

Supplementary Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Cabinet Monday, 18th April, 2011

Place: Council Chamber
Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Time: 7.00 pm

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (The Office of the Chief Executive)
Tel: 01992 564470
Email: gwoodhall@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

**8. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CABINET COMMITTEE - 15 MARCH 2011
(Pages 89 - 104)**

(Leader of the Council) To consider the minutes from the recent meeting of the Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee held on 15 March 2011 and any recommendations therein.

**9. FINANCE & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CABINET COMMITTEE - 21 MARCH 2011
(Pages 105 - 112)**

(Finance & Performance Management Portfolio Holder) To consider the minutes from the recent meeting of the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee held on 21 March 2011 and any recommendations therein.

**11. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK CABINET COMMITTEE - 28 MARCH 2011
(Pages 113 - 118)**

(Leader of the Council) To consider the minutes from the recent meeting of the Local Development Framework Cabinet Committee held on 28 March 2011 and any recommendations therein.

**17. EXTERNAL REPAIRS & REDECORATION - ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER (Pages
119 - 124)**

(Housing Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report (C-073-2010/11).

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Local Development Framework **Date:** 15 March 2011
Cabinet Committee

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, **Time:** 7.00 - 8.15 pm
High Street, Epping

Members Present: Mrs D Collins (Chairman), R Bassett, B Rolfe, Mrs M Sartin, Ms S Stavrou and Mrs L Wagland

Other

Councillors: J Philip, Mrs C Pond, Mrs P Smith, D Stallan and C Whitbread

Apologies: None.

Officers Present: J Preston (Director of Planning and Economic Development), I White (Forward Planning Manager) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

55. MINUTES

Resolved:

(1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Cabinet Committee noted its Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Council on 17 February 2009 (minute 113(a) refers).

57. STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

The Forward Planning Manager presented a report upon the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

The Forward Planning Manager reported that a draft Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) had been prepared in-house for the Epping Forest and Harlow Districts in December 2010. It was essentially a technical document, which brought together information on all sources of flooding, and took into account the potential effects of climate change. It was therefore a tool to enable appropriate decisions to be made about suitable locations for new development at all stages of the planning process.

The Forward Planning Manager went through each chapter of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the benefit of the Cabinet Committee. After the introduction in

Chapter One, Chapter Two outlined the flood risks within both the Epping Forest and Harlow Districts. Chapter Three listed the current policy framework, which would probably have to be reviewed when Planning Policy Statement 25, Development and Flood Risk – Practice Guide, was revoked. It was confirmed that the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 superseded local planning policy U3B concerning sustainable drainage systems.

Chapter Four of the Assessment defined the main flood zones in the two Districts, including fluvial flooding, surface water, groundwater, sewer flooding and schemes undertaken by the Council. The sustainable drainage systems should be appropriate to the geological composition of the area, and that in areas at high risk of flooding, further development should be resisted rather than discouraged. It was highlighted that the District was probably better protected than at any point in the past. The Cabinet Committee commented upon the reduction of surface water drainage when urban areas were increased and the risk of underground water flows being diverted by development.

Chapter Five dealt with emergency planning and the location of critical infrastructure. The Cabinet Committee would be advised of the location of the Emergency Rest Centres in Flood Zone Three and why the River Roding was not included in the table listing the data sources for Flood Zone Two. Chapter Six gave guidance for Developers and reiterated that they were under an obligation to seek the most suitable Sustainable Drainage System solution for the site. Officers would examine whether the guidelines also applied to all types of flooding and not just fluvial flooding.

Finally, Chapter Seven contained the recommendations for Developers and Development Control staff when dealing with planning applications. In addition, there were also recommendations in relation to Emergency Planning and Monitoring of the Assessment. It was intended for the findings of the Assessment to be applied to all new development within the District, including infrastructure and roads. The Forward Planning Manager added that the draft of the Assessment had been examined by Harlow Council, Thames Water and the other bodies listed in the consultation section, with only minor amendments suggested to date. It was acknowledged that the addition of maps would have been useful but it would have been difficult to reproduce them within the document as several of the originals were very large because they contained a considerable amount of detail.

Resolved:

- (1) That, subject to the clarification of the points raised by the Cabinet Committee, the findings and recommendations of the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment be agreed; and
- (2) That, subject to the clarification of the points raised by the Cabinet Committee, the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment be agreed and added to the Evidence Base to support the preparation of the Local Development Framework, although it had been based upon and influenced by policies and targets which might not be applicable in the future and might necessitate a review of the report in due course.

58. ENDORSEMENT OF THE "OPPORTUNITY ESSEX - INTEGRATED COUNTY STRATEGY"

The Director of Planning & Economic Development presented a report requesting the endorsement of the "Opportunity Essex - Integrated County Strategy".

At the suggestion of the Essex Chief Executives' Association (ECEA), an Integrated County Strategy had been formulated to encourage further economic investment in the area defined as Greater Essex. The Strategy had three key points:

- (i) Low Carbon Energy;
- (ii) Key Towns; and
- (iii) The Thames Gateway South Essex.

Harlow had been identified as one of the key towns and the Strategy had led to the development of a broad vision for the West Essex sub-region, comprising Harlow, Uttlesford and Epping Forest District Councils: *"To create a sustainable and employment-led major growth point focused on the renaissance, revitalisation and transformation of Harlow as a leading regional centre, served by a world class international airport at Stansted Airport and improved transport links, and where there is a pattern of market towns and villages set within attractive undeveloped countryside containing high quality environmental assets, heritage and prosperous rural enterprises."* To deliver this broad vision for West Essex, the following seven transformational changes had been developed:

- (i) the major renaissance of Harlow;
- (ii) the major development and regeneration of Harlow town centre;
- (iii) choice and diversity of housing stock in Harlow;
- (iv) to raise employment rates and labour force qualifications in Harlow;
- (v) to expand and diversify Harlow's local employment base;
- (vi) to upgrade Harlow's transport and other infrastructure; and
- (vii) the provision of affordable housing within the Epping Forest and Uttlesford Districts.

The Director of Planning & Economic Development commented that, important as the regeneration of Harlow might be for the region and the possible benefits for the northern area of the District, the southern sector of the District was more London-centric and the proposed transformations would not be of any great benefit to this area. The lack of public consultation over the Strategy was highlighted, and it was acknowledged that this could be interpreted as a weakness when greater localism was being encouraged by the Government. This Council, together with all the other constituent Borough, District and Unitary Authorities within Greater Essex, had been requested to endorse the Strategy.

The Cabinet Committee had a number of concerns with the Strategy as it was currently drafted. Of the seven transformational changes listed for the West Essex region, six were directly related to the regeneration and development of Harlow as a key town. It was acknowledged that there would also be a benefit to the District from this and it was felt that the wording could be amended from Harlow to West Essex for the transformations concerning choice and diversity of housing stock, raising of employment rates and labour qualifications, expanding and diversifying housing stock, and upgrading the local transport and infrastructure.

The Cabinet Committee agreed that the Strategy had little relevance to the south of the District and that this had further accentuated the lack of public consultation over the proposals – particularly given the importance attached to the emerging concept of Localism by the Government. The Cabinet Committee also requested a clear indication about how the proposed Strategy related to other strategies in preparation, such as the Local Development Framework and the West Essex Local Investment Plan.

The Director of Planning & Economic Development undertook to write a letter to Essex County Council reflecting the concerns of the Cabinet Committee prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Cabinet on 18 April 2011. The focus of the Strategy was to economically promote south-west Essex and it would probably link to other documents such as the West Essex Local Investment Plan. Greater Essex was defined as the areas covered by Essex County Council, Thurrock Council and Southend-on-Sea Council, both of whom were unitary authorities. The Strategy had been presented to the Department for Communities and Local Government but no indication had yet been given of the Minister's views.

Recommended:

(1) That a letter be drafted by the Director of Planning & Economic Development to Essex County Council outlining the following concerns of the Cabinet Committee with the Strategy:

(a) to expand some of the transformational changes to include the greater West Essex area and not just Harlow;

(b) the lack of relevance to the more London-centric south of the District;

(c) the absence of any public consultation undertaken in developing the Strategy;
and

(d) the relationship of the Strategy to the Local Investment Plans and Local Development Frameworks currently being developed by the constituent Councils within Essex.

(2) That the endorsement of the "Opportunity Essex – Integrated County Strategy be recommended to the Council by the Cabinet, following consideration of any response to the Cabinet Committee's concerns by Essex County Council.

Reasons for Decision:

To inform the County Council of the Council's concerns with the Strategy as it was currently drafted.

To attract further economic investment within Essex and West Essex.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

- Not to endorse the Integrated County Strategy.
- To seek amendments to the Integrated County Strategy.

59. PPG17 OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The Forward Planning Manager presented a report concerning the Open Space Assessment for Planning Policy Guidance Note 17.

The Cabinet Committee was informed that Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) required all Local Authorities to undertake an “assessment of local need” in order to ensure that there was adequate provision of accessible, high quality open spaces, sport and recreation facilities within each Local Authority to meet the needs of local communities and visitors. The Forward Planning team had begun work on the Council’s own PPG17 ‘Open Space Assessment’, which would be used to inform the Council’s approach when considering preparation of the Local Development Framework and planning applications. The Assessment would examine the likely demand for access to and use of open space, sport and recreation facilities from new residential development; and for the development of open space within the District, whether it was in public or private ownership.

The Forward Planning Manager stated that progress with the Council’s ‘Open Space Assessment’ had now reached a critical stage. The first stage of the process, auditing the existing provision within the District, had been completed but a large amount of work for the study still needed to be completed whilst the Forward Planning team had to also contend with the strict timetable now in place for the production of the Council’s Core Strategy. It was therefore proposed that the next three stages of the process – identifying local need, setting provision standards and applying the provision standards – should be completed by a suitably qualified and experienced external organisation, which would be paid for from the Local Development Framework budget.

The Cabinet Committee highlighted the involvement of all 24 Town and Parish Councils in identifying the number and location of sites to be included in the assessment, and felt that the importance of open spaces within the District should be emphasised to the consultants when they were appointed. The Forward Planning Manager added that the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority had been consulted but that the Forest Conservators had not needed to be involved in the process so far.

Resolved:

- (1) That the initial work completed towards the Council’s Open Space Assessment auditing the existing provision within the District, as required by Planning Policy Guidance 17, be noted; and
- (2) That the remainder of the Council’s Open Space Assessment – identifying the local need, setting provision standards and applying the provision standards – be undertaken externally by consultants.

60. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - BUDGET UPDATE

The Forward Planning Manager presented a budget update report for the Local Development Framework.

The Forward Planning Manager stated that the planning system was being reformed by the Coalition Government. The New Homes Bonus had been introduced. Regional Spatial Strategies with all their housing and employment land targets would be abolished when the Localism Bill had received its royal assent. Other provisions of the Bill needed to be further clarified, however, it was clear that Local Development Frameworks would remain the key local planning policy documents for the foreseeable future, with local authorities being urged and encouraged to continue their preparation.

The Cabinet Committee was informed that invitations to tender for a study of the Lea Valley Glasshouse Industry had been sent out and it was hoped to appoint consultants in April. Significant work had also been continuing on the preparation of the Evidence Base to support the preparation of the Core Planning Strategy. A total of £83,684 had been spent from the Local Development Framework Budget in the current financial year to date, with a further £47,773 committed for the remainder of the 2010/11 financial year. It was estimated that the preparation of the Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD) would cost £164,700, the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD would cost £263,600 and the preparation of Area Action Plans would cost £157,600.

The Forward Planning Manager added that the Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) was investigating the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy, but was encountering some difficulty. With no housing or employment targets yet set for the District, it was problematical to forecast the infrastructure requirements and costs. The Assistant Director intended to meet with and obtain data from other Councils.

The Forward Planning Manager informed the Cabinet Committee that the Issues & Options consultation was scheduled to start in the late summer of 2011. A large number of public responses was expected and it was felt that the Preferred Options consultation would not take place for a further year afterwards. The Core Planning Strategy could not be produced before 2014 if the Planning System was not further reformed in the meantime, although the process was very complex.

The Forward Planning Manager reminded the Cabinet Committee that the figures within the report were estimates and would be finalised in due course. Further and regular progress reports would be submitted for the Cabinet Committee to monitor the on-going situation. The Director of Planning & Economic Development added that, whilst some estimates had increased since the original budget had been drawn up other estimates had been reduced, primarily through working in partnership with other Councils where possible.

Resolved:

- (1) That progress on the Local Development Framework be noted; and
- (2) That the expenditure incurred on preparing the Local Development Framework in the current financial year, and the estimates for further expenditure in future financial years, be noted.

61. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Cabinet Committee.

CHAIRMAN

The Greater Essex Integrated County Strategy



This document provides an introduction to the Integrated County Strategy, summarising our core priorities guiding investment in our county. This document should be read in conjunction with the full ICS document, which provides a comprehensive analysis of the evidence base, and further details on the investments which should have a transformative effect on our county.

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2.0 Our strategic focus

3.0 Our strengths

4.0 Why is the ICS required?

5.0 Our focus, priority themes and priority investments

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 - *Key Towns*
 - *Low Carbon Energy*
-

6.0 Next steps

7.0 The ICS Priorities



1.0 Vision

1.1 Greater Essex is taking a clear lead in responding to the changing global economy. The Integrated County Strategy (ICS) provides a vision for Greater Essex, identifying the investment needed to maximise our economic growth. The ICS exists to direct investment to projects that will underpin the future economic stability of UK plc.

1.2 The ICS provides the connection between national and local policy, identifies strength and potential, and considers how we can use our key assets to improve the area for residents and make Greater Essex an even more attractive location for businesses. Moreover, within the context of public spending cuts and reduced public intervention, the ICS aims to identify the key strategic projects which will provide the maximum return on investment and greatest benefits.

1.3 The ICS has been produced on behalf of the Essex Chief Executives Association with agreement from all 15 county, unitary and district authorities of Greater Essex. A collaborative and rigorous process of research, consultation, and testing of issues and opportunities has identified a tripartite focus that, if adhered to, will most effectively provide economic growth in Greater Essex.



2.0 Our strategic focus

2.1 Our broad strategic focus is set out in the three boxes below:

Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE)

Achieve transformational development and change throughout TGSE to significantly improve the local economy, quality of life of residents, and natural and built environment

Key Towns

Promote opportunities for economic growth, redevelopment, and regeneration in the key urban centres of Southend, Thurrock, Basildon, Harlow, Chelmsford, and Colchester

Low Carbon Energy

Support the growth of renewable and low carbon energy as a key sector and promote the growth and location of associated industries in Greater Essex

3.0 Our strengths

3.1 Greater Essex has an unparalleled economic offer; our key facets are as follows:

Excellent European and UK location for business

Close proximity to London, Cambridge and Felixstowe

Established international links achieved through good transport links to London and to Europe

Presence of multi-national and leading edge and innovative companies

Buoyant business environment, with a UK-leading reputation for business start-ups and entrepreneurship

World class airports and expanding ports

Internationally significant logistics sector

Good access to higher education facilities

Regional cities, regional town centres, and a major retail offer

Growing agricultural economy supporting related businesses

High quality natural environment



4.0 Why is the ICS required?

4.1 Our ambition for Greater Essex is to create a highly performing and competitive economy that makes a significant contribution to UK economic growth and recovery; provides for the successful regeneration of Essex communities; promotes healthy communities and supports vulnerable people; and provides a high quality of life for our residents.

4.2 To achieve this, Greater Essex must tackle the key issues that limit the area's ability to maximise the full economic potential that its major strengths provide for. These issues include:

- Connectivity within and between the main towns, especially at times of peak demand
- Economic and physical decline in parts of our major towns
- Rail service needs improvement in terms of quality, service pattern, and travel time
- Below average skills levels at Levels II, III and IV compared to national and regional averages
- Increasing number of young people who are economically inactive
- Low proportion of Essex SMEs who trade internationally
- Shortage of staff to service the expanding logistics sector
- High house prices and localised problems of housing affordability
- Access to broadband in rural areas

4.3 We recognise that the era of reduced finances make it necessary for us to target any available investment very carefully. The ICS provides a clear statement to:

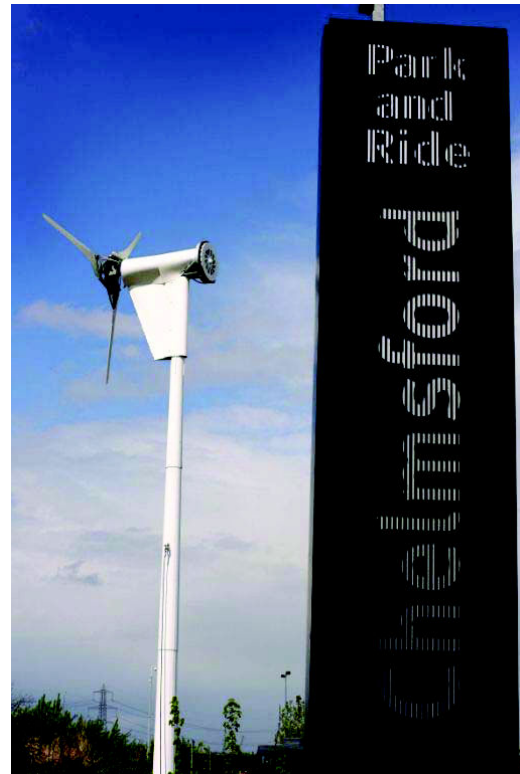
- 1) identify the issues of highest importance; and
- 2) identify the interventions which would produce the greatest benefits

5.0 Our strategic focus, priority themes, and priority investments

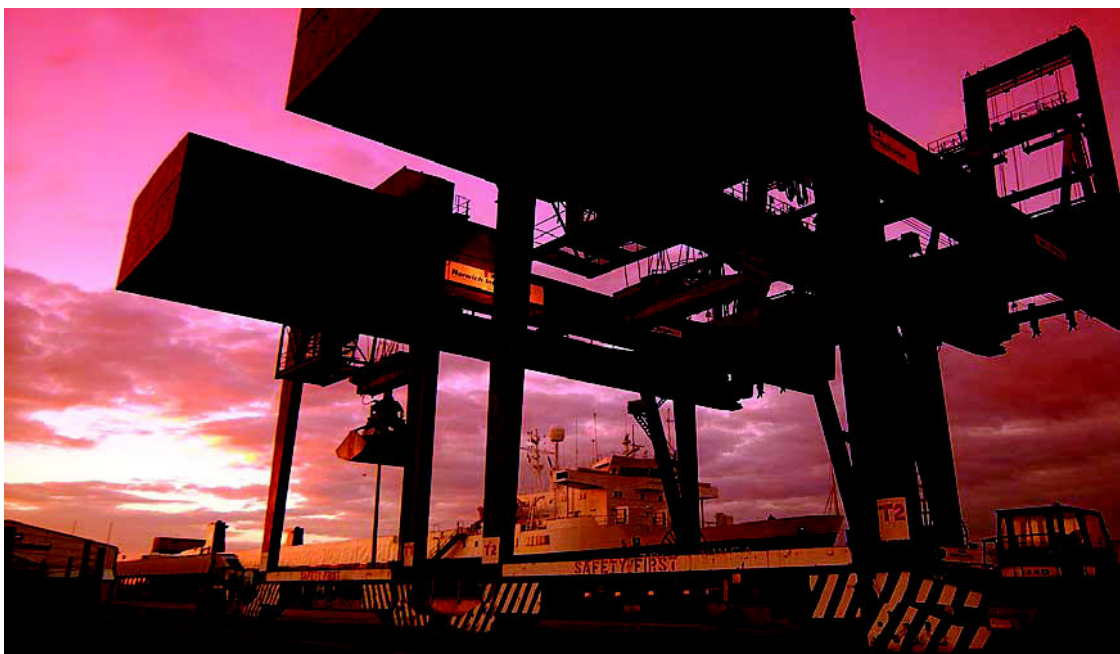
5.1 Research undertaken throughout the production of the ICS identified a number of opportunities for Greater Essex based on our existing assets. The key priorities closely relate to the main opportunities in Greater Essex, and attempt to use existing assets and opportunities to direct investment and provide the most effective approach to realising our significant economic potential.

5.2 Our approach to directing investment will be towards:

- 1) Prioritising the smarter use of our existing assets and maximising benefits arising from new economic opportunities
- 2) Targeting action to tackle key areas of development, growth and regeneration
- 3) Delivering changes that nest within a clear, long term strategy



Section 7 illustrates our approach. It details our tripartite focus (on TGSE, Key Towns and Low Carbon Energy), and demonstrates the link between this, our priority themes, and our priority investments.



Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE)

Achieve transformational development and change throughout TGSE to significantly improve the local economy, quality of life of residents, and natural and built environment

Priority Themes:

The Thames Gateway is the UK's top priority for regeneration, and the largest regeneration opportunity in Europe. Despite its industrial heritage, Thames Gateway South Essex is an area of significant untapped potential; and one that has previously punched below its weight in terms of attracting inward investment. To realise its full potential it must improve its image, skills levels, the quality of its town centres, and the transport connections between its towns.

Nevertheless, its close proximity and good connections to London and Europe, large economic base with leading companies, and major development opportunities, have all resulted in the area being earmarked for large scale growth in jobs and homes.

Thus far, this has been supported by robust performance of the logistics, manufacturing and retail sectors. The future and sustained realisation of this growth now requires a clear vision to direct future regeneration so that transformational development and change can be achieved.

The vision for Thames Gateway South Essex is:

To undertake a major economic, social, and environmental transformation of the urban areas in the sub-region through a programme of large scale regeneration, employment-led development and transport improvements, so that its local economy, quality of life of residents, and its natural and built environment is significantly improved.

Priority Investments:

The ICS will focus on the delivery of transformational change within the vision stated above. Priority investments established for the TGSE through the ICS are as follows:

Town centre regeneration in Basildon, Lakeside Basin, and Southend

- Provide for new housing growth
- Create a more positive image

Promote and advance neighbourhood regeneration needs

- Deliver regeneration in key neighbourhoods in Basildon

Promote and maximise potential benefits at key sites for employment and further economic development

Support the delivery of the London Gateway and make best use of the economic opportunities created by its growth

Maximising the job opportunities arising from the low carbon and digital economy through up skilling the local workforce

- Improve the skills levels of resident workers

Create an improved economic base and quality office space

- Improve the quality, availability, and range of employment sites and premises
- Improve the economic base in key urban areas

Enhance connectivity to jobs and services, and deliver reliable and predictable journey times

- Improve connectivity between the complex pattern of towns and to the strategic transport network
- Improve access to international ports and airports
- Reduce congestion and crowding on transport networks

Key Towns

Promote opportunities for economic growth, redevelopment, and regeneration in the key urban centres of Southend, Thurrock, Basildon, Harlow, Chelmsford, and Colchester

Priority Themes:

Our main towns are the drivers of the local economy and have been identified as critical to the delivery of the ICS. Commuting patterns within Greater Essex emphasise the key role provided by our main urban areas in serving both their own population and their rural catchments in terms of jobs and services.

This presents an opportunity to build on their role as key economic centres; to promote their self containment; and cement their economic vitality by supporting growth and redevelopment with focused investment around stimulating the economy and improving infrastructure.

Well designed and attractive town centres and neighbourhoods improve perception and encourage new residents and businesses to locate there. We want our towns to be successful. We will ensure the growth is sustainable by creating a high quality of life for residents, and providing employment growth alongside new housing to reduce the need to commute long distances. Appropriate transport provision will be necessary to ensure reliable journey times, manage road traffic congestion, and provide a variety of travel choices. Thriving towns are essential to enhance the competitiveness of local businesses and provide attractive places to live and to invest in.

Regeneration and development is not just about the direct delivery of jobs and homes; it will also

have a catalytic effect of attracting people to live and work in our towns, and improving the economy of Greater Essex as a whole. Attractive town centres that provide a broad range of services and facilities, and good quality housing for a range of people, will enable Essex towns to emerge as nationally significant magnets for investment.

Priority Investments:

The priority investments in the ICS for the key towns will be:

Town centre regeneration and redevelopment in Chelmsford, Harlow, Colchester, Basildon, Lakeside Basin, and Southend

- The need for modernisation, physical redevelopment and regeneration, and improvement to the range of services and facilities within town centres
- Ensuring that town centres capture the amount of retail and leisure spend that would be expected for urban areas of their size and rural hinterlands
- Ensuring that connectivity within and between the main towns is appropriate to support a thriving economy

Neighbourhood regeneration and improvements to housing quality and choice in Harlow, Colchester, and Basildon

- Supporting regeneration needs in neighbourhoods across Greater Essex reduce levels of deprivation and improve housing quality
- Improving affordability and choice of housing to meet the needs of the urban area

Create a balanced pattern of sustainable growth

- Ensuring that housing is matched with jobs and services, particularly in areas of highest growth
- Ensuring appropriate transport provision is available to support growth

Low Carbon Energy

Support the growth of renewable and low carbon energy as a key sector and promote the growth and location of associated industries in Greater Essex

Priority Themes:

Greater Essex is at the centre of the world's largest market for offshore wind energy and is next to the UK's most dense area of new offshore development situated between the Humber, Greater Wash, and the Thames Estuary.

Our ports are perfectly located to support this fast growing sector. It is our imperative to promote Greater Essex as *the* place to invest for innovative companies in this sector. We expect that Essex will become predominant nationally in terms of the development and growth of the renewable energy sector. It therefore has to be a focus area for the ICS.

This provides a significant opportunity for Essex to nurture its renewable energy sector, as well as ensuring that our businesses are able to capitalise on the requirements of the manufacture, maintenance, and infrastructure based operations of the offshore wind farms.

With the UK's transition towards a low carbon economy, there will also be a significant opportunity for Greater Essex firms to compete in the growing markets for green technologies and low carbon energy components and products.

Before the decommissioning of Bradwell Nuclear Power Station in 2002, Greater Essex had been an important producer of the UK's low carbon electricity. As part of the Government's programme to increase the UK's production of low carbon energy, Bradwell has been put

forward as a candidate site for the construction of a new nuclear power station.

However, a proposal at Bradwell has yet to be brought forward by a promoter and it would have to be decided by Government. It has not been included in the ICS on that basis.

Priority Investments:

The priority investments in the ICS for low carbon energy will be:

Support the promotion and location of wind port and related industries focused on Harwich and Essex University

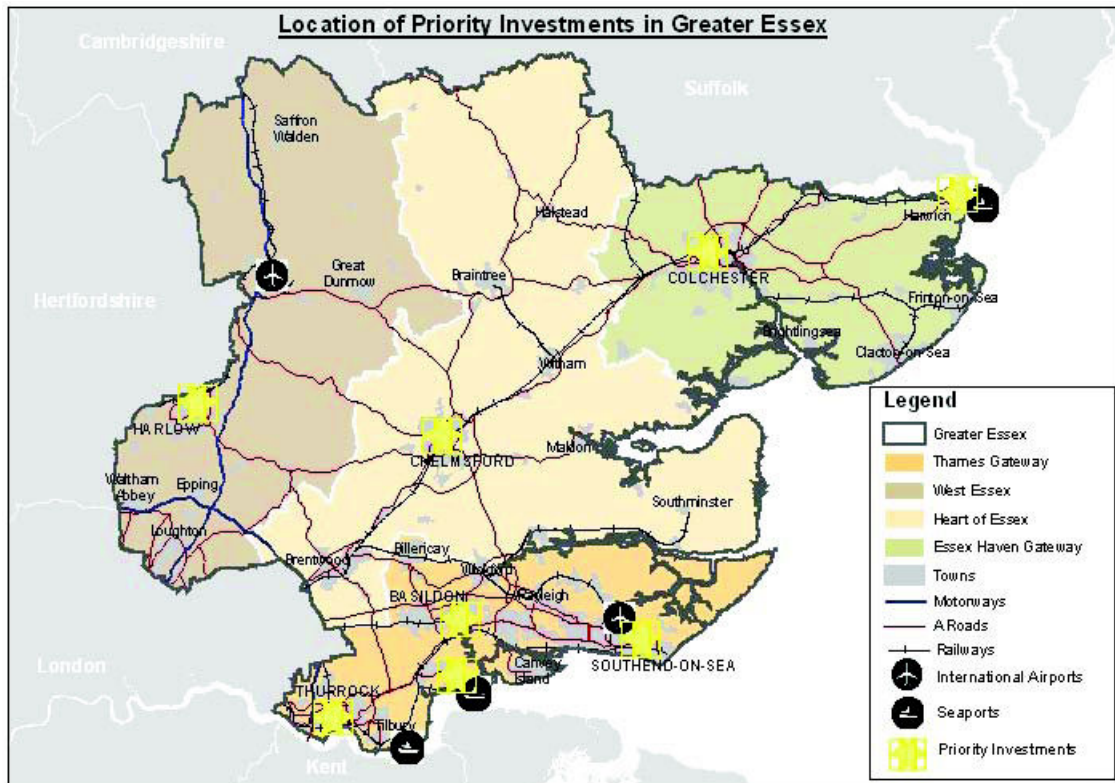
- Develop the excellent opportunities to grow local businesses to service off-shore renewable energy providers (such as for maritime survey work, the manufacturing of components, construction, and ongoing service and maintenance requirements)
- Enable Greater Essex companies to take advantage of market growth in green technologies and low carbon energy generation

Support the development and improvement of the Haven Gateway ports and make the best use of the economic opportunities created by growth

- Promote Greater Essex ports as hubs to serve the fast growth of UK off-shore renewable energy generation

Maximise the job opportunities arising from the low carbon economy through up skilling the local workforce

- Link the development of both these business sectors with the expertise provided by the University of Essex
- Provide skills training so that local people can take advantage of the increased demand for skilled workers



6.0 Next Steps

6.1 The next stage of the ICS will review in greater detail our agreed priority investments, and consider how they will be developed into more detailed proposals that could be resourced and delivered.

6.2 The ICS takes a broad and long term perspective looking between 10-20 years ahead. We now need to consider the following questions:

- How to organise the delivery of the priority investments in terms of their timing and phasing? For example, they could be grouped into different time bands (e.g., 1-3 years, 3-5 years, and 6+ years).
- Which stakeholders will be involved in delivery?
- What are our resourcing options; what is available and how will the ICS interface with the Local Enterprise Partnership's preparation of Regional Growth Fund bids?

- What could be achieved using existing resources?
- Which interventions could provide the greatest overall benefit? (e.g., more detailed sustainability report, costing and viability studies, and cost/benefit analyses could be undertaken)

The main ICS document that accompanies this summary provides background to the ICS process, and further information on the transformative change that a focus on TGSE, key towns and low carbon energy will sustain for our economy

7.0 The ICS Priorities

Our Strategic Focus

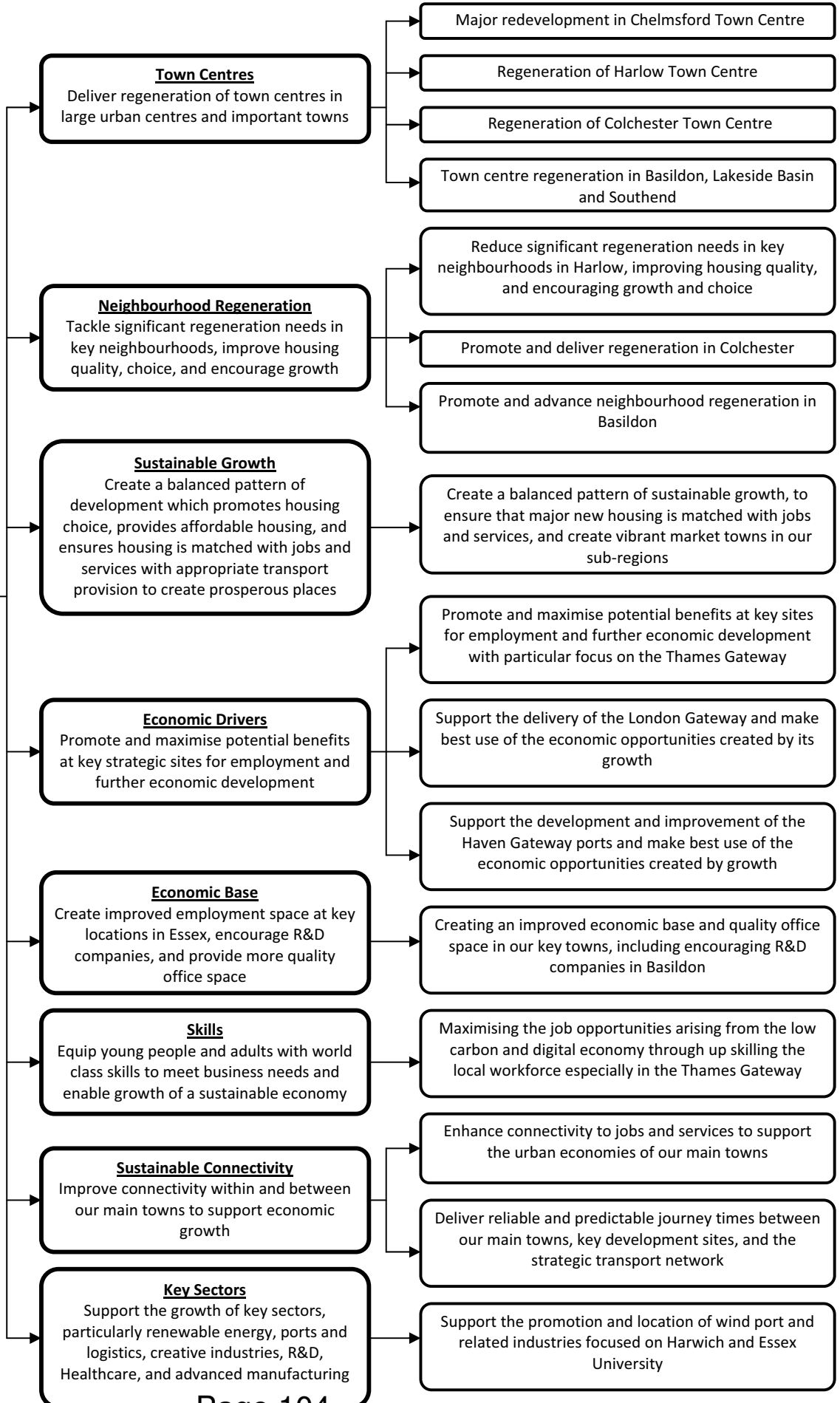
Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE)
Achieve transformational development and change throughout TGSE to significantly improve the local economy, quality of life of residents, and natural and built environment

Key Towns
Promote opportunities for economic growth, redevelopment, and regeneration in the key urban centres of Southend, Thurrock, Basildon, Harlow, Chelmsford, and Colchester

Low Carbon Energy
Support the growth of renewable energy as a key sector and promote the growth and location of associated industries in Essex

Priority Themes

Priority Investments



Note: 'Our strategic focus' identifies the key overarching priorities where resources should be directed. The 'priority themes' identify broad priorities that should be considered within the key priorities. The 'priority investments' are specific priorities identified throughout the ICS consultation process which relate to the key overarching priorities in 'our strategic focus'.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee **Date:** 21 March 2011

Place: Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 6.30 - 8.00 pm

Members Present: C Whitbread (Chairman), R Bassett, Mrs P Smith and D Stallan

Other Councillors: Mrs L Wagland

Apologies: Mrs D Collins and Ms S Stavrou

Officers Present: D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), J Gilbert (Director of Environment and Street Scene), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), B Bassington (Chief Internal Auditor), D Jolley (Senior Finance Officer - Procurement & Administration) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

45. MINUTES

Resolved:

(1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

46. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2011/12

The Acting Chief Executive presented a report upon the Council's Key Performance Indicators for 2011/12.

The Cabinet Committee was reminded that, as part of the duty to secure continuous improvement, a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) relevant to the Council's activities and key objectives were adopted each year. Improvement Plans were produced for each KPI setting out actions to be implemented each year to maintain or improve target performance. Performance against the Indicators was monitored on a quarterly basis by the Management Board and the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel, and had previously been an inspection theme in external assessments of the overall performance of the Council.

The Acting Chief Executive reported that the Key Performance Indicators for 2011/12 had been considered by the Finance & Performance Management Scrutiny Panel at its recent meeting on 10 March 2011 and a revised set of recommendations had been tabled at the meeting for the Cabinet Committee to consider. Most of the

revised recommendations were concerned with the proposed targets, but the definitions of two of the Indicators concerned with planning applications (LPI 45 (Planning Appeals), and NI 157 (Planning Applications)) were proposed for revision. In addition, it was felt that the setting of targets for the KPIs in 2011/12 should be deferred until both the Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet Committee had had an opportunity to consider the outturn positions for 2010/11 at their meetings scheduled for June 2011.

The Cabinet Committee felt that it was important for the Council to maintain its performance, but that a target of 100% was not practicable on occasion, as there would be instances when the resources required to affect a further performance improvement for a particular Indicator would be better utilised elsewhere. There was general agreement from the Cabinet Committee to await a further report from the Director of Planning & Economic Development before finalising a revised definition for LPI 45.

Recommended:

- (1) That National Indicator 189 (Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management) be deleted as a Key Performance Indicator for 2011/12;
- (2) That the revision of Local Performance Indicator 45 (Planning Appeals) to report the level of appeals allowed against the refusal of all types of planning appeals and to reflect where a Member decision to refuse a planning application was made contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation be agreed in principle, pending a further report from the Director of Planning & Economic Development on whether to include the levels of costs awarded against the Council at appeal within the definition and a proposed target for 2011/12;
- (3) That the definitions of National Indicator 157a, 157b and 157c (Planning Applications) be revised for 2011/12 to allow performance to be measured at the time of decision on individual applications rather than at the subsequent date of signing of any required Section 106 agreement;
- (4) That the proposed target for Local Performance Indicator 14 (Council Tax Collection) be revised to 97.8% for 2011/12;
- (5) That the proposed target for Local Performance Indicator 15 (National Non-Domestic Rates Collection) be revised to 98% for 2011/12;
- (6) That the proposed target for Local Performance Indicator 16 (Housing Benefit Claims) be revised to 23 days for 2011/12;
- (7) That the proposed target for Local Performance Indicator 17 (Housing Benefit Changes of Circumstance) be revised to 8 days for 2011/12;
- (8) That the targets for all other Key Performance Indicators where proposed to be adopted for 2011/12 be agreed;
- (9) That any outstanding targets for Key Performance Indicators in 2011/12 be determined after the reporting of the outturn for 2010/11; and
- (10) That the corporate target for the achievement of year-on-year improvement against the adopted Key Performance Indicators for 2011/12 also be determined after the reporting of the outturn for 2010/11.

Reasons for Decision:

The annual identification of Key Performance Indicators provided an opportunity for the Council to focus specific attention on how areas for improvement would be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people.

A number of the Key Performance Indicators were used as performance measures for the Council's annual Key Objectives. It was important that relevant performance management processes were in place to review and monitor performance against the Key Objectives, to ensure their continued achievability and relevance, and to identify proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of under performance.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

No other options were appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review performance against Key Objectives and to take corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for judgements made about the Council in corporate assessment processes, and might mean that opportunities for improvement were lost.

47. Q3 FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Director of Finance & ICT presented the Quarterly Financial Monitoring Report for the third quarter of 2010/11, which provided a comparison between the probable outturn figures generated during the 2011/12 budget setting process and the actual expenditure or income as applicable for the period ended 31 December 2010.

The Director reported that the salaries budget was underspent by £294,000 or 2% so far this year. Building Control income was £4,000 down at the end of the period, however January was a poor month and the account was expected to be in deficit by the end of the year. Investment income was £300,000 down on the original budgeted figure for 2010/11; the average return for the year so far had been 1.1% and there was little that realistically could be done to improve returns. So far, the Council had received back 50% of its investment with Heritable Bank; 85% was still the expected final return for the Council.

The income for Development Control was £20,000 better than expected, but again January had not been a good month. Income from Licensing and MOT's carried out by Fleet Operations were both holding up well, but income from Local Land Charges had been further revised downwards as a result of the Local Land Charges (Amendment) Rules 2010 being introduced. The Housing Repairs fund was currently showing an underspend of £354,000 but much of this was expected to be utilised when the winter related expenditure was processed. The development of Limes Farm Hall was due to start in April 2011, and would be included in the major capital schemes analysis from the first quarter of 2011/12 onwards.

The Director concluded that whilst a number of income streams would fall short of the original budgetary target, the amount needed from the General Fund Balances to meet the net expenditure was expected to be £235,000 less than the £544,000 originally budgeted. The Cabinet Committee was asked to note the position of the revenue and capital budgets as at 31 December 2010.

The Portfolio Holder for Legal & Estates commented that the Building Control section was facing greater competition from the private sector for work, which led to fewer opportunities for the section, whilst there would be a report upon the future of the Local Land Charges section in due course.

Resolved:

(1) That the revenue and capital financial monitoring report for the third quarter of 2010/11 be noted.

48. RISK MANAGEMENT - AMENDMENTS TO THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Director of Finance & ICT presented a report concerning amendments to the Corporate Risk Register.

The Corporate Risk Register had been reviewed by both the Risk Management Group on 21 February 2011 and the Corporate Governance Group on 23 February 2011, and three new risks had been identified. The first new risk was concerned with the reform of the Housing Revenue Account and the likelihood that the Council would have to accept £200million of debt when the current system ended; this risk had been scored as D2 - low likelihood, critical impact. The second new risk was concerned with changes to the Benefit system and in particular the introduction of the Universal Credit; this risk had been scored as B3 – high likelihood, marginal impact. The third and final proposed new risk was concerned with future budget reductions and the requirement for £2.5million of savings within the Medium Term Financial Strategy; this risk had been scored at C2 – significant likelihood, critical impact.

An amendment to one current risk was also proposed, to amend the name of Risk 1, currently known as Recruitment in Key Areas, to Recruitment Freeze; the score of the risk would remain at C3. A review of risk number 23 – Fraud - had also been undertaken following a request by the Cabinet Committee at its last meeting held on 17 January 2011. A number of areas at risk from fraud had undergone reviews by Internal Audit, which had demonstrated that appropriate controls were in place. Therefore, it was proposed that the scoring of this risk should remain at C3 – significant likelihood, marginal impact.

The Director of Finance & ICT added that the current proposals from the Government for Housing Revenue Account reform envisaged the receipts from Council House sales to continue to be pooled rather than retained by the Council, and the possibility that further debt could be allocated to the Council in the future. It was highlighted that Councils who had transferred their housing stock over to a Housing Association would not be allocated any debt as they no longer had a Housing Revenue Account. Although the current financial models had indicated that the probable debt of £200million could be cleared and further balances accumulated over the next thirty years, the Cabinet Committee recognised that the two threats facing the Council over this issue were being allocated further debt in the future and the possibly severe impact on the General Fund of the accounting requirements. With regard to the changes to the Benefits system, the current proposals envisaged reducing the amount of benefit that claimants were entitled to and the establishment of regional fraud centres, whereby staff would physically move from the Civic Offices, or be made redundant at a cost to the Council not the Department of Work and Pensions.

The Portfolio Holder for Legal and Estates suggested a new risk concerned with the provisions of the Localism Bill for residents to apply to run local community assets. In addition, the Portfolio Holder added that fraud was an ever increasing risk to local government, and that perhaps consideration could be given to either increasing the score of the current risk or using additional staff to vet the grant applications from newly established charitable organisations. The Director of Finance & ICT responded that the Council was dealing with all the fraud risk areas that had been identified by

the Audit Commission; the score was considered correct at the current time but would be kept under review. The Cabinet Committee agreed that the risk of fraud to the Council should be kept under constant review, and felt that the potential risks to the Council from the Localism Bill should be reviewed, including the possibility of the Council being defrauded by new charitable organisations.

Recommended:

- (1) That the review of risk 23, Fraud, by the Risk Management Group and the Corporate Governance Group and their conclusion that the score should remain unchanged be noted;
- (2) That a new risk 33, Reform of Housing Revenue Account, be added to the Corporate Risk Register and be scored as 'Low Likelihood, Critical Impact' (D2);
- (3) That a new risk 34, Changes to the Benefit System, be added to the Corporate Risk Register and be scored as 'High Likelihood, Marginal Impact' (B3);
- (4) That a new risk 35, Budget Reductions, be added to the Corporate Risk Register and be scored as 'Significant Likelihood, Critical Impact' (C2);
- (5) That the potential risks arising from the Localism Bill, including possible fraud from newly established charitable organisations, be reviewed by the Risk Management Group and the Corporate Governance Group;
- (6) That the current tolerance line on the risk matrix be considered satisfactory and not be amended; and
- (7) That, incorporating the above agreed changes, the amended Corporate Risk Register be recommended to the Cabinet for approval.

Reasons for Decision:

It was essential that the Corporate Risk Register was regularly reviewed and kept relevant to the threats faced by the Council.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To suggest the inclusion of further risks or amend the rating of existing risks if necessary.

49. UPDATE ON PROCUREMENT ACTIVITY & THE ESSEX PROCUREMENT HUB

The Senior Finance Officer (Procurement & Administration) presented a report about the Council's procurement activity and the Essex Procurement Hub.

The Council was meeting its requirement to publish reports of all expenditure in excess of £500 each month, and had been publishing historical data going back to April 2009. Further guidance on publishing new contracts and tenders data from the Government was expected this month, and when it had been received work would begin on ensuring that the Council met its requirements. EU Remedies Directive 2007/66/EC became law in December 2010, to provide for breaches of European Union and national procurement law. Two new measures had been introduced, these being automatic injunction and the ability to declare a contract ineffective. The Cabinet Committee's attention was drawn to two cases involving Leeds and York

Councils where European procurement rules had been broken and the two councils concerned had been successfully prosecuted.

With respect to the Essex Procurement Hub, the council was one of six member authorities, and its gross subscription for 2010/11 had amounted to £47,140. The total projected rebates for 2010/11 was £44,110 and would result in a net cost of membership to the Council of £3,026. Total savings realised by the Council from membership of the Hub was expected to be approximately £226,000 for 2010/11. A number of procurement projects had been recently completed in conjunction with the Hub, including CCTV Maintenance, redevelopment of Limes Farm Hall, Arboricultural Maintenance and the purchase of new Refuse Vehicles.

The Cabinet Committee was informed that the Council's total spend with Small & Medium Enterprises (SME) for 2009/10 accounted for 51% of the Council's total procurement, which was 4% greater than the national average for an English District Council. With 11 different suppliers, the Council was not getting value for money from its procurement of stationery, and the Senior Finance Officer agreed that there were circumstances where it was not appropriate to use the Hub for particular contracts. It was confirmed that all potential contracts were evaluated on quality criteria as well as cost to ensure that the Council obtained the best possible value for money.

Resolved:

(1) That the current performance of the Council's procurement activity and the Essex Procurement Hub be noted.

50. INTERNAL AUDIT BUSINESS PLAN 2011/12

The Chief Internal Auditor presented the Internal Audit Business Plan for 2011/12 for the Cabinet Committee to comment upon, prior to its consideration by the Audit & Governance Committee on 4 April 2011.

The Chief Internal Auditor stated that all the fundamental financial systems had been included to provide assurance in the controls in place for good financial management. In compiling the Plan, the Corporate Risk Register and the Risk Registers for each Directorate were reviewed to ensure that all high risk areas had been included. A contingency provision had been included for investigations and other unplanned work during the year, and some flexibility had also been included to accommodate reviews of areas considered to be of a higher risk to the achievement of the Council's objectives.

The Chief Internal Auditor reported that the Internal Audit Unit was now fully staffed and that the contract with Deloitte and Touche for the provision of additional audit resources would end on 31 March 2011. The Council's Audit staff would be trained on IT audits using part of the consultancy budget and also in the use of the Council's specialist audit software to enable a greater level of testing of data to be undertaken. A meeting had been planned with Officers of Uttlesford District Council to discuss the possibility of sharing services, and a skills database was being compiled by the Essex Audit Group of all Audit staff within Essex Authorities. The Plan would be regularly monitored throughout the year by the Audit & Governance Committee.

In response to questions from the members of the Cabinet Committee, the Chief Internal Auditor added that regular data checks using automated procedures would be carried out, and that this was an area to be developed further in the future. Some of the audit modules supplied with the Council's different ICT systems were expensive to add to the Council's licence, and that a cost/benefit analysis had to be

performed before implementing them. The Director of Finance & ICT reminded the Cabinet Committee that the Council had participated in the National Fraud Initiative managed by the Audit Commission.

Resolved:

- (1) That the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2011/12 be noted.

51. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Cabinet Committee.

CHAIRMAN

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Local Development Framework **Date:** 28 March 2011
Cabinet Committee

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, **Time:** 7.00 - 7.50 pm
High Street, Epping

Members Present: Mrs D Collins (Chairman), R Bassett, Mrs M Sartin and Ms S Stavrou

Other Councillors: D Stallan

Apologies: B Rolfe and Mrs L Wagland

Officers Present: K Polyzoides (Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation)), M Houseago (Olympics Regeneration Officer), K Hallé (Senior Planning & Consultation Officer) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillors Mrs M Sartin and Ms S-A Stavrou declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Lee Valley White Water Centre Update & Olympics Regeneration Officer, by virtue of being appointed members of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority by the Council. The Councillors had determined that their interest was not prejudicial and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor R Bassett declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Lee Valley White Water Centre Update & Olympics Regeneration Officer, by virtue of being appointed as a deputy member of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority by the Council. The Councillor had determined that his interest was not prejudicial and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

63. MINUTES

The Democratic Services Officer reported that the minutes from the last meeting were not quite ready yet, but would be ready in time for the Cabinet meeting on 18 April and for the Cabinet Committee to agree at its next meeting scheduled for 13 June 2011.

64. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Cabinet Committee noted its Terms of Reference, as agreed by the Council on 17 February 2009 (minute 113(a) refers).

65. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The Senior Planning & Consultation Officer presented a report about the Issues and Options Consultation Strategy for the Local Development Framework.

The Strategy outlined the approach for engaging with key stakeholders, interested parties and the community during the Issues and Options stage of the Core Planning Strategy. The Strategy aimed to be: focused using both tested and innovative methods; an adopted format for Officers and the community to work with, and cost effective. The Council was committed to providing local communities with opportunities to shape the places in which they lived and had developed an approach to engagement designed to make this achievable. The Government had made it one of its priorities to give local people more influence in the decisions that affected their locality. The Government had abolished regional housing targets and it was now the responsibility of the Council to work with local communities to determine options for future development.

The Strategy had included lessons from the successful 'Community Visioning' exercise carried out from November 2010 to January 2011. The next stage built upon this with a 'Community Choices' exercise that sought the views of the local community on the planning issues facing the District and the most appropriate policy options for addressing them. The Issues and Options Consultation was scheduled to start in September 2011 for a period of 12 weeks and the results would be used to produce the Core Planning Strategy Preferred Options document in Spring 2012. The consultation and methods would be expanded upon to form the Council's LDF Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Cabinet Committee was informed that the increased requirements to engage with local people would have a detrimental impact on the available Officer resources within Forward Planning.

In response to questions from the Members present, the Senior Planning & Consultation Officer stated that all Councillors would be included on the email distribution list for the Local Development Framework Newsletter. Neighbourhood Plans would have to link in with the Core Planning Strategy and Village Action Groups could contribute to the different consultations during the Core Planning Strategy process. The Ongar and North Weald Gazette was also being considered alongside the Epping Forest Guardian for advertising in, as well as the Everything Epping Forest website and any Parish Magazines.

The Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) added that invitations would be issued to all Councillors for the Stakeholder Options Workshops, as well those Councils adjacent to the District. The Council was awaiting further guidance from the Government on the process to be followed in producing Neighbourhood Plans, such as consultation methods and evidence gathering procedures. Any work undertaken by town or Parish Councils to date on Neighbourhood Plans could still be fed into the District's Core Planning Strategy.

The Cabinet Committee welcomed the Strategy and suggested that Roydon should be moved from the Rural Communities area to be included with Waltham Abbey and Nazeing, whilst North Weald could also be added as a location. The workshop schedules should incorporate a variety of times and days to permit the widest possible participation from local residents.

Recommended:

- (1) That the principles and methods set out in the Local Development Framework

Core Planning Strategy Issues and Options Consultation Strategy be approved as an approach for consulting the community in the forthcoming preparation of spatial development plans;

(2) That Roydon be moved from the Rural Communities workshop area to the Waltham Abbey and Nazeing workshop area; and

(3) That North Weald be added as a workshop location.

Reasons for Decision:

To provide a formalised strategy for engaging with key local stakeholders and the general public in the production of the Local Development Framework Core Planning Strategy.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not approve the Issues and Options Consultation Strategy. However, stakeholder and public engagement was a statutory requirement in the production of the Local Development Framework, and the Core Planning Strategy might be found unsound if there was no robust evidence of this.

66. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Senior Planning & Consultation Officer presented a report upon the Council's Local Development Scheme.

The Council was under a statutory obligation to produce a Local Development Scheme outlining the schedule for producing the documents which would form the Local Development Framework. Since the General Election last year, the new Government had made several key changes that would impact upon the production of the Local Development Framework, such as revoking Regional Spatial Strategies, cancelling the need to produce a separate Development Plan Document for Gypsies and Travellers, and requiring the Council to work more closely with the local community when preparing plans for the area.

The three key Local Development documents were: PD1 Core Planning Strategy; PD2 Site Allocations Development Plan Document; and PD3 Development Management Development Plan Document. The proposed timescale envisaged the Issues and Options stage for the Core Strategy beginning in the autumn of 2011, with adoption in the spring of 2014, whilst the Issues and Options stage for the other two documents would begin in the autumn of 2013, with adoption of both documents in the summer of 2016. Splitting the production of the three documents in this manner provided greater flexibility for dealing with revisions in the future, more productive and less confusing community engagement exercises, and better utilise the resources available within the Forward Planning team.

The Cabinet Committee was requested to approve the revised Local Development Scheme and the proposed timetable for the production of the three key documents.

The Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) updated the Cabinet Committee on the progress with the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy. The approach of other councils had been examined and some preliminary analysis was being undertaken, with the result that the Council was not as far behind as initially thought. There was the possibility that a separate Community Infrastructure Levy would be required for those areas adjoining Harlow and scheduled for development. The

Council did have a Section 106 agreement policy for large planning applications, even if its application by the Council was inconsistent. A Supplementary Planning Policy would be required if Section 106 Agreements were phased out in 2014 before the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy had been agreed and adopted.

Recommended:

- (1) That the methodology to update the Local Development Scheme be approved; and
- (2) That the Local Development Framework be produced in accordance with the proposed timescale within the Scheme.

Reasons for Decision:

The Local Development Scheme was a statutory requirement and would guide the production of all documents for the Local Development Framework.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To not approve the revised Local Development Scheme and timescale as proposed for the Local Development Framework.

67. LEE VALLEY WHITE WATER CENTRE UPDATE & OLYMPICS REGENERATION OFFICER

The Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) presented an update upon the Lee Valley White Water Centre Economic Development Study and introduced the Cabinet Committee to the jointly funded Olympics Regeneration Officer.

The Assistant Director reported that Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners had been appointed as the external consultants to assist in the development of the Economic Development Study for the Lee Valley White Water Canoe Centre White Water Centre in December 2010. since their appointment, Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners had been investigating how the Centre could become part of a popular visitor destination and the opportunities for attracting further leisure attractions into the area. They would also be examining how to maximise visitor numbers to the area and the related benefits for local people through job and training opportunities. Local businesses and organisations, including local Council Members, had an opportunity to contribute to the study at a seminar held in March in Waltham Abbey. Their draft report was due on 25 April, with the final report scheduled for publication on 30 May 2011.

The Olympics Regeneration Officer outlined the current and future projects that the Officer had been involved in. Aside from working with Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners on the Economic Development Study, the Officer had been assisting the British Canoe Union with their bid to host the 2015 Canoe Slalom World Championships; an announcement was due in April 2011. The Olympic Officer was also examining the Travel Plan for the Olympic period and the benefits for the Council. Regeneration projects for the area post-Olympics was being investigated, including a Waltham Abbey Town Centre Strategy similar to that being developed for Waltham Cross, and obtaining Heritage Lottery Funding to assist with them. A walk-about in Waltham Abbey was planned with representatives from both the Town and District Councils to identify key issues and further potential projects. The Officer believed that the Olympics would bring benefits to the local area in the long-term.

Resolved:

(1) That the appointment of the Olympics Regeneration Officer and emerging workstreams be noted; and

(2) That the update on the Lee Valley White Water Centre Economic Development Study be noted.

68. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business for the Cabinet Committee to consider.

CHAIRMAN

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-073-2010/11

Date of meeting: 18 April 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing

Subject: Acceptance of Tender – External Repairs and Redecorations

Responsible Officer: Paul Pledger (01992 564248)

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That SC Grover Ltd be awarded the contract, renewable annually for up to a total of 4-years, for the external repairs and redecorations to all Council owned properties and Council leasehold properties throughout the district, for the tender sum of £163,124.95 in the first year based on a schedule of rates contract, being the lowest tender received for the options available;**
- (2) That the contract be varied to allow expenditure up to the value set in the Housing Revenue Account budget for this work per annum using the tendered schedule of rates, which for 2011/12 and over the following 3-years is £851,000 per annum, totalling around £3.5 million; and**
- (3) That this contract be designated as a serial contract under Contract Standing Order C12 to facilitate the annual increase in the schedule of rate items in accordance with the Building Cost Indices.**

Executive Summary:

In accordance with Contract Standing Orders, tenders have been invited from five contractors registered with Constructionline to undertake external repairs and redecorations to all Council owned and leased properties over a 4-year period. The tenders have been evaluated by the Council, and it is recommended the appointment of the lowest tender on the basis of a full and valid tender.

Contractors were invited to provide tenders based on two contractors being selected to undertake the work in half of the District each, but also state if any discount would be provided if the contractor covered the whole of the District.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

In order to satisfy the requirements of Contract Standing Orders, whereby the contract value is in excess of £2 million over the life of the contract, the Cabinet is asked to consider the outcome of the tender exercise.

Other Options for Action:

- To appoint two contractors one for each of the two geographical areas of the district and not benefit from the economies of scale reductions.

- Not to undertake the external repairs and redecorations work on a cyclical basis. However, this would result in properties falling into disrepair and subsequently fail the Decent Homes Standard.
- To tender the works on an annual basis. However, this would be time consuming and inefficient, and at the same time would not guarantee more competitive tenders due to the economy of scale.

Report:

Background

1. The Council has always maintained the external envelope of its housing stock, by undertaking external repairs and redecorations on a cyclical basis. This was previously carried out based on an annual tendering exercise, and appointment of up to six separate contractors, supervised by 3 Council Officers.

2. However, five years ago, this approach was radically changed, when a new type of contract was used, whereby Partnership working was introduced. The properties in the district were split into two geographical areas (North and South) and a performance contract was let with two contractors, whereby they were required to bring the properties up to a minimum standard of condition. The responsibility to inspect and schedule the work shifted to the Contractors, with Council Officers post-inspecting for quality and quantity. This shift in working procedure saved the Council 2 x FTE Officers' time. The standard of work remained at the same high standard.

3. The resultant saving in staff resources enabled the Council to cease using expensive Consultants to help manage other planned maintenance programmes of work. This saving, amounting to around £193,000 over the last 5-years, has been recorded as an efficiency saving.

4. Following the success of this contractual approach to cyclical repairs and redecorations, tenders have been sought in accordance with Contract Standing Orders, from five Contractors, each of whom are registered on Constructionline, using the same form of contract as previously used.

5. A sixth contractor was initially invited to tender. However, it later transpired that they were no longer registered on Constructionline and therefore were excluded from the tender process after the documents were released. Despite being notified that their tender was withdrawn, Ambassador Group still submitted their tender, which was opened purely to identify the sender. Although this tender was recorded at the tender opening, the tender of the Ambassador Group will not be considered.

6. As before, the invitation to tender was based on a detailed Schedule of Rates which can then be used as the contract administration and payment mechanism for the works undertaken at each property. The contracts are based on an annual term, renewable each year, subject to the contractors' performance and quality of workmanship, for up to 4-years in total, with the annual sum capped at the sum included in the Housing Repairs Fund each year.

7. The tenders were returned on the 8 April 2011 and opened by the Housing Portfolio Holder on the 11 April 2011. The results of the tenders are recorded in the table below. Although these figures relate to the contractor undertaking all the work across the whole of the District, they are based on an approach whereby two contractors are appointed one for

the North and one for the South of the District.

Result	Contractor	Located	Tender Sum £
1	S C Grover Ltd	Harlow	163,125.00
2	Flowline (Builders) Ltd	Colchester	172,403.53
3	Seddon Property Services	Romford	184,187.68
4	Quill Construction Ltd	Rayleigh	230,219.65
5	Page Roofing Ltd	Grays	260,029.50

8. All five tenders returned have been completed in full and in accordance with the instructions to tender.

9. In order to ensure value for money, a full and comprehensive tender evaluation and price framework review was carried out on the tenders submitted. The evaluation found that the tenders returned have been completed in full and the rates contained in the tenders have been consistently priced. However, although each schedule of rate item contained within the tenders were priced correctly there were a number of arithmetical errors in carrying the schedule of rate totals to form the tender sum within 4 of the tenders. When these arithmetical errors are corrected the actual tender sums are as follows:

Result	Contractor	Located	Tender Sum £
1	S C Grover Ltd	Harlow	163,124.95
2	Flowline (Builders) Ltd	Colchester	177,083.53
3	Seddon Property Services	Romford	178,379.68
4	Quill Construction Ltd	Rayleigh	246,834.63
5	Page Roofing Ltd	Grays	260,029.50

10. As shown above, the tender evaluation identified a minor arithmetical error in the tender submitted by S C Grover Ltd which, when corrected, gives a corrected total of £163,124.95.

11. Incorporated in the tender documents was the provision for the tenderers to demonstrate economies of scale in the award of one contract to cover both areas North and South of the District. S C Grover Ltd, has tendered reductions in the schedule of rate item costs of 3% for the repairs and painting items along with a 5% reduction of the central office overheads.

Contractor	SOR % painting	SOR % repair	SOR % office	SOR % site	SOR % schedule
S C Grover Ltd	-3	-3	-5	0	0
Flowline (Builders) Ltd	0	0	0	0	0
Seddon Property Services	-2	-2	0	-1	-50
Quill Construction Ltd	-2	-2	0	0	0
Page Roofing Ltd	-10	-5	0	0	0

12. The tender evaluation has identified cost benefits which can be achieved over the 4-year period if the contract is awarded to one contractor being the lowest tender submitted by S C Grover Ltd.

13. The effect of the percentage reductions on the tender sums submitted by each contractor is shown in the table below. These savings amount to a total of £4,830.75 on the

schedule of rate items included in the tender submitted by S C Grover Ltd. When these reduced schedule of rate items are applied to the anticipated budget for the first year, savings of around £24,000.00 per annum are achieved and over the full term of the contract, savings of around £96,000.00 are achieved.

Result	Contractor	Located	Discounted Sum £	Tender
1	S C Grover Ltd	Harlow	158,294.25	
2	Flowline (Builders) Ltd	Colchester	172,403.53	
3	Seddon Property Services	Romford	179,319.93	
4	Page Roofing Ltd	Grays	235,637.30	
5	Quill Construction Ltd	Rayleigh	242,151.91	

14. The tender submitted by S C Grover Ltd, being the lowest tender submitted, based on a set of schedule of rate items for the ongoing and future cyclical external repairs and redecorations, is considered to represent good value for money and therefore it is recommended that one contract be awarded accordingly, initially for a one year period and then extended annually subject to a good standard of workmanship and performance.

Resource Implications:

The overall budget for cyclical external repairs and redecorations in the Housing Repairs Fund is £851,000 for 2011/12, with a similar amount per annum index linked. This amounts to around £3.5 million over the duration of the contract if the contract is extended to its full term.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Housing Act 1985.
 Contract Standing Orders
 Commonhold and Leasehold reform Act 2002
 Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Cyclical external repairs and redecorations enhance the visual appearance of the Council's housing estates.

Consultation Undertaken:

Leaseholders have been consulted in accordance with Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Commonhold and Leasehold reform Act 2002

Background Papers:

Contract specification and tender documents.
 Tender evaluation report
 Section 20 notices to Leaseholders

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The contract terms have been developed based on a working experience over the 5-year duration of the previous contract, which has demonstrated a low financial risk approach to contract management, since the expenditure is capped in line with the available budget.

With the appointment of one contractor the level of risk with regards to the quality of the work will increase however the current level of contract management ensures the quality of the work undertaken. Also the contract has break clauses so that there is no commitment to undertake any further works beyond the first year.

Equality and Diversity:

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? N/A

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A

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