Grigg and seconded by Councillor C Whitbread was;

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor D Stallan be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor D Stallan thereupon made a declaration of Acceptance of Office of Vice-Chairman of the Council and thanked the Council for his appointment.

**7. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 April 2016 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest by members of the Council under this item.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**(a) Announcements by the Chairman of Council**

**(i) Floral Display**

The Chairman announced that she intended to send the flowers from tonight's meeting to St Clare's Hospice, Hastingwood.

**(b) Members not seeking Re-election or Not Re-elected**

The Council noted that T Church, J Hart, H Mann and T Thomas had not sought re-election on 5 May 2016 and N Wright had not been re-elected.

In recognition of K Angold-Stephens 12 years of service as a Member for the Loughton Roding Ward, the Chairman presented the award to his wife, Mrs J Angold-Stephens. Also J Hart had been sent a service award for his 12 years of service as a Member for Loughton Forest Ward.

**10. REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENT PANEL**

**Mover: Councillor C Whitbread, (Chairman of the Panel and Leader of the Council)**

Councillor C Whitbread reported on the appointments which he had made to the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and Outside Organisations carrying out Executive Functions.

Councillor C Whitbread also reported the recommendations of the Appointment Panel in relation to the membership, chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels (non-Executive bodies) and to Outside Organisations carrying out Council, Regulatory or non Cabinet Functions. Councillor

C Whitbread also advised of changes made to the nominations since the Panel had met.

The Council voted on appointments where the number of nominations exceeded the number of places available.

**Amendment moved by Councillor J Philip and seconded by Councillor C Whitbread**

That the requirement for pro-rata for the Licensing Committee be set aside to allow voting on the appointments to that body to proceed in accordance with Council procedure rule V2.

**Carried**

The appointments to the Licensing Committee were subject to a vote and set out in Appendix 3.

Following the nominations of Councillor M Sartin and Councillor L Girling for the position of Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillors C P Pond, C C Pond, D Wixley, S Murray and H Kauffman requested that there be a recorded vote for the position.

There voted for Councillor Girling: (7) namely: Councillors R Baldwin, A Beales, R Brookes, R Butler, D Dorrell, L Girling, S Heap, B Jennings, J Jennings, H Kauffman, L Mead, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, C C Pond, C P Pond, C Roberts, D Roberts, B Surtees, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley.

There voted for Councillor M Sartin: (37) namely: Councillors R Bassett, N Bedford, T Boyce, W Breare-Hall, G Chambers, R Gadsby, A Grigg, L Hughes, S Jones, H Kane, S Kane, P Keska, J Knapman, Y Knight, M McEwen, A Mitchell, A Patel, J Philip, B Rolfe, B Sandler, M Sartin, G Shiell, D Stallan, S Stavrou, G Waller, L Webster, C Whitbread and H Whitbread.

There abstained from the vote (1) namely: J Lea,

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the Constitution of Political Groups as set out in Appendix 1, to these minutes be noted;
- (2) That the appointments made by the Leader of the Council to the Cabinet and Cabinet Committees and the allocation of Portfolios as set out in Appendix 2, to these minutes be noted;
- (3) That the membership, chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels (non-executive bodies) as set out in Appendix 3 to these minutes be approved;
- (4) That the following appointments to nominate Group substitute Members on any Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels, Boards, Select Committees or Working Groups of the Council be noted;
  - (a) Conservative Group: Councillor C Whitbread (Leader), Councillor S Stavrou (Deputy Leader), Councillor S Kane and Councillor G Waller;

(b) Green Party Group: Councillor S Neville (Leader) and Councillor S Heap (Deputy Leader);

(c) Liberal Democrat Group: Councillor J M Whitehouse (Leader) and Councillor J H Whitehouse;

(d) Loughton Residents Association Group: Councillor C P Pond (Leader) and Councillor D Wixley (Deputy Leader); and

(e) UKIP: Councillor D Dorrell (Leader) and Councillor R Butler (Deputy Leader).

(5) That Group Leaders confirmed nominations to the Proper Officer for appointments to be made to the Select Committees by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by 7 June 2016;

(6) That the appointments to Outside Organisations carrying out Council, Regulatory or non-Cabinet Functions, as set out in Appendix 4 to these minutes be noted; and

(7) That the appointments made by the Leader of the Council to Outside Organisations carrying out Executive Functions as set out in Appendix 5, to these minutes be noted.

#### **11. SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS - DELEGATED BY OR ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL**

The Council's Constitution requires that scheme of delegations be agreed at the Annual meeting. The current scheme had received no further additions or amendments since the adoption of the Council's new Constitution on 26 April 2016.

##### **RESOLVED:**

That the Scheme of Delegations – Delegated by or on behalf of the Council be noted.

#### **12. COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR 2016/17**

On 15 December 2015, the Council had adopted a calendar of meetings for the period of May 2016 to May 2017, which had included the ordinary meetings of the Council. The Council's Constitution required that a programme of ordinary meetings of the Council was approved at the Annual meeting. The Council was also asked to note the change of dates for December 2016, February 2017 and noted that an extraordinary meeting of the Council would be held on Monday 6 June 2016 in relation to the Royal Gun Powder Mills, Waltham Abbey.

##### **RESOLVED:**

(1) That during 2016/17 ordinary meetings of the Council be held on the following dates:

26 July 2016;  
27 September 2016;  
1 November 2016;  
20 December 2016;

21 February 2017;  
23 February 2017 (reserve date for Budget meeting);  
25 April 2017; and  
25 May 2017 (Annual Council)

(2) That the Extraordinary Council meeting of the Council arranged for Monday 6 June 2016 in relation to the Royal Gun Powder Mills, Waltham Abbey be noted.

**CHAIRMAN**

## ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING – 26 MAY 2016

## CONSTITUTION OF POLITICAL GROUPS AND GROUP LEADERS

**Local Government and Housing Act 1989 – Notice of Constitution of Political Groups and Group Leaders**

To note in accordance with regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the constitution of political groups as follows:

**Conservative Group:**

Group Leader - Councillor C. Whitbread  
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor S. Stavrou

|                        |                     |                        |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Councillor Avey        | Councillor H Kane   | Councillor Rolfe       |
| Councillor Bassett     | Councillor S Kane   | Councillor Sandler     |
| Councillor Bedford     | Councillor Keska    | Councillor Sartin      |
| Councillor Boyce       | Councillor Knapman  | Councillor Shiell      |
| Councillor Brady       | Councillor Knight   | Councillor Stallan     |
| Councillor Breare-Hall | Councillor Lea      | Councillor Wagland     |
| Councillor Chambers    | Councillor Lion     | Councillor Waller      |
| Councillor Chana       | Councillor McEwen   | Councillor Webster     |
| Councillor Gadsby      | Councillor Mitchell | Councillor H Whitbread |
| Councillor Grigg       | Councillor Mohindra |                        |
| Councillor Hughes      | Councillor Patel    |                        |
| Councillor Jones       | Councillor Philip   |                        |

**Members 35**

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**Green Party Group:**

Group Leader - Councillor S. Neville  
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor S. Heap

**Members 2**

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**Liberal Democrats Group:**

Group Leader – Councillor J. M. Whitehouse  
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor J. H. Whitehouse

Councillor B. Surtees

**Members 3**

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**Loughton Residents' Association Group:**

Group Leader - Councillor C. P. Pond  
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor D. Wixley

|                       |                        |                       |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Councillor R. Baldwin | Councillor J. Jennings | Councillor C. C. Pond |
| Councillor A. Beales  | Councillor R. Jennings | Councillor C. Roberts |
| Councillor R. Brookes | Councillor H. Kauffman | Councillor D. Roberts |
| Councillor L. Girling | Councillor L. Mead     |                       |

**Members 13**

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**United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) Group:**

Group Leader - Councillor D. Dorrell  
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor R. Butler

**Members 2**

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## APPENDIX 2

### CABINET & CABINET COMMITTEES - LEADER APPOINTMENTS 2016/17

(a) Deputy Leader

|               | 2016/17    |
|---------------|------------|
| Deputy Leader | S. Stavrou |

(b) Other Cabinet Members/Allocation of Portfolios

| Portfolio                                 | Portfolio Holder 2016/17 |
|---|--------------------------|
| Leader                                    | C. Whitbread             |
| Asset Management and Economic Development | A. Grigg                 |
| Environment                               | W. Breare-Hall           |
| Finance                                   | G. Mohindra              |
| Governance and Development Management     | R. Bassett               |
| Housing                                   | S. Stavrou               |
| Leisure and Community Services            | H. Kane                  |
| Safer, Greener and Transport              | G. Waller                |
| Planning Policy                           | J. Philip                |
| Technology and Support Services           | A. Lion                  |

(c) Cabinet Committee Memberships (not part of pro rata allocations)

(i) Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee

Leader

Finance Portfolio Holder (Chairman)

Housing Portfolio Holder

Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder

Technology and Support Services Portfolio Holder

(ii) Asset Management and Economic Development Cabinet Committee

Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder (Chairman)

Environment Portfolio Holder

Finance Portfolio Holder

Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder

Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder

(iii) Local Plan Cabinet Committee

Leader

Asset Management and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder

Technology and Support Services Portfolio Holder

Planning Policy Portfolio Holder (Chairman)

**(iv) Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee**

Housing Portfolio Holder (Chairman)

Planning Policy Portfolio Holder

Environment Portfolio Holder

Finance Portfolio Holder

Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder



**APPENDIX 3**

**COMMITTEE ETC. APPOINTMENTS 2016/17**

| <b>AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE EAST (19 MEMBERS) (NOT PRO RATA)*</b> |               |                           |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|---|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
|   |               | <b>Conservative Group</b> | <b>Green Party Group</b> | <b>Liberal Democrat Group</b> | <b>LRA Group</b> | <b>UKIP Group</b> | <b>Independent Members</b> |
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b>   | Chairman      | S. Jones                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   | Vice-Chairman | P. Keska                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | N. Avey                   |                          | B. Surtees                    |                  |                   | R. Morgan                  |
|   |               | N. Bedford                |                          | J.H. Whitehouse               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | T. Boyce                  |                          | J.M. Whitehouse               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | H. Brady                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | W. Breare-Hall            |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | A. Grigg                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | S. Jones                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | P. Keska                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | M. McEwen                 |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | J. Philip                 |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | B. Rolfe                  |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | D. Stallan                |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | G. Waller                 |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   |               | C. Whitbread              |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |
|   | H. Whitbread  |                           |                          |                               |                  |                   |                            |

\*Membership of Area Plans Sub-Committee East comprises all members of the relevant wards.

**AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE WEST (14 MEMBERS) (NOT PRO RATA)\***

|                           |               | Conservative Group | Green Party Group | Liberal Democrat Group | LRA Group | UKIP Group | Independent Members |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b> | Chairman      | A. Mitchell        |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           | Vice-Chairman | G. Shiell          |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | R. Bassett         |                   |                        |           | R. Butler  |                     |
|                           |               | R. Gadsby          |                   |                        |           | D. Dorrell |                     |
|                           |               | L. Hughes          |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | H. Kane            |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | S. Kane            |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | Y. Knight          |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | J. Lea             |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | A. Mitchell        |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | M. Sartin          |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | G. Shiell          |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | S. Stavrou         |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                           |               | E. Webster         |                   |                        |           |            |                     |

\*Membership of Area Plans Sub-Committee West comprises all members of the relevant wards.

| <b>AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE SOUTH (25 MEMBERS - SUBJECT TO 'OPT IN') (NOT PRO RATA)*</b> |               |                    |                   |                        |             |            |                     |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|
|  |               | Conservative Group | Green Party Group | Liberal Democrat Group | LRA Group   | UKIP Group | Independent Members |
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b>  | Chairman      | G. Chambers        |                   |                        |             |            |                     |
|  | Vice-Chairman | A. Patel           |                   |                        |             |            |                     |
|  |               | G. Chambers        | S. Heap           |                        | R. Baldwin  |            | S. Murray           |
|  |               | K. Chana           |                   |                        | A. Beales   |            | S. Watson           |
|  |               | J. Knapman         |                   |                        | R. Brookes  |            |                     |
|  |               | A. Lion            |                   |                        | L. Girling  |            |                     |
|  |               | G. Mohindra        |                   |                        | J. Jennings |            |                     |
|  |               | A. Patel           |                   |                        | R. Jennings |            |                     |
|  |               | B. Sandler         |                   |                        | H. Kauffman |            |                     |
|  |               | L. Wagland         |                   |                        | L. Mead     |            |                     |
|  |               |                    |                   |                        | C.C. Pond   |            |                     |
|  |               |                    |                   |                        | C.P. Pond   |            |                     |
|  |               |                    |                   |                        | C. Roberts  |            |                     |
|  |               |                    |                   | D. Roberts             |             |            |                     |
|  |               |                    |                   | D. Wixley              |             |            |                     |

Membership of Area Plans Sub-Committee South comprises all members of the relevant wards, subject to opt-in. Each member above has opted-in for 2016/17. Only Councillor S. Neville has opted-out for 2016/17.

| <b>AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (5 MEMBERS PLUS 2 CO-OPTED PERSONS)*</b> |          |  |                       |                            |               |                |                         |  |
|--|----------|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|--|
|  |          | Conservative Group (3)   | Green Party Group (0) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (1) | UKIP Group (0) | Independent Members (0) |  |
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b>  | Chairman | The chairman of the Committee is appointed at first meeting in each municipal year |                       |                            |               |                |                         |  |
|  |          | J. Knapman   |                       | J.M. Whitehouse            | R. Jennings   |                |                         |  |
|  |          | L. Hughes  |                       |                            |               |                |                         |  |
|  |          | A Patel  |                       |                            |               |                |                         |  |

\*The vice-chairmanship of the Audit and Governance Committee is assumed by a co-opted person.

**CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP (11 MEMBERS)**

|                           |               | Conservative Group (7) | Green Party Group (0) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (2) | UKIP Group (1) | Independent Members (0) |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b> | Chairman      | M. McEwen              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           | Vice-Chairman | M. Sartin              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | M. McEwen              |                       | J.H. Whitehouse            | C.C. Pond     | D. Dorrell     |                         |
|                           |               | J. Philip              |                       |                            | C.P. Pond     |                |                         |
|                           |               | A. Mitchell            |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | M. Sartin              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | D. Stallan             |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | G. Waller              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | H Whitbread            |                       |                            |               |                |                         |

**DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (15 MEMBERS)\***

|                           |               | Conservative Group (9) | Green Party Group (1) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (3) | UKIP Group (1) | Independent Members (0) |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b> | Chairman      | B. Sandler             |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           | Vice-Chairman | B. Rolfe               |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | A. Boyce               | S. Heap               | J.M. Whitehouse            | R. Jennings   | R. Butler      |                         |
|                           |               | H. Brady               |                       |                            | H. Kauffman   |                |                         |
|                           |               | G. Chambers            |                       |                            | C.C. Pond     |                |                         |
|                           |               | S. Jones               |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | S. Kane                |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | J. Knapman             |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | A. Mitchell            |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | B. Rolfe               |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           | B. Sandler    |                        |                       |                            |               |                |                         |

| <b>Joint Consultative Committee (9 members plus 9 staff side representatives)*</b> |           |                        |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|--|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|
|  |           | Conservative Group (6) | Green Party Group (0) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (2) | UKIP Group (0) | Independent Members (0) |
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b>  | Chairman* | A. Lion                |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|  |           | S. Kane                |                       | B. Surtees                 | R. Baldwin    |                |                         |
|  |           | J. Knapman             |                       |                            | C. Roberts    |                |                         |
|  |           | A. Lion                |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|  |           | G. Shiell              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|  |           | D. Stallan             |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|  |           | G. Waller              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|  |           |                        |                       |                            |               |                |                         |

\*The chairmanship of the Joint Consultative Committee is to be assumed by a councillor for 2016/17.

**Licensing Committee (and Sub-Committee) (15 members\*)**

|                                  |                                   | Conservative Group (9) | Green Party Group (0) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (3) | UKIP Group (1) | Independent Members (1) |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b>        | Chairman                          |                        |                       | B. Surtees                 |               |                |                         |
|                                  | Vice-Chairman                     |                        |                       |                            |               |                | R. Morgan               |
|                                  |                                   | N. Bedford             |                       | B. Surtees                 | J. Jennings   | D. Dorrell     | R. Morgan               |
|                                  |                                   | A. Boyce               |                       |                            | L. Mead       |                |                         |
|                                  |                                   | K. Chana               |                       |                            | C.P. Pond     |                |                         |
|                                  |                                   | R. Gadsby              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                                  |                                   | P. Keska               |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                                  |                                   | A. Lion                |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                                  |                                   | B. Rolfe               |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                                  |                                   | M. Sartin              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                                  | G. Shiell                         |                        |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
| Licensing Sub-Cttee Chairmen (6) | A. Boyce<br>P. Keska<br>M. Sartin |                        |                       | B. Surtees                 |               | D. Dorrell     | R. Morgan               |

The Licensing Act 2003 requires that the Licensing Committee comprise no more than 15 members. Licensing Sub-Committees should comprise no more than 3 members. The Council agreed for the pro-rotas of this Committee to be set aside for 2016/17.

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee (17 Members)\***

|                           |               | Conservative Group (10) | Green Party Group (1) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (4)    | UKIP Group (1) | Independent Members (0) |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b> | Chairman      | M. Sartin               |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |
|                           | Vice-Chairman |                         |                       |                            | L. Girling       |                |                         |
|                           |               | N. Avey                 | S. Neville            | B. Surtees                 | R. Brookes       | D. Dorrell     |                         |
|                           |               | N. Bedford              |                       |                            | L. Girling       |                |                         |
|                           |               | S. Kane                 |                       |                            | D. Wixley        |                |                         |
|                           |               | A. Mitchell             |                       |                            | +S. Murray (IND) |                |                         |
|                           |               | A. Patel                |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |
|                           |               | B. Rolfe                |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |
|                           |               | M. Sartin               |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |
|                           |               | G. Shiell               |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |
|                           |               | D. Stallan              |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |
|                           | Y Knight      |                         |                       |                            |                  |                |                         |

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The Appointments Panel wishes membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (normally 15 members) to comprise 17 members (pro rata) for 2016/17. An additional seat accruing to the LRA Group under this arrangement has been allocated to Councillor S. Murray (IND).

**Standards Committee (9 Members)**

|                           |               | Conservative Group (6) | Green Party Group (0) | Liberal Democrat Group (1) | LRA Group (2) | UKIP Group (0) | Independent Members (0) |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>MEMBERSHIP 2016/17</b> | Chairman      | G. Chambers            |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           | Vice-Chairman |                        |                       |                            | C.P. Pond     |                |                         |
|                           |               | G. Chambers            |                       | J.H. Whitehouse            | C.P. Pond     |                |                         |
|                           |               | S. Kane                |                       |                            | C. Roberts    |                |                         |
|                           |               | M. McEwen              |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | A. Mitchell            |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           |               | B. Rolfe               |                       |                            |               |                |                         |
|                           | D. Stallan    |                        |                       |                            |               |                |                         |

**Staff Appeals Panel (5 members and 5 deputies)**

|                    |                   | Conservative Group (3)                 | Green Party Group (1) | Liberal Democrat Group (0) | LRA Group (2)   | UKIP Group (0) | Independent Members (0) |
|--------------------|-------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| MEMBERSHIP 2016/17 | Chairman          | To be decided when the committee meets |                       |                            |                 |                |                         |
|                    | Vice-Chairman     |  |                       |                            |                 |                |                         |
|                    |                   | G. Chambers                            | S. Neville            |                            | L. Mead         |                |                         |
|                    |                   | B. Rolfe                               | S. Heap (Dep)         |                            | C.P. Pond (Dep) |                |                         |
|                    |                   | B. Sandler                             |                       |                            |                 |                |                         |
|                    |                   | L. Hughes (Dep)                        |                       |                            |                 |                |                         |
|                    |                   | Y. Knight (Dep)                        |                       |                            |                 |                |                         |
|                    | A. Mitchell (Dep) |  |                       |                            |                 |                |                         |

**OTHER BODIES (NOT PRO-RATA)**

**Leisure Management Contract Monitoring Board (6 members)\***

|                    |  | Conservative Group | Green Party Group | Liberal Democrat Group | LRA Group  | UKIP Group | Independent Members |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|
| MEMBERSHIP 2016/17 |  | G. Chambers        |                   | J.M. Whitehouse        | R. Brookes |            | R. Morgan           |
|                    |  | H. Kane            |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                    |  | P. Keska           |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                    |  |                    |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                    |  |                    |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                    |  |                    |                   |                        |            |            |                     |



**Portfolio Holder Advisory Group - Leisure Management**

|                       |  | Conservative Group | Green Party Group | Liberal Democrat Group | LRA Group   | UKIP Group | Independent Members |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| MEMBERSHIP<br>2016/17 |  | G. Chambers        |                   | J.M. Whitehouse        | R. Jennings |            | R. Morgan           |
|                       |  | H. Kane            |                   |                        |             |            |                     |
|                       |  | P. Keska           |                   |                        |             |            |                     |
|                       |  | G. Shiell          |                   |                        |             |            |                     |
|                       |  | E. Webster         |                   |                        |             |            |                     |

**Portfolio Holder Advisory Group – Car Parking Strategy**

|                       |  | Conservative Group | Green Party Group | Liberal Democrat Group | LRA Group  | UKIP Group | Independent Members |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------|------------|---------------------|
| MEMBERSHIP<br>2016/17 |  | A. Patel           |                   | J.H. Whitehouse        | L. Girling | D. Dorrell | R. Morgan           |
|                       |  | G. Waller          |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                       |  | E. Webster         |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                       |  |                    |                   |                        |            |            |                     |
|                       |  |                    |                   |                        |            |            |                     |

**Waste Management Partnership Board**

**(2 Members plus 2 Officers and 4 representatives of the Council’s waste management contractor)**

|                       |  | Conservative Group           | Green Party Group | Liberal Democrat Group | LRA Group | UKIP Group | Independent Members |
|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|
| MEMBERSHIP<br>2016/17 |  | Environment Portfolio Holder |                   |                        |           |            |                     |
|                       |  | Finance Portfolio Holder     |                   |                        |           |            |                     |

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## APPENDIX 4

### REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

#### 1. Leader Appointments - Organisations Carrying Out Executive Functions

| Organisation and Allocation Category |   | Nominations for 2016/17   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1.                                   | Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH) – Executive Board  | Housing Portfolio Holder<br>*See also officer appointment   |
| 2.                                   | Civil Enforcement of Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London (PATROL) – Adjudication Joint Committee   | Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder   |
| 3.                                   | <del>Crime and Disorder Strategy Panel</del><br>Epping Forest District Community Safety Partnership   | Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder<br>Environment Portfolio Holder (Deputy)  |
| 4.                                   | East of England Local Government Association  | Leader  |
| 5.                                   | Enfield Essex Herts Border Liaison Group  | R Bassett<br>M Sartin<br>L Webster<br>Y Knight (Deputy)<br>J Lea (Deputy)<br>G Shiell (Deputy)  |
| 6.                                   | Epping Forest District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP):<br><br>(a) LSP Board;<br><br>(b) Health Equalities Group;<br><br>(c) Safer Communities Partnership;<br><br>(d) Sustainable Communities Group;<br><br>(e) Epping Forest Children’s Partnership | Leader and Assets & Economic Development Portfolio Holder<br><br>Finance Portfolio Holder and B Sandler<br><br>Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder<br><br>Assets & Economic Development Portfolio Holder<br><br>E Webster |
| 7.                                   | Essex Community Wide Traveller Unit   | Planning Policy Portfolio Holder  |
| 8.                                   | Essex Waste Partnership - Inter-Authority Member Working Group  | Environment Portfolio Holder<br>Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder (Deputy)  |
| 9.                                   | Harlow Stansted Gateway Transportation Board (HSGTB)  | Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder<br>Assets & Economic Development Portfolio Holder (Deputy)  |
| 10.                                  | Local Government Association - General Assembly   | Leader<br>Deputy Leader   |

| <b>Organisation and Allocation Category</b> |   | <b>Nominations for 2016/17</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| 12.   | North Essex Parking Partnership         | Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder<br>Environment Portfolio Holder (Deputy) |
| 13.   | South East Local Enterprise Partnership | Leader<br>Assets & Economic Development Portfolio Holder                             |
| 14.   | Waste Partnership Member Board          | Environment Portfolio Holder<br>Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder (Deputy) |
| 15.   | West Essex Alliance                     | Leader<br>Assets & Economic Development Portfolio Holder (Deputy)                    |

## APPENDIX 5

### 1. Council Appointments - Organisations Carrying Out Council Regulatory or Non-Cabinet Functions

| Organisation and Allocation Category |  | Nominations for 2016/17  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1.                                   | Epping Forest Care and Repair Management Committee   | A Grigg<br>A Mitchell<br>G Shiell  |
| 2.                                   | Epping Forest Citizens' Advice Bureau  | K Chana<br>J Knapman (Appointed voting Member)<br>J. Jennings                              |
| 3.                                   | Campaign to Protect Rural England (Essex Branch)   | A Boyce<br>Y Knight (Deputy)   |
| 4.                                   | <del>Epping Forest Community Transport Steering Group</del><br>Epping Forest Community Transport Board of Trustees | G Waller   |
| 5.                                   | Epping Forest Housing Aid Committee  | G Shiell   |
| 6.                                   | Epping Forest Local Highways Panel   | N Avey<br>R Bassett<br>G Chambers<br>K Chana<br>P Keska<br>C. Roberts<br>E Webster         |
| 7.                                   | Essex Police and Crime Panel   | G Waller   |
| 8.                                   | Essex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee   | Not required for 2016/17. Councillor R. Gadsby has been appointed by Essex County Council. |
| 9.                                   | Grange Farm Managing Trustees (Term to 31.5.19)  | Not required for 2016/17   |
| 10.                                  | Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (Term to 30.6.17)   | Not required for 2016/17   |

| Organisation and Allocation Category |   | Nominations for 2016/17  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| 11.                                  | Leisure Centres Liaison Groups:<br>(a) Epping Sports Centre<br><br>(b) Ongar Leisure Centre<br><br>(c) Loughton Leisure Centre<br><br>(d) Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool | W Breare-Hall<br>H Whitbread<br><br>N Bedford<br>P Keska<br><br>R. Brookes<br>G Chambers<br>A Patel<br><br>J Lea<br>G Shiell |
| 12.                                  | Local Councils Liaison Committee  | A Boyce<br>J Lea<br>M Sartin<br>B Rolfe<br>E Webster<br>J H Whitehouse   |
| 13                                   | Outer North-East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee  | G Mohindra   |
| 14.                                  | Princess Alexandra Hospital - Partnership Governor  | G Mohindra   |
| 16.                                  | Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve:<br><br>(a) Management Committee<br><br>(b) Working Group  | (a) S Murray (IND)<br><br>(b) Officer representative see officer schedule*   |
| 17.                                  | Stansted Airport Consultative Committee   | M Sartin<br>G Waller (Deputy)  |
| 18.                                  | Stansted Airport Community Trust Fund   | R Morgan   |

| <b>Organisation and Allocation Category</b> |   | <b>Nominations for 2016/17</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| 19.   | Town Centre Partnerships:<br>(a) Buckhurst Hill Town Centre Partnership<br><br>(b) Epping Town Centre Partnership<br><br>(c) Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership<br><br>(d) Loughton High Road Town Centre Partnership<br><br>(e) Ongar Town Forum (Steering Group)<br><br>(f) Waltham Abbey Town Partnership | G Chambers<br>A Patel<br><br>N Avey<br>H Whitbread<br><br>C. Roberts<br>D. Roberts<br><br>A. Beales<br>J. Jennings<br><br>N Bedford<br>P Keska<br><br>H Kane<br>G Mohindra |
| 20.   | Voluntary Action Epping Forest  | G Shiell   |
| 21.   | Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills Ltd   | H Kane   |
| 22.   | Waltham Abbey Tourist Information Centre (Joint Management Committee)   | A Mitchell<br>E Webster<br>J Lea   |
| 23.   | West Essex Wellbeing Joint Committee  | G Mohindra<br>A Patel  |

**2. Appointments Held by Officers – Organisations Carrying Out Executive Functions (Appointments by the Leader)**

|    | <b>Organisation and Committee Responsible</b>           | <b>Representative 2016/17</b>                  |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH)          | Director of Communities (or representative)    |
| 2. | National Society for Clean Air (SE Division)            | Director of Neighbourhoods (or representative) |
| 3. | Standing Conference – Investigation of Air Pollution    | Director of Neighbourhoods (or representative) |
| 4. | Roding Valley Meadow Local Nature Reserve Working Group | Director of Neighbourhoods (or representative) |

**3. Appointments Held by Officers – Organisations Carrying Out Council Regulatory or Non-Executive Functions**

This Appendix indicates those organisations where the Council determined on 25 April 1995 that the representatives should be officers.

|    | <b>Organisation and Committee Responsible</b>                          | <b>Representative</b>                          |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | Essex Water Safety Liaison Committee                                   | Director of Neighbourhoods (or representative) |
| 2. | Voluntary Action Epping Forest (see also member appointments schedule) | Grants Officer (+G Shiell)                     |



## **EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES**

**Committee:** Council **Date:** 6 June 2016

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 10.20 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors J Lea (Chairman), D Stallan (Vice-Chairman), N Avey, R Baldwin, N Bedford, A Boyce, H Brady, W Breare-Hall, R Brookes, R Butler, G Chambers, K Chana, D Dorrell, R Gadsby, L Girling, S Heap, L Hughes, R Jennings, J Jennings, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Knapman, S Murray, S Neville, A Patel, C P Pond, C C Pond, C Roberts, D Roberts, B Rolfe, B Sandler, M Sartin, G Shiell, S Stavrou, B Surtees, G Waller, E Webster, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse and D Wixley

**Apologies:** Councillors R Bassett, A Beales, A Grigg, S Jones, Y Knight, A Lion, R Morgan, J Philip, L Wagland, S Watson, C Whitbread and J M Whitehouse

**Officers Present:** C O'Boyle (Director of Governance), S G Hill (Assistant Director (Governance & Performance Management)), N Richardson (Assistant Director (Development Management)), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer), R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer), S Kits (Social Media and Customer Services Officer) and A Rose (Marketing & Digital Content Officer)

### **13. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Assistant Director of Governance and Performance Management reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

### **14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct Councillor H Kane declared a non pecuniary interest on items 4 and 5, EPF/3028/15 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Full Planning Application and EPF/0018/16 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Grade II\* Listed Building Application by virtue of being the Council's appointed representative on Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills Ltd. She had sought advice and advised that she would remain in the Chamber for the consideration of the application and voting.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors Sartin, Knapman and Stavrou declared a non pecuniary interest on items 4 and 5, EPF/3028/15 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Full Planning Application and EPF/0018/16 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Grade II\* Listed Building Application by virtue of being Council representatives of the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority. They had taken no part in any discussion regarding the application and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the application and voting.

(c) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Gadsby declared a non pecuniary interest on items 4 and 5, EPF/3028/15 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Full Planning Application and EPF/0018/16 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey –

Grade II\* Listed Building Application by virtue of previously being County Council representatives of the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority. She had taken no part in any discussion regarding the application and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the application and voting.

(d) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor Webster and Stavrou declared a non pecuniary interest on items 4 and 5, EPF/3028/15 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Full Planning Application and EPF/0018/16 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey – Grade II\* Listed Building Application by virtue of being a Waltham Abbey Town Councillor. They had taken no part in any discussion regarding the application and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the application and voting.

## 15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Full Council Protocol

The Chairman advised Members that Part 4 – Members Conduct M1 of the Council Constitution stated that the protocol for Council meetings was for Members to stand when speaking and address the meeting through the Chairman.

(b) Armed Forces – Raising of the Flag

The Chairman advised that the raising of the flag for Armed Forces would be on Monday 20 June 2016 at 10.30 am outside the Civic Offices and all Members were welcome to attend.

(c) Battle of the Somme Commemoration Service

The Chairman advised that Members were welcome to attend the Vice-Chairman lighting the brazier at 9 p.m. on 30 June 2016 and an early morning outdoor service of commemoration at 7.30 a.m. Friday 1 July 2016 at the North Weald Airfield.

(d) Chairman's Charity Golf Day

The Chairman advised that the Chairman's Charity Golf day was on Tuesday 28 June 2016.

(e) Councillor R Baldwin

The Chairman presented declaration of acceptance of office certificates to newly elected Member Councillor R Baldwin.

16. **PLANNING APPLICATION EPF/3028/15 - GUNPOWDER MILL, POWDERMILL LANE/BEAULIEU DRIVE, WALTHAM ABBEY - FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE USE OF PARTS OF THE SITE AS AN OUTDOOR RECREATION AND ACTIVITY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN TOGETHER WITH THE ERECTION OF NEW BUILDINGS TO PROVIDE: GUEST ACCOMMODATION, DINING HALL AND KITCHEN, PAVILION (CHANGING ROOMS); AND THE CONVERSION OF SEVERAL LISTED BUILDINGS TO PROVIDE FURTHER GUEST ACCOMMODATION AND CLASSROOMS, TOGETHER WITH A NEW LAKE FOR WATER BASED ACTIVITIES AND THE ERECTION OF FREE-STANDING ACTIVITY STRUCTURES.**

**Mover: Councillor B Sandler, Chairman of District Development Management Committee**

The Assistant Director of Governance (Development Management) presented a report regarding a full planning application for the use of parts of the site as an outdoor recreation and activity centre for children together with the erection of new buildings to provide guest accommodation, dining hall and kitchen, pavilion (changing rooms). Alongside the conversion of several listed buildings to provide further guest accommodation and classrooms, together with a new lake for water based activities and the erection of free-standing activity structures.

**Amendment moved by Councillor H Kane and Seconded by Councillor L Webster**

That the planning application be deferred for further information on an agreement between the operating company and the trustees regarding shared facilities and the re-use of the Cordite buildings.

**Lost**

Following a further debate Councillor B Sandler moved the recommendation on the agenda which included the following additions;

Under the legal agreement under recommendation (1):-

"4. The preparation of a formal agreement between the Operating Company for the visitor attraction and PGL for the shared use of some existing facilities and the Queen's Mead area, with the implementation of the agreement prior to the first occupation of the development."

"5. The preparation of a strategy to be agreed between the Trust and the attraction operator for the rationalisation and provision of those facilities that would need to be relocated, pending proposals for the introduction of a new sustainable visitor attraction."

An additional condition under recommendation (2):-

"31. Prior to first occupation of the development, details of a screening fence adjacent to the rear garden boundary to Hoppit Road of residential properties at 2, 3 and 4 Gregory Mews shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The details as approved shall be provided before first occupation of the development and retained thereafter."

**Lost**

**Amendment moved by Councillor C C Pond and Seconded by Councillor H Kauffman**

That the application be refused, for reasons to be drafted by the Director of Governance which would include policy numbers only, but to include;

(1) The demolition of all but a small part of the unlisted cordite factory would severely impact the historical integrity of the Conservation Area as a whole, which the Local Planning Authority is under a statutory duty to preserve and enhance. Thus the proposals would detrimentally impact on the Conservation Area contrary to planning policies HC6, HC9 and HC 16 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework;

(b) Insufficient reasons have been adduced for the demolition of most of the Cordite Factory, which is a non-specifically designated heritage asset within the Conservation Area, contrary to paragraphs 128, 132 and 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework;

(c) Insufficient consideration appears to have been given to adaptation of the Cordite Factory by replacing the lightweight construction between the blast walls and then reusing the whole, contrary to Policies HC6 HC9 and HC16(ii) of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations;

(d) The harm done to the site and the heritage assets it contains would be substantial, in that a key set of buildings is proposed for demolition rather than sensitive conservation and reuse, contrary to Planning Policies HC6, HC9 and HC16(ii) of Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and paragraphs 132 and 133 of The National Planning Policy Framework;

(e) Insufficient attention has been given to the continuation and improvement of the visitor attraction contrary to Policy HC16(iv) of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations;

(f) The increase of the footprint of the buildings on the site of approximately of 30% is unacceptable in the Green Belt site, which is wholly in the Metropolitan Green Belt. There are no special circumstances to outweigh the harm; therefore the proposals are contrary to Planning Policy CP2, GB2A and HC16(v) of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Chairman requested that the meeting be adjourned whilst councillor C C Pond completed the reasons for refusal for members to be considered. The meeting was adjourned at 9.30 p.m. and re-convened at 10.05 p.m. for the purposes of transacting the remaining items on the agenda.

Following the resumption of the meeting, the Council voted on the amendment which was carried.

**Carried**

The Council discussed a way forward for the application which included the following;

1. To reduce the foot print of new buildings proposed in the planning application substantially;

2. To refresh and re-use the cordite factory as accommodation in accordance with the Local Plan Policy; and
3. That a formal agreement with the operating company should be submitted in draft for approval by Members and should include unfettered visitor attraction use of buildings fronting Queens Mead; and
4. That an archaeological investigation report be submitted.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Planning Application EPF/3028/15 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey be refused, for reasons to be drafted by the Director of Governance which would include policy numbers only, but to include;

- (1) The demolition of all but a small part of the unlisted cordite factory would severely impact the historical integrity of the Conservation Area as a whole, which the Local Planning Authority is under a statutory duty to preserve and enhance. Thus the proposals would detrimentally impact on the Conservation Area contrary to planning policies HC6, HC9 and HC 16 of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- (2) Insufficient reasons have been adduced for the demolition of most of the Cordite Factory, which is a non-specifically designated heritage asset within the Conservation Area, contrary to paragraphs 128, 132 and 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework;
- (3) Insufficient consideration appears to have been given to adaptation of the Cordite Factory by replacing the lightweight construction between the blast walls and then reusing the whole, contrary to Policies HC6 HC9 and HC16(ii) of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations;
- (4) The harm done to the site and the heritage assets it contains would be substantial, in that a key set of buildings is proposed for demolition rather than sensitive conversation and reuse, contrary to Planning Policies HC6, HC9 and HC16(ii) of Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and paragraphs 132 and 133 of The National Planning Policy Framework;
- (5) Insufficient attention has been given to the continuation and improvement of the visitor attraction contrary to Policy HC16(iv) of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations;
- (6) The increase of the footprint of the buildings on the site of approximately of 30% is unacceptable in the Green Belt site, which is wholly in the Metropolitan Green Belt. There are no special circumstances to outweigh the harm; therefore the proposals are contrary to Planning Policy CP2, GB2A and HC16(v) of the Adopted Local Plan and Alterations and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

17. **LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION EPF/0018/16 - GUNPOWDER MILL, POWDERMILL LANE/BEAULIEU DRIVE, WALTHAM ABBEY - GRADE II\* LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION AND ALTERATION AND EXTENSION OF SEVERAL LISTED BUILDINGS TO PROVIDE GUEST ACCOMMODATION AND CLASSROOMS, AS PART OF THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AS A RESIDENTIAL CENTRE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION AND ACTIVITY.**

The Assistant Director (Development Management) presented a report regarding the Grade II\* Listed Building Application for the conversion and alteration and extension of several listed buildings, which would provide guest accommodation and classrooms, as part of the redevelopment of the site as a residential centre for outdoor recreation and activity.

Following a short debate on the application, Councillor Sandler moved the recommendations on the agenda and the 6 conditions.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the Council considers the Listed Building Application EPF/0018/16 - Gunpowder Mill, Powdermill Lane/Beaulieu Drive, Waltham Abbey be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings these being those set out in the Drawing Register (Sheets 1 to 4) submitted with the application.

Reason: To ensure the proposal is built in accordance with the approved drawings.

3. Notwithstanding approved drawings, samples of the types and details of colours of all the fencing, hardstanding, and signage shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works

4. Dining Hall extension to L168:

- Details of the types and colours of the external finishes of the extension to L168 shall be submitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development, and the development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.

- A sample panel of brickwork for the extension to L168, minimum size 900 x 900mm, shall be built on site prior to commencement and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works.

- Additional drawings that show details of proposed new window, doors, eaves, verges, and cills of the extension to L168, by section and elevation at scales between 1:20 and 1:1 as appropriate, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to the commencement of the works.

- Notwithstanding annotations on the approved drawings, fascias, soffits and bargeboards of the extension to L168 shall be timber unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

5. Notwithstanding annotations on the approved drawings, all new rainwater goods and soil and vent pipes shall be of black painted cast iron unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

6. Additional drawings that show details of proposed new internal doors, at scales between 1:20 and 1:1 as appropriate, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing prior to their installation.

**CHAIRMAN**

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## ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Asset & Economic Development

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor A Grigg

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Asset & Economic Development Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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### **1. Visitor Economy**

Economic Development has been working with colleagues in Planning to commission a Visitor Accommodation Needs Assessment for the district. This work will look at all forms of visitor accommodation, including serviced (hotels, pub accommodation etc) and non-serviced accommodation (self-catering, camping, moorings etc). As reported previously, the main driver of this work is the preparation of the new Local Plan and the Study will form a key part of the evidence base helping to inform tourism policies in the Local Plan.

Beyond planning policy though, the Study potentially has the scope to inform broader interventions within the Council e.g. through the Economic and Tourism Development Teams and perhaps in the consideration of the future use of the Council's own assets etc. At the time of writing this update, interviews have been undertaken with potential consultants with the final decision on appointment to be made imminently.

A presentation has also been received from a potential provider of a new tourism website under the Visit Epping Forest banner. Work will now commence to realise the vision for a dynamic new website which is intended to greater promote and support the district's valuable visitor economy. The initial procurement and build of the website is being funded through monies awarded by the Town and Village Centres Opportunities Fund.

Following representation from the Tourism and Visitor Board members that a tourism conference towards the end of the year might be more useful than during English Tourism Week in March as staged currently, a decision was made to host a second conference this year on 14th October and this will once again take place at the Waltham Abbey Marriott Hotel.

The Visit Epping Forest leaflet has recently been enlarged, updated and reprinted. As part of an awareness building campaign, leaflet holders have been purchased and the new leaflets placed in high-traffic visitor outlets across the district. The leaflets feature our major attractions plus information on destination towns and villages in the district and will help drive traffic to the Visit Epping Forest website, particularly important in view of the planned refresh of the website mentioned above.

### **2. Town Centres**

I recently chaired the latest Town Teams meeting which took place on 27<sup>th</sup> June. I am very pleased to say that the meeting was well attended and a number of presentations were

received at the meeting looking at town centre evacuation plans as well as findings from a recent Future of Town Centres seminar.

The 2016/17 Town & Village Centres Opportunities Fund was introduced to the town teams present at that meeting. At the time of writing, a report presenting a new policy document for the fund, setting out the parameters within which a wider range of organisations can apply to the fund, was due to be presented to Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> July for review and subject to this being approved a wider and more concerted launch and promotional campaign for the fund will then take place.

### **3. Business Support**

#### **Pop Up Café**

The Economic Development Team is pleased to be testing a new format business event in the district in July. The Pop Up Business Café was, at the time of writing, due to be held at the newly-refurbished Epping Forest District Museum in Waltham Abbey on Wednesday 13 July, 10am to 1pm. BEST Growth Hub (which provides business support across the Greater Essex area) were helping to coordinate the café and ran a similar event in Southend earlier this year which was very successful.

The basic concept was to draw together a small number of business support and local business professionals in an informal setting and to invite local businesses and those looking to start-up in business. The businesses would be attracted by the chance to speak with a business professional (say marketing, accounting, HR etc.) for 10/15 minutes and the opportunity for networking.

#### **Database**

The Team's exercise to improve the information and contact information it holds for local businesses within the district has progressed well. The work is helping in the delivery of a number of the Team's current projects and means that its regular email updates (on business events, funding, training opportunities, awards etc) are reaching a bigger audience locally and similarly, so too will One Business Briefing from now on.

#### **Asset Management**

Progress reports on the Epping Forest Shopping Park, are being considered on a regular basis by the Economic Development and Asset Management Cabinet Committee, attended by the lead consultants responsible for project management and lettings. In addition, a report on the award of the main construction contract for the Shopping Park for those Members who are interested will be considered by Cabinet on the 21 July. I am pleased to report that the new Depot at Oakwood Hill is now largely completed, with the only outstanding issues in relation to some external hard landscaping. This will allow all the Council's Services to be transferred, from Langston Road, giving the appointed Construction Contractor a vacant site.

Also on the 21 July Cabinet Agenda, is a further report on the St John's Road Redevelopment.

## ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Environment

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor W Breare-Hall

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### **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Environment Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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### **Fly tipping**

Incidents of fly tipping continue to be a problem across the county, with a number of areas in our district targeted by repeat offenders. Recent incidents in North Weald prompted residents to contact BBC Essex. This resulted in the Council's Environment & Neighbourhood Manager, Richard Gardiner, participating in a live studio interview to discuss fly-tip enforcement and prevention.

Mr Gardiner emphasised the need for all of us to take responsibility for our own waste and to always "Check, Challenge and Record" whenever we transfer waste to somebody else for disposal. Businesses and householders alike have a "duty of care" to ensure their waste is handed to an authorised person.

The Environment & Neighbourhoods team have a number of ongoing fly-tip investigations, and recently had three fly tipping cases in court, resulting in substantial fines and costs being awarded:

Mr. Samee Ullah, of Blackhorse Road, Walthamstow, was fined £1200 and ordered to pay the Council's prosecution costs of £1987 together with a Victim Surcharge of £120 after pleading guilty to a waste duty of care offence in relation to a large pile of fly-tipped waste found in Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey. He had handed waste materials from refitting of his restaurant to another person without exchanging a written description of the waste, known as a Waste Transfer Note. The Magistrates found that he had a reckless attitude when arranging for the disposal of the waste.

Fly-tipping in Pick Hill, Waltham Abbey, resulted in fines and costs of over £2200 for The Bathroom Fitting Company Limited, whose registered office is recorded as being at the Seedbed Centre, Langston Road, Loughton. Employees of the company had handed waste materials from a job they were working on in Waltham Abbey to another person without asking whether that person was authorised to transport waste and without exchanging a Waste Transfer Note.

Mr. Jamie Rolt, of Monksgrove, Loughton, who trades under the name JCR Decor, pleaded guilty to fly-tipping and was fined £483 and ordered to pay the Council's prosecution costs of £913.95 together with a Victim Surcharge of £48. Sacks of waste from his business were found in Highwood Lane, Loughton, near a bin store and close to a sign stating "No rubbish dumping".

## **Off-road motorbikes**

There has been a recent spike in complaints about the use of motorbikes being used off-road, illegally, without the permission of the landowner, often in public areas. The noise from these incidents and danger to other users of the land has caused concern. Complaints also refer to the motorbikes being driven dangerously around estates and the nearby highway. The police have powers to seize motor vehicles that are being used to cause alarm, distress or annoyance, and the Council may also be able to take noise nuisance action. Officers are considering new powers to introduce Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) to prohibit motorbikes from sensitive public areas. However, whilst a PSPO may act as a deterrent, catching offenders is still a difficult process.

## **Food Safety**

Although there was no response from businesses to the Essex County Council-funded “Tuck In” project reported in June last year, businesses in the Loughton area were approached as part of the Debden Festival of Healthy Living and several signed up to the project to reduce the use of salt and sugar in takeaway foods. Officers also attended an event to answer questions on this year’s FSA Food Safety Week, which aims to reduce the amount of food wasted by the public. They answered questions on “Best before” and “Use by” dates and the safe storage of food.

## **Health and Safety at Work**

The project to monitor Carbon Monoxide emissions from indoor charcoal grill cooking was successfully completed and a similar project is now underway in Indian restaurants and takeaways using charcoal-fired tandoor ovens.

A number of items on laser equipment used in the beauty industry have been found with falsified or incorrect safety documentation. Cases have been passed to the Health and Safety Executive to investigate the importers.

## **Pests**

The number of complaints about rats has reduced since last year, but the heavy rain of recent months has forced rats from their usual nesting sites into areas where they have not previously been seen regularly.

## **Waste Management**

Members will be aware that it has been a long standing aspiration of the Council to provide a commercial waste collection service to businesses in the District. I am pleased to report that progress has been made on this front. I have asked officers to carry out some further work on the prices that will be charged for commercial waste collections and the operational and resource impact. I am keen that the service is provided on a cost neutral basis to the Council whilst offering a better value choice to businesses across the District.

There remains a significant proportion of food waste in the residual stream and it would appear that some residents are reluctant to avail themselves of the recycling opportunities available. It is very important that we increase our recycling and reduce landfill waste as much as possible so I have asked officers to prepare strategies for addressing this issue and I intend to ask the Chair of the Neighbourhoods Select Committee to consider these.

I am sure Members will be pleased to hear that we will shortly receive the new gum cleaning machine. After testing and staff training we will be able to carry out cleansing of our high streets in the next few weeks.

I am pleased to report that the Civic Offices will soon benefit from a new recycling scheme. The scheme is currently being developed with a view to commence in September. I have asked officers to provide more information to all Members via the Bulletin.

In order to further encourage recycling and to engage the next generation of recyclers, the officers of the waste team ran a recycling initiative with all the local schools in the District. Students were asked to produce recycling campaign material and some excellent designs were submitted. I have asked officers to display these entries in the front foyer of the Civic Offices and on the Council's website.

### **Drainage**

With the arrival of the English summer the officers of the Engineering Drainage & Water Team have inevitably been extremely busy, dealing in particular with two recent significant rainfall events. Whilst scattered around the district, upwards of 20 homes in total were affected by flooding from a variety and combination of sources. Officers attended sites on the days in question to assist where practically possible and offered advice and guidance where intervention was ineffective. A number of sites have required follow up visits to help residents understand where redress and potential solutions may lie, and it is clear that, despite changes in legislation over recent years designed to give clarification as to what organisations are responsible for the various assets involved, residents' first port of call in flooding circumstances is still their local council. As such, visits to both advise and inform residents has on the whole been welcomed by those in the unfortunate position of having to clear up their homes.

Officers have continued to contribute from a drainage, flooding and water quality perspective to the important work being undertaken by the Planning Policy Team on the Local Plan preparation. Site selection sifting and policy formulation have been topics of late and early input, particularly on the latter, will hopefully pay dividends post the eventual adoption of the Plan.

### **Grounds Maintenance**

The Grounds Maintenance gardening teams are being kept very busy with their mowing operations in order to maintain our verges and open spaces. The extremely wet weather experienced this year has produced some exceptional growth rates and difficult mowing conditions. However, all machines and staff are working hard to complete this task, with the focus turning to shrub and hedge pruning in due course.

The Grounds Maintenance section has started to move some of its equipment into the new depot at Oakwood Hill. However, with some weeks to go until final completion, the main workforce will still be operating from Langston Road depot for the time being. The staff have been given a tour of their new home and positive feedback was received, with everyone looking forward to the final move.

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# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Finance Portfolio

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor G Mohindra

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Finance Portfolio Holder be noted**

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## **Accountancy**

The Accountancy team are busy dealing with our external auditors as the audit of the draft Statutory Statement of Accounts is now underway. Once the audit has concluded the Accounts will be presented to Council on 27 September. The outturn reports for both revenue and capital were presented to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 16 June and the Resources Select Committee on 12 July. I do not want to repeat the contents of those reports but, as not all of you will have attended one of those meetings, it is worth giving you the headlines.

The revenue outturn showed that the Council had used more reserves than had been estimated. It was anticipated in the revised estimates that £1.674 million would be used from reserves, but the outturn actually saw £2.021 million of the General Fund balance being used. The total variance of £347,000 comprised of £435,000 of net expenditure above budget and £88,000 of additional income from Government Grants and Local Taxation. The in-year savings on the Continuing Services Budget (CSB) were £596,000 which was very close to the revised estimate of £634,000. There was a larger variance on the opening CSB which was £369,000 higher than predicted. The largest movement in the opening figures was in the provision for bad and doubtful debts, which included an increase to allow for a higher level of housing benefit overpayment debts.

It should be remembered that the gross expenditure budget is approximately £74 million so the overall variance is not significant. It is also worth highlighting that the use of reserves of £2.021 million was after charging £3.151 million of capital expenditure, so if we had decided to fund the capital expenditure in a different way the reserve could have increased by £1.13 million.

The outturn on the Housing Revenue Account was a surplus of £633,000. This was £716,000 better than the revised estimate, largely due to savings on revenue expenditure. Consequently the HRA revenue balance is higher than expected as is the balance on the Major Repairs Reserve. This will be reviewed when the financing of the capital programme for 2016/17 is considered. The combined balance on the Housing Repairs Fund, the Major Repairs Reserve and the HRA revenue balance is £16.21 million.

The capital outturn detailed spending of £37 million on a range of schemes, this was some £12.6 million below the revised estimate. The two largest areas of slippage on non-housing items were the purchase of land for the St Johns Road development

(£6,000,000) and works on the retail park (£2,076,000). Amounts of £9.2 million (General Fund) and £3.7 million (HRA) will be carried forward to 2016/17 to allow for completion of the various projects.

Having mentioned the outturn for 2015/16 I need to move on to the Council's budget for 2017/18. We will again start the budget cycle earlier by bringing forward the presentation of the Financial Issues Paper from the September meeting of the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee to July. Last year this allowed for a wider consultation and consideration of the options to achieve the necessary savings. The extra meeting of the Cabinet Committee will take place on 14 July, after the deadline for the completion of this report but before Council, and the Financial Issues Paper will be presented to this meeting together with an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

It will be some time yet before there is any clarity on the full economic consequences of the decision to leave the European Union. The Office for Budget Responsibility will not present their updated predictions until the autumn, although the Chancellor has already announced that his target date for a budget surplus of 2020 will not now be achievable. It is clear that further measures will be necessary to bring the public finances back into balance but this is likely to be a combination of increased taxation, reduced spending and additional borrowing. We will have a better idea of how these policy options will be combined once it is clear who will be the new occupants of 10 and 11 Downing Street.

### **Benefits**

On 16 June the Finance Cabinet Committee received the outturns for the Key Performance Indicators for 2015/16. I am pleased to report that both the performance targets for Benefits were achieved. The improvement in the processing of new claims is worth mentioning as the target was made tougher in 2015/16 by reducing it from 25 to 22 days. Average performance of 21.76 days was achieved which beat this more challenging target. Changes of circumstance were processed in an average of 4.47 days which beat both the target of 6 days and last year's performance of 4.74 days.

### **Revenues**

The Key Performance Indicators for Revenues also met their targets for the year. The in year collection rate achieved for Council Tax for 2015/16 was 98.03% which exceeded the target of 96.5% and showed a small increase on the previous year's rate of 97.79%. The in year collection rate of 97.84% for non-domestic rates was also better than the target of 97.2%.

On 7 July the Government published the first of what I am sure will be a series of consultations on the proposed reforms to business rates. The consultation is nearly 50 pages long and includes 36 questions. Responses have to be made by 26 September so it is likely that a draft response will be considered by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee at its meeting on 15 September.



# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Governance and Development Management

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor R Bassett

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **1. Development Management: Income**

### **Building Control**

Building Control's income for June 2016 is £46,488 (Budget £40,790) an excess over budget of £5,698.

It is particularly encouraging that the income for the first three months of this financial year of £147,985 means BC have already achieved 35% of their year's budget (compared with 2015/16 32%).

This supports the end of year projection of £462,625 (Budget £425,000) and comprises of three months actual £147,985 plus nine months budget £314,640.

### **Development Control**

Development Control's Income for June 2016 is £63,605 (Budget £52,900) an excess over budget of £10,705.

The income for the first three months of this year is £147,985 and indicates that DC have achieved 30% of their budgeted income for the first three months of this year. One of the key issues is that both 2014/15 and 2015/16 were record years regarding DC Income. It is recognised that to continue to improve and exceed previous years actual turnover is very difficult to sustain.

However DC have shown a degree of resilience with the first three months actual income at £236,191 and nine months budget £620,620 indicates that it may be possible to end the year with a projected income for DC of £856,811 as compared with the 2016/17 budget of £800,000.

## **2. Legal Services**

### **Prosecution for Illegal Eviction**

This case has been fully reported in the Bulletin but I draw attention to it again here as it highlights the breadth of work the Council undertakes, demonstrates productive cross-directorate working and sends an important message to landlords that the correct procedures must be followed when ending tenancies. The fines, the costs and the

implications of a criminal record for the landlord provide a strong deterrent for this type of behaviour.

The Council successfully prosecuted Alexandria Kenna of Oakwood Hill, Loughton for illegally evicting one of her tenants last December 2015.

Ms Kenna rented out rooms in her house at a rate of £475 per calendar month including all utilities. The Taiwanese tenant, who is a student, moved in during October, signing a 6 month agreement.

The tenant refused to pay a rental increase of £50 towards the electricity bill, because she had signed a 6 month agreement which included utility bills. Ms Kenna told her that she had to leave that day, threatening to throw her possessions out in the street, took her keys away and shouted at her. At one point Ms Kenna locked the front door refusing to let anyone in or the tenant out until the tenant had emptied her room and moved her possessions downstairs.

The tenant was in a desperate situation, she had no family here to help her and no money to find alternative accommodation as Ms Kenna would not return her deposit or rent that she had paid up until 16<sup>th</sup> December.

In coming to their decision, the Magistrates concluded it had been a thoroughly unpleasant incident for the tenant who would have it found highly intimidating and frightening. The claim for the additional money for electricity use had been unreasonable.

The court imposed a fine of £275, costs of £447.50, a Victim Surcharge of £28 and of their own volition; they ordered that compensation of £100 be paid by the landlord to the tenant for her distress.

### **3. Corporate Fraud**

In the first quarter of 2016/2017, the Corporate Fraud Team have been instrumental in stopping 7 Right to Buy applications, one involving suspicions of money laundering. In one of these cases, the property has been recovered from the tenant who surrendered the tenancy shortly following a visit from one of the team investigating his RTB application.

In this area alone, the RTB discount saved is approximately £545,000 whilst the approximate value of the preserved rent revenue streams is around £321,000.

A further 5 properties have also been recovered due to the team's intervention, one being a highly sought after property designated for use by the elderly. In this case it was discovered that the tenant was actually living in Spain and allowing her son to live at the property. The approximate savings made here is around £108,000.

The team have investigated an application for a disabled facilities grant (worth around £30,000) which was ultimately stopped due to the investigation discovering the applicant had considerable assets which had not been declared (including regular payments from a company she had recently sold).

Proceeds of Crime investigations have been initiated on 4 cases including an illegal subletting case, 2 false housing applications and a suspected joint tenancy / RTB fraud.

The team have also set up the newly formed Eastern Corporate Fraud Group designed as a forum for local authority counter fraud practitioners in Essex & Suffolk to come together to share good practice, training etc. The group had its inaugural meeting at North Weald Airfield on 30<sup>th</sup> June with meetings planned every quarter.

In addition, one of the team, Bruce Heubner, has been interviewed by BBC Radio 4 for a programme investigating the right to buy scheme and its vulnerability to fraud and abuse and what is being done to combat it. Bruce was able to highlight a successful case in our District and this Council was mentioned several times in a positive light as leading on this type of fraud prevention and detection.

#### 4. Elections

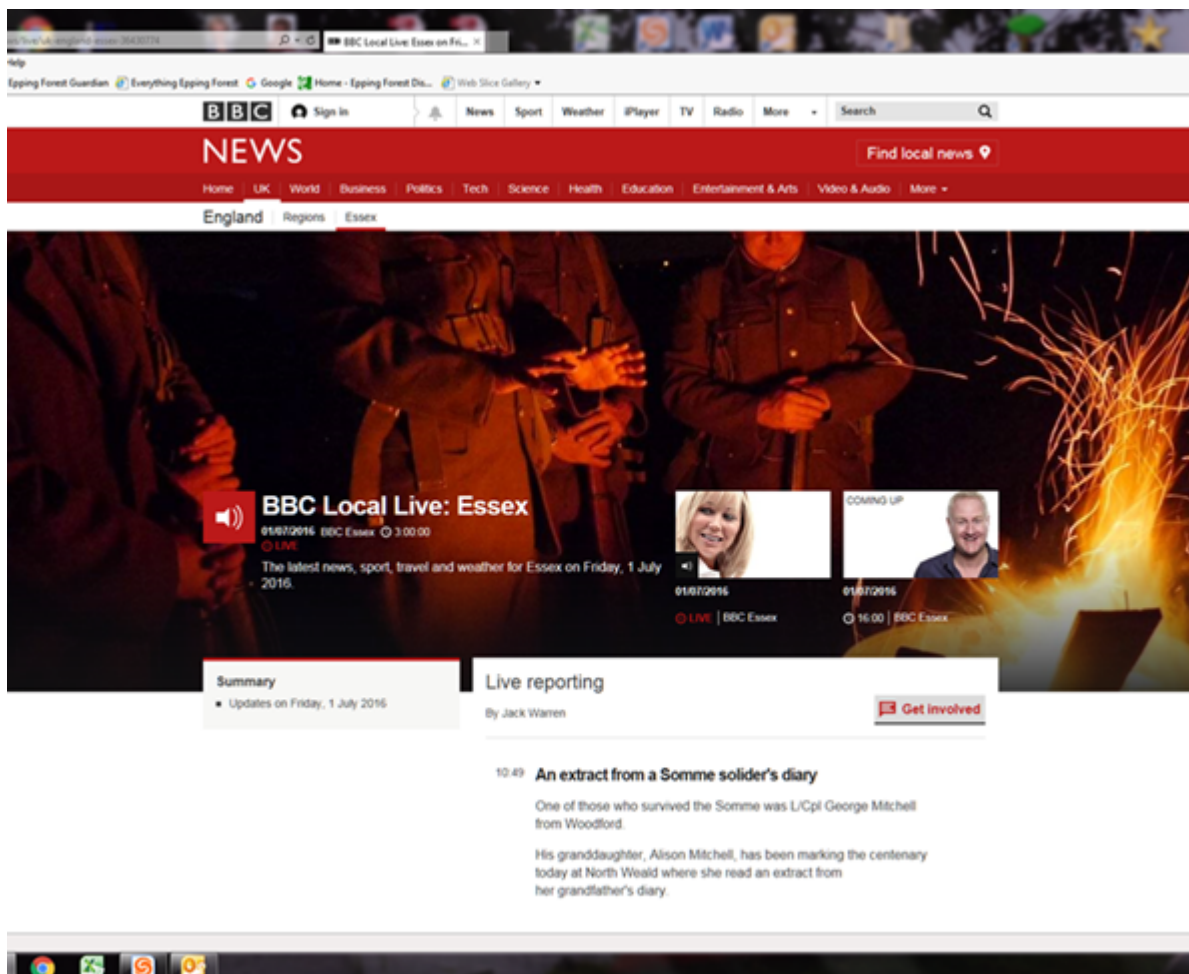
The Governance Select Committee has agreed a review of the processes for the May District and Parish Elections and June EU referendum within its work programme, with a report due to the 29 September 2016 meeting.

#### 5. Public Relations

The Battle of the Somme Commemorations culminating on 30 June/1 July involved extensive out of hours communications via social media and radio. The council contributed four radio interviews to the BBC:

- Peter Charman (EFDC) – Drive Time Thursday 30 June
- Colin l'Anson (EFDC) – Breakfast Show Friday 1 July
- John Duffel (Royal British Legion at North Weald) Breakfast Show Friday 1 July
- Alison Mitchell (EFDC) Breakfast Show Friday 1 July

14. By prior arrangement with the BBC, Epping Forest District Council provided overnight photography of the vigil which was featured on the BBC Essex Homepage.



15. Heart FM also included EFDC commemorations in its news coverage.

16. Following the success of a video interview with a visitor to the Control Tower exhibition earlier in the week, the Council shot and uploaded two more videos to You Tube during the vigil. These were used in conjunction with photography to support extensive social media output resulting in some of the most impressive proactive (ie good news) reach achieved on Twitter and Facebook. Further video material is available for a final video.

17. Responding to social media comments, Councillor David Stallan made his social media comments as Vice-Chairman, posting his own response that it was his privilege to take part and to remember the fallen.

18. The Epping Forest Guardian carried extensive coverage of the North Weald vigil and service, taking photography directly from the Council's Flickr account and media releases issued straight after the service.

19. Several members of the public who attended the commemoration have also posted their own pictures of the service with much of the focus on the reconstruction of a WW1 trench. While commemorations across Essex were part of the national picture, the trench built by members of the Airfield Operations Team and the presence of airfield staff in uniforms of WW1 soldiers added a 'unique selling point' to the EFDC output and undoubtedly contributed to the widespread media coverage.

20. While You Tube, Flickr, Facebook and Twitter provided powerful communications platforms, the Council's website provided the foundation of background material, information and coverage with 854 views. Access is available to the website articles via the following links:

- [Somme vigil and Centenary Commemoration](#)
- [Memories stirred at Somme exhibition](#)
- [Join our Somme Centenary Commemoration](#)
- [Battle of the Somme Commemoration](#)

21. North Weald Operations Team also has one of the Council's most successful social media profiles and contributed significantly to the corporate output provided by Public Relations.

**Somme Commemorations Social Media Statistics:**

| Date               | Message Summary   | Media & Reach (Impressions and Posts) |         |          |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------|----------|
|                    |   |                                       | Twitter | Facebook |
| 30-06-16<br>1pm    | Join us for our #Somme100 Commemoration @NWAirfield tomorrow. Service starting at 7.30am<br><a href="http://ow.ly/wEac301Nbpr">http://ow.ly/wEac301Nbpr</a>   | Pic                                   | 546     | 91       |
| 30-06-16<br>8.05pm | Sound check @NWAirfield before #Somme100 Commemoration Service at 7.28am tomorrow<br><a href="http://ow.ly/ZS3C301OkXA">http://ow.ly/ZS3C301OkXA</a>          | Pic                                   | 618     | 261      |
| 30-06-16<br>8.13pm | Peter Charman spoke to Dave Monk @BBCEssex of his great uncle who died 1916<br><a href="http://ow.ly/Bj8U301OlhO">http://ow.ly/Bj8U301OlhO</a> starts 2:25:20 | Pic                                   | 2066    | 172      |

|                     |  |            |               |               |
|---------------------|--|------------|---------------|---------------|
| 30-06-16<br>9pm     | Dusk descending over @NWAirfield for #Somme100 commemoration<br><a href="http://ow.ly/G2Aq301Or4I">http://ow.ly/G2Aq301Or4I</a>  | Pic        | 1325          | 2193          |
| 30-06-16<br>10pm    | Vice-chairman Dave Stallan lighting the brazier at the start of Epping Forest district's all-night vigil #Somme100   | Pic        | 1385          | 2656          |
| 30-06-16<br>11.22pm | Keeping warm at the #Somme100 all-night vigil @NWAirfield  | Pic x2     | 623           | 3818          |
| 01-07-16<br>12am    | #Somme100 If I should die/think only this of me/that there's some corner of a foreign field/that is for ever England <a href="http://ow.ly/KK0S301ONaB">http://ow.ly/KK0S301ONaB</a> | Text       | 301           | 67            |
| 01-07-16<br>12.04am | Great set of First World War poems by @poetrybyheart at <a href="http://ow.ly/IHFz301ONzX">http://ow.ly/IHFz301ONzX</a> #Somme100 #harrowing #humbling #heartening                   | Text       | 292           | 723           |
| 01-07-16<br>3.29am  | Hypnotic flames dance away during Epping Forest district's all-night vigil #Somme100   | Video      | 530           | 1595          |
| 01-07-16<br>4.20am  | Trench lit up by #Harlow lights and @NWAirfield Control Tower during #Somme100 all-night vigil   | Pic x2     | 2768          | 2069          |
| 01-07-16<br>4.30am  | Dawn approaching for #Somme100 vigil <a href="http://ow.ly/8RaZ301P5Jj">http://ow.ly/8RaZ301P5Jj</a> #nearlythere  | Pic        | 474           | 134           |
| 01-07-16<br>5am     | Video of Corporal George Mitchell's memoir on the 2nd Battle of the Somme - <a href="http://ow.ly/wM1U301P6wp">http://ow.ly/wM1U301P6wp</a> read by Peter Charman for #Somme100      | Video      | 545           | 1659          |
| 01-07-16<br>5.30am  | Dawn breaking over #NorthWeald - just 2 hours till H hour #Somme100  | Pic        | 591           | 475           |
| 01-07-16<br>6am     | Early bird? Come to @NWAirfield for 7:28am today for our special #Somme100 service, we'd love to see you there!  | Pic        | 747           | 142           |
| 01-07-16<br>6.05am  | It's gone 6am, we kept the flames alive all night @NWAirfield! Remembering the fallen on 1 July 2016 for #Somme100   | Pic        | 501           | 4365          |
| 01-07-16<br>6.10am  | It's gone 6am, we kept the flames alive all night @NWAirfield! Remembering the fallen on 1 July 2016 for #Somme100   | Video      | 1598          |               |
| 01-07-16<br>12.11pm | A moment of reflection for #Somme100 @NWAirfield <a href="http://ow.ly/A0ja301PKuD">http://ow.ly/A0ja301PKuD</a>   | Pic        | 493           | 1617          |
| 01-07-16<br>12.50pm | Listen to @peter_charman in a moving interview with @DaveMonkShow about his great uncle who died in #Somme100  | Radio link | 731           | 166           |
| 01-07-16<br>2pm     | Listen to Colin and John's interview with @RobWestEssex @NWAirfield #Somme100 starts 36:40 <a href="http://ow.ly/qNil301PPAI">http://ow.ly/qNil301PPAI</a>                           | Radio Link | 493           |               |
| 01-07-16<br>4.01pm  | A huge #Thankyou to all that joined us for our #Somme100 early morning service @NWAirfield <a href="http://ow.ly/mtPo301PMpX">http://ow.ly/mtPo301PMpX</a>                           | Pic        | 857           | 931           |
| 01-07-16<br>7.01pm  | Couldn't be with us this morning? Check out our #Somme100 #photography <a href="http://ow.ly/8Sk4301PL1g">http://ow.ly/8Sk4301PL1g</a>   | Pic        | 796           | 639           |
| Totals              |  |            | <b>18,280</b> | <b>23,773</b> |

Twitter Retweets – 49  
Twitter Likes – 38  
Facebook Shares – 72  
Facebook Likes – 259

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# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Housing

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor S Stavrou

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Housing Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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### **Familiarisation with the Housing Portfolio Brief**

Since taking over the Housing Portfolio at the Annual Council Meeting, I have been familiarising myself with my new Brief.

I have had a number of briefings from the Director of Communities and his Assistant Directors on current local and national housing issues, and have toured the Civic Offices to meet all the managers and some of the staff within the Housing Service based there. I have also spent a day with the Director visiting other housing offices and other facilities around the District, meeting managers and staff, as well as visiting a number of housing sites of interest.

I attended the first meeting of the new Communities Select Committee, as well as my first meeting of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation – both of which I intend to attend as many meetings as possible over the coming year.

### **Enactment of the Housing and Planning Act 2016**

Following a lengthy, and somewhat controversial, passage of the Housing and Planning Bill through Parliament, the resultant Housing and Planning Act received Royal Assent on 12th May 2016. The new Act comprises a number of provisions relating to both housing and planning and, at the last meeting of the Communities Select Committee, the Director of Communities provided a summary of the key housing provisions of the Act, that potentially have the most significant implications for the Council over the coming year, which are:

- The introduction of the mandatory provision of fixed term tenancies for new Council tenants
- The required sale of higher value void Council properties, to help fund the extension of the Voluntary Right to Buy to housing association tenants
- The required provision of starter homes on new private developments, to form a proportion (to be determined) of the overall affordable housing provision
- The introduction of the Government's "Pay to Stay" Scheme, to charge higher rents to Council tenants with incomes (outside London) in excess of £31,000, up to market or "near market" rents

The other main housing provisions within the Act cover:

- The encouragement of self-build and custom housebuilding
- Powers to deal with "rogue" landlords and property agents
- Powers to recover abandoned premises
- New arrangements for the licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs)

It is proposed to hold a Housing Information Evening for Members in the Autumn to explain the provisions to all members in more detail, once the detailed provisions are known - through Government guidance and regulations, that are awaited.

### **Council Housebuilding Programme**

Due to the contractor's delays to complete the 23 new Council affordable homes for rent in Waltham Abbey under Phase 1 of the Council Housebuilding Programme, the Council terminated its contract with the contractor, Broadway Construction Ltd, on 1 June 2016. The Council secured the site on the same day and has completed a schedule of works that needs to be undertaken for completion. In order to expedite the completion of the works, this schedule has been provided to another contractor, who has previously worked successfully for the Council, and their assessment of the cost to complete the works was received on 8 July 2016. Dependent on whether or not the Council's Employers Agent, Pellings LLP, assess the costs to be reasonable, I will consider whether or not the completion contract should be let to this second contractor.

The Council's appointed contractor, Mulalley & Co Ltd, have taken possession of the Burton Road, Loughton site, to construct 51 new affordable rented homes under Phase 2 of the Council Housebuilding Programme. They are actively progressing with the detailed design before they commence the build stage. In the meantime, the site has been hoarded and letters have been issued by Mulalley & Co Ltd to all local residents introducing themselves and providing contact details. Work on site is expected to start in August 2016.

The specifications, designs and contract documents have been prepared for all 7 contracts that will make up Phase 3 of the Housebuilding Programme. Tenders will be sought in July and August 2016, with works starting on-site around November 2016. The contract phase for each site will be around 18-months, so completion for all of the homes can be expected around April 2018.

For Phase 4 of the Housebuilding Programme, the Council has now received planning approval on 7 sites, which will deliver 20 homes. However, planning permission for 4 other sites in Pyrles Lane, Ladyfields and Whitehills Road, Loughton have all been refused planning permission. The Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee has already determined that revised planning applications should be submitted for Ladyfields and Whitehills Road, which are currently being prepared. The more recent refusal of planning permission for the Pyrles Lane site will be referred back to the Cabinet Committee for a decision on the future use of the site.

The Cabinet Committee has also agreed that another proposed development site, in Hillyfields, Loughton - for which a planning application was withdrawn due to concerns from planning officers about its suitability for development – should be sold on the open market, with the proceeds being utilised to help fund the Housebuilding Programme.

All sites making up Phase 5 of the Housebuilding Programme, which comprises sites in Buckhurst Hill and Ongar, have been submitted for planning permission. However, only two sites in Ongar have been granted planning permission to date, with all 3 sites in the Hornbeam Road area of Buckhurst Hill being referred to the District Development Management Committee for determination, with a recommendation for refusal from the Area Plans (South) Sub Committee.

The Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee has been monitoring the use of "one-for-one replacement capital receipts", which must be spent on the provision of new affordable housing within 3 years of receipt. This monitoring has previously identified the need to purchase a small number of existing properties from the open market, to avoid passing any Right to Buy receipts to the Government. Accordingly, 6 properties are being purchased in the Waltham Abbey area, on or near to existing Council estates. These are predominantly 2 and 3-bed houses.



The Council has also now entered into a Development Agreement with Linden Homes, who is the developer of a site at Barnfield, Roydon. This is a joint approach whereby, under the Development Agreement, the Council will purchase 8 affordable rented homes on completion (to utilise some of the Council's one-for-one replacement receipts) and B3 Living, one of the Council's Preferred Housing Association Partners, will purchase 3 shared ownership properties. Completion is due around April 2018.

### **Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme**

In response to the Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme, the Council has agreed to make available 1 x 2 bedroom flat and 1 x 1 bedroom flat from its housing stock to house up to 6 Syrian Refugees in each year for a period of four years. This represents in total up to 8 properties housing up to 24 Syrian Refugees. Those housed will be non-secure tenants for up to a period of 5 years.

The Government's Syrian Joint Team have advised that, on 21 September 2016, a flight carrying around 120 Syrian Refugees will arrive at Stansted Airport. The arrivals will be housed across the Eastern Region and will mainly comprise between 4 or 6 family members.

Essex County Council, who are leading on the re-settlement programme for Essex, have requested that the Council puts forward the 2-bedroom flat that it has offered to potentially accommodate one household from the September arrivals. The rental loss whilst the property to be offered is kept vacant, ready for the arrival, will be met by the Government.

On 10 August 2016, the Home Office Team will be matching families to available properties from across the country, so we will not know until then whether or not we will be asked to take a family.

Essex County Council have appointed a delivery partner, "Migrant Help", who will make the preparations for the arrivals and will provide the Syrian Refugees with intensive resettlement support. Although the Council will assist with matters such as signposting, we will mainly provide just the landlord role.

### **Review of Epping Forest Careline Alarm Monitoring Service**

The Council's Careline Service offers a twenty-four hour, 365 days per year, emergency alarm monitoring service to older and disabled people living within the District.

The Draft Work Programme for the Communities Select Committee includes the undertaking of a review of the Careline Service, to be considered at its meeting in November 2016, which will consider options for the future delivery of the service.

The review is being undertaken as a result of the Careline Monitoring Centre expanding, in terms of the number of private sector connections, and the advances in technology (enabling service users to benefit from a range of associated sensors), which has resulted in the management and operational aspects of the service becoming much more complex, which will soon require additional investment and increased staffing.

Since I do not think that continuing with the service under the current arrangements is a viable option in the long term, the review will consider options, costs and potential savings for the future delivery of the Monitoring Service, from retaining an enhanced Monitoring Service - with increased investment and staffing levels - to outsourcing the Monitoring Service to an external provider.

### **Review of Housing Service Standards and performance against the Standards**

The Council has a range of around 100 separate Housing Service Standards that cover all of the Housing Service's main areas of activity, which are provided to our tenants as part of the

Tenants Handbook. Each year, we review performance against the Service Standards and consider whether any changes should be made.

I am grateful to the Communities Select Committee for reviewing, at its last meeting, the Housing Service's performance last year against the Service Standards and for considering whether any changes should be made for the future. As a result, between the Director of Communities and the Select Committee, 7 changes to the Service Standards have been proposed. Once I have received the views of the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation, which is being consulted at its meeting in August, the Service Standards will be revised accordingly.

### **Tenants Handbook – Online by default**

The Council provides around 500 new Council tenancies a year. Until May 2016, each new tenant was issued with a copy of the Council's 'Tenants Handbook', comprising a binder containing important information to tenants.

In May 2016, we amended our tenancy agreements to include a tick box inviting tenants to access the Handbook via the Council's website, rather than being provided with a hard copy - to provide tenants with easier access to the latest information, at a lower cost to the Council. A hard copy of the Handbook will always be available to new tenants on request, for those that do not have access to the internet.

Due to changes in law or Council policies, information within the Tenants Handbook is updated frequently, so accessing the handbook electronically will ensure that the most current version is always available to be downloaded, which will also reduce wastage of surplus leaflet stock.

### **Prosecution of Landlord for Illegal Eviction**

One of the responsibilities of the Council's Housing Service is to respond to the harassment of tenants by private landlords and to deal with landlords who illegally evict tenants.

In June, the Council successfully prosecuted a Loughton landlord for illegally evicting one of her tenants. The tenant, who is a student at East 15 Acting School, signed a 6 month tenancy agreement in October 2015. Although the rent of £475 a month included all utilities the landlord tried to charge an additional £50 towards electricity. When the tenant refused to pay the extra rent the landlord ordered her to leave that day and intimidated the tenant when she tried to remove her possessions from the premises.

There is no requirement under the law for a court order for the eviction of a lodger, but reasonable notice must be given which in this case would have been 28 days.

A fine of £275 was imposed on the landlord, with an order to pay the Council's costs of £447.50. The Magistrates also ordered that compensation of £100 be paid to the tenant for her distress. Although this may have been relatively low, the implications of a criminal record for guilty landlords offers a strong deterrent for this type of behaviour. In addition a tenant can pursue a civil case for damages which can be fairly substantial.

This landlord was not a member of the Student Accommodation Accreditation Scheme which the Council's Private Sector Housing Team operates in partnership with East 15 Acting School in Loughton.

## ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Leisure & Community Services

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor H Kane

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### **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Leisure and Community Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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### **Community Services**

**Museum Service:** Our District Museum is going from strength to strength following its re-opening earlier in the year. Apart from welcoming many new visitors and especially those with limited mobility who can now access all areas of the building, we are having great success in attracting online visitors, with a total of 354,357 interactions with the Museum's social media platforms in 2015/16. This compares to 107,256 in the previous financial year.

In its' first month of opening, the newly refurbished museum building attracted 3000 visitors, with around 2300 adults and 700 children and a steady flow of people continue to visit. It is anticipated that with the launch of the summer holiday programme in July, the numbers of children visiting the museum and participating in the range of activities available will significantly increase.

Anyone who attended the re-opening of Epping Forest District Museum will have seen two decorative trees laden with five hundred beautifully decorated egg shells, and these were all made by residents from across the Epping Forest District. The aim of the 'eggs' project was to promote the message that the new museum is about cultural engagement for everyone across the district and the eggs continue to be displayed in the museum's new space for learning and activities. Five different parishes took part in the 'eggs' project, with residents aged from five to seventy-five, who blew, primed and marbled the eggs in workshops led by the MHC team. The project reached new audiences, with participants travelling from as far as the Limes Estate in Chigwell, to see their eggs on display. For many this was their first time visiting the district museum.

**Museum Garden Regeneration:** To compliment the facilities in the Museum building, the museum garden has been renovated and this provided a perfect opportunity to engage with new volunteers. I was delighted that a dozen young people from Waltham Abbey Youth Group helped to plant up the garden, to be design ready for the grand opening. Then after the opening, a team of volunteers from Voluntary Action Epping Forest spent time in the garden, sowing seeds, weeding and painting the garden furniture. All participants were given a tour of the new museum and for many this was their first visit. I can highly recommend a visit to the museum garden, to see the excellent work that these groups have done and the wonderful new mosaic that features in the centre of the garden.

**Dance Residency and Performance:** A few weeks ago, I was delighted to see the Museum in a completely new light, when the collections sprang to life and over 250 visitors were led

through the galleries on an enchanting dance exploration. Choreographer in Residence, Elysia Tebb developed a dance interpretation, in collaboration with DNA Studios, inspired by the current *On the Move* exhibition and collections.

Working with performing arts students from Waltham Abbey-based DNA Studios, Elysia choreographed a dance piece with a transport related theme that was reflected in the movement and music used. The Penny Farthing on display, acted as a central focus for the dancers to move around in the temporary exhibitions gallery creating interesting and innovative patterns. The ensemble company performed this 15 minute piece before dispersing around the museum to some of the other galleries and Museum garden, where they performed their own individual pieces.

The performing arts students shared the dances they had improvised and choreographed during their residency of the museum which were inspired by some of the many collection objects and stories on display throughout the building, offering a new and slightly different take on the interpretation of the displays. Characters included Fairies from a *Midsummer Night's dream*; Tudors; local artist Hayden Mackey; a Policeman and the Salvation Army.

**Museum on the Move:** During May, the museum took part in an international competition called 'Museum Dance Off'. The Museum Heritage and Culture team and volunteers created a film called 'On the Move' which documents the installation of the brand new facility and celebrates its reopening. Thirty-six Museums entered across the globe and EFD Museum got through to the second round. This was a valuable marketing tool for the Museum, helping to raise its profile within the community and with other Museums overseas, whilst celebrating our reopening.

**Reminiscence Network East Conference Presentation:** Two of our staff were invited to give a presentation called *In the Mix* at the Reminiscence Network East Conference, at Norwich Castle Museum on 18 May. They shared information on how we work creatively with older people through care homes, specifically speaking about the *Transitions* projects – the 'Recipe Book' and 'Journeys in the Moment'. These projects involved artists working directly with care staff and activity organisers in 8 residential homes to develop creative activities, and in the process help them to recognize, develop and use their own creative skills. The initiatives developed new activities that had a recognisable impact on residents' well-being. During the projects, the good partnerships developed between care staff and artists meant that staff were wholly engaged, which resulted in improved wellbeing in residents being documented.

**After School Dance Clubs and The Big Dance Pledge 2016:** Earlier this term our after school dance clubs were working towards The Big Dance Pledge, which enables dancers to take part in a connected performance day with thousands of dancers in countries around the world. Dance Artist Akram Khan created the choreography and using the themes of 'overcoming adversity' and 'achievement'. Over 100 dancers from our dance clubs performed together at Chipping Ongar Primary School, alongside thousands of others interpreting the Pledge around the world.

**Astroturf Pitch at Town Mead:** I am pleased to advise members that the excellent 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation artificial football pitch that we co-provide with Waltham Abbey Town Council at Town Mead is proving to be a real success with local people and clubs from further afield. We have an excellent programme of bookings and from August this summer, Tottenham Hotspur will be using the pitch for 42 weeks (until May 2017) as part of their joint football education project with Epping Forest College. This will bring in an extra £19,000 of income and they will be using the pitch on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday for 4 hours each day and a Friday afternoon for 2 ½ hours.

**Crucial Crew:** Once again, I was delighted to attend the Crucial Crew event, which this year, was held at Debden House in Loughton. Over 1800 Year 6 pupils from Epping Forest and Brentwood took part in the event, which is an interactive safety initiative to educate our young people about staying safe and avoiding dangerous situations. The 10 and 11 year olds were given the chance to role play different scenarios, allowing them to experience risk without being put in any real danger. During the 2 weeks, they took part in various scenarios that included road safety, fire safety and personal safety, and got advice on cyberbullying, the health impacts and consequences of excessive alcohol and smoking, and the benefits of healthy living. The Crucial Crew experience really leaves all participants with the skills and knowledge to help keep them safe.

**£37,000 funding for the Epping Forest Inclusion Project:** Community Health and Wellbeing have been successful in a funding application to 4Children, to continue with the delivery of the very popular and successful Inclusion Project in Epping Forest. This funding is part of the provision of Essex Short Breaks, Clubs and Activities, which 4Children have been contracted to co-ordinate across Essex and the £37,000 has been awarded for us to continue to deliver the project, from 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017.

The Inclusion Project provides sports and leisure opportunities for children and young people with disabilities and Special Educational Needs. During school term the project provides a range of after school sessions from Trampolining to Horse Riding and during school holidays, various sessions and activities are held, that where possible, include siblings and parents which parents are very grateful for. Activities available this summer include camping, relaxed performances, forest fun days and multi -sports camps. The Inclusion Project not only benefits the children, but the whole family and the inclusion of siblings at the holiday activities is crucial for parents.

**£9,500 - Active Essex Funding:** £9,500 has been successfully secured from Active Essex, to deliver a range of health and wellbeing initiatives to get Epping Forest residents more active. These include running programmes such as 'Couch to 5K' and parkrun, disability football festivals, walking football, mountain biking and festivals of healthy living across the district.

**Summer Activities Programme:** I encourage all members to look out for our Annual summer holiday activities brochure, which promotes the exciting programme of activities that are available for children, young people and families throughout the District. The types of activities and events available for toddlers to teens, include multi-sport days, play in the park, play in the forest, how to draw, children's shows, family workshops, mountain biking and much more. If any Members wish to see the activities in action, please contact James Warwick on Extn. 4350 to arrange a visit.

**EF Youth Council Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Project 2016:** Over the last few months, our youth councillors have been working on an Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Project for the young people of the Epping Forest district. The decision to develop this project was based on the concerns of young people, which have been raised through consultation and via survey results from 500 students at our Secondary schools. Each of the Secondary schools in the district have also been consulted and have confirmed that there is an evidenced need for mental health support for their students.

The project will be led by Community, Health and Wellbeing supported by the youth councillors, in partnership with NELFT NHS Trust, The Red Balloon Family and Essex County Council.

The aim of project is to work with pupils to raise awareness, build resilience, dispel the negative connotations surrounding mental health problem, give young people the tools to support themselves and their peers and to encourage them to seek help.

Workshops will take place in each secondary school and there will be an opportunity for participants to request additional support and advice, website guidance, group or 121 sessions. Training packs will also be provided for teachers and youth workers to continue the discussions.

### **Hillhouse Master Plan**

I am pleased to report that, following consultation with key stakeholders and local people (through a Community Planning Weekend), a Master Plan for the Hillhouse area of Waltham Abbey has now been formulated and published. The proposed development site at Hillhouse is in a relatively central, well-populated, part of Waltham Abbey, comprising land owned by the District Council and Essex County Council.

The Master Plan has been formulated by consultants, JTP, on behalf of the three key partners – the Council, Essex County Council and NHS England. A copy of the Master Plan is available on the Council's website, but the main components of the Master Plan include:

- A new swimming pool and leisure centre, incorporating a new community hall - to replace the existing swimming pool at Roundhills, Waltham Abbey, which is reaching the end of its operational life, and the Hillhouse Community Centre, which has recently had to close due to its poor condition;
- An Independent Living (sometimes referred to as Extra Care) Scheme - providing 1 and 2 bedroom self-contained affordable rented and open market flats for people over 55 years of age with identified care and support needs;
- A new health centre providing new, modern accommodation, to replace the existing Maynard Court Doctors Surgery, which will soon be no longer fit for purpose - to enable a wider range of health services to be provided for the benefit of the local community and to provide an opportunity for the practice to increase GP and nurse training on site;
- The retention of around half of the existing playing fields as informal recreation space; and
- The provision of an appropriate level of financial contribution towards alternative sports/recreation provision to be provided elsewhere in Waltham Abbey, to compensate for the loss of informal recreation space at Hillhouse.

The next stage is for the three key partners to submit an Outline Planning Application for the development of the area, in general accordance with the Master Plan, in order to seek approval to the general principle of development and to the general location and size of the three key components. It is planned to submit the planning application in the Autumn, which will be determined by the District Development Management Committee.

The costs of formulating the Master Plan and submitting the Outline Planning Application are being shared between the three key partners.

If Outline Planning Permission is received, the three key partners will then be responsible for obtaining Detailed Planning Permission and to procure, fund and deliver their own facility on the site.

### **Leisure Management**

Progress continues to be made on the procurement of a new Leisure Management Contractor, to manage the Council's facilities. A key objective of the procurement exercise is not only to increase participation whilst reducing revenue costs to the Council, but also to seek additional investment, not only in the existing Leisure facilities, but to provide a new state of the art Leisure Centre in Waltham Abbey, to replace the ageing swimming pool. Four good quality submissions have been received at the first stage of the competitive dialogue process. These are currently being evaluated by the Officer Working Group. I have a meeting of my Portfolio Advisory Group on the 25 July 2016, where a presentation will be made to Members on the initial findings. Another issue that will be considered at the Advisory Group, is the desirability of extending the current contract with SLM further to the 1 April 2017. The advantage of this would be that before the award of any new Contract in December, a decision would have been reached around the outline planning consent for the Hillhouse Redevelopment., of which the new Leisure Centre is an integral component. I will be able to update Members at Council as appropriate.

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# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Planning Policy

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor J Philip

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Planning Policy Portfolio Holder be noted**

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1) Local Plan timetable

The Local Development Scheme considered by Cabinet on 21 July 2016 updates the timetable for the production of the Local Plan. It sets the consultation on the draft plan on a schedule to run from 31<sup>st</sup> October for 6 weeks up until 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Prior to the consultation the draft plan will be considered at Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> October and then Council on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016. This means that the proposed draft plan, together with the supporting background evidence, will be in the public domain from late September and therefore available for residents and Town and Parish Councils to consider.

This timing aligns with East Herts, Uttlesford and Harlow Districts who are all proposing to publish their draft plans in the autumn for a 6 week period seeking representations on soundness under Regulation 19 of the Local Plans regulations. This is a stage further on in the process from Epping Forest.

The Government has made clear their expectation that all local planning authorities should have a post NPPF local plan and have set out their commitments to take action to get these plans in place with up to date policies. This includes intervening where no local plan has been produced by early 2017 to arrange for the plan to be written, in consultation with local people, to accelerate production of a local plan. One of the penalties proposed for not having produced a plan (although it is not clear yet how this will be interpreted) is the loss of new homes bonus. It is therefore essential that the Council makes good progress this year and to have completed the consultation on our Draft Plan Preferred Approach by the end of the year.

For this reason the focus of the Planning Policy Team is on completing the outstanding work needed in order to go out to consultation on the Draft Plan. Consequently, until the Plan is out to consultation, the team is unable to give as much resource to Neighbourhood Planning as previously. However, the team will continue to signpost to relevant material and grants available.

Duty to Cooperate

Officers and Members continue to meet regularly with appropriate authorities, principally through the Cooperation for Sustainable Development Officer Group and associated Member Board, to consider a wide range of cross boundary issues. The Board met on the 19<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and the Officer Group on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 13<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> July.

Much of the discussion at these meetings on key cross-boundary matters has been focussed on the 4 authorities within the Strategic Housing Market Area (HMA) and the work undertaken leading to agreement on how the growth will be distributed across the HMA. The Member Board is provided with regular updates on progress with the evaluation of the spatial options previously agreed for testing. This work now includes an option taking into account the potential impact of newly released population projection data on the existing OAN figure in the SHMA. Each of these options has been evaluated through:

1. Transport modelling (what are the transport implications of the different options?)
2. Sustainability appraisal (how does the options effect air quality, biodiversity, water etc.?)
3. Deliverability appraisal (what infrastructure is necessary to deliver the different options?)
4. Habitat Regulations Assessment (how will the different options affect Epping Forest?)

The Board also received three draft memoranda of understanding: one includes Highways England covering strategic transport matters, another which includes Natural England covering Air Quality in relation to the Forest and a third to set out the vision for the SHMA area and to agree the distribution of growth. The final decision on the agreed best strategic spatial option taken at the Board's July meeting is critical to meeting the timeline for consultation on the Local Plan in the autumn.

As previously reported, officers are working with SHMA partners using CLG funding to assess the strategic sites around Harlow. This work will feed into the Council's site selection work (see below). The outcome of this work being undertaken by AECOM is a draft final report for consideration at the Board meeting held on 18 July 2016. Additionally EFDC, Harlow DC and East Herts DC are working on a draft bid to the government's Garden Towns/Cities prospectus in relation to strategic growth in and around Harlow. Government is offering funding to help with evidence costs, staffing etc. and brokerage with government departments.

To help inform the best way to meet the OAHN for the Strategic Housing Market Area further transport modelling work is being undertaken by Essex County Council. This is looking at the implications for the transport network of growth and how it can be distributed across the HMA. The outputs will then be considered by the districts and jointly by the four SHMA authorities at the Cooperation for Sustainable Development Board.

In addition to the input and updating on transport infrastructure and modelling work, Essex County Council has provided details on the recent consultation for construction of a new Junction 7A on the M11, and updates on planned capacity improvements for the existing Junctions 7 and 8. I, with Cllr Bassett, Eleanor Laing MP and Robert Halfon MP met with The Transport Minister Andrew Jones MP to encourage government support for Junction 7a. The meeting was successful and the joint approach carries much weight. Highways England representatives are now attending the Co-op meetings and Herts CC also update the groups on highways matters in their County. Officers continue to keep a close watching brief on transport work being undertaken by the London Borough of Enfield as part of that Council's Northern Gateway Access Package, in particular any discussion of an access road from Bullsmoor Lane / Mollison Avenue onto the M25 between junctions 25 and 26.

Managers at Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH) have presented recently identifying their need for a new hospital site. Consequently the Co-op Officer Group and Member Board are working with PAH in identifying potential site options in the SHMA-area and then assessing the relative merits of each.

Co-op Member authorities, including EFDC, use the meetings to present Local Plan consultations and work on evidence base documents like Green Belt Reviews and SHMAs, and public consultations such as the recent consultation on M11 J7A and Broxbourne Borough's current Local Plan consultation.

All of the above work and continuing co-operation provides tangible evidence to present to the Inspector when we reach the Local Plan Examination in Public that the four West Essex/East Herts Councils have considered all of the cross-border issues, and relevant options relating to their Local Plans carefully and consistently; thus showing compliance with the Duty to Co-operate.

## 2) Member Workshops

These workshops have proved to be successful in both informing Members of emerging key issues that the draft Local Plan will cover and ensuring that Members' views and concerns are aired in order that they might be taken account of in the policy drafting.

Since the last Cabinet PFH report in April further workshops have been held on climate change (24 May), transport accessibility and parking standards (31 May) and development management policies (16 July). There will also be a briefing on the proposals for the local plan consultation on 28 July 2016 to which I encourage Members and Town and Parish Council representatives to attend.

## 3) Update on key evidence work

Work continues on finalising the evidence base reports used to inform the policies included in the Draft Plan (Preferred Approach) that the Council consults on at the end of October.

### ***Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Economic and Employment evidence***

These key pieces of technical evidence relating to housing and jobs numbers were completed in 2015 and the reports can be viewed via the Local Plan pages of the Council's website.

The updated Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) produced in conjunction with the other authorities within our Housing Market Area: East Herts, Harlow and Uttlesford provide figures for Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) for Epping Forest District and the other three Districts. The OAHN figure in Epping Forest District is 11,300 dwellings up to 2033 but it is important to understand that this is not the housing target for the District. As reported above, work is underway with the other SHMA authorities to consider the options for the most appropriate spatial distribution of growth across the area and thereby enable us to arrive at a housing target.

An Economic Evidence report for West Essex and East Herts commissioned jointly by EFDC and East Herts, Harlow and Uttlesford Councils should be read together with a second more detailed report covering 'Economic and Employment Evidence to Support the Local Plan and Economic Development Strategy' completed for EFDC alone. Officers are also updating information in the 2010 Employment study.

### ***Site selection and infrastructure delivery work***

The Council's Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) has been updated and site selection undertaken in order to provide options on the preferred sites for allocation. A total of 33 criteria have been used to assess all the sites. Proformas have been sent to promoters of sites to ensure we have correct and up to date information, which will be

important when assessing the availability of sites. Some of the sites were submitted as far back as 2008 so this is an important element of the work. For some of the sites we do not have details of ownership and this will entail undertaking land registry searches. This needs to be completed in order to take complete the final shortlist of sites for potential allocation by the end of July so that they can be included in the draft plan for consultation.

We are also preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to support the sites being selected for the Draft Plan. Initial work has been undertaken to tie in with the site selection work programme to identify physical, social and community infrastructure requirements of the candidate sites

### ***Green Belt Review***

Work on the Green Belt Review Stage 2 is being undertaken for the Council by external consultants LUC. Officers have fed comments back to the consultants on a draft final report. The results of this work will be used to inform the Draft Plan and will be published as part of the consultation.

### ***Settlement Capacity Work***

Consultants Fregonese Associates have undertaken a settlement capacity study of the District's 10 largest settlements - namely Epping, Theydon Bois, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Loughton/Debden, Waltham Abbey, North Weald Bassett, Chipping Ongar, Lower Nazeing and Roydon. This provides information to determine the potential for additional capacity within existing settlements over and above that originally identified in the SLAA, and so minimise the potential need to utilise Green Belt land for any future growth. All the sites identified have been fed into the updated SLAA and the site selection process. Like Stage 2 of the Green Belt Review, the results of this work are being used to inform, and will be published alongside, the consultation Draft Plan Preferred Approach.

### ***Other evidence base studies***

Essex County Council has recently undertaken a Historic Environment Characterisation study of the District. Characterisation is a well-established approach to landscape analysis and management and is specifically identified in the NPPF. The characterisation work will inform the Local Plan and provide guidance to planning officers about the varied and important historic environment of the District. Town and parish councils have also been asked for expressions of interest in participating in work leading to the establishment of a Green Infrastructure Framework for the District. The intention is that this work will produce a Corporate District-wide strategy and used to help inform policies in the emerging Local Plan as well as potentially support neighbourhood planning initiatives.

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor G Waller

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Safer, Greener & Transport Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Community Safety**

### *Changes to working arrangements with Essex Police*

Our Community Safety team is working well with the Community Policing teams, established under the new Essex Police structure, and a 'virtual hub', designed to ensure maximum cooperation, now operates between Epping Forest and Brentwood councils on the one hand and Essex Police on the other. This arrangement is generating a good exchange of information around operational issues and includes a new process whereby there is a daily call briefing with police to carry out a review of significant incidents over the previous 24 hours, providing a valuable forum for discussion of any planned resource or operational activity.

Additionally, the Community Safety team is now an integral part of the district police tasking meeting, which is held every two weeks and is carried out by call conference, saving officer time travelling to a police station. There is also hot desking capacity in the Community Safety office, which is being used regularly each week by the district police Inspector, Community Policing team Sergeant, Police Intelligence Officer and Integrated Offender Management officers. This is having a very positive effect in terms of joined up working and highly effective intelligence sharing.

Since the new policing arrangements have been rolled out over the last year, it has been noticeable that the two Council Anti-Social Behaviour Investigators have seen a significant increase in workload, resulting in a 33 per cent uplift in the first half of this year compared with 2015. They have a current workload count of 320 live or completed cases this year, including investigatory work for neighbourhood disputes, meetings with victims and perpetrators and compilation of reports to support the serving of injunctions and public space protection orders.

### *Crime and Disorder Analysis*

Based on the model of activity undertaken by the West Local Policing Area Analyst, based and managed at the Council for over five years, Essex Police are now providing permanent full time analytical support to all of the Community Safety Partnerships across Essex. The police are currently recruiting additional analysts for the two remaining policing areas, and the analyst that we currently host is in the process of transferring to Essex Police, retaining responsibility for the West LPA and continuing to be based at the Civic Offices. This is

considered to be a win-win outcome as we shall continue to benefit from the excellent work of the analyst while funds are released for other community safety initiatives.

### *Domestic Homicide Review*

I reported in April that I had begun the process to establish a Domestic Homicide Review following the death of a Theydon Bois woman. In my capacity as Chairman of Epping Forest District Community Safety Partnership and in accordance with statutory procedures, I informed the Home Office that we considered that a review was required to take place. Subsequently Liz Hanlon, a former senior officer with Hertfordshire Constabulary who chairs Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, has been appointed to chair the review, and John Gilbert, a former director with this Council, has been appointed as report writer. I am delighted that we have secured the services of two individuals who are so well qualified to perform these roles.

The review panel has met to deal with initial arrangements but, at the request of Essex Police, will not meet again until after the conclusion of court proceedings for murder against the alleged victim's husband, due to commence at Chelmsford Crown Court in November.

Meanwhile, we also considered the circumstances surrounding the death of a Buckhurst Hill woman who was tragically killed at a hotel in Waltham Cross in December 2015. Because this case might also have met the criteria requiring a Domestic Homicide Review to be set up, I attended three hearings at St Albans Crown Court, but the evidence and the judge's sentencing remarks indicated that those criteria were not met in this instance. Nevertheless, there are disturbing features which require further investigation, and I very much welcome the fact that partners in Hertfordshire have agreed to establish a multi-agency review to establish what lessons might be learned for the future.

### **Safeguarding**

The Safeguarding team continues to be very busy with local cases, including many relating to adult hoarders. Although hoarding is considered by some to be a lifestyle choice, many people find themselves living in this way due to trauma, bereavement or other life event that causes them distress and which leads to obsessive and compulsive behaviour. Most of the local issues of hoarding and resultant complications are identified through the Council's housing teams and our Environmental Health Officers, who may be alerted to concerns relating to the presence of vermin or foul odours emanating from properties. Following an initial visit, officers will make a judgement as to whether conditions justify a need for action, in which case steps can be taken to enforce a complete clean and clearance of the property. However, this is done in consultation with Essex County Council social care team and mental health colleagues, due to the complexities of the hoarding condition and potential need for support before the property is cleared, whilst it is taking place and afterwards, to help prevent reoccurrences of the problem. Where possible, the Council provides temporary accommodation for the individuals concerned if they do not have the opportunity to stay with family or friends.

### **Countrycare**

Since the last report Countrycare have had 13 more volunteer working parties in Buckhurst Hill, North Weald, Ongar, Bobbingworth and Waltham Abbey, in addition to joint tasks with Essex Wildlife Trust at Hawksmere Spring in Stapleford Tawney and Loughton Town Council at Willingale Road community orchard.

The work parties continue to be well attended. In the first half of 2016, a total of 383 volunteer days were given, an average of over 15 people per task - a new record number of

volunteers for Countrycare. The annual volunteer walk took place on 9 June in fine weather, the volunteers enjoying a five mile walk around Roydon and the Glen Faba lake and nature reserve.

An event for children was held at Linder's Field, Buckhurst Hill on 1 June. The theme of the event was hedgehogs, with 19 children and their parents having a fun educational morning playing games connected with hedgehogs. Abigail Oldham and Kevin Mason gave a presentation in Sheering on 12 April looking at the work of Countrycare and explaining the work that has taken place at Sheering Copse. Kevin Mason organised a training session for the district Tree Wardens in Gernon Bushes, Coopersale on the subject of diseased trees. On behalf of the council, Kevin Mason also attended the Tree Council conference on ash tree dieback in non-woodland settings held in Coventry on 19 April.

The ponds in the Civic Offices car park and Nazeing Triangle were surveyed by Abigail Oldham and Nicola Ceconi over five days in May for great crested newts. The Civic Offices pond still has a healthy population of newts. Finally, the special roadside verges in Sheering, Beauchamp Roding and High Laver have all been surveyed to ensure they retain their status as nature reserves.

## **Energy efficiency and fuel poverty**

### *Environmental Charter*

The Council's Green Working Party has developed an Environmental Charter which states the Council's commitment to 'green issues' under the headings of 'Climate Change', 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions' and 'Sustainability'. Attached to the Charter is a plan of realistic but stretching actions that will achieve the Council's commitments under each heading.

The Working Party's existing work plan already includes day-to-day 'green' activities which can be added to and fed into the actions to demonstrate the Council's progress against its commitments. The Council's Management Board has endorsed the Charter, and the Neighbourhoods Select Committee has recommended it to Cabinet for approval.

### *Essex Energy Switch*

In 2014 I agreed that the Council should actively support the Essex Energy Switch initiative that was developed in partnership with Essex County Council. The aim of this was to encourage consumers to consider changing to providers of cheaper energy by making it simpler to switch. There was no cost to the Council, and we were reimbursed for the time spent by officers assisting in the administration of the scheme.

In last year's Energy Switch 52 households in the District switched provider. The average savings by those that switched was £265.69. Another auction took place in May and as a result 43 residents chose to switch, with an average saving on this occasion of £307.57

A further auction will take place towards the end of this year. As before, it is likely that use will be made of the Library network, the Contact Essex helpdesk and the websites of participating districts and boroughs to help residents submit paper submissions if they wish. I will keep members informed of the outcome.

## **Parking**

### *Council car parks*

Under the Council's adopted parking strategy, which includes a commitment to improve CCTV systems and install LED lighting in all Council car parks. I am pleased to inform

members that CCTV systems are being upgraded on a priority basis and that in the first phase, car parks in Ongar will get have CCTV systems installed. Assessments for conversion to LED lighting are currently being carried out and I shall be updating members when more information becomes available.

I am also happy to report that the Council has once again been awarded the Park Mark® status for all its car parks. This is a prestigious award and is part of the Police Crime Prevention Initiative which aims to reduce crime and the fear of crime in car parks.

As members are aware, the Council is leaving the off street element of the North Essex Parking Partnership from 31 March 2017 and will again assume responsibility for the management of its car parks. The procurement for the provision of this service is well under way and officers, with the assistance of consultants RTA Associates, are drawing up detailed plans to issue the necessary tender documents in the coming months.

I would like thank the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group which continues to provide valuable support in this process and I look forward to their continued assistance.

#### *Loughton Broadway Parking Review*

Work on the Loughton Broadway Parking Review has been phased to provide that in the first instance a number of schemes will be implemented to address immediate safety concerns. This will be followed by an area wide assessment of the impact on local parking of some of the large infrastructure development schemes being planned in the Broadway area. I shall meet with the relevant members in the coming weeks to consider the proposals.

#### *TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) scheme reductions*

Twice a year I am able to nominate TRO schemes to the Joint Committee of the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to begin the process towards implementation. Although a number of schemes have been implemented, the list of pending schemes is very long, with over 100 currently listed for consideration within Epping Forest District. I support NEPPs request that the list be reviewed with the intention of making it deliverable within a realistic timescale. On my behalf, officers have consulted all relevant ward members and recommended that the list be reduced. I shall present the reduced list at the next Joint Committee meeting of NEPP in October 2016.



# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Technology and Support Services

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor A Lion

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Technology and Support Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Support Services**

### **HR/Payroll IT System – Implementation**

Work started on the HR and Payroll project on the 15 June 2016. This is a shared service initiative with three Council's Braintree, Colchester and Epping Forest using the industry leading I-Trent system. The initial workshop was facilitated by consultants from Midland HR and attended by representatives from the three councils.

An Implementation Governance Board has been established with the first meeting held on 20 June. The purpose of the group is to ensure effective use of the consultant days, to make collective decisions around system and design and agree the lead system administrators. The planned go live date for Payroll is December 2016.

A three day training session took place on 27 to 29 June to detail systems set-up capabilities and to run through features of the system, followed by a workshop, hosted by Colchester Council and covering details around the different types of system structures. Those who attended the training were able to demonstrate their understanding and help to facilitate an agreement around the preferred structure for all three Councils to work with.

A decision was made by the Implementation Governance Board to have the same structure for all three local authorities as this would enable easier management when changes needed to be made to the system for transferring staff and restructures.

To ensure that our data is up-to-date and correct, Payroll are carrying out data cleansing and an audit of HR personal details held on our existing system. This information will be sent out to all staff in the coming weeks, to ensure that the details held are correct.

### **Personal Data Working Group**

A working group was set-up with Officers across all Directorates to have an input into improving corporate administration. Efficiency gains have been achieved with introduction of new Time Recording Sheets, Annual Leave and Sickness Absence E-Form.

Sub-groups have now been set-up to investigate current procedures and best work practices on other areas of corporate administration.

Sub-groups will corporately be investigating the following topics:

- Starters, Leavers and Amendments Forms
- Recruitment Forms and Process
- Intranet Site/HR Forms
- Training Records
- PDR Forms
- Annual Leave System and Time Recording Sheet

### **Starters and Leavers**

#### **7 new starters joined in June**

Business Rates Officer  
 Intern Officer  
 Benefits Assistant  
 Careline Operator  
 Administrative & Technical Officer  
 Senior Planning Officer  
 Clerical Assistant

#### **6 leavers in June**

Recovery Assistant  
 Careline Operator  
 Coms IT Systems Support  
 Animal Warden  
 Clerical Assistant  
 Gardener

### **Facilities**

The preparation work to enable the replacement of the Cashiers windows for the installation of the new payment kiosks at the Civic Offices has now been completed. A phased introduction of the kiosks is planned for later this summer.

The move of Grounds Maintenance and Fleet Operation office staff from Langston Road to the new depot at Oakwood Hill has now been completed. As the new depot is now complete Langston Road site has been cleared in preparation for works to commence on the new shopping area in the District at the Epping Forest Retail Park.

### **Technology**

ICT were recently approached by ESRI, our Geographic Information System (GIS) software supplier to consider putting a case study together, as the GIS team are ahead of most other Local Authorities in terms of developing mapping and gazetteer solutions. The supplier indicated how impressed they were with both the speed at which the Council are developing their skills and our innovative uses for ESRI technologies. We produced an article which has been published and can be viewed at:

<http://www.esriuk.com/Resources/case-studies/epping-forest-district-council>

The ESRI system provides access to the market leading Pix4D, a company who produce advanced photo modelling software. This software can be used with the UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) to create professional aerial photographs and 3D models. The software

which is fully compatible with our UAV, costing £2,500 per annum, has been made available to us at no additional cost. It is anticipated that our UAV's will begin flying in late August/September following final authorisation from the Civil Aviation Authority.

### **Printer Migration Project**

The printer migration project is progressing well. A series of maps showing the preferred locations for the proposed 15 MFD's (Multi-Functional Devices) within the Civic Offices ( set up in the members room) and the 11 MFD's for the satellite offices have been established, along with the appropriate procurement framework. Following final approval from the Transformation Board, it is anticipated that the MFD's will be rolled out during October of this year, replacing the current solution of approximately 120 more expensive printers.

Research has shown several benefits by introducing the MFD's, just by simplifying printing and routing all jobs through a single queue, so work can be collected from any MFD (on any site), security is enhanced and wastage reduced as work is only printed when the user swipes their security door pass. Smaller number of more efficient printers reduces space requirements and also reduces power usage. A savings prediction of 10% reduction in paper usage and estimated savings in print cost per page are between 50% for mono printing, and 98% for full page full colour printing. Overall the estimated savings are approximately £18,000 per annum are predicted with a suggested potential saving of £90,000 for the 5 year life of the contract.

### **Energy Management - Smith Bellerby**

A report was presented to the Resources Select Committee (RSC) on the 12 July 2016 regarding the continued performance of Smith Bellerby, who deal with our energy management. The report identifies the actual savings made so far are approximately £31,000 and also highlights the staffing resources and time savings this arrangement continues to achieve. The Energy Savings and Improved Management Process full report can be viewed from the Council's Committee Management System.

### **Superfast Broadband High Speed Internet**

#### **Business Breakfast**

To further promote take-up by businesses of the ultrafast fibre broadband network being built within Epping Forest District by Gigaclear PLC as part of the Superfast Essex Rural Challenge Project (RCP), the Economic Development team will be hosting a business breakfast aimed at the businesses within the RCP as well as businesses from outside the area whose services may be more effectively utilised with an ultrafast network.

It is planned that as well as a number of speakers presenting to the audience about the opportunities an ultrafast network makes possible, the event will also represent an excellent opportunity for local businesses to network with key Business to Business (B2B) providers, both local and national and make useful connections. The event will take place at Mulberry House, High Ongar on 13 September at 7.00am and promotion of the event will take place over the course of the next couple of months. Liaison with local parish councils will also take place to ensure awareness of the event reaches as many businesses as possible in the RCP area.

#### **Ultrafast Network**

The physical build of the RCP network continues at pace and to date, over 84km of network has been built, installing connection points outside over 1100 premises. Having started in

Bobbingworth, the network has moved on through Moreton, Fyfield, Norton Heath, Abbess Roding and Toot Hill and will continue throughout the remainder of the year to areas such as Willingale, The Lavers, Sheering, Ongar and North Weald. The project has experienced some delays but remains due to be completed in early 2017.

### **Transformation Programme**

The Transformation Programme Board has been meeting regularly and has agreed proposals for around 40 change projects, drawn largely from the Corporate Plan: Key Action Plan 2016/17. Consideration of these projects has enabled the Board to co-ordinate benefits and balance the use of resources across projects.

Good progress is being made across projects and programmes from the Transformation Programme. Detailed reports are given via a monthly highlight reports presented to Cabinet.

The Transformation Programme has four priority projects:

- Customer Contact Projects
- Service Accommodation Review
- Establish Project and Programme Management
- Corporate Communications

An update briefing for Councillors on the Transformation Programme will take place during July.

### **Transformation Savings**

A cost benefit analysis has now been undertaken for the 65 savings suggestions submitted by staff. The Transformation Programme Board has agreed which initiatives will be taken forward to achieve the £100,000 transformation savings for 2016/17.

### **Transformation Training**

Officers from project teams are continuing to attend transformation training, with the second cohort for 20 delegates completed in July. A third cohort will commence in the autumn.



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

## ***Decision by Leader***

**Report reference: LDR-001-2016/17**

**Date of Report: 20 June 2016**

**Portfolio:** Leader

**Author:** S. Tautz (Ext 4180)

**Democratic Services:** J. Leither (Ext 4756)

**Subject:** Member Representation on External Organisations - Essex Partnership for Flood Management

**Decisions:**

1. That Councillor W. Breare-Hall (Environment Portfolio Holder) be appointed as the Council's representative on the Essex Partnership for Flood Management; and
2. That Councillor G. Waller (Safer, Greener and Transport Portfolio Holder) be appointed as deputy for Councillor W. Breare-Hall as the Council's representative on the partnership.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>ADVISORY NOTICE:</b>  |   |
| <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i> |   |
| I have read and approve/ <del>do not approve</del> (delete as appropriate) the above decision:   |   |
| Comments/further action required:  |   |
| Signed: Cllr C Whitbread   | Date: 20 June 2016  |
| <i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member: none</i>   | <i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee: Yes/No or n/a</i> |

***After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY***

**Reason for decision:**

Member appointments to external organisations carrying out executive functions are delegated to the Leader of the Council. Appointment to Essex Partnership for Flood Management should be a Leader Appointment, given that flooding management is covered within the responsibilities of the Environment Portfolio.

**Options considered and rejected:**

Not to make a member appointment to the Essex Partnership for Flood Management.

**Initialed as original copy by the Leader of the Council:**

## Report

1. The Council has received an invitation from Essex County Council, for member appointment to the Essex Partnership for Flood Management.
2. The Partnership brings together all key stakeholders to contribute to a strategic overview of matters surrounding flooding in Essex, to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach with regard to flood risk management. The Board meets quarterly and contributes to key decisions on projects, strategies funding and communications.
3. The Chairman of the Partnership is County Councillor Roger Hirst, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Healthy Living. The Partnership comprises an elected member from each of the District, Borough and City councils within Essex and Members can be supported at partnership meetings by lead officers from their respective councils.
4. The Director of Neighbourhoods considers that it would be appropriate for the Council to be represented on the partnership.

## Due Regard Record

This page shows **which groups of people are affected** by the subject of this report. It sets out **how they are affected** and how any **discrimination** they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how **access to the service(s)** subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to **understand each other better** as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

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There are no equality implications arising from this decision.

# ***Report to the Council***

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Appointment of Members to External Organisations

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## **1. EPPING FOREST LOCAL LIAISON GROUP**

### **Recommending:**

- (1) That the Council consider an invitation from the City of London Corporation to appoint member representatives to the Epping Forest Local Liaison Group; and**
- (2) That, subject to recommendation (1) above, the Council appoint representatives to the Liaison Group for 2016/17, in accordance with the specified membership requirements of the Corporation.**

1.1 The Council has been invited to nominate members to the Epping Forest Local Liaison Group established by the City of London Corporation, as a means of improving understanding between the Council and the Corporation with regard to the management of Epping Forest, the largest open space within the district.

1.2 The Corporation considers that, whilst it already has an excellent working relationship with the Council through its representation on the Local Strategic Partnership, more could be done to fully inform members about the importance and continuing management of Epping Forest. The Corporation has already established successful liaison groups for the areas of Epping Forest within the London Boroughs of Redbridge and Waltham Forest.

1.3 If the Council wishes to appoint members to the Liaison Group, representation should be determined on the basis of nominations from the political groups holding seats in the following wards identified by the City of London Corporation. The appointment of members from these wards represents the membership requirements for the Liaison Group stipulated by the Corporation and has not been influenced by the Council:

- the member for the Broadley Common, Epping Upland and Nazeing ward (Councillor L. Hughes);
- one member from the Buckhurst Hill West ward;
- one member from the Epping Lindsay and Thornwood Common ward;
- one member from the Epping Hemnall ward;
- one member from the Loughton St. John's ward;
- one member from the Loughton St. Mary's ward;
- one member from the Loughton Forest ward;
- one member from the Theydon Bois ward; and
- the member for the Waltham Abbey High Beach ward (Councillor S. Stavrou).

1.4 In addition to members of the Council, the new Epping Forest Local Liaison Group will also comprise representation from the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, the Superintendent of Epping Forest, Essex Police and the Forest Verderers.

1.5 The Council is requested to consider whether to appoint members to the Epping Forest Local Liaison Group and, if appropriate, to make appropriate appointments for 2016/17.

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## ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:**           **Audit & Governance**

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:**           **Annual Report 2015/16**

**Chairman:**       **Councillor J Knapman**

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### **Recommending:**

**(1) That the Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee for 2015/16 be noted.**

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### **Report:**

1. The Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee outlines the Committee's work and achievements over the year ending 31 March 2016. The Annual Report helps to demonstrate to residents and the Council's other stakeholders the vital role that is carried out by the Audit and Governance Committee and the contribution that it makes to the Council's overall governance arrangements.

2. The Annual Report is attached as an Appendix to this report, and we recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

## Due Regard Record

This page shows which groups of people are affected by the subject of this report. It sets out how they are affected and how any unlawful discrimination they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how access to the service(s) subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to understand each other better as a result of the subject of this report. S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

| <b>Date / Name</b>                     | <b>Summary of equality analysis</b>  |
|--|--|
| 27 June 2016<br>Chief Internal Auditor | The report is a summary of the work reviewed in the year by the Audit and Governance Committee and has no equality implications. |

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**2015/16**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Audit Committee was established by the Council in July 2007. Its purpose is:

- to provide independent assurance to the Council in respect of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements, risk management framework and the associated control environment; and
- independent scrutiny of the Council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment.

Whilst there is no statutory obligation for a local authority to establish an audit committee, they are widely recognised internationally across the public and private sectors as a key component of effective governance. Similarly, it is considered good practice for the Committee to report annually to the Council on its work.

The key benefits of an effective audit committee are:

- increasing awareness regarding the effectiveness and continued development of the Council's governance arrangements;
- providing additional assurance on the robustness of the Council's governance arrangements through a process of independent and objective review;
- reducing the risks of illegal or improper acts;
- increasing public confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial and other reporting;
- contributing to performance improvements in assurance levels and awareness of the need for strong internal control including the implementation of audit recommendations; and
- reinforcing the importance and independence of internal and external audit and similar review processes.

## 2. ASSURANCE ACTIVITY 2015/16

To help the Committee draw conclusions about the effectiveness of the Council's internal control framework, governance and risk management it gained assurances from the following sources:

### **Internal Audit**

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 require the Council to maintain an adequate and effective internal audit which is discharged by the Director of Resources as Section 151 Officer. Internal Audit is a key source of assurance for both Members and management on the effectiveness of the control framework. The Committee has a responsibility for ensuring that Internal Audit is effective in the provision of this assurance.

The Committee considered and agreed reports regarding the Internal Audit Strategy, Terms of Reference and Annual Plan 2015/16, and progress by management in implementing audit recommendations. It also received regular progress reports on the performance of Internal Audit. These reports have helped in ensuring that reported weaknesses have either been addressed or the identified risks adequately mitigated by management and that there is an effective system of governance and internal control in place.

The Committee also kept under review the recent joint working arrangement with Harlow District Council and Broxbourne Borough Council, including audit resources to deliver the plan and benefits derived from the shared working.

### **Assurance Framework / Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee's terms of reference include advising on the effectiveness of the Council's assurance framework including the production of the Annual Governance Statement.

During the year, the Committee has received reports on the control framework and how the annual review and assurance process is undertaken. The Assurance Framework is compiled from various sources of assurance, for instance Directors and other key officers.

The Chief Internal Auditor provides an annual report and opinion regarding the Council's control framework. This opinion is considered by the Committee alongside other sources of assurance.

The Committee reviewed the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2014/15 which identified governance issues requiring further ongoing improvement relating to:

- Parking income;
- Housing rent reconciliations;
- Contract Standing Orders; and
- Sundry debtors

The assurance framework and the Council's Code of Corporate Governance remained unchanged during 2015/16. The Committee was able to be satisfied that there is a robust assurance framework in place to safeguard the Council's resources through reliance on the annual review of the Council's system of internal control and the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion.

### **Anti-Fraud and Corruption**

Countering fraud and corruption is the responsibility of every Member and officer of the Council. The Committee's role in this area has been to monitor and support the actions taken by officers to counter fraud, particularly with the setup of the Corporate Fraud Team, who work in tandem with Internal Audit.

The Committee receives reports and presentations on such work undertaken in the Council and proactive fraud work, for example participation in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).

The Council continues to send out a strong message that fraud will not be tolerated and that where fraud is proven the strongest possible actions of redress will be taken.

Based on the work to date, coupled with no major incidences of fraud and corruption being highlighted by management, the Corporate Fraud Team or Internal Audit, the Committee concludes that there is a sound anti-fraud framework in place.

### **Risk Management**

The Committee receives regular reports on risk management, including in March 2016 a report on the effectiveness of the arrangements for risk management highlighting the Council had continued its programme of risk management.

### **Committee Working Arrangements**

The Committee has a rolling and flexible programme of work for its main areas of activity which is proactively reviewed and amended throughout the year to reflect

changes in policies, priorities and risks. The Committee met five times in 2015/16. The Committee considered items which are presented annually, such as audit results, the statement of accounts, the annual governance statement, and audit plans; as well as a number of other items including treasury management as this falls under the committee's remit.

Training sessions have been held and the agreed work programme enables the Committee to provide an independent assurance to the Council as to the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment.

Members of the Committee have a wide range of both experience and professional knowledge which, coupled with it having two co-opted persons, has continued to help demonstrate its independence. The Committee has the benefit of being well supported by Council officers. This included the Director of Resources, who is also the Section 151 Officer, Director of Governance, who is also the Monitoring Officer, and the Chief Internal Auditor as well as the Council's external auditors.

During the year the committee considered the benefits of combining the committee with the Standards Committee. It was agreed that keeping the two committees separate was a current strength of the Council but the situation would be reviewed in two years' time.

To help ensure the effectiveness of the Committee, there is a training programme, comprising of formal training sessions, as well as the committee reports. This supplemented the corporate induction packs and training programme provided, particularly for new members to the Council. Ongoing training requirements are kept under review and opportunities for joint training with Harlow and Broxbourne Councils are actively sought.

There have been no reported major breakdowns in internal control, governance and risk management that have led to a significant loss in one form or another, nor any major weakness in the governance systems that has exposed, or continues to expose, the Council to an unacceptable level of risk.

The purpose, strategy and work programme of the Committee mitigates against any major failure by the Council to obtain independent assurance in relation to the governance processes underpinning:

- An effective risk management framework and internal control environment including audit;
- The effectiveness of financial and non-financial performance (to the extent that it affects exposure to risk and poor internal control); and
- The compilation and consideration of the AGS.

### **Outcomes / Achievements**

Through its work, the Committee's main outcome is in the additional assurance provided of the robustness of the Council's arrangements regarding corporate governance, risk management and internal controls.

The Committee has added value through its activity and in particular:

- it has continued to increase the importance placed upon governance issues, particularly risk management, anti-fraud and the assurances sought that key risks are being mitigated; and
- it has continued to raise the profile of internal control issues across the Council and to seek to ensure that audit recommendations are implemented.

## **Conclusions**

The Committee's remit is achieved firstly through it being appropriately constituted, and secondly by the Committee being effective in ensuring internal accountability and the delivery of audit and a robust assurance framework. The Committee has received and challenged reports from management and both internal and external audit.

The agreed work programme enables the Committee to provide independent assurance to the Council as to the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment.

The Committee has continued to have a real and positive contribution to the governance arrangements of the Council. The Committee's key achievement is in the additional assurance provided of the robustness of the Council's arrangements regarding corporate governance, risk management and the control environment.

## **Looking Forward**

The Committee has continued to work well and has considered a wide range of different topics relating to the Council's governance framework. It has continued to establish and develop its role, particularly in respect of ensuring that there are good risk assessment / management arrangements and good governance procedures in place.

Stricter internal control and the establishment of a Committee can never eliminate the risks of serious fraud, misconduct or misrepresentation of the financial position. However, the Committee will continue to raise awareness of the need for internal control and the implementation of audit recommendations as well as to maintain a watching brief on the areas highlighted in the AGS. In addition, through a process of independent and objective reviews, the Committee is best placed to provide an additional assurance as to the adequacy of the Council's overall governance arrangements.

The Committee has performed its duties as required under its terms of reference, contributing to an effective control framework. In order to build upon its achievements to date and to raise awareness of the work of the Committee during the coming year the Committee will focus on the following:

- Continue to review governance arrangements to ensure that the Council adopts best practice;
- Continue to support the work of audit and ensure that appropriate responses are provided to their recommendations;
- Continue to help the Council manage the risk of fraud and corruption;
- Provide effective challenge, particularly to officers, raising awareness of the importance of sound internal control arrangements and giving the appropriate assurances to the Council;
- Consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements.
- Provide existing and new members to the Committee with relevant training, briefings etc. to help in discharging their responsibilities.
- Consider the potential role of the Committee in appointing the Council's External Auditors.

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## ***Report to Council***

***Date of meeting: 26 July 2016***

**Subject: Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report to Council**

**Committee: Overview and Scrutiny**

**Chairman: Councillor M Sartin**

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### **Recommendation:**

**That the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Select Committees and the Task and Finish Panels during the past municipal year (2015/16) as detailed in the annual report be noted.**

### **Report:**

1. This report was produced in accordance with Article 6, Overview and Scrutiny Rule 37 of the Constitution that requires an annual report to be submitted to the Council at the start of each year.

2. This is the eleventh annual report under the scrutiny regime instituted by the Council in April 2005, incorporating (for the first time) four Select Committees and the Task and Finish Panels.

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**Overview and Scrutiny**  
**Annual Report for**  
**2015-2016**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**  
[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk)



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# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT: MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015/2016

## *Introduction and Welcome from the Chairman*

Welcome to the eleventh report of the Overview and Scrutiny Structure of Epping Forest District Council. After an 11 month long review into the Overview and Scrutiny functions we have established a new way to conduct our business. This year we have established four Select Committees in place of the old Scrutiny Panels structure we have had in previous years. These Select Committees were roughly aligned with the new Directorate structure the Council had put in place.

As always, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the new Select Committees were charged with reviewing Cabinet decisions, the Corporate Strategy, the Council's financial performance and also scrutinising the performance of the public bodies active in the District by inviting reports and presentations from them. The bare bones of scrutiny had not changed, only the way we carried it out.

At the beginning of the 2015/16 municipal year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to the setting up of four Select Committees for the year; no Task and Finish Panels were commissioned, but the already established Grant Aid Task and Finish Panel and the Youth Engagement Task and Finish Panel continued their work from the previous year.

During the year we received numerous presentations from outside bodies including the Epping Forest College, Barts Health NHS Trust, and the Epping Forest Youth Council.

My thanks go to the Chairmen and members of the four new Select Committees and the members and officers of the Task and Finish Panel, and my very special thanks go to my much missed Vice-Chairman, Councillor Angold-Stephens for all his help and support through the year.

And of course, I would like to thank all the officers that have worked so hard to keep the Committee members informed and supplied with the background information that they needed to carry out their investigations.

*Cllr Richard Morgan*

Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## ***What is Scrutiny?***

- Ø Scrutiny in local government is the mechanism by which public accountability is exercised.
- Ø The purpose of scrutiny in practice is to examine, question and evaluate in order to achieve improvement.
- Ø The value of scrutiny is in the use of research and questioning techniques to make recommendations based on evidence.
- Ø Scrutiny enables issues of public concerns to be examined.
- Ø At the heart of all the work is consideration of what impact the Cabinet's plans will have on the local community.
- Ø However, the overview and scrutiny function is not meant to be confrontational or seen as deliberately set up to form an opposition to the Cabinet. Rather the two aspects should be regarded as 'different sides of the same coin'. The two should complement each other and work in tandem to contribute to the development of the authority.

Alongside its role to challenge, the scrutiny function has also continued to engage positively with the Cabinet and there continues to be cross party co-operation between members on all panels.

Scrutiny has continued to provide valuable contributions to the Council and the Cabinet remained receptive to ideas put forward by Scrutiny throughout the year.

The rules of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also allow members of the public to have the opportunity to address the Committee on any agenda item.

## ***The Overview and Scrutiny Committee***

The Committee coordinated with the Cabinet and pre scrutinised their Key Decision list (their forward plan) on a meeting by meeting basis. This acted as a troubleshooting exercise, unearthing problems before they arose.

The Committee also engaged with external bodies in order to scrutinise parts of their work that encroached on the District and its people. They also received stand alone reports from officers and reports from the Select Committees on the work they carried out during the year.

## ***Select Committees***

A lead Officer was appointed to each Select Committee to facilitate its process. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the terms of reference for each of the Committees on the basis of a rolling programme to consider ongoing and cyclical issues. Four Select Committees were established, dealing with:

- i. Housing
- ii. Governance
- iii. Neighbourhoods and Community Services
- iv. Resources



The Select Committees reported regularly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with the work they were carrying out.

### ***Task and Finish Panels***

The Task and Finish reviews are restricted to dealing with activities which are issue based, time limited, non-cyclical and with clearly defined objectives on which they would report, once completed, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Two Task and Finish Panels were established last year, both finishing this year. They were the Youth Engagement Task and Finish Panel, and the Grant Aid Review Task and Finish Panel.

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

## *The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consisted of the following members:*

Councillor R Morgan (Chairman)  
Councillor K Angold-Stephens (Vice Chairman)  
Councillors N Avey, T Church, D Dorrell, L Girling, S Kane, P Keska, A Mitchell, G Mohindra, S Murray, S Neville, B Rolfe M Sartin, G Shiell, B Surtees and D Wixley

The Lead Officer was Derek Macnab, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods.

## *Terms of Reference*

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's main functions are to monitor and scrutinise the work of the executive and its forward plan, external bodies linked to the District Council and the Council's financial performance. It is tasked with the consideration of call-ins, policy development, performance monitoring and reviewing corporate strategies.

## *The Committee's workload over the past year can be broken down as follows:*

### *(a) Scrutinising and monitoring Cabinet work*

The Committee has a proactive role in this area through carrying out pre-scrutiny work. This involved considering the Cabinet's Key Decision List (Forward Plan) for the coming months on a meeting by meeting basis.

### *(b) Call-ins*

The Committee received one call-in this year.

The call-in received was on the Cabinet Decision ((C-018-2015/16) on the release of restructure covenants on land at Epping Forest College, Loughton.

The Call-in was based on the following premises, that:

- 1) *The covenants were imposed by the London County Council to protect an adequate supply of land for educational and NHS use in the vicinity of the residential development they had undertaken.*
- 2) *That need remains valid today.*
- 3) *ECC projections of rising 5s, plus the factors of extensive EFDC council house building and of continuing in-migration, imply a new school will be needed in 7-10 years.*
- 4) *There is no suitable spare land in Loughton on which a new school could be built.*
- 5) *Therefore this land, use of which was restricted for the needs of the then LEA (and NHS), should continue to be protected by covenant, for its original purpose.*

In attendance for the consideration of the call-in was Brian Page, the interim Principal of Epping Forest College; County Councillor Ray Gooding, the ECC Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning and Mark Pincombe the ECC School Organisation Officer.

The responsible Portfolio Holder noted that it was not his job to address the provision of primary educational needs for the area. Officers had asked Essex County Council's Education department and they said that they did not want the land; and the education projection of the population by the ONS suggested that no new places were to be needed in the next 10 years. He had received a request from Epping Forest College to release the Covenant and had to process that request in a reasonable timescale. It was a decision that was looked at in great depth, and in which officers had asked the Education Authority whether they wanted the land and they did not. Given that, the Cabinet had no option but to say that it made sense to release the covenants.

In the end and after reviewing the arguments both for and against, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed the original decision of the Cabinet (C-018-2015/16) regarding the release of restrictive covenants on land at Epping Forest College.

### ***(c) Select Committees work programme monitoring***

The Committee received regular updates from the Chairmen of the four Select Committees reporting on the progress made on their current work programme. This allowed the Committee to monitor their performance and if necessary adjust their work plans to take into account new proposals and urgent items.

### ***(d) Items considered by the committee this year***

Over the year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received various presentations and considered a range of diverse topics.

### ***(e) Councillor Ken Angold-Stephens***

In April 2016 the Committee lost its respected Vice Chairman, Councillor Ken Angold-Stephens, who passed away after a long illness. Councillor Angold-Stephens was the Vice-Chairman of this Committee and chaired various other committees. He would be remembered for his great wealth of knowledge and experience and especially for being impartial and a friend to all.

### ***Presentations:***

**(i) Barts Health NHS Trust – Whipps Cross University Hospital** - The Committee at their first meeting of the year in June 2015 received a presentation from Lyn Hill-Tout, the interim Managing Director of Whipps Cross University Hospital. She was there to report to members on Barts Health NHS Trust's detailed plans for improvement in the areas of concern identified by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).



The Committee noted that Ms Hill-Tout had only been in post for 8 weeks, although she has had 42 years experience in the NHS and was last at the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust.

The Committee noted that 4 warning notices had been issued by the CQC plus specific compliance actions. The key concerns arising from the inspections were: insufficient staff levels; a persisting culture of bullying and harassment; bed occupancy that was too high; and a failure to meet national waiting times targets. Part of these concerns related to the high levels of agency staff and low staff moral.

The four warning notices related to the following regulations: staffing; incidents and learning (staff did not feel that anything was being done); flow, escalation, end of life care; and complaints and PALS.

There were however areas of outstanding practice, one was the effective management of pain relief for children and adults and their 'Great Expectations' maternity programme.

Four major hospital services at Whipps Cross (surgery, critical care, maternity and gynaecology, and services for children and young people) were rated as good for delivering caring treatment.

Ms Hill-Tout noted that Whipps Cross was still needed and had a future in providing acute healthcare to its local population, but has to change and develop a strategy for the future. They were committed to transparency with their stakeholders, staff and patients about their progress. A lot of people looked upon Whipps Cross as their local hospital and there was a lot of positive feedback from the local population.

The meeting was then opened out to questions from the members of the committee.

*(See Case Study for full details)*

**(ii) Volunteering through Time Banking** - At their meeting in July 2015 the Committee welcomed Marc Balkham the Voluntary Action Epping Forest (VAEF) time-bank co-ordinator; with him was Chris Overend the EFDC policy officer.



Mr Balkham noted that this scheme covered the Epping Forest District as well as Harlow. This was about an exchange of time and skills between time bank members. They need only do what they wanted, when they wanted to. As they volunteered they built up time credits and were able to claim it back. Some examples of things that could be done were gardening, DIY, help with IT, languages, music or dance tuition. The scheme was free to join, with any exchanges covered by insurance. There was a simple online registration process that also required two referees. This was a requirement for joining, and both referees would be contacted and asked to provide a reference.

Some activities were best avoided such as providing direct care; anything carrying a financial risk; or repairs to cars and motorcycles for critical mechanical works such as breaks, steering or suspension; and childcare and anything connected with children. Groups of members could become mini time banks, if they had a shared location or shared aims.

The meeting was then opened to questions from the members present.

**(iii) Presentation from the Epping Forest College** - At their meeting in October 2015, the Committee received a presentation from Mr B Page, Deputy Principal of Epping Forest College and Mr S Markham, Director of Fusion Project Management Limited regarding the work of Epping Forest College.

Mr B Page advised that the college had expanded its courses recently and were working in close partnership with external organisations to widen the educational experiences of its students.

Mr S Markham advised of future plans in regard to the college site. A proposal was being made for the creation of a Sports and Health and Well Being facility, which would be built through a self funded scheme. The college required release of surplus assets to invest. The facility would have full community access.

Later in the year this would be a subject of a call-in.



The meeting was then opened to questions from the members present.

**(iv) Barts Health NHS Trust** - At their February 2016 meeting the Committee received a return visit from Barts Health NHS Trust there to update the Committee on their improvement plan from their last visit to this meeting in June 2015. In attendance was Fiona Smith, the Managing Director for Whipps Cross Hospital, with Dr Heather Noble, the Medical Director and Felicia Kwaku, the interim Director of Nursing.

They had now finalised their improvement plan called 'Safe and Compassionate', with each site having the same headings for their improvement plans. The improvement was being delivered through seven key work streams with both a corporate and site based focus and key government structures.



They had made progress in freeing up ward managers to manage ward fundamentals; nursing documentation had been streamlined; had started a 'smile and care' campaign and patient engagement workshops; put in a revised complaints process with a requirement to be much more responsive; and visitors and patients were able to identify the nurse in charge via a badge.

They had also ensured that there were appropriate care plans for those patients nearing the end of their life. Also the Margaret Centre had been refurbished, making it a more safe and comfortable environment for patients and families.

The Trust now had a new Chairman and a new Chief Medical Officer and a new Deputy Chief Executive. The Trust Board also had two new Non-Executive Directors to strengthen the Board. They also had new site teams in place accountable for operational delivery. They had a new programme called 'listening into action' to engage staff and also hold "Big Conversations" with staff (so far with over 1000 staff). This had resulted in lots of little improvements being made following suggestions from members of staff.

*(See Case Study for full details)*

**(v) Epping Forest Youth Council** – In April 2016 the Committee received their annual presentation from Epping Forest Youth Council giving an update on the year past and their future programme.

They thanked the members for their involvement and loyalty to the Youth Council over the past eight years. Noting that without member support they would not be in such a strong position to represent young people's views on issues that they cared about.

Their highest profile event in their second year was the Youth Conference held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Their aim was to promote Local Democracy Week and they invited the local MP, Eleanor Laing to talk about her work in the House of Commons. About 90 young people attended, representing nine secondary schools in and around the Epping Forest District. Among other things they had a 'Make your Mark' ballot where they voted on which campaign they would like to pursue in the coming months. The top item they decided would be the living wage for young people, secondly tackling racism and religious discrimination and thirdly emotional wellbeing and mental health.



It was recognised that emotional wellbeing and mental health were major issues in the district and was not always addressed by schools. The Youth Council was working with North East London NHS Foundation Trust looking at ways they could design a project to support young people in the Epping Forest area. They were currently designing an 'Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Workshop' to deliver to secondary schools.

Volunteering remained a big theme for the youth councillors; they were passionate about encouraging other young people to volunteer and were working closely with their individual schools and had set up Youth Volunteer Days.

They were also looking at ways to break down barriers between older residents and young people. Over the years there were numerous intergenerational projects delivered by the Youth Council. Afternoon teas provided them with an opportunity to break down barriers and chat to the older residents about their perceptions of the younger generation and visa versa.

**(vi) Essex County Council Children Services** - The Committee welcomed Chris Martin, the Commissioning Director (Children) and Gill Holland the lead on Children Centre Performance in the west of the County. They were there to talk about Children Services in our area of the County and the 'Children's Centres in Essex' Consultation taking place.



Mr Martin noted that the Children's consultation was to consult on the Children's and young persons plan. This plan was to run from 2016 to 2019 and would set the direction of children services across Essex. This would affect children and young people from pre-birth to 19 and would improve joint accountability and decision making and move on to family centred plans.

As part of the consultation they had proposed to extend the current children's centre service by increasing the age range to support families with children from pregnancy to age 19 (up to 25 with Special Educational Needs) and by bringing these services together.

They were also proposing to stop calling them Children's Centres and call them Family Hubs. This was because they will be important places for young people and families as well as children and the name reflected the wider range of services that would be on offer. It was proposed that one existing Children's Centre in every district would become a Family Hub and the focal point for co-ordinating services and support families in that area. As well as these delivery sites there would be various 'outreach' sites variously situated in libraries and community centres; these would offer the opportunity for face to face advice, information and guidance.

Hopefully this would all help in the delivery of more flexible services, tailored to meet individual needs and would lead to improved opportunities to improve outcomes for families.

The meeting was then opened out to questions from the members present.

### **Other Topics Considered:**

**(i)** Over the course of the year the Committee considered the Cabinet's Forward Plan and Key Objectives for the coming year on a regular meeting by meeting basis. At each meeting the Committee looked at the updated list of the coming year's work programmed in for the Cabinet.

**(ii)** In June 2015 the Committee received a report setting out the year end outturn of the Corporate Plan Key Objectives. The Committee reviewed the report setting out the final outturn and progress made of the Council's Key Objectives for 2014/15.

They noted that:

- (a) 65% of the individual deliverables or actions supporting the key objectives had been achieved; and
- (b) 35% of the deliverables or actions were not completed by year-end.

**(iii)** The Leader of the Council, Councillor C Whitbread, introduced the Corporate Plan, Key Action Plan 2016/17 report. The Corporate Plan included the aims and objectives which are the Council's highest level strategic intentions. He noted that this was coming out earlier this year so as to get as much input as possible. This was an early opportunity for members to have some input into the Corporate Plan for 2016/17.

**(iv)** In July 2015 the Committee considered a consultation document on the replacement Waste Local Plan, revised preferred approach. They noted that Essex County Council (ECC) and Southend Borough Council were Waste Planning Authorities (WPAs) and were required to prepare a Replacement Waste Local Plan (RWLP) under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and the revised EU Waste Framework Directive (2010).



The consultation ran from 18 June to 30 July 2015 – a period of six weeks, but the lead-in time for this Committee has meant that officers have had only one week to familiarise themselves with lengthy and quite difficult documentation to prepare this report. Officers believed that this was a wholly unreasonable approach by the WPAs, unfair to all consultees because of completely inadequate time to get to grips with a very important, but very complex, issue.

The formal response by this Council to the consultation emphasised the dissatisfaction that was shared by officers and Members. With future consultations, and with issues of this complexity, the Waste Planning Authorities must make full allowance for the lead-in period required by local authorities to prepare and publicise Committee reports.

**(v)** Also in July, the Committee considered the newly established Select Committee's Terms of Reference following the Council's revised procedure rules for the operation of the Overview and Scrutiny Function. The terms of reference were developed between the lead officers and the Chairmen of each committee before they went to the first meeting of that

select committee for consideration and agreement. The terms of reference were intended to reflect the scope of each committee who were to provide regular progress reporting on relevant matters to be made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**(vi)** In October 2015, the Committee received a report from the Democratic Services Manager regarding the Overview and Scrutiny Article and related rules from the Constitution which were being reviewed by the Constitution Working Group.

The approach of the review were for rules which applied generally to be moved into the main rules section and Article 6 (Overview and Scrutiny) would be re-drafted to address instances of relevant procedures being spread across the Constitution.

**(vii)** The Committee also received the final report from the Youth Engagement Review Task and Finish Panel presented by Councillor A Patel, a member of the Panel in the absence of the Chairman, with Councillor S Murray, and Youth Councillor J McIvor.

The Youth Engagement Review was undertaken between April and September 2015 during which they received evidence from Council officers, Youth Council Members and Essex County Council. Although the panel had been particularly interested in the targeted work undertaken with young people, they were disappointed that the County Council did not deliver any youth work within Epping Forest district because of budget cuts.



The Panel had recommended that the current operational budget for the Youth Council should be maintained at £12,000 per annum and that the Cabinet be asked for a CSB Growth Bid of £8,000 per annum for an enabling fund to support the Youth Council's access to projects. In addition, the Panel had requested that the District Council pursue devolvement of the budget and responsibilities for Youth Provision from the County Council to the District Council. A further bid would be made to the Cabinet for another CSB Growth of £25,000 per annum for targeted work by Community Services and Safety of the County Council.

The Committee agreed the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Panel and recommended them to the Cabinet.

Through the year the Committee was kept apprised of what was happening to the Task and Finish Panel's recommendations as they went through Cabinet and the budget setting round.

**(viii)** At the end of each quarter, the Committee received a report regarding the Quarterly Performance of the Key Objectives Key Action Plan 2015/16.



The Corporate Plan was the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out its priorities over the five year period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The priorities, or Corporate Aims, were supported by Key Objectives which provided a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for these five years.

**(ix)** In January 2016 the Committee received a report on Chelmsford City Local Plan consultation issues. Chelmsford's current local plan would run until 2021 and the next local plan was intended to roll forward to 2036. This consultation on the issues and options was the first of three such public consultation exercises.



Chelmsford shares boundaries with seven other Essex local authorities including Epping Forest District. It has an area of about 34,000 ha, 34% of which is in the Green Belt – this covering the south-west of the City Council area, including the boundary with this Council. It has a current population of 168,300 (with approximately 110,000 in Chelmsford Urban Area) and this is expected to increase to 192,000 by 2022.

Members noted that provision for traveller sites and pitches was a particularly difficult issue for this authority because of the 92% Green Belt coverage and the fact that permanent and temporary pitches were inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As this authority has a target of 112 extra pitches from the Essex GTAA 2014, one of the options for meeting this will be to discuss with neighbouring authorities the possibility of meeting some of this need through joint or shared provision. Chelmsford's consultation document did not mention this as a potential option.

**(x)** Also in January the Committee received another consultation document on the consultation relating to Crossrail 2.

Following an earlier consultation in 2013, the route for Crossrail 2 was decided upon with the Regional option favoured over the Metro option. This decision accorded with the route preference expressed by this Council at that time. Subject to funding and Government approval, it was anticipated that an application for powers could be made in 2017, with construction beginning in 2020 and completion in 2030.



The route of the Regional Option Crossrail 2 Line would run north-east to south-west in tunnels through central London linking up Wimbledon with Tottenham Hale. At the north-east end of the line a branch was proposed from Dalston heading to New Southgate in Enfield via Seven Sisters. However, the main line would run through Tottenham Hale following the WAML route up to Broxbourne.

The Committee noted that it was important to understand what the overall benefits and impacts of Crossrail 2 were likely to be for the District. In reiterating EFDC's continued broad support for Crossrail 2, there were invariably a number of issues and uncertainties at this stage regarding the likely impacts that implementation of the scheme may have. And, given that 2030 was the very earliest date that the line could become operational, assessment of likely impacts on Epping Forest District were very difficult to gauge at this stage.

In expressing a preference for the regional option this Council highlighted its concern about the need for guaranteed future investment in, and improvements to, the Central Line – both the Epping branch and the Hainault loop. The route, speed and relative ticket pricing for Crossrail 2 when it becomes operational are all variables that are likely to influence

passenger behaviour between using Crossrail 2 or the Central Line to access central London.



**(xi)** At their February 2016 meeting the Committee responded to the Basildon Borough Council local plan consultation and a consultation from the Essex Fire Authority. This consultation document proposed three options for organisational changes to the Essex County Fire and Rescue Services against a background of changing risk, reduced funding and a greater emphasis on partnership working.

**(xii)** Also in February the Committee considered and agreed the report on the recent review of the Waste and Recycling Collection arrangements and their initial service failures.

It concluded that a number of the problems encountered by Biffa when introducing the revised 4-day collection arrangements, could have been avoided with additional time, e.g. to improve staff training and familiarisation with new vehicles and IT, to test drive new routes more thoroughly, to retain and utilise local knowledge of existing staff, to fully run in new fleet and to have operated longer from new depot locations, before the service change.

This report then went up to cabinet to present its findings.

**(xiii)** In April 2016 the Committee received the final report of the Grant Aid Task and Finish Panel. The Chairman of the Grant Aid Review Task and Finish Panel, Councillor Caroline Pond introduced their final report. The Panel acknowledged the £11,500 saving made from the Grant Aid Budget for 2015/16 in respect of the one-off major grants and considered whether any further reductions could be made to the overall Grant Aid funding programme. It also looked at the various criteria for the distribution of funding; the monitoring and evaluation for each grant awarded and the Service Level Agreements applied.



More detailed consideration was given to the higher level funding agreements, in respect of Voluntary Action Epping Forest and the Citizen's Advice Bureau, who provided presentations to the Panel on their work. In addition, visits were made by the Panel members, to various organisations in receipt of grant funding.

The Task and Finish Panel recognised the vital role that the voluntary and community sector brought to local community well-being in the Epping Forest District. However, it also acknowledged the need for a more proactive approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of grants awarded, and particularly the higher level grants.

The Committee reviewed and agreed the recommendations made by the Panel.

**(xiv)** Also, in April the Committee considered a report on the review of the Select Committee Framework. As the Committee were aware, a new Overview and Scrutiny framework based on a structure of four 'select committees', was established with effect from

the commencement of the current municipal year, on a basis mirroring the new directorate structure.



As the first year of the select committee arrangements came to an end, it was considered that it would be useful for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review the operation and management of the select committees, particularly in terms of the allocation of service responsibilities between individual committees and the achievability of their associated work programmes.

The comments and observations that have been submitted in relation to the operation of the select committee arrangements over the last year were largely focussed on the division of service responsibilities. The main issue raised was the imbalance of workload in the Neighbourhood and Community Services Select Committee. They had a heavy workload last year leading to long meetings and overcrowded agenda.

It was proposed that the Select Committees should be aligned with the directorates. This was seconded and agreed by the meeting. The committee also agreed that there should be a separate O&S and Select Committee Chairman and Vice-chairmen meeting at the start of the year.

#### **(f) Case Study: Barts Health NHS Trust – Whipps Cross University Hospital**

At their June 2015 and their February 2016 meetings the Committee received a presentation from officers from Barts Health NHS Trust.

They were there because a recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Whipps Cross had taken place in November 2014 by a team of about 20 inspectors with different expertise. Five domains were used to rate the quality of services: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well led.



The overall CQC rating of Whipps Cross was 'inadequate' and 4 warning notices were issued by the CQC plus specific compliance actions. The key concerns arising from the inspections were: *insufficient staff levels; a persisting culture of bullying and harassment; bed occupancy that was too high; and a failure to meet national waiting times targets*. Part of these concerns related to the high levels of agency staff and low staff moral.

The four warning notices related to the following regulations: *staffing; incidents and learning (staff did not feel that anything was being done); flow, escalation, end of life care; and complaints and PALS*; and the four compliance actions related to safeguarding; consent; records; and equipment.

There were however areas of outstanding practice, one was the effective management of pain relief for children and adults; and their 'Great Expectations' maternity programme. Also four major hospital services at Whipps Cross (surgery, critical care, maternity and gynaecology, and services for children and young people) were rated as good for delivering caring treatment.

The NHS Trust Development Authority (TDA) had placed Barts Health in special measures. These were designed to deliver service improvements at pace by providing support where it was most needed. Part of this support includes the appointment of an Improvement Director and the opportunity to partner with a high-performing trust. It was noted that staff were very relieved when that this report was produced as it had highlighted their concerns.

Improvement programmes would be developed in partnership with staff, staff representatives, patients and partner organisations.

It was noted that Whipps Cross was still needed and had a future in providing acute healthcare to its local population, but had to change and a future strategy had to be developed.



In February 2016 a different set of officers came to the Committee to update them on the progress made by Barts Health in the eight months between their first visit in June. They came to update the Committee on the measures undertaken since Barts NHS had been put into special measures and Whipps Cross Hospital had received four warning notices issued by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). They had now finalised their improvement plan called 'Safe and Compassionate', with each site having the same headings for their improvement plans. The improvement was being delivered through seven key work streams with both a corporate and site based focus and key government structures.

The trust had put in place "safety huddles" for each hospital every day, to discuss any safety or quality issues that would affect their patients. They also reviewed performance on a ward by ward basis against key quality and safety metrics that allowed them to track the measures in place. They also held monthly learning reviews looking at learning and sharing of improvement actions.

They had made progress in freeing up ward managers to manage ward fundamentals; nursing documentation had been streamlined; had started a 'smile and care' campaign and patient engagement workshops; put in a revised complaints process with a requirement to be much more responsive; and visitors and patients were able to identify the nurse in charge via a badge.



They had also ensured that there were appropriate care plans for those patients nearing the end of their life. Also the Margaret Centre had now been refurbished, making it a more safe and comfortable environment for patients and families.

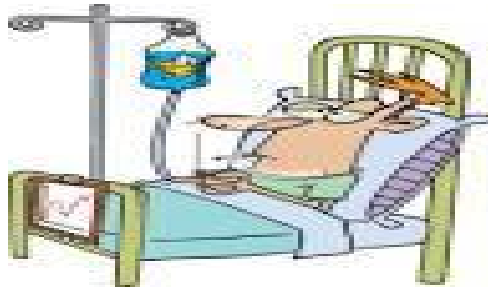
They were also tackling the number of vacancies and engaging more with staff. They had reviewed safe staffing levels and increased funded nursing establishment by 532 posts (150 posts being at Whipps Cross). Their current fill rate was up to 82% and they wished to take it up to at least 90%.

Whipps cross Hospital now had an integrated discharge team, working with CCGs, Council Social Care and Community Health Teams.

They were also investing £2million in IT, the first steps in a wider programme; £17.5million was planned in investment in Whipps Cross improvements; there was also a ward improvement programme and £15million set aside for medical equipment across the Trust. It

was noted that Whipps Cross was an old site, hard for staff to work in, but Barts Health was now investing in the site. A new High Dependency Unit was to be opened by July.

The Committee via the Chairman thanked the representatives from the Barts Health NHS Trust for their excellent presentation and their full and helpful answers and congratulated them on the work they had done so far.



# SELECT COMMITTEES

## 1. HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE

*The Housing Select Committee consisted of the following members:*

Councillor S Murray (Chairman)  
Councillor A Mitchell (Vice Chairman)  
Councillors K Chana, R Gadsby, L Girling, S Kane, J Lea, C Roberts, B Rolfe, G Shiell and J H Whitehouse

The Lead Officer was Alan Hall, Director of Communities. The Committee also appreciated the Housing Portfolio Holder, Councillor D Stallan, attending the meetings to help them with their deliberations.

Wyn Marshall represented the Tenants and Leaseholder Federation, attending the meetings as a non-voting co-opted member to provide the views of residents and stakeholders.

### *Terms of Reference*

The Housing Select Committee was tasked to undertake reviews of housing related services and related functions of the Communities Directorate;

To ensure that they are appropriate and responsive to the needs of residents, service users and others;

To consider the effect of Government actions on housing related services and functions of the communities Directorate;

To undertake performance monitoring in relation to the housing services; and

They also undertake specific projects related to public and private sector housing issues, as directed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

*The Panel scrutinised a number of important issues over the last year, which included:*

**(i) Communities Directorate's Housing Service Strategies** – At the beginning of the year (June 2015) the Committee received several reports on the various Strategies and Standards covering Housing and the Communities Directorate. These included the review of the Housing Strategy, Housing Service Standards Performance (2014-15) and review, the Communities Directorate's Housing Service Strategy on Energy Efficiency, the Housing Service Strategy on Housing and Neighbourhood Management, the Housing Service Strategy on Older People's Housing services and the Housing Strategy: 6 month progress report on the Key Action Plan 2015/16.

These were reviewed and agreed by the Committee and would continued to be kept under review throughout the year.

**(ii) Key Performance Indicators – Outturn (Q4) Performance** - From 2014/15 each former Scrutiny Panel became responsible for the review of quarterly performance against

KPIs falling within its area of responsibility. This report therefore included in detail only those indicators which fell within the areas of responsibility of the Housing Select Committee.

Ten of the Key Performance Indicators fell within the Housing Select Committee's areas of responsibility with the overall position in regard to the achievement of target performance at the end of the year, as follows:

- 10 (100%) indicators achieved the cumulative end of year target.

**(iii) Presentation on the current and future approach dealing with Private Empty Properties** – In November, the Select Committee received a presentation from the Private Housing Manager (Technical) regarding the Current and Future approach to dealing with Private Empty Properties.

The Select Committee were advised that nationally, there had been a reduction in the number of empty homes:

(a) From 783,119 in 2008 to 610,123 in 2014;

(b) Within Epping Forest District the reduction had been from 1,837 in 2005 to 1,391 in 2014; and

(c) From the £548,829 received by the District Council through the New Homes Bonus, £57,946 was due to the reduction in empty homes.

*(See Case Study for full details)*

**(iv) Results of the STAR Triennial Tenant Satisfaction Survey** - The Council's Communities' Directorate had been a member of Housemark, a national housing benchmarking club, for many years. They had a standard Tenant Satisfaction Survey called STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) for its members to use.

The Council had commissioned an independent research company to carry out the STAR survey which took place between July and August 2015. An anonymous postal self completion questionnaire was sent to a random sample of a third of the District Council's tenants. In total, 798 tenants took part in the survey, representing a 36% response rate. This was well in excess of the STAR target. There were 26 questions in total.

Overall the resident satisfaction survey results in 2015 were broadly similar in comparison to the last STAR survey with satisfaction scores varying by one or two percentage points, up or down, on the majority of core questions compared to 2012. Where benchmark information was available, the vast majority of results were generally at or above average when compared with other landlords. The most notable result from the survey concerned the quality of homes which showed an 84% satisfaction level.

**(v) Response to DCLG Consultation on mandatory 'Pay to Stay' Scheme** – The Select Committee received a report regarding the District Council's proposed response to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Consultation on Pay to Stay: Fairer Rents in Social Housing.



In June 2013, the DCLG issued a consultation paper entitled "High Income Social Tenants Pay to Stay." At that time, the Government set out its intention that local authorities should be given the flexibility to charge those with high income proposed at that time, as more than (£60,000 per year) a higher level of rent to stay in their own homes. The proposal at that time was based on the higher rent being set at 80% of market rents. The Housing Scrutiny Panel,

which preceded this Select Committee, supported the proposal at that time but had concerns particularly around administration costs, the creation of “ghettos” which would inhibit mixed communities and felt that different thresholds should be applied to different parts of the country.

In October 2015, the Government issued a further Consultation Paper – Pay to Stay: Fairer Rents in Social Housing. Particular attention was drawn to the two questions on which views were invited by the DCLG, these were:

**Question 1:** How income thresholds should operate beyond the minimum threshold set at budget, for example through the use of a simple taper/multiple thresholds that increases the amount of rent as income increases and whether the starting threshold should be set in relation to eligibility for Housing Benefit?

Members felt that the introduction of a simple taper could be a sensible approach on the basis that a tenant’s taxable income increased the level of rent increase. However, this change would make the administrative arrangements difficult.

**Question 2:** Based on the current system and powers that local authorities had, what was your estimate of the administrative costs and what were the factors that drive these costs?

Officers considered that to administer the scheme an additional 2 (FTE) members of staff would be required to deal with matters such as tenants changing incomes and rent levels, backdating increased payments and refunds, altering a tenant’s rent in accordance with their tenancy conditions and undertaking regular reviews.

The Committee was advised that due to changes in income and benefit, officers would need to review cases several times a year.

**(vi) Future Approach to Housing Service Strategies** – The Director of Communities explained that over many years, the Housing Service had formulated a suite of Housing Service Strategies that individually set out the detailed approach taken by the Council and its officers to various housing activities. All the service strategies were produced in a common format and were then reviewed and updated by officers every three years and reported to the Housing Select Committee for consideration. Around the same time, service strategies relating to landlord services were also reported to the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation for their views.

The Communities Management Team (CMT) had recently considered the cost-benefits of spending the significant amount of time to update these Housing Service Strategies. They identified that although the general principles set out in the Service Strategies were followed, the Service Strategies were hardly ever referred to by officers between the three yearly reviews. Moreover, most of the actions included within the Action Plans had usually already been identified and planned prior to the relevant Service Strategy being updated and were included and monitored through the Communities Directorate’s Continuous Improvement Regime in any event.

The CMT was also aware that this approach to strategic service planning was not adopted by any of the other Directorates, Select Committees or Portfolio Holders. There was therefore an inconsistent approach both across the Council and the Communities Directorate. However, the CMT was also aware that the Select Committee appeared to find it useful to understand and review the Council’s approach to the various housing functions.



The CMT did believe that there would be real benefit in continuing to review, update and maintain some of the service strategies in some form, due to their particular strategic importance or a legal requirement.

Officers suggested that a further report be submitted to the Select Committee recommending that the number of strategies should be reduced, with some of them being combined, significantly reduced in content and reviewed every 5 years, instead of every 3 years.

In January 2016 officers came back with a new approach to covering the strategies most needed by the Council, including a reduction the number of strategies from 16 to 7, which the Select Committee supported.

**(vii) Six Month Review of the HRA Financial Plan** - As part of the Chancellor's Summer Budget in July 2015, it was announced that all social landlords must reduce their rents by 1% per annum for four years. The District Council's consultants had assessed that the estimated loss in rental income to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) would be around £14 million over the next four years and around £228 million over the next 30 years. In view of this significant reduction in rental income, the consultants were commissioned to provide a report on the options available to the Council to ensure that its HRA did not fall into deficit.



The Select Committee were advised that the consultant's report identified a number of options available to the Council to re-cost its HRA Financial Plan for the future, including:

- a) Ceasing all or some of the funding currently available within the Financial Plan for future housing improvements and service enhancements for HRA services;
- b) Reducing investment in improvements to the Council's housing stock;
- c) Reducing/ceasing the Council's own Housebuilding Programme;
- d) Further borrowing for the HRA, repaid by the end of the Financial Plan; or
- e) Combinations of the above.

It was advised that the Housing Portfolio Holder had recommended to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee in September 2015 that most of the £702,000 uncommitted funding within the HRA's Housing Improvements and Service Enhancements Fund for 2016/17 should not be allocated or spent at present.

**(viii) Key Performance Indicators - Quarterly Progress** – the Committee reviewed the Key Performance Indicators relevant to their Select Committee on a quarterly basis.

**(ix) Data Quality Strategy 2016/17 – 2018/19** – At their March 2016 meeting the Select Committee noted that good quality data was essential in supporting the Council's decision making especially where these involved finance and performance. Additionally the Council's customers, partners and others interested in the Council's performance, needed to rely on the data the Council produced for evaluation purposes. The Council was also accountable for the money it spent and how it managed competing claims on their accuracy, reliability and timeliness in order to plan for the future and met customer needs.

The authority had identified principles and arrangements for ensuring high standards of data quality and had for a number of years formalised them within a strategy to support

consistency and encourage high standards of practice of data quality management. Data quality arrangements included ownership of data, systems and ensuring staff had the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high standards of data and data management.

**(ix) Housing Service Strategy on Empty Properties (3 Year Review)** - There would always be empty homes and properties empty awaiting sale, re-letting or renovation as these were a normal part of a healthy housing market. However properties that were left empty for long periods of time could cause significant problems in the local and national context. They were a wasted resource in terms of housing provision, particularly in areas of high demand like the Epping Forest district where 92% of land was green belt.



The previous and current government had recognised the value of reducing the number of empty properties as part of its overall ambition to provide an additional million homes nationally by 2020. Various incentives and options for local authorities had been introduced which included the New Homes Bonus (which rewarded councils for additional homes provided) and allowing councils the flexibility to charge up to 50% extra Council Tax on property that had been unoccupied and unfinished for 2 years or more. These initiatives had contributed to marked reduction in empty properties nationally.

Within the district the number of empty homes had fallen from 1,837 in 2005 to 607 in 2015. It was the Council's intention to bring 30 empty properties into use per annum.

### ***Case Study: Current and Future Approach Dealing with Private Empty Properties***

The Select Committee received a presentation on the current and future approach to dealing with private empty properties.

On a national level there had been a reduction in the number of empty homes:

- (a) From 783,119 in 2008 to 610,123 in 2014;
- (b) Within Epping Forest District, the reduction had been from 1,837 in 2005 to 1,391 in 2014; and
- (c) From the £548,829 received by the District Council through the New Homes Bonus, £57,946 was due to the reduction in empty homes.

The Select Committee noted that despite these figures, it was likely that there was an under reporting of empties to the Council because there had been a removal of incentives for people to inform their local authority that they had a home which was empty. Whilst the numbers for long term empties was steadily decreasing in the district (by 57 in the last year), the number of properties that had been empty more than 2 years had hardly changed (124 down to 122). The main reasons that these properties were empty was because they were being left for investment purposes, the owner had run out of money, properties were under major renovation or they were being marketed for sale possibly at an inflated price.

It was proposed that in the future officers would:

- (i) Continue to offer advice, information and financial incentives to owners of properties which have been at least 6 month's empty;

- (ii) Consider recommending a reduction in the time limit for eligibility for the Empty Homes Repayable Assistant to 6 months (from 1 year);
- (iii) Risk assess all properties that have been empty for at least 2 years against criteria based on length of time empty;
- (iv) Risk assess probate properties that have been empty for more than 2 years;
- (v) Actively pursue those properties with the highest risk score using enforcement if appropriate;
- (vi) Pursue all empties causing issues to local residents or the environment;
- (vii) Seek member approval for Compulsory Purchase or Empty Dwelling Management Orders; and
- (viii) Consider the possibility of the Council purchasing empty properties to replace homes sold under Right to Buy.



## 2. GOVERNANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

### *The Governance Select Committee consisted of the following members:*

Councillor T Church (Chairman)  
Councillor Y Knight (Vice Chairman)  
Councillors D Dorrell, L Hughes, S Jones, H Kaufman, M McEwen, B Sandler, S Watson,  
Jon Whitehouse and D Wixley

The Lead Officer was Nigel Richardson, Assistant Director for Development Management.

### *Terms of Reference*

To undertake reviews of the services and functions of the Governance Directorate and to consider the effect Government actions or initiatives on the services and functions of the Governance Directorate and to review the six monthly progress towards the achievement of the Council's equality objectives and review public consultation and engagement. To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Council or the Cabinet with recommendations on matters allocated to the Committee as appropriate.

To undertake performance monitoring in relation to the services and functions of the Governance Directorate, against adopted key performance indicators and identified areas of concern.

To review six monthly progress towards the achievement of the Council's equality objectives for 2012/13 to 2015/16 and progress in relation to other equality issues and initiatives.

To develop arrangements as required, for the Council to directly engage local communities in shaping the future direction of its services, to ensure that they are responsive to local need.

To annually review details of the consultation and engagement exercises undertaken by the Council over the previous year.

### *The Panel scrutinised a number of issues over the last year, which included:*

(i) **Review of Elections – May 2015 - Lessons Learnt** – At their July 2015 meeting, the Panel received a report from the Returning Officer regarding the lessons learnt at the recent elections.



The report discussed planning processes and implementation for the elections held on 7 May 2015, the results of which were the election of a Member of Parliament for the Epping Forest Constituency, one Councillor was returned for each of eighteen District Council wards and ten Parish Council elections took place with six contested wards.

This election followed the first year when the Council was required to implement Individual Electoral Registration (IER). Work undertaken to encourage further registration had prompted some 5,000 changes to the IER register, published in 2014.

All of the election papers were printed by the Council's Reprographics Section, which, as before, provided an excellent service. The proofs of all District Council and Parish Council ballot papers were scrutinised carefully and all ballot papers were printed correctly.

It was advised that nationally, there was an issue regarding a late change made to the logo of the Green Party. The Electoral Commission had agreed the change but had not transmitted this information effectively to Returning Officers.

Due to the number of ballot papers required for the Parliamentary election it was necessary to engage an external printer for the 75,000 ballot papers. The split between internal printing for local elections and external for national ones worked well, it was recommended to continue with this for the 2016 Police and Crime Commissioner election where 100,000 ballots would be required.

The issue of postal votes for Epping Forest went smoothly. Nearly 10,000 postal voting packs were sent out, the most ever. Although there was no evidence of any postal vote fraud, 150 postal votes were rejected for various reasons.

All polling stations opened on time with no access issues. This year, four polling stations were changed due to unavailability of previous locations, no issues were raised in connection with these stations.

The Select Committee reviewed the circumstances of an issue that occurred in the town council elections in Epping, where ballot papers had been issued to transposed stations in the Hemnall and St. John's wards. Although this situation had arisen as a result of human error, members noted that appropriate lessons had been learnt from the incident and that revised processes had been immediately implemented by the Returning Officer to prevent any recurrence. In future, all ballot paper books were to be clearly marked with details of the relevant ward and date of election, all ballot papers would be thoroughly compared against issue lists before being issued to Presiding Officers, and that Presiding Officers would finally double check the allocation of ballot papers against expected totals before the commencement of a poll'.

Verification and counting of parliamentary ballot papers took place at Debden Park High School enabling a larger number of count staff to be employed. Counting started as soon as the polling finished, the process going smoothly. The final declaration of the Parliamentary seat was made at around 3.45p.m.



Discussions were held with Essex Police prior to the election. Polling stations received visits during the day and there were no instances requiring immediate police presence outside of the regular visits. Police support was also provided at the Count Centres on both Thursday evening and on Friday at Theydon Bois.

**(ii) Consultation Register 2014/15 and 2015/16** - The Committee noted that the District Council carried out a wide variety of consultations, both externally for public participation and internally for staff opinions. A list of these were compiled and published as a register on the Council's website, they set out the issues on which individual services would be consulting on or engaging with residents and customers during the year. They summarised the purpose, start and completion dates, service area administering the surveys, location of results and key findings. The register also set out the overall objective for consultation exercises yet to be undertaken.



Amongst the larger surveys carried out by the Council in the last 12 months were the Car Parking Review and the Tenant Participation Survey.

Human Resources would be carrying out further employee "Pulse" consultation to compare and measure staff attitudes against previous survey results.

**(iii) Key performance Indicators 2014/15 – Quarter 4 (Outturn) Performance** - Six of the KPIs for 2014/15 fell within the Governance Select Committee's area of responsibility. The overall position with regard to the achievement of target performance at the end of the year for these six indicators was as follows:

- (i) Three (50%) indicators achieved the cumulative end of year target;
- (ii) Three (50%) indicators did not achieve the cumulative end of year target; and
- (iii) One (17%) of these KPIs performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator.

**(iv) Equality Objectives 2012-2016 – Quarter 4 progress for 2014/15** - The Equality Act 2010 placed a number of responsibilities on the Council in having regard to equality in the exercise of its functions, this included a Public Sector Equality Day (PSED). It aimed to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons sharing relevant characteristics and those who did not. Further specific responsibilities required the adoption of objectives for improving equality for service users and employees.

In March 2012, the Cabinet agreed four equality objectives for the four years from 2012-16, designed to assist the Council meeting the needs of the PSED. The objectives supported by an Action Plan, focused on key areas where improvement in relation to equality had been identified.



Members received a schedule detailing progress against individual actions, the reporting progress followed status indicators applied to individual actions.

**(v) Section 106 agreements – monitoring report 2014/15** – In October 2015 the Committee received a report setting out all Section 106 Agreements entered into during 2014/15, and details of the benefits realised throughout the year from previous agreements, including monies received where development had commenced.

Members noted that Section 106 Agreements acted as the main instrument for placing restrictions on development, often requiring the mitigation of site specific impacts. Agreements could be sought in situations where planning conditions were inappropriate to ensure or enhance the quality of development and to enable proposals that might otherwise have been refused planning permission to proceed in a sustainable manner. The Committee were reminded that Section 106 Agreements must always be relevant to and proportionate

to the scale and kind of related development and could be used to deliver: a) affordable housing; (b) necessary highway works; (c) public open space; (d) the restoration of listed buildings; and (e) off-site infrastructure.

Several members expressed the view that effective scrutiny of Section 106 arrangements required an overview and understanding of how and where monies arising from agreements were intended to be spent and appropriate timescales for the collection of relevant monies and the realisation of the associated benefits.

**(vi) Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 - Quarterly Progress** – the Committee reviewed the Key Performance Indicators relevant to their Select Committee on a quarterly basis.

**(vii) Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) – Equality Information Report 2015/16** - The broad purpose of the PSED required the Council to integrate the consideration of equality and good relations into its day-to-day business, positively contribute to the advancement of equality and fairness, and to reflect equality considerations into the design of policies and the delivery of services. The Senior Performance Improvement Officer reported that the review and monitoring of performance against the equality duty helped the authority to comply with its legal requirement; and to provide inclusive services.

The Select Committee congratulated the Senior Performance Improvement Officer on the development of the equality information report for 2015/16, which set out the Council's many initiatives and achievements in a clear and extremely effective way. Members identified a number of areas for possible inclusion in the report going forward, including the provision of services for young people and individuals leaving local authority care. Several members also expressed support and encouragement for participation in the equality-related programmes offered to councillors as part of the annual member training and development programme.

**(viii) Chairman's Expenditure and Allowances** – At their December 2015 meeting, the



Committee noted that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council received special responsibility allowances in recognition of the particular expenses incurred by the Civic and Ceremonial role. It was advised that an anomaly in recompense for transport costs was addressed by the adoption of a motion at Full Council on 28 July 2015 that a review should be conducted into the current levels for the civic ceremonial budget by this select committee.

In addition to the Chairman's and Vice Chairman's individual allowances, "spending" budgets directly supported the work of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman amounted in total to £22,530. Officers conducted a survey of civic ceremonial expenditure by other Essex and neighbouring councils although differing budget structures made direct comparisons with the District Council difficult, there was a range of costs applied by different authorities, for example Chelmsford City spent £71,000 in total and Braintree District Council spent £17,340.

Officers informed members that the Chairman's spending never went over budget, in addition the Chairman's Secretary made strenuous efforts to reduce expenditure on events by obtaining a fairer bargain for the authority. It was also stated that there had been no inflationary increase in budget for the Chairman of Council in 10 years.

The Select Committee supported referring the Chairman's and Vice-Chairman's Allowances to the Member Remuneration Panel for more direct scrutiny.

**(ix) Planning Appeals Performance** – Appeal performance was reported every 6 months to the area planning committees using two Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), GOV007 which measured the percentage of planning applications recommended by planning officers for refusal, overturned and granted planning permission by appeal and GOV008 which measured the percentage of planning applications refused by Councillors against the recommendation of the planning officers and subsequently granted planning permission on appeal. Members sought clarity and understanding on why some appeals were dismissed and others were allowed, which in turn would help towards improving performance of these two KPIs as identified in their individual improvement plans.



Members were advised on the problems of attempting to successfully defend a decision to refuse at an appeal if there were no objections from the local Highways Authority. However, they felt that the staff at Essex County Council Highways were not particularly pro-active in checking planning applications at the consultation stage for neighbour objections on highway grounds whereas Councillors felt, if they did, then they could raise objections which would support their own views at the committee meeting.

*(See Case Study for full details)*

**(x) Development Management Pre-Application Advice** – The Committee noted that the Local Government Act 2003 allowed local authorities to charge customers for holding discussions prior to the submission of planning applications. This Council had been charging on major category applications since 2007 and had expanded this across other developments including householder extensions. Unlike planning application fees, pre-application advice was set locally, with discussions having always been encouraged as a charging scheme had the benefit of dissuading some ill conceived proposals and highlighted the cost of officer time in the process and recouping some of this cost.



It was advised that the number of pre-applications received and dealt with by officers had markedly increased and although this brought in a larger income to the authority, it had also added significantly to officer workload. In addition the time frame for response, set for up to 21 working days from a meeting, was rarely achieved because of the pressure for turning around planning applications in a timely manner.

**(xi) Development Management Chair And Vice-Chair's Meeting** - Member's attention focussed on the Review of Current and Future Training Needs. Members supported using training, particularly for Parish and Town Councils, to reduce the number of call-ins of planning applications to the Area Planning Sub-committees, better knowledge and understanding of planning considerations would make for better recommendations. It was also felt that regular and smaller "bitesize" training sessions for members would be beneficial as the details were easier to digest.

Members expressed concern with the consultation comments that were received from Essex County Council Highways on planning applications submitted to committees. They requested that Essex Highways' officers should be invited to this select committee to discuss these issues and it was agreed that this should be added to next year's select committee draft work programme.



There was a strong feeling that the District Council was stranded in a situation whereby the county council did not object or make adequate representations on planning applications and thus weakened planning committees' decisions, particularly when appeals took place.

**(xi) Technical Consultation On Implementation Of Planning Changes** – at their April 2016 meeting the Select Committee received a report from the Assistant Director Development Management regarding response to “Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes” Consultation. The Government was setting out proposals in the following areas:

- (a) Changes to Planning Application Fees;
- (b) Permission in principle;
- (c) Brownfield Register;
- (d) Small Sites Register;
- (e) Neighbourhood Planning;
- (f) Local Plans;
- (g) Expanding the approach to planning performance;
- (h) Testing competition in the processing of planning applications;
- (i) Information about financial benefits;
- (j) Section 106 dispute resolution;
- (k) Permitted Development Rights for state funded schools; and
- (l) Changes to statutory consultation on planning applications.

The consultation period commenced on 18 February 2016 and concluded on 15 April 2016, it ran to 12 chapters containing 77 questions in all. However, only those questions relevant to the select committee's terms of reference were submitted to the meeting.

The Committee gave their opinions to the answers that were pertinent to their terms of reference. The Assistant Director of Development Management said that he would take the Member's comments and submit them to the Government before the deadline.

### ***Case Study: Planning Appeals Performance***

The Select Committee reviewed planning appeals performance at its meeting held in December 2015.

Applicants applying for planning permission through a planning authority could appeal to the Secretary of State any decision made whether it be refused, or granting with conditions. In these instances, all parties provided the evidence required and were normally determined by exchange of written statements or appearance at a hearing or inquiry. Appeal performance was reported every 6 months to the area planning committees using two Key Performance

Indicators. The members of the select committee discussed six recent cases across the district which the Assistant Director (Development Management) had selected.

Members were advised on the problems of attempting to successfully defend a decision to refuse at an appeal if there were no objections from the local Highways authority. However members felt that the staff at Essex County Council Highways were not particularly proactive in checking planning applications at the consultation stage for neighbour objections on highway grounds, they could raise objections which would support their own views at the committee meeting.

An option for area planning sub-committees was to defer items for a fuller Highways assessment of the application in question. The Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder advised caution when objecting to planning applications against officer recommendation as good evidence was needed to justify a refusal in all reasons put forward.

Members noted that an officer from the Highways authority did visit the District Council and read current planning applications and also visited relevant sites.

However, there had only been one successful appeal this year where costs had been awarded against the authority.

The current method of analysing the appeals record from the area planning sub-committees was through the 'Probity in Planning' reports submitted to the committees every six months at the end of the meeting which tended to happen after a long agenda. Members supported putting a summary of appeal decisions regularly in the Bulletin and that further training on this topic was also needed.



### 3. RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

#### *The Resources Select Committee consisted of the following Members:*

Councillor G Mohindra (Chairman)  
Councillor P Keska (Vice Chairman)  
Councillors K Angold-Stephens, N Bedford, S Kane, H Mann, A Mitchell, A Patel, S Watson and Jon Whitehouse

The Lead Officer was Peter Maddock, Assistant Director (Accountancy).

#### *Terms of Reference*

- To undertake overview and scrutiny, utilising appropriate methods and techniques, of services and functions of the Resources Directorate, excluding those matters within remit of the Audit and Governance Committee, the Standards Committee or the Constitution Working Group;
- To undertake quarterly performance monitoring in relation to the services and functions of the Resources Directorate, though review of progress against adopted key performance indicators and other appropriate measures;
- To consider the draft directorate budgets for each year, and to evaluate and rank proposals for enhancing or reducing services where necessary, whilst ensuring consistency between policy objectives and financial demands;
- To review key areas of income and expenditure for each directorate on a quarterly basis throughout the year;
- To monitor and review progress on the implementation of all major ICT systems;
- To consider the Council's comparative value for money 'performance', and to recommend as required to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee, in respect of areas where further detailed investigation may be required;
- To monitor and review areas of concern or significance that comes under Human Resources.

#### *The Panel scrutinised a number of important issues over the last year, which included:*

**(i) Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 Outturn Performance** – At their meeting in July 2015 the Committee received the outturn report for the Quarter 4 results for the Key Performance Indicators for 2014/15. The Committee noted that the overall position for all the KPIs at the end of year (31 March 2015) was:

- 26 or 72% - indicators achieved the cumulative end of year target;
- 10 or 28% - indicators did not achieve the target; and
- 1 or 3% - performed within the agreed tolerance for the indicator.

Eleven of these indicators fell within the Resources Select Committee area of responsibility. The overall position at the end of the year for these eleven indicators was as follows:

- 7 or 64% - achieved the cumulative fourth quarter target; and
- 4 or 36% - did not achieve the cumulative fourth quarter target.

**(ii) Sickness Absence Outturn Report 2014/15** - Also at their July meeting the Committee received the outturn report for the sickness absence levels for 2014/15.

The Committee considered the sickness absence for quarters 3 and 4, 2014/15. It was noted that the target for sickness absence, under KPI10 for 2014/15 was an average of 7 days per employee; the outturn figure for that year was 9.2 days, making the Council above target for the first time in 4 years.

**(iii) Provisional Capital Outturn 2014/15** - The Committee then received a report on the Council's capital programme for 2014/15 in terms of expenditure and financing and compared the provisional outturn figures with the revised estimates. The revised estimates, which were based on the Capital Programme, represent those adopted by the Council in February 2015.



It was noted that the Council's total investment on capital schemes in 2014/15 was £20,114,000, compared to a revised estimate of £24,092,000. The largest underspends were experienced on General Fund projects. In particular, there was an underspend of £1,000,000 on the St John's Road Development scheme as the land purchase and asset negotiations planned to enable the proposed development of this site, had not taken place yet. As a consequence the full £1,000,000 set aside for this scheme was requested for carry forward to 2015/16. In addition, there was another large underspend of £448,000 on the Museum redevelopment scheme, for which Heritage Lottery funding has been secured. A carry forward of £448,000 to 2015/16 was requested.

**(iv) Provisional Revenue Outturn 2014/15** – Also in July 2015 the Committee received a report on the Council's revenue outturn for the Continuing Services Budget (CSB) of the general fund and the consequential movement in balances for 2014/15.



Net expenditure (CSB) for 2014/15 totalled £14.547 million, which was £763,000 (5%) above the original estimate and £223,000 (1.5%) above the revised. When compared to a gross expenditure budget of approximately £74 million, the variances can be restated as 1% and 0.3% respectively.

The main movement between the original estimate and the Revised and Actual position was the creation of the spend and save reserve which had moved £500,000 from the General Fund Balance into an earmarked reserve set up to fund any initial costs required to achieve on-going CSB savings. The fund would operate in a similar way to the District Development Fund (DDF) in that there would be the ability to move budgetary provision money between years as necessary. 2015/16 would be the first year of operation for this Fund.

**(v) Planning Enforcement Matters** – At their October 2015 meeting the Committee had a report on the work of the Planning Enforcement Section.

They noted that:

- The Planning Enforcement section was a non-statutory discretionary function of the Council, which had historically been actively supported by Councillors;
- Complaints were received from the public, Town and Parish Councils, Councillors and other departments which were responded to within 24 hours of the complaints, if they involved



Listed Buildings, Preserved Trees and new Gypsy & Traveller Sites or within 14 days for all other complaints;

- Officers spent a considerable amount of time on and off site investigating, evidence gathering, negotiating and advising with both complainants and complainers' whilst complying with the law and regulations;
- The complaints ranged from the serious and complex, to trivial and non-planning related with enforcement investigations being completed after a first visit or in more complex cases taking several years;
- All prosecutions and actions had to be legal, proportionate and expedient. The system allowed appeals on planning and enforcement decisions to go as high as the Supreme Court which took time and often appeared to the public and Members that no action was being taken;
- There was encouragement for complaints to keep in touch for regular updates and progress on the cases;
- The section was adequately resourced and had an active relationship with other Councils sections and the Essex Police;
- Income was generated by the receipt of retrospective planning applications and the pursuit of S106 Planning obligation monies;
- The Council had spent £424,000 in 2014/15, which compared to other Essex authorities was greater, although the District had the largest amount of Green Belt in Essex;
- The additional resources invested in planning enforcement reflected the seriousness of the planning enforcement function and would be detrimental to the authority and its residents if it was not maintained.

**(vi) Financial Issues Papers** – The Committee noted the Financial Issues Paper. This provided the initial framework for starting the 2016/17 budget and updated Members on a number of financial issues that would affect the Authority in the short to medium term. The following issues represented the greatest areas of current financial uncertainty and risk to the Authority, which included Central Government Funding, Business Rates Retention, Welfare Reform, New Homes Bonus, Development Opportunities, Income Streams, the Waste and Leisure Contracts and Transformation.

The Council remained in strong financial position as the overspend in 2014/15 had not been significant and the Council had substantial reserves. Following the General Election a greater political certainty had been created although there were a lot of funding and financial uncertainties for the Council.

**(vii) Energy Savings and Improved Management Process** – The Committee received a progress update report on energy savings and improved management processing. They were advised that the management and payment of energy supplies had historically been spread across numerous Directorates and the information had become fragmented therefore an energy consultant, Smith Bellerby (SB) had been approached to produce an accurate consolidated database, identify potential savings and streamline working practices.



The Select Committee noted that:

- SB were energy cost reduction specialists;
- The invoice processing element alone utilised at least 2 weeks of a full time post each month which now took 3 hours to process;
- SB dealt directly with the energy companies on behalf of the Council;

- The largest savings were from gas and electric supplies changing to cheaper tariffs which resulted in anticipated saving of £13,000, a scope to reduce available capacity charges yielding £3,300 per year and two additional savings of £500 per year for meter operator and data collector contracts; and
- The majority of savings had been identified during the first year, however the use of SB for a further year would provide time savings and a conclusion to the numerous ongoing disputes.

The Select Committee were in agreement with the use of SB, although concerns were raised about whether the consultants would need to be used continuously.

**(viii) Call Handling** – The Committee received a report on the first quarter for telephone monitoring statistics 2015/16, which included the percentage of abandoned calls and the number of calls sent directly to the voicemail system.

The Committee were advised that the figures for quarter 1 had been skewed because of problems with the new waste contract, which had now settled down and certain figures needed to be removed as they were related to answer phone services.

**(ix) Careline and Housing Related Charges** – Also at their October 2015 meeting, the Director of Communities, introduced a report on the charging plan for Housing Related Support (HRS) services.

The Committee noted that:

- The HRS covered the Careline Service, Scheme Management Service and the Intensive Housing Management;
- The Council had increased the HRS charges by 50% for 2015/16, in order to recover expected reductions in funding from Essex County Council (ECC) and for the service to become self funding;
- ECC had decided very late not to proceed with the planned reductions in funding in 2015/16, but because the charges had been increased and the tenants affected had been advised, they remained;
- The Housing Portfolio Holder had presented the Cabinet with 5 options on what action to be taken with the increased income, although after reviewing the services it had been noted that providing the Scheme Management Service there had been a £50,250 deficit;
- The Council also relied on the HRS funding from ECC, which had been expected to reduce in 2016/17 and was likely to continue to reduce in further years;
- Therefore the Cabinet decided that the Housing Portfolio Holder should produce a charging plan on how the HRS charges would be increased each year from April 2016 until the cost of the Scheme Management Service became self-funded and included the annual reductions in funding from ECC;
- The Epping Forest Tenants and Leaseholders Federation supported the charging plan and associated methodology.

The committee were advised that HRS services had been supported by the HRA for over 10 years and that there were other financial pressures on the HRA, therefore it was fairer for all, that the costs were spread over the users of the service.

**(x) Fees and Charges 2016/17** - This report which provided details on the fees and charges that the Council levies and what scope, if any, there was to increase any particular charges. This was an annual report produced as part of the annual budget process.



It was noted that:

- The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had identified the need for savings, around £1m over the four year period with £150,000 falling in 2016/17, which was based on an assumed reductions in Government funding of 10% per annum;
- Increasing existing fees and charges was fairly limited and introducing charges where they were not levied was also limited;
- The traditional use of the September Retail Index (RPI) and Consumer Prices Index (CPI) had been widely used as a guide to inflation but it was thought that the Labour inflation rate was now more relevant as employee costs represented the largest element of the expenses, which was currently 2.8%.

The Director of Communities advised that the Tenants and Leaseholder Federation supported the proposed housing-related fees and charges for 2016/17, which were increased by the labour Inflation rates, which were currently 2.8%.

**(xi) Quarterly Financial Monitoring** – The Committee received Quarterly Financial Monitoring reports on key areas of income and expenditure, proving a comparison between the original estimates for the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015 and the actual expenditure or income applicable.

**(xii) Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 Quarterly Updates** - The Committee reviewed the Key Performance Indicators relevant to their Select Committee on a quarterly basis.

**(xiii) Draft General Fund CSB and DDF Lists and Savings Update** – In December 2015 the Select Committee considered the first draft of the Continuing Services Budget (CSB) and the District Development Fund (DDF) schedule for 2016/17.

They noted that the Financial Issues Paper went to the October 2015 meeting of this committee, highlighting a number of financial uncertainties and risks facing the authority, including the reduction in Central Government funding, retention of Business Rates, Welfare reform and the Leisure Management Contract renewal. Since then there had been a number of other items identified such as the increase in the employers national insurance contributions, relating to the employees in the Local Government Pensions Scheme.

The Governments Spending Review was due shortly; speculation was that District Councils would be hit the hardest, although this Council was well placed to meet that challenge

**(xiv) Sickness Absences 2015/16** - It was noted that the Council's target for sickness absence for 2015/16 was an average of 7 days per employee. The outturn figure for 2014/15 was an average of 9.2 days per employee. This put the council above its target for the first time in 4 years. This year, although still running above target the figures were slightly better than this time last year. It was also noted that the 2015 Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) report stated that a number of organisations (not just in the public sector) reported that



they had seen an increase in stress related absence and mental health problems. Although minor illness accounts for most short term absence whereas acute conditions such as stress, musculoskeletal, mental health and back pain are the most common reasons for long term absences. The council reflected these findings.

As part of the improvement plan HR will arrange workshops for managers on mental health issues. The first four of a number of workshops had been arranged for December 2015 and it would be mandatory for all managers to attend. The Council was also working with 'Rethink', a mental health charity and Vine HR to arrange these sessions.

#### **(xv) Update of Work Carried Out by the HR Team –**

**Apprentices** - The Committee noted that the first cohort of apprentices (2013-15) had now successfully finished their apprenticeships. The council appointed 7 business administration apprentices and 2 multi trade apprentices. The business administration roles would provide a range of transferable skills and thus offer more opportunities for employment.

A second cohort had now been appointed and it had been decided that it would be just for local young people who would do appropriate NVQs at the local college. There was not as much money around to fund as many places as last time but they received some help from the Communities Directorate in conjunction with a Housing Association and were able to fund two more places, but these places were reserved for the children of their tenants. This time around, the apprentices' progress would be monitored more closely.

**Shared Services – HR** – The HR team participated in the Essex network of the heads of HR the Essex Strategic Partnership for a number of years. In 2010 the partnership reviewed its governance arrangements and agreed to develop it into a not for profit company.

The aim of setting up a not for profit organisation was so that;

- it could generate its own income so it becomes self-sufficient;
- it could provide value for money for the member authorities in any contractual arrangements;
- Heads of HR could work more collaboratively and achieve greater savings for their authorities; and
- It provides a formal framework for the Heads of HR, limiting the risks and liabilities for individual authorities.

**Procurement of a HR/Payroll IT System** – The current payroll IT system was not fit for purpose and that officers were presently in discussions with Colchester and Braintree Council's with the aim of jointly procuring a system. The evaluation process was due to be finalised before Christmas 2015 with an implementation/start date early in the new financial year.

**Broxbourne** – Officers were having initial discussions with Broxbourne Council to identify potential areas where we could work together and find efficiencies. They currently provide museum services for us and it may be we could work closer with them.

**Mast Money Budget** – It was noted that the Council receives rent from communications companies for the lease of space on the Civic Offices roof for a communications mast. Members have agreed that any money from this lease would be allocated to projects that would benefit the staff.

**Employee Engagement** – The Graduate Trainee organised Employee Engagement Workshops to involve staff and were run from April to June 2015 to gain feedback from



employees on a range of engagement centred topics. There were 62 employees who attended the workshops across five different sessions.

**Employee Survey** – As part of the work on the Engagement Strategy the Graduate Trainee was tasked with carrying out an Employee Survey. During the workshops referred to previously employees were asked their views

**(xvi) Review of Private Funding** – Also at their December 2015 meeting the Select Committee noted that Grants and Contributions make up a fairly modest proportion of capital funding, this includes section 106 and similar income which the Council receives as part of agreements made when planning permission was granted for development schemes. These monies could be provided for a variety of different purposes and would be based upon requirements identified as part of the planning process. The types of project could range from education, highways, leisure, health and affordable housing provision. In some cases the money was provided to the County Council or the National Health Service and in other cases to this Council.

**(xvii) Housing Benefit Fraud and Compliance** – This went to the February 2016 meeting of the Select Committee. They noted that from 1 October 2015, the responsibility for the investigation of Housing Benefit fraud was transferred from the Authority to the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) which was part of the Fraud and Error Service within the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Responsibility for Local Council Tax Support fraud remained within the Authority and was investigated by the Corporate Fraud Team.

*(See Case Study for full details)*

**(xviii) Data Quality Strategy 2016/17 to 2018/19** – The meeting noted that the Council needed timely, accurate and reliable data in order to manage activities and meet internal and external requirements to demonstrate accountability through accurate reporting. Data was used for the assessment of the Council's performance, including the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Data Quality Strategy set out the arrangements for the next 3 years to ensure key data met the highest standards and was 'right first time'.



Good quality data was essential to support the Council's decision making especially decisions involving finance and performance. Additionally the Council's customers, partners and others interested in the Council's performance, needed to be able to rely on the data produced for evaluation purposes. The Council was also accountable for the money it spent and must manage competing claims on its resources. It therefore required data which was accurate, reliable and timely in order to plan for the future and meet customer needs.

**(xix) Government Consultation on New Homes Bonus** – The Committee received a report on the government consultation on New Homes Bonus, part of the draft financial settlement for local authorities.



The meeting noted that:

- The consultation sought views on a number of significant changes to the New Homes Bonus.
- The stated intention of the proposed changes to the scheme was to save £800 million which can then be used to fund adult social care.

- The removal of £800 million and the re-allocation of this amount has the overall effect of changing the distribution so two thirds will now go to counties and only a third to districts.

**(xx) Presentation from the Council Apprentices and National Graduate**– at their April 2016 meeting the Select Committee received a short presentation from 8 of the Council apprentices about their work and experiences at the council. They each gave a brief outline of the work that they were doing and how it helped them develop. They were then questioned by the Committee on their time with, and how they felt working for, the Council.

At the same meeting the committee also received a short presentation from the Council's National Graduate Development Programme appointee, who gave a short presentation to the meeting about his appointment and subsequent work at the Council. This was a national scheme for trainee management development he had applied for and had subsequently to go through various tests and interviews to get this placement. Since he had started with the Council he had been given a different placement every six months to get a broad experience of the work of a local authority.

Council's National Graduate Development Programme appointee, Mr G Nicholas gave a short presentation to the meeting about his appointment and subsequent work at the Council. This was a national scheme for trainee management development he had applied for and had subsequently to go through various tests and interviews to get this placement. Since he had started with the Council he had been given a different placement every six months to get a broad experience of the work of a local authority.

### ***Case Study – Housing Benefit Fraud and Compliance***

The meeting noted that from 1 October 2015, the responsibility for the investigation of Housing Benefit fraud was transferred from the Authority to the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) which was part of the Fraud and Error Service within the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Responsibility for Local Council Tax Support fraud remained within the Authority and was investigated by the Corporate Fraud Team.



Four of the Council's existing Benefit Investigators were transferred to the DWP under TUPE like legislation. Three of these were transferred to the Harlow DWP office and the other was transferred to the Basildon DWP office. The former Benefit Investigation Manager was now the Manager of the Council's Corporate Fraud Team and was the only member of the former Benefit Investigation team who remained with the Authority. The transfer went smoothly.

If a referral was passed to SFIS for investigation, it could be allocated to any SFIS team and would not necessarily be investigated by the SFIS team in Harlow. As they had no documents relating to Housing Benefit, the Council were requested to provide all the documentation that it had. However, this had proved problematic as the Council needs to send the documents electronically but the DWP's IT system could not accept the file size that the Council needed to send. This had emerged as a problem for all Authorities which the DWP had not yet resolved. The Council either has to split it up into a lot of smaller emails or hand over the paperwork physically, but the amount of work this was causing was becoming a problem.

Following the transfer to the DWP, the Council set up a Compliance team to carry out initial enquiries and clarify/obtain information relating to applications for Housing Benefit/Local Council Tax Support, and Liaison Officer posts were created with part of their duties being the liaison point between the Authority and SFIS.



Traditionally communication with the DWP was difficult because their staff were frequently moved to different roles and/or offices. It was therefore not possible to build any relationship with regard to any particular project or work stream. Communication with the SFIS team in Harlow had been good with regard to the cases that were transferred, but only because three members of the former Benefit Investigation team were currently based there. However, two of those are now transferring out of the Harlow office which means that future communication may not be so effective.

In conclusion it was noted that the Council's working practices have been changed to adapt to the lack of control over Housing Benefit fraud investigation and officers would continue to monitor the situation and make further changes if necessary. However, it was too early to determine exactly how effective the transfer to a single fraud investigation service would be in reducing fraud in the Housing Benefit system in the future.

## 4. NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

*The Neighbourhoods and Community Services Select Committee consisted of the following members:*

Councillor M Sartin (Chairman)

Councillor H Brady (Vice Chairman)

Councillors N Avey, R Gadsby, L Hughes, B Jennings, L Mead, A Mitchell, S Neville, A Patel and B Surtees

The Lead officer was Derek Macnab, Director of Neighbourhoods and Deputy Chief Executive.

### *Terms of Reference*

1. To undertake overview and scrutiny, utilising appropriate methods and techniques, of services and functions of the Neighbourhood and Communities Directorates (not including Housing matters).
2. To consider any matter referred to the Select Committee by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3. To keep under review:
  - (i) *Environmental enforcement activities;*
  - (ii) *Safer communities activities;*
  - (iii) *Waste management activities; and*
  - (iv) *Leisure Management*
  - (v) *Local Plan Scrutiny*
4. To identify any matters within the services and functions of the Neighbourhoods Directorate and the community services and community safety activities of the Communities Directorate that require in-depth scrutiny and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as necessary.
5. To act as the Council's Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and to keep under review the activities of the Epping Forest Community Safety Partnership as a whole or any of the individual partners which make up the Partnership.
6. To undertake performance monitoring in relation to the services and functions of the Neighbourhoods Directorate and the community services and community safety activities of the Communities Directorate, against adopted Key Performance Indicators and identified areas of concern.
7. To monitor and keep under review the Council's progress towards the development and adoption of a corporate energy strategy / environmental policy and to receive progress reports from the Green Working Party.
8. To receive reports from the Waste Management Partnership Board in respect of the operation of and performance of the waste management contract.
9. To monitor and keep under review leisure management matters and in particular the procurement of the Leisure Management Contract.

***The Panel scrutinised a number of important issues over the last year, which included:***

**(i) Key Performance Indicators 2014/15 Quarter 4 (Outturn)** – At their first meeting of the year in July 2015 The Committee considered the outturn (Q4) report for the Key Performance Indicators for 2014/15 specific to this Select Committee area of responsibility.



**(ii) Update on the adoption of the River Roding Flood Risk Management Strategy** - The Committee considered the letter from the Environment Agency updating the council on the River Roding Flood Risk Management Strategy. It was noted that the Environment Agency (EA) had attended the Safer Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Panel sometime ago to brief them on this management strategy. This letter was sent to every property next to the river and to this Council as it had land by the river. It was noted that members were very unhappy about this strategy.



The EA was responsible for the overview of flood risk management in England and had identified the best way to manage flood risk in the Roding catchment over the next 100 years, with the aim of protecting as many properties as possible while carefully balancing the amount of public money they spent.

**(iii) Crucial Crew Initiative** – In September 2015 the Committee received a report on 'Crucial Crew'. This was an annual event which was facilitated and delivered by the Council's Community Service and Safety teams. It was specifically designed to educate primary school pupils aged 10 (year 6) in a range of personal safety, health and wellbeing topics.

Crucial Crew has been provided for over 10 years and was historically delivered over the same two week period in June, in line with agreed primary school timetables. This year every Year 6 primary school pupil in the Epping Forest District attended the half day events; in all 1351 Epping Forest pupils participated. In addition 13 schools from the Brentwood area paid to attend, bringing a further 408 children into the project, making a total of 1759 attendees.



The event has traditionally been held at Gilwell Park Scouting Headquarters; however, following recent notification of a planned increase in hire costs by approximately £2000 in 2016 it was decided that an alternative venue of Debden House would be piloted in 2016 for the same venue costs as 2015.

**(iv) Draft Community Safety Partnership Annual Report for 2014-15** - The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was made up of representatives from Essex Police, Essex Fire and Rescue Service, Community Rehabilitation Service, Epping Forest District Council, Voluntary Action Epping Forest and the Magistracy. They meet on a quarterly basis to oversee the range of work undertaken and were responsible for undertaking an annual review of current crime and disorder issues.



Their main source of funding was from the Essex Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and although this has reduced, they have still managed to function efficiently and effectively.

Over the year they had assessed the following issues as local priorities:

- Domestic Abuse;
- Assault/violent crime;
- Anti-social behaviour; and
- Burglary in a dwelling.

They did some of the best work in Essex on domestic abuse by care and support of victims. They ran a sanctuary scheme with Community Safety, Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service to provide enhanced security to very high risk victims that do not wish to move, making them feel safer at home. They also run 'J9' training courses across West Essex to deal with the preventative side of domestic abuse. Their work on Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) continues to be a priority area. They have an ASB investigator who is trained in mediation and is also the EFDC Restorative Justice Ambassador to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This was a new initiative to identify emerging problem families and provide support and mediation before problems escalate.



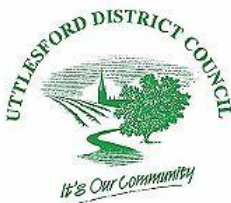
In 2013 with funding from the PCC, EFDC's community safety team purchased 5 cameras allowing the installation of a self contained CCTV system (camera, monitor and recorder). These were offered to local residents on a loan basis with an option to purchase at cost price. They would be used to assist across a broad range of matters including gathering evidence in support of allegations of Anti-social Behaviour or deterring bogus callers.

Burglary from dwellings continued to be a priority crime due to the close proximity to the London Metropolitan area and the excellent transport links through the district. This allows travelling criminals to enter and leave by a number of different means.

**(v) Key Performance Indicators 2015/16 Quarterly Updates** - the Committee reviewed the Key Performance Indicators relevant to their Select Committee on a quarterly basis.

**(vi) Review of the Local Plan** – at each meeting the Committee received regular updates on the current state of the Council's Local Plan.

**(vii) Uttlesford Local Plan – Issues and Options Consultation** – In November 2015 the meeting noted that Uttlesford District Council's previous Local Plan ran into difficulties at Examination in Public late in 2014. The main concerns related to the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (OAHN) figure relying on out of date evidence and the capacity of the village of Elsenham to take the amount of new development being proposed. The examination was not completed and as a consequence Uttlesford subsequently withdrew the Plan in February 2015.



Their current Issues and Options consultation on a new local plan was intended to be the first of three stages of formal consultation and engagement. They hoped to have a final draft plan by next year and a submission version by 2017.

Uttlesford along with Harlow & East Hertfordshire is one of the

Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) partners with this Council. Officers were concerned that the SHMA was not mentioned in the consultation document as this was a key piece of joint evidence prepared for the four authorities in the Housing Market Area. Officers were also surprised that there was no mention in the document about the boundary issues and that more was not said about the potential impact of Stanstead Airport.

**(viii) Community Services Summer Activities 2015** - The 2015 summer activities were organised and delivered by the Community Services section. They consisted of a wide range of activities to engage children, young people and their families. It was noted that almost 2000 people had participated in the extensive range of activities on offer which included physical activities such as Soccer Tots, mountain biking, Play in the Park and Play in the Forest sessions and dance programmes as well as other creative activities.

These activities were detailed in a brochure that was delivered to all schools in the district. This was supplemented by fliers, posters, school visits, social media, a website, radio interviews and attendance at community events and Town Shows.



There was also an 'Inclusion Programme' which was funded through Essex County Council, designed for children and young people with additional needs. Although parents and carers frequently elect to attend sessions with their children, a special fully supervised camping break was organised this year to give parents respite and enable the children to stay without their families if they wanted to. This proved hugely successful and received excellent feedback.

**(ix) Fly Tipping Clearance and Enforcement** – In November the Committee also received a report on fly-tipping clearance and enforcement. It was noted that this was a problem that was growing. The Environment & Neighbourhoods (EN) Team were responsible for enforcing waste law in the district. They log all incidents of fly-tipping and prioritise investigations to try and trace the source of the waste and fly-tipper. They took as an example Laundry Lane that was constantly being fly-tipped and constantly being cleared by the district or the County Council. Waste has



also been dumped on private land and although the Council has the powers to force the land owner to clear the tip they did have some sympathy with them on this. They were also getting pressure from the private land owners to help them clear up the tipped areas.

**(x) Update from the Green Corporate Working Party** - The Committee noted that they were working towards a new environmental policy to tie in with the Council's Corporate Objectives.

A presentation was given to the Leadership Team on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 which Directors and Assistant Directors were asked to consider the options for the development of a corporate energy strategy/environmental policy. They came up with a number of suggestions including:

- Electric vehicle charge points in the district;
- The council to have their own electric vehicles;
- E-billing, e-notification, more on-line forms;
- Have targets for energy efficiency as part of the local plan;

- Making communities resistant to the impact of climate changes;
- Making meetings paperless.

These, and the other suggestions made would be taken to the next Green Working Party meeting to be discussed. They would then look to create an 'environmental charter' with an action plan which would then be brought back to this Select Committee for comments and agreement. This would replace the Council's existing Climate Change Policy 2009.

**(xi) Review of Waste and Recycling Collection Arrangements** – On 17 December 2015 a special meeting was arranged for this Select Committee with a one item agenda, specifically to review the new domestic waste and recycling contract and following the switch to the four day collection schedule and the introduction of new vehicles and technology. This resulted in an unacceptably high level of missed collections. The Council's Environment Portfolio Holder noting that this was an important service, formally requested that the Overview and Scrutiny undertake a review on his behalf and that the outcome be formally reported back to the Cabinet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that this request should be determined by the Neighbourhoods and Communities Select Committee. Given this, a single, one off meeting of the Select Committee be dedicated to this single subject.



*(See Case Study for full details)*

**(xii) PICK Form on 20mph Speed Limit** – In January 2016 The Committee welcomed David Sprunt, from the Essex Transportation Strategy and Engagement, Economic Growth; and Vicky Duff, the Essex Network Management Group Manager. They were there to enlighten the committee on those facts and policies used by Essex County Council and the guidance issued by the Department of Transport on road speeds, especially relating to the implementation of 20mph limits.



The Committee noted that:

- That Essex CC had a Speed Management Strategy advised by the Department of Transport circular 01/2013;
- It had been established by research that 20mph speed limits generally only led to small reductions in traffic speeds;
- The latest advice was that a mix of 20mph limits and 20mph zones would be better, providing that the signing was correct;
- The objective would be that 'any 20mph restrictions should be self-enforcing';
- Any 20mph limit of zone would require a Speed Limit Order, which had to be consulted on;
- The current policy allowed for the consideration of 20mph limits on local roads if the mean speeds were less than 24mph;
- At the beginning of the limits there would have to be clear signage and also at the end of the restrictions. There would also have to be repeater signs along the route;
- 20mph zones had traffic calming measures e.g. speed humps, chicanes etc. these zones applied not just to one road but to whole areas, such as estates;
- It was noted that generally people did not like them and the low speeds over traffic calming measures also produced more noise for residents;
- The most effective method for reducing speed was the use of chicanes, but it needed some major engineering work to put them in;



- 20mph signs could be used as a calming feature but they would not physically reduce the speeds;
- The county also has a “20’s plenty” scheme used mainly outside schools, but very little reductions in speeds were achieved;
- Advisory speed limit signs could be also be used outside schools, they were not mandatory and thus no speed limit order was required;
- Before a scheme was put into place, information was required in the form of speed surveys, traffic surveys and collision data;
- It was noted that a lot of areas in Essex did not have high collision rates for Children and pedestrians;
- Repeat signage in an area tended to create clutter on those roads;
- Essex Police did not have the resources to enforce these areas.

**(xiii) Area Crime Analyst** – Also in January 2016 the Chairman welcomed the Safer Communities Manager and West Local Policing Area Partnership Analyst, who gave a short presentation on the local crime and disorder figures up to and including November 2015, via the Home Office system, ‘iQuanta’. This system provided data for a 3 year span.



The Committee noted that:

- All Crime was up by 14% (630 cases) in comparison to previous years figures to date;
- On a month by month total – in December 2012 there were 591 cases compared to November 2015 with 642 cases, an increase of 7.9% (51 cases) over 3 years;
- Against other similar authorities we had similar figures to Maidstone, who the ONS identified as a match to Epping. Our figures were 56.835 crimes to Maidstone’s 56.588 crimes;
- Broxbourne was a border council similar to us with similar proximity to London and transport links and had 62.278 crimes and Watford (with 72.614 crimes) had similar tube and Motorway links;
- The figures for violence against the person showed a 27% (246) increase in Epping Forest in comparison to the previous year;
- Epping was 17% below the Essex average;
- In comparison with other similar authorities, the figures for the year ending November 2015, Epping had 1690, Maidstone 2690, Watford 1704 and Broxbourne;
- Following a peak in October ASB incidents had fallen by a third in December; and
- By locality, Loughton remained the highest, with 263 ASB incidents, followed by Waltham Abbey (176) and Epping (139).

**(xiv) CCTV Action Plan** – The Committee reviewed the EFDC CCTV strategy for 2016-2022, noting that this report had recently gone to the Cabinet for their information and agreement.



The Committee noted that the strategy covered the period from 2015 to 2022, following on from the previous strategy that was produced in 2008, when the Community Safety Team took over the responsibility for the Council’s CCTV provision as part of the Safer, Cleaner Greener Review.

The Strategy set out the Council’s current CCTV provision, detailing respective locations, numbers of cameras, condition and costs for maintenance, and repair and replacements over the next seven years,

along with recommendations for de-commissioning of equipment. It also provided an overview of the benefits that were realised for the local communities in which it was installed and the various use made of CCTV footage by the Police and insurance companies.

The Council's success in the use of CCTV had generated ongoing demands from Directorates to install new CCTV equipment within key areas of the district and the point had now been reached where an increased budget was required, to meet the costs of replacing old equipment and the increased servicing and maintenance costs, which was also covered by the Strategy.

**(xv) Local Policing Proposals** – The Committee received a report on the recently proposed Policing cuts and their implications on the Council's Community Safety Service.

This originated from November 2015, when the PCC, Nick Alston and the Chief Constable of Essex Police announced proposals to make significant changes to local Policing across Essex, in a move to ensure that Essex Police was fit for purpose, in the future.

This report was aimed at starting a discussion with members on the implications of the reduction in police resources and the impact it would have on the Council's Community Safety Service.

The problem council officers faced were that they were best guessing what was going to happen in the district. They were looking at potential reductions in policing, such as triaging calls into High, Medium or Low risks and then only reacting to high risk cases and fielding the other calls to other relevant authorities. They were mindful that the Council would pick up more work and there would be more disgruntled members of the public not having the Police act on their problems.



Anti-social Behaviour powers given to us by the Government would raise the officer's workload, especially as the Police would not act. This may also result in more problems at the reception desks from disgruntled members of the public.

The Council only had two ASB officers to deal with the Epping Forest District. They were seeing a rise in cases from 192 to 331 cases. The public would make their feelings known to Members who will then let the officers know, increasing their caseload as they try and resolve complaints on behalf of Members and this would be very time consuming.

**(xvi) Reality Roadshow 2015** - Building on the long-standing success of Crucial Crew, the Reality Roadshow initiative was a personal safety, health & well-being event that brought together a host of statutory and voluntary agencies, to deliver a day of educational workshops to Year 9 (14 year old) pupils at schools in the district. It was specifically tailored to address young people's issues that have been identified as a priority concern locally. It provides over 1100 pupils in the district with expert advice and guidance on making the right choices in life for good health and well being.

Pupils participated in either 5 or 6 workshops depending on individual school timetables and each session was specifically designed to address current issues facing local young people. The workshops delivered in 2015/16 were:

- The Consequences of Crime – delivered by Essex Magistrates
- Online Internet Safety – EFDC's Community Health and Well-being Team
- Sexual Health - NHS Sexual Health Services

- Legal Highs and Substance Misuse - Alcohol & Drugs Advisory Service (ADAS)
- Alcohol Awareness - AlcoHELP
- Healthy Relationships and Domestic Abuse - Safer Places

The impact of the Reality Roadshow programme on participants was generally very significant, as the messages given are very clear and designed to show the worse case scenarios of being involved in negative behaviours. The programme also promoted the opportunity for young people to make changes in their lives and to receive support and advice from the various agencies available locally.

**(xvii) Response to DCLG technical Consultation on the NPPF** – Also in January 2016



the Committee received a report on the response to the proposed changes to the national planning policy consultation. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012 and was supported by

the online Planning Practice Guidance. Amendments are now proposed to the NPPF which encompassed the following:

- Broadening the definition of affordable housing, to expand the range of low cost housing opportunities for those aspiring to own their new home (this includes the Government’s intention to introduce Starter Homes as a type of low cost home ownership);
- Increasing the density of development around commuter hubs, to make more efficient use of land in suitable locations;
- Supporting sustainable new settlements, development on brownfield land and small sites (up to 10 units), and delivery of housing allocated in plans; and
- Supporting delivery of starter homes.

There were nine sections contained with the consultation paper and 23 questions on which answers were sought.

**(xviii) Museum Development Trust** – At their March 2016 meeting the Committee received a report on the proposal to establish a Museum Development Trust for Epping Forest and Lowewood Museums.

The meeting noted that In April 2015, officers were successful in securing £55,000 funding from Arts Council England (ACE) as part of its Resilience Programme, to undertake two feasibility studies. The aim of the studies was to investigate opportunities for supporting resilience of the Museum, Heritage and Culture (MHC) service over the long-term and during economic austerity.



The key recommendation to come out of the study was to establish a Development Trust to operate in parallel to the general management of Epping Forest and Lowewood Museum services based on the model of a company limited by guarantee and registered charity.

They noted the positive benefits of setting up a separate charitable entity, which included the ability to access a range of funding possibilities that were not previously available, opportunity to secure additional grants and donations and the ability to claim Gift Aid on qualifying ticket sales.

A tripartite arrangement came into being in early February, following an approach by Chelmsford City Council for support and advice in relation to operation of their Museum Service, which had just received funding for a major Heritage Lottery Fund project.

Two senior officers from Chelmsford came to look at our museum and talk to senior officers here. They had discussions about the Trust and how to set it up. They were very impressed with our work and were keen to act as a partner agency for us and set themselves up as a separate Foundation Trust. We shall establish a close relationship with them as well as Broxbourne.

**(xix) Prevent Initiative and Radicalisation Issues** – Also at their March meeting the committee received a report on the Home Office funding for the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism – the ‘Prevent Duty’ that came into force for local authorities on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015.



In October 2015, the Council received notification from the Home Office, that it would be allocating £10,000 to all local authorities (excluding priority areas) as a one off payment in this financial year, for the delivery of specific work to support the implementation of the Prevent Duty.

All Councils were required to apply for the funding and needed to present a plan on how the money would be spent. The application on behalf of EFDC focussed on two distinct areas of work; the upgrading of the Council's IT systems to prevent misuse of IT for extremist material, and, the provision of a Prevent Education Programme within the district's local secondary schools, for both pupils and teachers.

Following the receipt of the grant a nationally recognised Training Programme '*Me and You Education*' was therefore commissioned to undertake the delivery of in-schools Prevent work and this has been delivered to pupils in years 7 – 13.

**(xx) Brentwood Draft Local plan: Public Consultation** - The Committee noted that the Brentwood Draft Local Plan includes the strategy, planning policies and proposed land allocations intended to cover the period 2013 to 2033.

Epping Forest District and Brentwood Borough are in a very similar situation – i.e. with challenging pitch provision targets from the GTAA (112 and 84 respectively) and with very comprehensive Green Belt coverage (92% and 89% respectively), so there could be some advantage in considering joint provision in the general area of the common boundary.

**(xxi) Response to Lower Thames Crossing Consultation** - Highways England was consulting on proposals for a new road crossing of the River Thames connecting Kent and Essex. It was considered that a new crossing was needed to reduce congestion at the existing Dartford Crossing and unlock economic growth, supporting the development of new homes and jobs in the region.



The proposal was the culmination of lengthy investigations into options for a new Lower Thames Crossing which has been lobbied for by Kent and Essex County Councils and business leaders.

**(xxii) Replacement Essex Waste Local Plan – Consultation** - The Replacement Waste Local Plan: Pre Submission Draft was the version of the Plan proposed to be submitted to the Secretary of State, leading up to independent examination by a Planning Inspector later in 2016. It included a vision statement, objectives and a spatial strategy to enable the delivery of sustainable waste development, site allocations and policies to manage waste

development. The Plan covers the administrative areas of Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.

The focus of this consultation, which was being carried out under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 was on soundness and legal compliance. The Planning Inspector could only address these issues in his consideration of the Waste Plan.

**(xxiii) Data Quality Strategy 2016/17 – 2018/19** – The Committee noted that the Council needed timely, accurate and reliable data in order to manage activities and meet internal and external requirements to demonstrate accountability through accurate reporting. Data was used for the assessment of the Council's performance, including the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Data Quality Strategy set out the arrangements for the next 3 years to ensure key data meets the highest standards and was 'right first time'.



The Council had identified principles and arrangements to ensure high standards of data quality and had for a number of years, formalized them within a strategy, to support consistency and encourage high standards of practice of data quality management. This revised strategy continued to reflect the principles for data quality originally identified by the former Audit Commission.

**(xxiv) Enforcement Activity** – The Committee received a report on the enforcement actions taken in 2015. They noted that in line with previous reports on enforcement activities of the Environment & Neighbourhoods team, the data has been broken down into 6 month periods covering the summer and winter months. In general summer months were busier, particularly for noise complaints. This pattern has been repeated in 2015.



Noise and waste/fly-tipping issues make up a large percentage of the teams enforcement work, it was estimated that the Environment and Neighbourhood Officers (ENO) spend 80% of their time on these two issues across the district.

In some cases officers are clearly working towards establishing non-compliance with the law, with the aim of instigating prosecution proceedings e.g. fly-tipping incidents. However, officers also spend a great deal of time trying to educate, deter and resolve issues informally. That was particularly the case with noise issues and other neighbour nuisance complaints. Although prosecutions draw attention, enforcement officers investigate and resolve many more cases informally.

Officers have started to use new powers to issue formal Community Protection Warnings (CPW) and Community Protection Notices (CPN). This new power provided officers with more scope to deal with some issues that previously did not fall under specific statutory nuisance powers.

Although the new power was welcome, the Committee noted that it came at a time when other enforcement agencies, that share similar enforcement responsibilities, such as the Police, Environment Agency and Essex County Council were increasingly under pressure, leading to more enforcement work being directed to the ENO team.

## **Case Study: Review of Waste and Recycling Collection Arrangements**

On 17 December 2015, the Chairman of the Committee welcomed the members of the public, officers, councillors and invited guests to a special meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Communities Select Committee. The meeting was to review the new domestic waste and recycling contract and following the switch to the four day collection schedule and the introduction of new vehicles and technology. This had resulted in an unacceptably high level of missed collections. The Council's Environment Portfolio Holder noting that this was an important service, formally requested that the Overview and Scrutiny undertake a review on his behalf and that the outcome to be reported back to the Cabinet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed that this request should be determined by the Neighbourhoods and Communities Select Committee. Given this, a single, one off meeting of the Select Committee be dedicated to this single subject.

In addition to the Environment Portfolio Holder and the Council's lead officers on Waste and Recycling, senior representatives from Biffa municipal were present. They were invited to give evidence and answer questions.

### **Part one – the Procurement Process**

The Committee went on to review the procurement process. The consultant from White Young and Green, who supported the council through the procurement process gave a brief description of why the council chose to go for Competitive Dialogue, the procurement process, any key considerations and service improvements identified. He noted that this process enabled the bidders to take into consideration:

- the grounds maintenance service;
- establish synergies between grounds maintenance and street cleansing services;
- to market test the in-house service for fleet management and maintenance;
- to seek a solution in relation to depot provision;
- an innovative approach to the provision of trade waste collection and recycling;
- achieve a minimum average recycling rate in excess of 60%;
- the provision of up to date ICT; and
- where affordable to endeavour to go for innovation and added value.

The Council had expressed a wish to move from their current depot and explore alternative type of fleet contract and would also examine the contract term, which should be longer than the former 7 years.

They were also looking at how recycling, composting etc. could be improved; the procurement process was wholly designed to see how contractors would tackle this.

### **Part two – Mobilisation and the first 6 months of Contract**



The meeting went on to consider the second part of the review, the mobilisation and the first 6 months of the contract.

Officers advised the meeting that the decision to award the contract was made by the Cabinet in May 2014. After that there was a handover period from Sita to Biffa. The first thing was to get Biffa set up at the Langston Road depot; TUPE staff transfer over to Biffa; transfer assets like vehicles and the stock of wheelie bins and other

containers etc. This was carried out successfully and Biffa operated the 5 day collection service from 4 November 2014. The Waste and Recycling Manager added that the council acted as a buffer between the outgoing and incoming contractors.

Officers noted that every household received a letter about the change over, with a calendar showing the collection dates, information was also put on our website with a search tool to enable householders to check the date and type of waste and recycling collection, and this proved very successful. The Council had received criticism for not having enough publicity, but the problem was not that, but that collections were missed.

The Portfolio Holder added that with hindsight the letters were not as clear as they could have been. But more broadly, we had done a good job communicating by using the website and other means.

### **Part three – Revised Arrangements, Problems, Operational Issues & Remedial Actions**

Officers noted that the 4 day collection consisted of Tuesday to Friday collections, a one pass collection for dry recycling and glass and new ICT and Customer relationship Management systems for the management of customer contact and also the new collections for small electrical equipment, textiles and batteries.

At the start the Council had received feedback that the collections were not happening as effectively as they should have been. Some houses were missed and this was coupled with a lack of knowledge of some of the areas being covered. Staff did not necessarily know the location of some of the bins as there were some unusual places they were being kept. This ended in missed collections and staff had to do some relearning of the 'ins' and 'outs' of an area. Some rural areas had consistent problems at this time.

At its peak the contact centre was getting about 750 calls a day and they handled this by drafting in staff from other areas to answer calls and emails. An additional problem was that officers had to learn new ways of processing the new systems; at the start the lines of communication were not that clear, but this had changed now.

A member of the public said that she had received her recycling calendar for May to October for which she thanked the officers. But, right from the beginning her general waste was collected but her recycling waste wasn't. On numerous occasions during May and July when she reported it she was told that Biffa would be informed of this.



Officers from Biffa noted that that the new ways of working required change. They should have been using local crews; and once they started operating they were not achieving what they should. They then had to run three 'mop-up' crews to deal with the problems that arose. A combination of various issues caused a perfect storm. They also lost some employees and with them local knowledge. The new vehicles were different and needed some time for familiarisation; they were also slower which impacted on the length of the rounds. They were also relying on a new IT system which had

teething problems and the longer working days meant that they got caught up in traffic as

well. They noted that they did not have enough resources and introduced four new rounds and also had to bring in new people.

A full report went to the February Overview and Scrutiny Committee and onward to the April 2015 Cabinet meeting.





# TASK AND FINISH PANELS

## 1. *YOUTH ENGAGEMENT REVIEW TASK AND FINISH PANEL*

### **Origin**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 10 February 2015 set up a Task and Finish Panel to review potential options for the best use of the existing budgets for youth engagement for the future. Also, they agreed that it would be helpful to co-opt two youth councillors to sit on this panel and give their input. This Panel stemmed from a PICK form submitted by Councillor Kane the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Community Services.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- (a) To report findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and submit a final report for consideration by the Committee and the Council by November 2015;
- (b) To include two representatives from the District Youth Council on the Task and Finish Panel;
- (c) To determine the impact of the Council's current engagement with young people, through consultation with local statutory and voluntary sector partners, and,
- (d) To determine the best use of the allocated funding for the future.

### **Draft Terms of Reference**

- 1. To review the operation of the Youth Council and identify specific areas of work undertaken and the success and impact of these;
- 2. To review the level of engagement with peers in local schools and 'other young people' of all ages across the district, through the range of work undertaken by the Youth Council and the importance of this engagement for local community groups;
- 3. To consider feedback from local schools and other partners in respect of the work of the Youth Council;
- 4. To identify the expenditure related to various elements of the Youth Council work programme and analyse the cost/benefit of this;
- 5. To consider other work undertaken by Community Services and Safety to engage with young people and identify the costs associated with this;
- 6. To consider the status of Essex Youth Services following recent service transformation and resulting implications for the district; and,
- 7. To prepare a set of recommendations for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in November 2015.

## **The Panel**

The Committee appointed the following members to serve on the Panel:

**Members** (up to May '15): S. Murray, G. Mohindra, C. Roberts, B. Surtees, K. Adams, R. Butler

**Members** (after May '15): S. Murray, G. Mohindra, C. Roberts, S. Neville, B. Surtees A. Patel

**Other Members who attended:** Mrs H Kane, J McIvor (Youth Councillor), M Tinker (Youth Councillor)

**Officers:** J Chandler (Assistant Director Community Services and Safety), G Wallis (Community, Health & Wellbeing Manager and R Perrin (Democratic Services Officer).

The Panel had its first meeting in April 2015 and their last meeting on 14 September 2015.

## **Outcome**

Recommendations of the Panel in relation to the Epping Forest Youth Council was:

- i) That the Council retains and continues to support and develop the Youth Council in terms of wider youth engagement;
- ii) That the Youth Council be afforded the opportunity to present a report/update twice a year to all Members of Council through a suitable meeting;
- iii) That the Youth Council acts as a consultee for stakeholder presentations at Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- iv) That the current operational budget for the Youth Council be maintained at £12,000 per annum; and,
- v) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes a bid to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee for Continuing Services Budget (CSB) Growth of £8,000 per annum for an enabling fund, that the Youth Council can access for projects, to be agreed by the Neighbourhoods & Communities Select Committee.

Recommendations of the Panel in regard to future delivery of youth provision by Community Services and Safety:

- i) That the Council pursues the devolvement of the budget and responsibilities for Youth Provision from Essex County Council to the District Council; and,
- ii) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes a bid to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee for Continuing Services Budget (CSB) Growth of £25,000 per annum, for targeted work by Community Services and Safety and not at the detriment of the current service.

## 2. GRANT AID REVIEW TASK AND FINISH PANEL

### Origin:

At its meeting on 16 September 2014, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the establishment of a new Task and Finish Panel to review the Council's Grant Aid Scheme for Sports, Arts, Leisure and Community Groups in terms of the overall policy/guidance and procedures for Major Grants and Service Level Agreements including those for the determination of applications, and those for the pre and post determination stages.



### Aims and Objectives:

- (a) To report findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to submit a final report for consideration by the Committee and the Council by April 2015;
- (b) To gather evidence and information in relation to the review through the receipt of appropriate data, presentations and by participation in fact-finding visits to other authorities if necessary;
- (c) To have due regard to relevant legislation and the Council's procedures;
- (d) To consult political groups and independent Councillors during the review process.

### Term of Reference:

To review the current structure of the Grant Aid Scheme, taking into consideration the terms of the overall policy/guidance and procedures those for the determination of applications, and those for the pre and post determination stages and how this framework would best fit the structure of the Council.

(1) To specifically consider:

- The eligibility criteria and assessment arrangements for funding taking into account the budget available and the thematic areas in the leisure and cultural strategy;
- The grant maxima;
- Appropriate arrangements for safeguarding;
- Review procedures.

(2) To consider any other matters that are deemed appropriate.

### The Panel

The Committee appointed the following members to serve on the Panel:

Councillors Caroline Pond (Chairman), J Knapman (Vice-Chairman), T Boyce, A Mitchell, S Murray, G Shiell and B Surtees

The Panel did not finish its work by the end of the 2014/15 municipal year and continued its work into the 2015/16 year, holding its final meeting on 14 March 2016.

The Panel recognised the vital role that the voluntary and community sector brought to local community well-being in the Epping Forest District. However, it also acknowledged the need for a more proactive approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of grants awarded, and particularly the higher level grants.

### **Outcome**

The Panel were satisfied that the agreed amendments to the Grant Aid Service Level Agreements and improved performance management would ensure that the Council was receiving best value from the grants awarded. They also felt that the level of remaining Grant Aid Funding should remain as it is, to ensure that the Council could continue to support the essential services provided through the voluntary sector.

The Panel made the following recommendations:

- (1) That the current level of Grant Aid funding be maintained;
- (2) That, from 1 April 2016, funding of less than £5,000 per annum for three years be provided for Voluntary Groups without the need for a formal Service Level Agreement, but, subject to the receipt of an Annual Report from each Group outlining the benefit to the District from the funding;
- (3) That the revised Service Level Agreement as agreed by the Panel, be adopted by the Council;
- (4) That the District Council maintain provision for longer term funding to Voluntary Action Epping Forest and Epping Forest Citizens Advice Bureau from 2016/17 onwards, based on performance management benchmarking closely monitored on an annual basis; and
- (5) That a more rigorous process of monitoring is adopted for the higher Grant Awards currently in operation for Voluntary Action Epping Forest and Citizen's Advice Bureau



## **Report to Council**

**Date of meeting: 26 July 2016**

**Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Report to Council**

**Contact for further information: Councillor M Sartin  
(Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee)**

**Committee Secretary:** Adrian Hendry, ext.4246

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

**That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report from April 2016 to the present be noted.**

### **Report:**

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 19 April 2016**

1. At our last meeting for 2015/16, held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016, we received a presentation from The Epping Forest Youth Council who gave us an update on their past year's work and their future programme. We noted that they had contributed to 14 consultations during the year and that Volunteering remained a big theme for them; they were passionate about encouraging other young people to volunteer, were working closely with individual schools and had set up Youth Volunteer Days. They were also looking at ways to break down barriers between older residents and young people.
2. We also noted that the Youth Council had secured outside funding of £6,750 in the last 12 month period to help them in their project work.
3. Also at this meeting we received a presentation from the Essex County Children Services. We welcomed Chris Martin, the Integrated Commissioning Director (West) and Gill Holland the lead on Children Centre Performance in the west of the County. They were there to talk about Children Services in our area and the 'Children's Centres in Essex' Consultation taking place. Mr Martin noted that the Children's consultation was to consult on the Children's and Young Persons Plan. This plan was to run from 2016 to 2019 and would set the direction of children services across Essex. This would affect children and young people from pre-birth to 19 and would improve joint accountability and decision making and move on to family centred plans.
4. Essex County Council was in the process of redesigning the current service offer for Children's Centres and the Healthy Child Programme. This would place parents, children and families at the heart of the service redesign.
5. The information collected from the consultation would be analysed and once completed would be added into their planning before making their recommendations to the ECC Cabinet. They would publicise the link for the recommendations once it was ready and they expected that to be late this summer and the new service to go live in April 2017.
6. We then received the final report of the Grant Aid Task and Finish Panel. The Panel acknowledged the £11,500 saving made from the Grant Aid Budget for 2015/16 in respect of

the one-off major grants and considered whether any further reductions could be made to the overall Grant Aid Funding Programme. It also looked at the various criteria for the distribution of funding; the monitoring and evaluation for each grant awarded and the Service Level Agreements applied. They concluded that the current level of Grant Aid be maintained and made four other recommendations to help expedite the council's funding procedures.

7. The Committee then considered the Equality Objectives for 2016 to 2020 which were agreed and then considered the Select Committee framework, which we slightly altered so that in the new municipal year, the four Select Committees would be lined up directly to the four directorates.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 7 June 2016**

8. At our first meeting for this year, held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016 we received a presentation from the Superintendent of Epping Forest, Paul Thompson and Judy Adams the Chairman of the Friends of Epping Forest speaking to the recent public consultation on the Forest Management Plan. We noted that a new management plan was needed to guide the future management of Epping Forest.

9. The top two topics that the public expressed most concern over were public recreation and enjoyment and the preservation of the natural aspects of the forest.

10. A clear message from the consultation was that unstructured play involving natural features such as puddles, streams, sticks and logs was preferred to the provision of traditional formal play equipment. Also many respondents wanted to strike a balance between wild forest, waymarked trails and easy access trails.

11. We noted that the management plan would prompt further research to better understand the impact of visitor activities and would consider whether the current licensing scheme should be modified or extended. The presentation produced a considerable number of questions from members which were fully answered.

12. We then also reviewed and noted the outturn report on the Key Objectives for last year, agreed the final draft of the O&S Annual Report for 2015/16 and agreed the membership of the Select Committees for the coming year. It was agreed to hold a special meeting of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Select Committees to discuss their upcoming work programmes and this was scheduled for 30 June.

### **O&S Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen meeting – 30 June 2016**

13. The Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Select Committees were invited to attend a new meeting to co-ordinate their work programmes for the coming year.

14. The following areas were covered and possible solutions were discussed:

- a) Presentations at Overview and Scrutiny Committee – members could meet agencies beforehand to discuss exactly the queries they intended to make at the presentation meeting. Scoping reports could be used.
- b) Presentations could be connected to an actual event or to a particular report being published.

- c) A good source for scrutiny was social media; trends in complaints could bring out particular problems.
- d) The topics around Freedom of Information Requests could also be identified as scrutiny projects.
- e) Directorate Business Plans could be scrutinised.
- f) Focus could be put on Key Performance Indicators that were shown as being in the red, where targets had not been achieved.
- g) There was a need to focus on issues rather than bodies.
- h) Trends could also be identified from Compliments/Complaints.

15. It was suggested that in future, perhaps around February or March, the work programmes for next year could be started rather than, as this year, the early summer period.

16. A full report on the outcome of this meeting went to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 July. The group will meet again in 6 months time.

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## **Report to the Council**

**Portfolio:** Housing

**Date:** 26 July 2016

**Subject:** Overview and Scrutiny Rule 53 (Special Urgency)

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**1. PURCHASE OF STREET PROPERTIES - 12 CALDBECK, WALTHAM ABBEY & 15 WILLOW PATH, WALTHAM ABBEY**

**Recommending:**

**To note that the Chairman of Council agreed that the following decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder be treated as a matter of urgency and not be subject to the call-in provisions in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule (Call-In and Urgency):**

- (a) That the Council purchase the street properties at 12 Caldbeck, Waltham Abbey and 15 Willow Path, Waltham Abbey for the sum of £335,000 and £279,950 respectively, subject to a satisfactory property searches, surveys, valuations and contracts.**

1.1 In July 2015, the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee considered a report on the acceleration of the Housebuilding Programme, to ensure that all "1-4-1 Replacement Right to Buy" capital receipts were spent within the required 3 years of receipt and that none were passed on to the Government, with interest. One of the options agreed was the purchase street properties from the open market, and the agent appointed by the Council was subsequently instructed to source appropriate street properties.

2.1 In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule 53 (Special Urgency) of the Constitution, the Chairman of the Council (Councillor E. Webster) was satisfied that this decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder (4 May 2016) was reasonable in all the circumstances and should be treated as a matter of urgency. The Chairman of Council was also satisfied that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's interests in this respect, as the purchase prices for the properties subject of the decision had been negotiated on the basis of sales being completed quickly, due to both properties being vacant with no purchase chain, and to ensure that one-for-one receipts arising from Right to Buy sales were spent within the required timescale.

**2. PURCHASE OF STREET PROPERTIES – 11 CANELAND COURT, WALTHAM ABBEY & 7 MILHOO COURT, WALTHAM ABBEY**

**Recommending:**

**To note that the Chairman of Council (Councillor J. Lea) agreed that the following decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder (7 June 2016) be treated as a matter of urgency and not be subject to the call-in provisions in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule (Call-In and Urgency):**

- (a) That the Council purchase the street properties at 11 Caneland Court, Waltham Abbey and 7 Milhoo Court, Waltham Abbey in the sums of £310,000 and £290,000 respectively, subject to the completion of satisfactory property searches, surveys, valuations and contracts.**

- 2.1 In July 2015, the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee considered a report on the acceleration of the Housebuilding Programme, to ensure that all “1-4-1 Replacement Right to Buy” capital receipts were spent within the required 3 years of receipt and that none were passed on to the Government, with interest. One of the options agreed was the purchase street properties from the open market, and the agent appointed by the Council was subsequently instructed to source appropriate street properties.
- 2.2 In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Rule 53 (Special Urgency) of the Constitution, the Chairman of the Council (Councillor J. Lea) was satisfied that this decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder (7 June 2016) was reasonable in all the circumstances and should be treated as a matter of urgency. The Chairman of Council was also satisfied that any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council’s interests in this respect, as the purchase prices for the properties subject of the decision had been negotiated on the basis of sales being completed quickly, due to both properties being vacant with no purchase chain, and to ensure that one-for-one receipts arising from Right to Buy sales were spent within the required timescale.

## ***Report to the Council***

**Date: 26 July 2016**

**Joint Arrangements and External Organisations: Royal Gunpowder Mills**

**Council Representatives: Councillor H Kane**

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### **Gunpowder Mills Meeting on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> of June 2016**

The Chairman John Bowles opened the meeting introducing a new member on the board, Terry Campbell, who is representative of Hill Construction, which is based in the RGM. His expertise in the building construction industry and his experience are valuable to the RGM.

The members present voted in favour of this new addition to the board. There seems to be some changes in the structure of both: The Foundation and the Operating Company Boards as a number of members have expressed their wish to step down. Any changes will have to be in September when the AGM will take place.

The volunteers and staff had meetings with the General manager, Stella Morris, in order to discuss the two different scenarios prior to the Special Council decision. Had the application gone through they were ready to complete a thorough inventory of all the items kept in different buildings, and should the application not have been successful, they had to think very seriously about the future. They are all fully aware that the site is not sustainable, and unfortunately they cannot keep the site open to the public every day, as there are not enough people to manage and cope with any issues of safeguarding the visitors. So they are busy concentrating on new activities and events based on history and nature. They have not been able to plan events in advance, so the season's events and activities programme has been hurriedly assembled.

From the accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2016, education income is holding up well and measures were in place to counteract impression that RGM will be shut. Unfortunately, the rumours that RGM will be shut for one reason or another have not been at all helpful.

The staff and members of the Operating Company are waiting to find out if the Foundation and PGL will appeal the Council's decision.

The Board members after that went to Private session to discuss staff issues.

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