

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Monday, 29th November, 2010

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

Time: 7.30 pm

Democratic Services Officer: Simon Hill, Senior Democratic Services Officer, The Office of the Chief Executive
email: shill@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel: 01992 564249

Members:

Councillors R Morgan (Chairman), K Angold-Stephens (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, W Breare-Hall, Ms R Brookes, Mrs R Gadsby, Mrs A Grigg, D Jacobs, D C Johnson, G Mohindra, J Philip and J M Whitehouse

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND

WEBCASTING NOTICE

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1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

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

2. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

“This meeting will be webcast live to the Internet and will be archived for later viewing. Copies of recordings may be made available on request.

By entering the chamber’s lower seating area you consenting to becoming part of the webcast.

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2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

5. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 10)

Decisions required:

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 October 2010.

6. PRESENTATION FROM YOUTH COUNCIL

(Youth Council Representatives) In 2008/09 the Cabinet had requested the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an annual presentation from the Youth Council giving an update on the developing Youth Council programme and to present their request for funding for the year ahead.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - SIX MONTHLY REVIEW (Pages 11 - 34)

To consider the attached report.

8. INTERIM REPORT ON CHILDREN'S TASK AND FINISH PANEL (Pages 35 - 38)

(Councillor Mrs Wagland) To consider an interim report of the Children Services Task and Finish Panel.

9. KEY OBJECTIVES 2010 / 11 - PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 39 - 70)

To consider the attached report.

10. SCRUTINY OF CABINET FORWARD PLAN (Pages 71 - 88)

Recommendation:

To discuss the Cabinet priorities for the year ahead and the forward work programme for 2010/11.

The Overview and Scrutiny rules state that this Committee should "...arrange meetings with the Leader and other Portfolio Holders to discuss their plans for the year ahead and ... agree with them on any items for inclusion in the work programme which may be undertaken by the Committee on the cabinet's behalf".

Accordingly, attached is the latest Executive Work Programme incorporating the Forward Plan.

The Cabinet has determined that it's Corporate Priorities for 2010-11, are:

- (i) To deliver a sound Core Strategy of the local development Framework;
- (ii) To help mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses, through the development and implementation of appropriate initiatives;
- (iii) To further improve the Council's corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people as part of Essex County Council's Children's Trust arrangements;
- (iv) To improve the performance of the Benefits Service;
- (v) To maintain the Council's sound financial position;
- (vi) To achieve the level of savings identified within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy;
- (vii) To work with the Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership to further reduce levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the District;
- (viii) To seek continuous performance improvement and the best use of resources;

- (ix) To enable the provision of additional affordable housing in the District and other initiatives to assist people unable to purchase a property on the open market;
- (x) To continue the improvement in the benefit the Council receives from its investment in information and communications technology
- (xi) To continue to increase the Council's recycling performance; and
- (xii) To review the Council's commercial landholdings in order to coordinate competing land use proposals, to fulfill the authority's operational requirements and achieve value for money.

In addition there are a number of further objectives split between the nine Portfolios as detailed in the attached Objectives for 2010/11.

The Leader and Portfolio Holders have been invited to attend this meeting to present their plans and answer questions on their work.

11. STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON DUTY TO RESPOND TO PETITIONS (Pages 89 - 100)

(Councillor Mrs M. MacEwen) To consider the attached report of the Constitution & Member Services Standing Scrutiny Panel.

12. NEW HOMES BONUS CONSULTATION

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee grant permission for the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel to report directly to the Council meeting scheduled for 14 December 2010 on the Government's consultation document on 'New Homes Bonus'.

On 12 November, Grant Shapps (Minister for Housing) launched a consultation on the Government's Proposed 'New Homes Bonus', where central Government would match the council tax raised from new homes for the first six years. The consultation seeks the views on the implementation of the New Homes Bonus and runs from 12 November to 24 December 2010.

The Consultation document will be going to the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel on 2 December 2010 and because of the tight deadline involved they are seeking this Committee's permission to report directly to the Council meeting scheduled for 14 December 2010.

13. CABINET REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION:

To consider any items to be raised by the Chairman at the Cabinet meeting on 06 December 2010.

(Assistant to the Chief Executive). Under the Overview and Scrutiny rules the Committee is required to scrutinise proposed decisions of the Executive. The Chairman is also required to report on such discussions to the Cabinet.

The Committee is asked to consider the 6 December 2010 Cabinet agenda (previously circulated) to see whether there are any items that they wished to be raised at the Cabinet meeting.

14. 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):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Paragraph Number	Information
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.

Confidential Items Commencement: Paragraph 9 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution require:

- (1) All business of the Council requiring to be transacted in the presence of the press and public to be completed by 10.00 p.m. at the latest.
- (2) At the time appointed under (1) above, the Chairman shall permit the completion of debate on any item still under consideration, and at his or her discretion, any other remaining business whereupon the Council shall proceed to exclude the public and press.
- (3) Any public business remaining to be dealt with shall be deferred until after the completion of the private part of the meeting, including items submitted for report rather than decision.

Background Papers: Paragraph 8 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules of the Constitution 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 (as defined in Rule 10) and in respect of executive reports, the advice of any political advisor.

Inspection of background papers may be arranged by contacting the officer responsible for the item.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MINUTES

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **Date:** Monday, 18 October 2010

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 8.15 pm

Members Present: Councillors R Morgan (Chairman) K Angold-Stephens (Vice Chairman of Council) (Vice-Chairman) Mrs R Gadsby, Mrs A Grigg, D Jacobs, D C Johnson, Mrs M McEwen, G Mohindra, J Philip and D Wixley

Other Councillors: Councillors R Bassett, Mrs P Smith, Mrs M Sartin, D Stallan, C Whitbread and Mrs L Wagland

Apologies: Councillors R Barrett, W Breare-Hall, Ms R Brookes and J M Whitehouse

Officers Present: D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer) and M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant)

38. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman 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.

39. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor D Wixley had substituted for Councillor Mrs R Brookes and Councillor Mrs McEwen for Councillor W Breare-Hall.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

41. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 06 September 2010 be agreed.

42. PRESENTATION FROM EPPING FOREST COLLEGE

The Committee noted that due to significant problems with the Colleges IT System the Principal of Epping Forest College could not attend this meeting and gave her apologies. The proposed presentation would be rescheduled.

43. DEPUTY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS - REPORT OF CONSTITUTION & MEMBER SERVICES STANDING SCRUTINY PANEL (23.9.10)

The Chairman of the Constitution and Member Services Standing Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Mrs McEwen introduced the report on Deputies to Portfolio Holders.

The Scrutiny Standing Panel was asked to look at a proposal to establish deputies to Portfolio Holders. Upon looking into this they noted that Cabinet functions could only be delegated so far as members are concerned to those appointed to the Executive. So, Deputy Portfolio Holders could not be full members of the Cabinet and therefore could not participate in its decisions either individually or collectively and would not be able to make formal decisions. They may assist Portfolio Holders but could not formally substitute for them.

As for any remuneration for fulfilling these roles, the Independent Remuneration Panel would have to consider if they would be in receipt of a special responsibility allowance.

The Committee agreed the report noting that it would help develop councillors for future roles.

RESOLVED:

That a report be submitted to the Council recommending as follows:

- (i) That positions of Deputy Portfolio Holders be introduced and included in the Council's Constitution;
- (ii) That the proposed amendments to Article 6 of the Constitution and the Executive Procedure Rules as shown in Appendix 2 of the report be approved;
- (iii) That the Member Role Statement for Deputy Portfolio Holders as set out in Appendix 3 to the report be approved;
- (iv) That the application of Special Responsibility Allowance to Deputy Cabinet Member positions be deferred until 2011/12 to allow more time for these new positions to be assessed in their initial period of operation.

44. CABINET & OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ADDRESSES BY THE PUBLIC

The Chairman of the Constitution and Member Services Standing Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Mrs McEwen, introduced the report on having members of the public address the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Panel had been asked to examine how requests to address Cabinet meetings should be dealt with as there was no special provision in the Constitution for representations to be made.

The Panel looked at the arrangements in place for the Area Plans Sub-Committees where arrangements exist for the public to make representations on planning matters. A speaker at these meeting had to register by 4.00pm on the day before the meeting and would be allocated a maximum of three minutes.

The Committee agreed that introducing a similar system for the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be useful and noted that:

- This would increase transparency;
- This was not about asking questions but about making a statement;
- Circulation of any documents would have to be received in time so that they could be circulated to members prior to the meeting to avoid members taking time out during the meeting to read any documents;
- Members were at liberty to question the member of the public if any clarification was needed;
- A maximum of two speakers on any one agenda item;
- A maximum of six speakers for any one meeting;
- It would be first come first served for registering speakers;
- The arrangements would be reviewed after 12 months; and
- It would be interesting to how many had taken up the offer to address either meeting in a year's time.

RESOLVED:

(1) That provision be made in the Executive Procedure Rules in the Constitution to regulate arrangements for members of the public or other organisations to address Cabinet meetings on agenda business;

(2) That the proposed additional clause in the Executive Procedure Rules set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved;

(3) That these arrangements be reviewed in 12 months time;

(4) That similar provision be made in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix 2 of the report in order to provide for similar arrangements to operate at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

45. CANCELLATION OF MEETINGS

The Chairman of the Constitution and Member Services Standing Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Mrs McEwen, introduced a report tidying up the rules to enable meetings to be cancelled at short notice because of adverse weather conditions. This set out specific provision for the cancellation of meetings and the alterations to the Council's procedure rules agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Constitution be amended to provide procedures for the cancellation of meetings; and

(2) That the proposed amendment to the Council Procedure Rules as set out in the Appendix to the report be approved.

46. WORK PROGRAMME MONITORING

(a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Item 6: Noted that tonight's presentation would be rearranged.

(b) Standing Panels

Planning Services Standing Panel

Noted that they had recently had an extra-ordinary Panel meeting to look at East Herts and Broxbourne Councils district's core strategies consultation documents.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the Planning Panel could add another item looking at the text of letters sent out by planning and the enforcement sections to their work programme.

47. CHILDREN SERVICES TASK AND FINISH PANEL - TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted and agreed the terms of reference for the Children Services Task and Finish Panel.

48. CABINET REVIEW

It was noted that there was no items that the Committee wished to comment on contained in the forthcoming Cabinet Agenda.

CHAIRMAN

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 29 November 2010

**Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme –
Six Monthly Review**

Officer contact for further information: Simon Hill (Ext 4249)

Committee Secretary: A Hendry (ext 4246)

Recommendations:

(1) That the current work programme be reviewed in accordance with rule 9.3 of the Overview and Scrutiny Rules having regard to:

- (a) the resourcing and scope of the programme; and**
- (b) the reserve programme and new proposals from members.**

1. (Assistant to the Chief Executive). The Overview and Scrutiny Procedural rules state that 'The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme shall be of six – months duration and be reviewed at or before the expiration of that six month period'.

2. The current work programme is attached. A review of this plan is therefore now due.

Task and Finish Panels

3. At the annual review (June 2010) one new Task and Finish Panels was established: The Children Services Task and Finish Panel, which has met twice this year.

Scrutiny Standing Panels

4. No new Standing Panels were created this year.

Reserve List.

5. A reserve list of scrutiny topics is required to ensure that the work flow of OSC is continuous. OSC will 'pull out' items from the list and allocate them accordingly once space becomes available in the work plan following the completion of existing reviews.

6. To date no items have been submitted. Members can put forward any further suggestions for inclusion in the reserve list either during the meeting or at a later date. Existing review items will be dealt with first, then time will be allocated to the items contained in the reserve work plan.

7. Members need to bear in mind that new projects can be added but only if there is capacity among Panels and officers to undertake them.

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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme – November 2010

Overview and Scrutiny Committee			
Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Scrutiny of London Underground Ltd	June 2010	Came in June 2010.	01 June 2010 12 July 06 September 18 October 29 November 24 January 2011 28 February; and 11 April
(2) OS Annual Review/ Annual Report	April 2011	2010/11 Final Report to go to April 11 meeting.	
(3) Scrutiny of Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership – Chairman and Member level EFDC representatives	Went to July 2010 meeting	Last came in July 2010 - Representatives of the partnership to report on an annual basis.	
(4) Scrutiny of Cabinet Forward Plan	November 2010	Last looked at in March 2010; to review again when Cabinet next consider their forward plan.	
(5) Six monthly review - (a) Monitoring of OS recommendations (b) OS work programme	November 2010	Last completed in November 09	

(6) To review the strategic direction of Epping Forest College, its vision for the future and its relationship with the Community	Item postponed – to rearrange	Principal of Epping Forest College addressed the December 2008 meeting. To be invited sometime in 2010.	
(7) Budget Report	January 2011	Last completed January 2010	
(8) Debt Management Review.	Considered in November 2009. A further review report was submitted in July 2010.	Completed – originally went to November 09 meeting. A sub-committee, consisting of four members had been constituted to look into this topic.	
(9) Review of Secondary and Primary education in the District and to focus on the link between Education and deprivation in the District.	In 2010	To ask the appropriate County Officer or Portfolio Holder to attend a future meeting.	
(10) To receive a presentation from Youth Council members	November 2010	Went to November 09 meeting. As last year, members of the Youth Council will attend with proposals for their funding bid for 2011/12 and give an update on their developing programme.	
(11) To receive a presentation from 'Connectplus25'.	September 2010	Came in September 2010. 'Connectplus25' are responsible for the M25 works for the next thirty years. They wish to engage the community and set up a dialogue with the District.	

(12) Broadband access in the District	Now likely early 2011	BT and one other service provider to be asked to address the O&S Committee on access to broadband and speeds for the Epping Forest District Area.	
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Standing Panels			
Housing Standing Panel (Chairman – Cllr S Murray)			
Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Revised Date for meeting schedule 28 April 2011	Low	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	29 July 2010 8 September 2010 — Special Meeting 12 October — Joint Meeting with Finance & Performance Scrutiny Panel 28 October 27 January 2011; and 24 March 2011
(2) Presentation on Homelessness Prevention	Low	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(3) Annual Ethnic Monitoring Review of Housing Applicants	High	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(4) Review of Housing Performance Indicators	Low	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(5) Continuous Housing Improvement Strategy	High	Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to January 2011 or March 2011 meeting	
(6) Value for Money Strategy in the Provision of Housing Services	High	Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to January 2011 or March 2011 meeting	
(7) Annual Review of Housing Allocations Scheme	High	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(8) Housing Service Strategy on Information (Review and Update)	Medium	Completed at the October 2010 meeting	
(9) Housing Service Strategy on Private Rented Sector (Review and Update)	Medium	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	

(10) Housing Service Strategy on Empty Properties (Review and Update)	Medium	Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to January 2011 meeting	
(11) Housing Service Strategy on Tenant Participation (Review and Update)	Medium	Drafted, but not finalised, or consulted upon with the Tenants and Leaseholders Federation (due to other commitments) – Deferred to January 2011 meeting	
(12) Tenant Participation Impact Assessment	High	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(13) 12 Month Progress Report on Housing Strategy Action Plan 2009/10	Low	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(14) Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010/11	High	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(15) Review of Housing Service Standards	High	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(16) Six Monthly Progress Report on the Housing Regulatory Framework Action Plan	Low	Completed at October 2010 meeting	
(17) Six Monthly Progress Report on Housing Business Plan Action Plan	Low	Completed at October 2010 Meeting	
(18) Homelessness Strategy – Action Plan Progress Report	Low	Completed at the October 2010 meeting	

(19) Housing Service Strategy on Rent Arrears (Review and update)	Medium	Not yet produced (due to other commitments) – Deferred to January 2011 Meeting	
(20) Housing Service Strategy on Anti-Social Behaviour (Review and Update)	Medium	Completed at the October 2010 meeting	
(21) Housing Service Strategy on Energy Efficiency (Review and update)	Medium	Not yet required (October 2010)	
(22) Briefing on the proposed Council rent increase for 2010/11	Low	Not yet required (March 2011)	
(23) 12-monthly Progress Report on Housing Business Action Plan	Low	Not yet required (March 2011)	
(24) Six Monthly Progress Report on Housing Strategy Action Plan 2010/11	Low	Not yet required (March 2011)	
(25) HRA Business Plan 2011/12	High	Not yet required (March 2011)	
(26) Annual Report on the HomeOption Choice Based Lettings Scheme	Low	Not yet required (March 2011)	
(27) HouseMark Benchmarking Report on value for Money of Housing Services	Medium	Not yet required (March 2011)	

(28) Housing Customer Perspective Programme – Action Plan and Progress Report	Low	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(29) Tenant Satisfaction Surveys 2009/10 – Comparisons with other stock-retained councils	Low	Completed at July 2010 Meeting	
(30) Review of proposed Licence Conditions for Park Homes – Referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to a Special Meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel	High	Completed - Review undertaken at Special Meeting of Panel on 8 September 2010. Consultation will follow and referral to the Cabinet in October 2010.	
(31) Pre-Scrutiny of report to Cabinet on the likely cessation of Government funding for the Homelessness Prevention Service, and the future of the Service.	High	Completed at the 28th October 2010 meeting	

Constitution and Member Services Standing Panel (Chairman – Cllr Mrs McEwen)			
Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Review of May 2010 Elections	24 June 2010	COMPLETED at OSC Meeting on 12 July 2010	24 June 2010 23 September 9 November (Extra Meeting) 16 December; and 17 March 2011
(2) Cancellation of meetings because of inclement weather	23 September 2010	COMPLETED	
(3) Executive Procedure Rules – Speakers at Cabinet	23 September 2010	COMPLETED – To be reviewed in 12 Months Time	
(4) Assistant to Portfolio Holders	23 September 2010	COMPLETED	
(5) E-Petitions	9 November 2010	COMPLETED – considered at the OSC meeting on 29 November 2010	
(6) Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer & Chief Finance Officer (Draft Protocol)	9 November 2010		

(7) Member Role Accountability Statements	9 November 2010		
(8) Appointments at Annual Council	16 December 2010	Delayed from November meeting as officer responsible on jury service	
(9) Cabinet Meetings – “Guillotine”	16 December 2010		
(10) Member Training Review	16 December 2010		
(11) Annual Review of Financial Regulations including E Invoices	16 December 2010		
(12) Annual Review of Contract Standing Orders	17 March 2011		
(13) Annual Review of Officer Delegation	17 March 2011		
(14) Planning/Landowner Roles – details to be confirmed	To be determined	Further discussion between Councillor L Wagland and Legal Staff on the scope of the report.	
(15) Referendum on an Elected Mayor	To be determined		
(16) Supply of water in place of coffee to meetings held in Committee Rooms As at: November 2010	Being dealt with at officer level	Minute Item 51 29 March 2010 Panel	9

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Standing Panel (Chairman – Cllr Ms C Edwards)			
Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Safer, cleaner, greener strategy			1 July 2010
(a) Enforcement activity – half yearly report.	July 2010 January 2011	(a) Received half Yearly report in July 2010. (b) Received Strategy Action plan in July 2010. (c)	26 August (extra meeting)
(b) SCG Strategy Action Plan – half yearly report.	July 2010 January 2011		7 October 6 January 2011 24 February; and 7 April
(c) Review strategy.	July 2010 January 2011		
(2) Community Safety			Crime & Disorder Scrutiny meetings – The 2 meeting dates are October 2010 and February 2011
(a) CCTV action plan – half yearly report.	July 2010 January 2011	(a) Received CCTV half yearly report in July 2010.	
(b) Receive reports from Community Safety Scrutiny meetings.	To be determined		

<p>(3) Essex Waste procurement process and Joint Committee</p> <p>(a) Receive notes/minutes of Member Partnership Board.</p> <p>(b) Receive notes/minutes of Inter Authority Member Group.</p>	<p>To be determined.</p> <p>To be determined</p>	<p>As and when available.</p>	
<p>(4) Waste Management Partnership Board</p> <p>(a) Receive minutes of Partnership Board.</p> <p>(b) Progress of recycling in flats and similar buildings.</p> <p>(c) Review of weather disruptions to services</p>	<p>To be determined.</p> <p>July 2010 January 2011</p> <p>July 2010</p>	<p>(a) Minutes received at the July 2010 meeting.</p> <p>(b)</p> <p>(c) Reviewed at July 2010 meeting.</p>	
<p>(5) Nottingham Declaration</p> <p>(a) Progress against Declaration pledges – half yearly reports.</p> <p>(b) Climate change strategy action plan – half yearly reports.</p>	<p>July 2010 January 2011</p> <p>July 2010 January 2011</p>	<p>(a) Updated given at July 2010 meeting.</p> <p>(b)</p>	

<p>(6) Bobbingworth Tip</p> <p>(a) Receive reports on availability for public access.</p> <p>(b) Receive notes/minutes of management/liaison group.</p>	<p>July 2010 To be determined</p> <p>To be determined</p>	<p>(a) Update given ay July 2010 meeting. (b)</p>	
<p>(7) Leisure Issues.</p> <p>(a) Receive progress reports on new sports hall at WASP</p> <p>(c) Receive progress reports on youth initiatives & play strategy.</p>	<p>July 2010</p> <p>October 2010</p>	<p>(a) Update given at July 2010 meeting. (b)</p>	

Planning Services Standing Panel (Chairman – Cllr J Philip)			
Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) (a) Regional Plan (b) Local Development Framework (c) Current Staffing (d) Improvement Plan	Regular updating reports	Report on new LDF Scheme & implications for S106 agreements, new draft policy required. LDF timeline to be presented. Development Document Site Allocations Issues and Options Paper. Updated Staffing Family Tree	3 June 2010 2 September 11 October – Extra Ordinary Meeting 2 December; and 3 March 2011

<p>(2) Value for Money Provision:</p> <p>(a) Administration & Customer Support</p> <p>(b) Building Control</p> <p>(c) Development Control (including Appeals)</p> <p>(d) Economic Development</p> <p>(e) Enforcement</p> <p>(f) Environment Team</p> <p>(g) Forward Planning</p> <p>(h) Performance</p>		<p>VFM Task and Finish report went to September 08 meeting and the November 08 O&S Cttee meeting where it was endorsed.</p> <p>Bring back report on District Council/Appeals annually on Value for Money work commenced in 2008.</p> <p>To include response to Economic Downturn. Revised report on enforcement process for January 2010 (See Item 7) Timescale on flowchart.</p> <p>Timescale on flowchart</p>	
<p>(3) Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Area Planning Cttees to be invited to a meeting to provide feedback.</p>		<p>A meeting of the Chairmen & Vice Chairmen of Planning Sub-Committees, District Development Control Committee and Planning Portfolio Holders took place on 2 August 2010. Results will be fed back to Panel regularly. Meetings will take place on a frequent basis.</p>	
<p>(4) Report from Legal on performance at Planning Appeals</p>	<p>June 2009</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>	

(5) Comments from the planning agents and amenity groups required matching		Meeting has taken place, minutes will be circulated at the Panel meeting in December 2010.	
(6) That a report be produced for the Panel setting out the possible route any planning enforcement investigation could take.		A further report was required with financial implications.	
(7) Review the Corporate Planning protocol with respect to dealing with applicants, agents, developers and the local business community to ensure that the highest standards of probity and governance are achieved.	February 2010 meeting		
(8) To review a selection of controversial planning decisions to see if lessons can be learnt from their consideration.	On agenda for 2 September 2010 Panel meeting	This item has been extracted from the Terms of Reference of the Provision for Value for Money within Planning Services Task and Finish Panel and the current Panel.	
(9) To consider whether the reporting arrangements for Terms of Reference sections and those from the Section 106s (including how they are negotiated agreed and implemented strategically to secure community benefit), and appeals are sufficient (including how new legislation impacts on these) and recommend accordingly		This item has been extracted from the Terms of Reference of the Provision for Value for Money within Planning Services Task and Finish Panel and the current Panel.	
(10) Best Value Review	Received update in February 2010		

(11) Planning conditions controlling damage to highways infrastructure	December 2010	Referred from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – March 2010.	
(12) Contributions to affordable housing	New Item		
(13) Arrange visit to other planning authorities to learn from their work.	New Item		
(14) Countrycare	Submitted to 2 September 2010 meeting	COMPLETED – (Future structure of Countrycare following departure of Paul Hewitt)	
(15) Consultations from Hertfordshire Councils regarding Core Strategies.	New Item – October 2010 Meeting	COMPLETED - Consultations considered at extra-ordinary Panel meeting on October 11 2010.	
(16) Consultation regarding Tree Preservation Orders	New Item – December 2010		

Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel (Chairman – Cllr G Mohindra)			
Item	Report Deadline / Priority	Progress / Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Key Performance Indicators – Performance Outturn 2009/10	Performance report to be considered at year end. Considered at the June '10 meeting.	Outturn KPI performance report for 2009/10. Considered at the meeting to be held on 10 June 2010. Performance report to be produced for inclusion in E-Annual Report in place of former Best Value Performance Plan.	10 June 2010 9 September 9 December 17 January 2011 ; and 10 March
(2) Key Performance Indicators – Performance Monitoring 2010/11	Performance report to be considered on a quarterly basis.	Quarterly KPI performance report for 2010/11 to be considered at the meetings to be held on 09 September 2010, 09 December 2010 and 10 March 2011.	
(3) Quarterly Financial Monitoring	Reports to be considered on a quarterly basis.	First quarter Information to be considered September 10, 2 nd quarter in December 10 and 3 rd quarter figures at the March '11 meeting.	
(4) Council Plan 2006-2010 Performance Monitoring	Performance report considered on an annual basis. Report went to the June '10 meeting.	Performance report for the final year of the Council Plan (2009/10). Considered at the meeting held on 10 June 2010.	

(5) Cost and Performance Benchmarking Analysis	Analysis updated on an annual basis to reflect the latest available cost and performance information published by the Audit Commission. The meeting in June '10 set up a sub-committee.	The Audit Commission's annual 'Value for Money Profiles' are published during March each year. The Cost and Performance Benchmarking Analysis is developed from this tool and will be considered by a sub-group of the Scrutiny Panel as early as possible in the municipal year.	
(6) Annual Consultation Plan	Report considered on an annual basis. Report went to the June '10 meeting.	Consultation Plan considered at first meeting of each municipal year. Report went to the June 2010 meeting,	
(7) Detailed Portfolio Budgets	Went to the January 2010 meeting.	Considered at the January '10 - Annual review of the Portfolio Holders Budgets. To go again to the January 2011 meeting.	
(8) Medium Term Financial Strategy	January 2011	To review the Council's medium term financial strategy January 2011.	
(9) Equality and Diversity - Monitoring and Progress	Report considered on an annual basis. Report went to the June '10 meeting.	An annual report in respect of progress against the Council's equality schemes and other initiatives will be made to the first meeting in each municipal year.	
(10) Capital Outturn 2009/10 and use of transitional relief in 2009/10	Considered at the June '10 meeting.	Last considered at the June 2010 meeting	
(11) Provisional revenue Outturn 2009/10	Considered at the June '10 meeting.	Last considered at the June 2010 meeting	
(12) Fee and Charges	December 2010	Last considered at the November 2009 meeting	

<p>(13) Customer transformation T&F Panel work</p>	<p>Report went to 17 November 2009 meeting. A follow up report to be considered at a subsequent meeting</p>	<p>Work of the disbanded the Customer Transformation Task and Finish Panel was placed with the Finance and Performance Management Standing Scrutiny Panel. The Cabinet at their meeting in February 2009 agreed the recommendations with the proviso at (3) that:</p> <p>“(1) That, given the increasing importance of the Council’s Website for communication, information and electronic interactions, the level of dedicated resource to the maintenance and development of the Council’s Website be increased;</p> <p>(2) That a District Development Fund bid be made to fund an additional Grade 5 Website Support Officer on a three-year fixed term contract as part of the budget process for 2009/10, at an estimated cost of £25,000 per annum subject to job evaluation; and</p> <p>(3) That the Task and Finish Panel on Customer Transformation be requested to reconvene and further prioritise the remaining seven recommendations of the original report.”</p>	
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Task and Finish Panels

Provision of Children Services in the District (Chairman – Cllr Mrs L Wagland)

Item	Report Deadline / Priority		Programme of Future Meetings
First meeting to define Terms of Reference.		Second meeting held 5 November 2010. Interim report made to this meeting. Further meeting to be arranged for January 2011	21-September 2010 5-November

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Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 29 November 2010

**Subject: Interim Report of the Children's Task and
Finish Panel**

Officer contact for further information: Julie Chandler (01992 56 4214)

Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246)

SCRUTINY



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- 1) **To receive an interim report of the Children's Services Task and Finish Panel**
- 2) **To note the Panel's concerns in regard to Essex County Council's recent amendments to the county structure for Children's Services which will see the deletion of District Children's Partnerships form the core business, and concerns in respect of the planned Essex-wide and preferred partner approach to commissioning children's services**
- 3) **That Overview and Scrutiny Panel consider whether it wishes to respond formally to Essex County Council in regard of the above**

Executive Summary

The Children's Services Task and Finish Panel was initially established to inform a decision on whether the Council should sign up to the Memorandum of Understanding with Essex Children's Trust in respect of Safeguarding Children. It also sought to gather information regarding local provision for children and young people, including the Council's own Community Services work and Youth Services function provided through Essex County Council.

The initial meeting of the Panel was held on September 21st and it was noted at this meeting that Essex County Council had announced a revision of Children's Trust arrangements. This was stated to be in line with the new coalition government guidelines and in response to findings of the County Council's second Ofsted in August, which deemed the Council's Safeguarding arrangements and some Children's Services provision to be 'Unsatisfactory'.

Within this new structure it would not be necessary for local district councils to sign the memorandum. The terms of Reference of the Panel were therefore amended in light of this. It was also noted that the only evident change to the Essex structure for children's services was the deletion of the District Children's Partnerships and this had raised serious concerns amongst local stakeholders on Epping Forest Children's Partnership, including schools, voluntary sector and Managers of Essex Youth services.

More recently the Panel were informed of the concerns of officers and Education Leads from Epping Forest, Uttlesford and Harlow Council's on the decisions being taken by Essex in regard to county-wide commissioning.

The following detailed report outlines actions undertaken by the Panel to date.

Report

1. The Council's Cabinet Committee received a presentation from Essex County Council in April 2010, which outlined the Essex Children's Trust Structure and Memorandum of Agreement requiring signing by Districts in respect to Safeguarding and Children's services. At this meeting, Cabinet took the decision not to sign the Memorandum of Agreement on the basis that an adequate explanation could not be given to explain to the committee what 'aligning of resources' would actually require of the Council. In addition, members of Cabinet and interested members of the Council attending the meeting had been very concerned by the Ofsted report on Essex County Council which had 'red-flagged' some areas of Children's Services provided.
2. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee was therefore asked to establish a Task and Finish panel to consider the Council's role and approach to delivery of children's services under the new trust arrangements and to make recommendations as to whether the Council should sign up to the Memorandum of Understanding with Essex Children's Trust.
3. The Task and Finish Panel were also asked to gather information regarding local provision for children and young people, including the Council's own Community Services work, work undertaken by the voluntary sector and Youth Services provided through Essex County Council.
4. The initial meeting of the Panel was held on September 21st 2010. At this meeting Members were advised by the Council's Lead Officer that Essex County Council had announced a revision of Children's Trust arrangements including withdrawal of the Memorandum of Agreement. This was stated to be in line with the new coalition government guidelines and in response to findings of the County Council's recent Ofsted in August, which had again judged some of the Council's services to be 'Unsatisfactory'. Revised Terms of Reference for the Panel were therefore agreed in light of these changes. (As included in Background Papers to this report).
5. Members were also advised that the County Council had instigated a series of Commissioning meetings for West Essex, in regard to the proposed commissioning of specific Children's Services across Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford. These were to be held in October with the purpose of confirming local priorities to ensure effective commissioning from April 2011.
6. The Panel were presented with an overview of children's and young people's service provision across the district, outlining the key work delivered through the EFDC Council's Community Services Teams; Essex Youth Services and the Voluntary Sector. The presentation also highlighted the proposed new Essex structure for children's services and the deletion of the District based Children's Partnerships as part of this. Members were advised of the importance of the Epping Forest Children's Partnership (EFCP) to local stakeholders including schools and the voluntary sector, who see this forum as a key route to improving children's services for Epping Forest children. This had been demonstrated through the effective partnership and collaborative working that takes place.
7. It was also noted that this partnership had been effective in securing further delivery of several key and successful projects that had been closed down as part of the County's withdrawal of Performance Reward Grant Funding. This had been achieved by actively pooling financial and physical resources.
8. The presentation also detailed the County-wide structure for Safeguarding Children and young people and the Council's contribution to this. It was noted that EFDC's own Section 11 Inspection in regard to Safeguarding had been held up as a model of best

practice, whereas Ofsted had judged Essex Safeguarding as 'improved' but still 'Unsatisfactory'.

9. The panel agreed that the various members should research different aspects of the Children's Services Review and a range of responsibilities were allocated, with members required to report back at the next meeting in November.

10. In the intervening period, the Lead Officer sent a range of correspondence to Essex County Council which included a letter outlining EFCP concerns around the proposed deletion of Children's Partnerships from the County structure. The response from the County Locality Manager for West Essex advised that the Children's Partnerships in West districts were unique, as there were no others established in place across Essex. Two further papers were sent to the Locality Manager providing suggestions for local commissioning. These were based on the successes of locally developed interventions to address self esteem and emotional welfare issues amongst disadvantaged children and those with additional needs, and key, evidenced programmes to tackle obesity in primary school children.

11. During this period the County commissioning meetings took place and a range of concerns were raised by West area stakeholders in regard to the apparent drive by Essex to commission services on an Essex-wide basis. This led to a meeting of District Council Officers, Education Leads and Children's Centre providers from West Essex, prior to the planned final commissioning meeting on November 4th.

12. At this meeting, the concerns of local partners were realised as it was confirmed that Essex had indeed pursued a preferred partner route and Essex-wide approach to commissioning key services for children. This approach being in complete contrast to the Governments' plans for 'Big Society' and 'Place Based Budgeting'. In light of this, it was agreed that the group would present their concerns as a united body at the final commissioning meeting and request that County consider a local commissioning arrangement within West Essex.

13. The second meeting of the Panel was held on Friday 5th November. At this meeting the panel members fed back on their findings in respect of local provision for children with disabilities and special needs; work undertaken on emotional health and well being and programmes specifically designed to reduce obesity in children and families. A report was submitted on the work of Epping Forest Youth Council in identifying the best youth facilities across the district and Community Services Officers provided detailed presentations on key work programmes.

Several issues were highlighted for further consideration:

- a. Epping Forest Youth Council Mystery Shopping Exercise – To consider adding a new category to the annual Civic Awards list, in respect of an award for the best youth provision in the Epping Forest District.
- b. Tottenham Hotspur Foundation – to consider the impact of the cessation of the current level of service funded through a Section 106 Agreement
- c. Trampolining Project – to investigate opportunities to continue with and sustain the delivery of this project, which has been identified by schools as extremely successful in improving the self esteem and attainment of disadvantaged children and children with additional needs
- d. Essex Commissioning – to forward the views of local stakeholders to Essex County Council, in regard to the need for services to be locally commissioned and developed and for this to include innovative interventions as opposed to traditional methods of approach

- e. Capacity Building – To consider the Council’s ability to support local communities in developing services to meet locality needs
- f. Safeguarding – To further review the effectiveness of Safeguarding arrangements at West and County level, in light of recommendations emanating from Serious Case Reviews.

Reason for decision:

The Children’s Services Task and Finish Panel are very concerned that Essex County Council is pursuing the commissioning of children’s services via a preferred partner option, on an Essex-wide approach. This method of commissioning rules out the opportunity to build on existing successes in a range of locally commissioned work and is also in direct contrast to the Governments’ plans for ‘Big Society’ and ‘Place Based Budgeting’.

Options considered and rejected:

To accept Essex County Council’s commissioning plans.

Consultation undertaken:

Children’s Task and Finish Panel, West Essex District and Education Leads.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: NIL

Personnel: NIL

Land: NIL

Community Plan/BVPP reference:

Relevant statutory powers:

None

Background papers: Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Terms of Reference. Children’s Services presentation (J Chandler)

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:

Key Decision reference: (if required)



Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 29 November 2010

Portfolio: Performance Management (Councillor R. Bassett)

Subject: Key Objectives 2010/11 – Progress Report

Responsible Officer: S. Tautz (01992 564180)

Democratic Services Officer: A. Hendry (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider performance for the first six months of 2010/11, in respect of the Council's Key Objectives for the year.

Executive Summary:

1. The Local Government Act 1999 and the Best Value regime previously required all local authorities to publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP), detailing priorities for the year ahead. Although the statutory requirement to publish a BVPP was removed from 2009/10, this process traditionally provided an opportunity for the Council to articulate its key objectives and priorities for each year.

2. As part of the ongoing development of a new four-year Corporate Plan, a range of specific Key Objectives for 2010/11 was adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 19 April 2010. The Key Objectives reflect national and local priorities and specific service improvements, and are intended to provide a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for the year. The Key Objectives contain specific targets and outcomes, and on-going performance is reported to the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six-monthly basis.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

3. The annual identification of Key Objectives provides an opportunity for the Council to focus specific attention on how areas for improvement will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people. The Committee considered the draft key objectives for 2010/11 at its meeting on 4 March 2010.

4. It is important that relevant performance management processes are in place to review and monitor performance against the Council's Key Objectives, to ensure their continued achievability and relevance, and to identify proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of under performance.

Other Options for Action:

5. No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review performance against the Key Objectives, and to take corrective action where necessary,

could have negative implications for the Council's reputation and for judgements made about the authority in corporate assessment processes.

Report:

6. The Council's Key Objectives for 2010/11 were adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 19 April 2010. A schedule detailing six-month performance (at 30 September 2010) against the Key Objectives, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

7. Progress against the Council's Key Objectives was formerly an area of inspection focus in the Managing Performance element of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) process introduced in April 2009. The Managing Performance theme comprised the annual assessment of the progress the Council was making towards achieving improvement in the services it delivers to the public, and was intended to identify and reflect efforts to put in place plans to secure improvement. Whilst the Committee will be aware that CAA has been abolished by the Coalition Government, it nevertheless remains important to ensure that relevant performance management processes are in place to review and monitor performance against the authority's Key Objectives, and to consider proposals for corrective action in areas of current under performance.

8. As the Committee is aware, the Council has sought to align its business, budget, and workforce planning and development processes over recent years, and these arrangements have provided an opportunity for the Key Objectives for each year to be incorporated within individual Directorate Business Plans, thereby further linking the various elements of the Council's performance management framework. For 2010/11, the Key Objectives were set by the Cabinet alongside the setting of the budget for the year, representing significant improvement over previous arrangements where key objectives were not determined until early in each municipal year, long after the budget for the year had been adopted. Service Directors are currently discussing the identification of draft Key Objectives for 2011/12 with individual portfolio holders, with regard to these informing the development of Directorate Business Plans for next year. These draft Key Objectives will initially be considered as part the joint Cabinet and Management Board meeting to be held on 15 December 2010, and will be subsequently referred to the Committee for consideration as with the draft Key Objectives for 2010/11.

9. The Committee is requested to consider performance against the Council's Key Objectives for 2010/11, for the first six-months of the year. This progress report is also to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 6 December 2010, and the views of the Committee in respect of progress against specific Key Objectives will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.

10. Outturn reports in respect of the Key Objectives for 2010/11 will be made to the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, early in the 2011/12 municipal year.

Resource Implications:

Resource requirements for any proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of current under-performance set out in this report, will be identified by the respective service director.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal implications or Human Rights Act issues arising from the recommendations in this report, which ensure that the Council monitors progress and reports against the achievement of its corporate priorities.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations in this report for the Council's

commitment to the Nottingham Declaration for climate change, the corporate Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, or any Crime and Disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

Six-month performance (at 30 September 2010) against the Key Objectives adopted for 2010/11, has been reported by the respective service director(s).

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The respective service director(s) will have identified any risk management issues arising from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of current under-performance in relation to the Council's Key Objectives for 2010/11, as set out in this report

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. The content of this report has no specific equality implications. However, the respective service director(s) will have identified any equality issues arising from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of current under-performance in relation to the Council's Key Objectives for 2010/11, as set out in this report

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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KEY OBJECTIVES 2010/11 – PROGRESS REPORT (6 DECEMBER 2010)

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
(1) To maintain the Council's sound financial position;	(a) To increase the Council Tax for 2011/12 by no more than 2.5%;	The level of the Council Tax increase for 2011/12;	<p>Band 'D' Council Tax was increased by 1.5% for 2010/11, following increases of 2.5% in the preceding two years.</p> <p>The Government has made it clear that it expects Council Tax levels to be frozen for 2011/12 and 2012/13, although beyond this period it is assumed that future increases will not exceed 2.5%. The Department for Communities and Local Government has announced that a new grant scheme will be available for all billing and major precepting authorities that freeze or reduce Council Tax for 2011/12, who will receive additional funding next year equivalent to the raising of the 2010/11 Council Tax by 2.5%.</p> <p>The latest version of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is based on no increase in Council Tax in either 2011/12 or 2012/13.</p>
	(b) To ensure that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy delivers a balanced budget in its final year;	The success of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in delivering a balanced budget for 2013/14;	This latest version of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy does not deliver a balanced budget in its final year, but this will be re-visited before the budget for 2011/12 is set in February 2011.
	(c) To ensure that the General Fund Reserve Balance falls to no lower	The predicted level of the General Fund Reserve Balance for 2013/14;	The predicted level of the General Fund Reserve Balance is still

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
	than 25% of Net Budget Requirement;		planned to exceed 25% of the Net Budget Requirement at the end of 2013/14.
	(d) To continue to achieve high levels of revenue collection, as measured by Local Performance Indicators 14 and 15;	<p>The achievement of target performance for Local Performance Indicator 14 (Council Tax) and Local Performance Indicator 15 (National Non-Domestic Rates) for 2010/11 by 31 March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to collect 97.8% of the Council Tax due for 2010/11; • to collect 98% of the National Non-Domestic Rates due for 2010/11; 	<p>Collection rates so far in 2010/11 are on target to achieve year-end targets. Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is as follows:</p> <p>LPI 14 – 52.43% LPI 15 – 57%</p> <p>Although 0.04% down on the same period in 2009/10, Council Tax collection is running broadly at the same level as last year. The target for 2010/11(97.8%) requires a 0.3% improvement on last year, and collection and recovery procedures are in place to collect outstanding debts.</p> <p>National Non-Domestic Rate collection is 0.11% down on the same period in 2009/10. There have been several new backdated assessments which have recently entered the valuation list and are yet to be collected. The target for 2010/11(98%) requires a 0.44% increase in performance on last year, and billing and recovery procedures are in place to collect outstanding debts.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
(2) To seek continuous performance improvement and the best use of resources;	(a) To achieve an overall score of 3 (Performing Well) in the CAA Organisational Assessment for 2009/10 (to be undertaken in 2010/11);	The achievement of an overall score of 3 (Performing Well) for the CAA Organisational Assessment for 2009/10;	The coalition Government announced the cessation of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process in June 2010, and all work on the assessment for 2009/10 ceased at that time. As a result, the joint inspectorates did not update the assessments published for 2008/09, or issue scores for the Use Of Resources and Managing Performance CAA themes for 2009/10. The coalition Government has yet to announce proposals for any replacement performance management framework for local authorities.
	(b) To achieve overall improvement in respect of the Council's Key Performance Indicators for each of the four years from 2010/11 to 2013/14;	The achievement of a percentage improvement rate of 70% in respect of the Council's Key Performance Indicators for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	At the end of the second quarter of the year, 21 (72.41%) of the Council's quarterly monitored KPIs had achieved the performance target for 2010/11. Current performance against each of the KPIs will be reported to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 9 December 2010. Performance against National Indicator 195 is measured over three four-month periods (April-July, August-November and December-March) during the year, and results for the second period were not available at the time of the preparation of this report. It should also be noted that additional KPIs are subject to year-end reporting only, as little change is likely over

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			<p>each three month quarterly period. The results of these additional</p> <p>A number of the Council's 31 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for 2010/11 are drawn from the National Indicator Set, which has been abolished by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government with effect from April 2011. Management Board has considered the Council's future performance monitoring arrangements, and it is intended to continue to monitor and report performance against each of the KPIs for the remainder of the year, particularly given the use of certain indicators to measure performance against these Key Objectives.</p> <p>A report will be made to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel on 9 December 2010, identifying National Indicators that could be deleted from the KPI set for 2011/12 on the grounds that data collection is resource intensive or over burdensome, or where issues of limited value and validity have arisen in respect of data previously collected. This review will highlight ongoing and future activities in the areas where KPIs may be deleted, in order to ensure that the Council maintains appropriate focus on key areas in the absence of corporate</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			assessment or centralised performance reporting arrangements.
	(c) To continue to improve performance on the processing times of all categories of planning applications, as measured by National Indicator 157;	<p>The achievement of target performance for National Indicator 157 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 157(a) (Major Applications) 81% within target time (thirteen weeks); • NI 157(b) (Minor Applications) 80% within target time (eight weeks); • NI 157(c) (Other Applications) 94% within target time (eight weeks); 	<p>Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is as follows:</p> <p>NI 157(a) - 92.86% NI 157(b) - 83.33% NI 157(c) - 92.51%</p> <p>Second quarter performance against National Indicators 157(a) and (b) is currently on target for the year. Performance against NI157(a) is volatile due to the low number of application submissions and the complexity of major applications. Performance against NI157(c) is slightly under target for the second quarter, although the consideration of fewer of this type of application by the Area Plans Sub-Committees would generate an improvement in performance.</p>
	(d) To further improve the Housing Repairs Service, primarily through the appointment of a private housing repairs management contractor, and to increase performance on repairs response times as measured by Local Performance Indicators 7, 8 and 9	(i) The appointment of a private repairs management contractor by 1 January 2011;	Good progress has been made with the formulation of a bespoke specification by the Council's procurement consultant for this unique 'in-sourcing' contract. The process was due to be finalised by the Housing Repairs Advisory Group (comprising members and representatives) in November 2010 prior to tenders being invited, and it

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		<p>(ii) The achievement of target response and satisfaction levels for Local Performance Indicators 7, 8, 9 and 10 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPI 7 (Emergency Repairs) 99% within target time (twenty-four hours); • LPI 8 (Urgent Repairs) 95% within target time (five working days); • LPI 9 (Routine Repairs) 95% within target time (six weeks); • LPI 10 (Repairs Satisfaction) 98%; 	<p>is anticipated that the contract will commence from 1 April 2011.</p> <p>Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is as follows:</p> <p>LPI 7 – 98% LPI 8 – 57% LPI 9 – 89% LPI 10 – 99%</p> <p>Despite staff shortages at managerial level due to the introduction of the new management structure for the Housing Repairs Service, and with the exception of LPI 8 (Urgent Repairs), repairs performance continues to improve compared to previous years. Although it appears that only 57% of urgent repairs were undertaken within five days, the average time to complete urgent repairs overall was five days.</p>
	<p>(e) To further improve street scene standards (litter, graffiti, detritus, fly-posting, fly-tipping) across the district, as measured by National Indicators 195 and 196;</p>	<p>The achievement of target performance for National Indicators 195 and 196 (Improved Street and Environmental Cleanliness) for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 195(a) (Litter) 10% • NI 195(b) (Detritus) 13% • NI 195(c) (Graffiti) 0% 	<p>Performance against National Indicator 195 (a)-(d) is measured over three four-month periods (April-July, August-November and December-March) during the year. The first of these monitoring periods was reported at the end of the first quarter (see below), but results for the second period were not available at the time of the preparation of this report, and will therefore be reported to the Finance and Performance</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 195(d) (Fly-Posting) 0% • NI 196 (Fly-Tipping) Level 2 	<p>Management Scrutiny Panel in February 2011. Performance to the end of the first monitoring period of the year was as follows:</p> <p>NI 195(a) - 9% (above target) NI 195(b) - 8% (above target) NI 195(c) - 0% NI 195(d) - 0%</p> <p>Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year for NI 196 is Level 3 (below target) .</p> <p>The likelihood of meeting the year-end targets for these indicators remains uncertain. During the first six months of the year there have been improvements in performance against the litter and detritus elements of National Indicator 195 but, as the result of a fundamental review of the way data is collected and presented, the target for National Indicator 196 will not be met for the year. However, the Council has had some recent successful prosecutions and the Director of Environment and Street Scene is confident that the base position is understood.</p>
	(f) To fully embed the Council's Workforce Planning and Development arrangements within its business planning processes;	The full incorporation of Workforce Planning and Development arrangements within Directorate Business Plans for 2010/11 by 31 May 2010, resulting in:	Workforce information was initially issued to all Service Directors and Assistant Directors in December 2009. This process will be repeated again with updated information, in November 2010.

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased understanding of workforce planning within directorates through appropriate training; and • the early identification at a strategic level, of staffing/training needs to be reflected in the annual Learning and Development Plan; 	<p>The Learning and Development Manager has met with each Directorate/Service Management Team, to discuss workforce development requirements for the Business Planning process for 2011/12, and information and templates in respect of workforce development are provided within the annual business planning guidance. If a suitable trainer can be commissioned, workshops to increase the understanding of workforce planning will take place before the end of 2010/11.</p>
	(g) To complete the prioritisation of the customer care improvements identified by the Customer Services Transformation Panel, and to develop an implementation programme of works;	(i) The agreement of customer care priorities by 30 June 2010;	<p>Delay in the agreement of customer care priorities has been experienced pending the outcome of the feasibility study into improvements to the benefits reception area at the Civic Offices, as a result of criticism around access raised by the Audit Commission in it's inspection of the benefits service in early 2010.</p> <p>Architects have been appointed to pursue the redesign of benefits reception area and have produced plans as part of a feasibility study to refurbish the existing reception area. Meetings with the architects have taken place and the receipt of costed options is currently awaited.</p> <p>The Avoidable Contact Working</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			Party has yet to fully conclude its work around improvements to existing levels of poor telephone call signposting, although the data collection exercise for 2010/11 has recently commenced in a number of service areas.
		(ii) The agreement of funding and a programme of customer care improvement works, by 30 October 2010;	See progress in respect of Key Objective 2(g)(i) above.
	(h) To secure Level 2 ('Achieving') of the Equality Framework For Local Government, in respect of the Council's approach to securing equal life chances for all;	The implementation of agreed key recommendations arising from the informal Equality Peer Challenge to be undertaken in March 2010, by 31 March 2011;	<p>A comprehensive action plan has been developed arising from the informal Diversity Peer Challenge undertaken in March 2010. Significant progress has already been made against the action plan, although it is possible that not all relevant actions will have been completed by the end of the year. Progress is monitored by the Corporate Equality Working Group at each of its meetings, and will be reported to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel in December 2010.</p> <p>The achievement of Level 2 ('Achieving') of the Equality Framework For Local Government is subject to external assessment through a formal Diversity Peer Challenge process administered by Local Government Improvement and Development (formerly IDeA). The</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			current cost of the Diversity Peer Challenge is £4,300, for which no specific budget provision currently exists. The Corporate Equality Working Group is currently considering how best to take this issue forward.
(3) To work with the Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership to further reduce levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the district;	(a) To achieve a reduction in levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the district;	The achievement of a reduction in the level of overall crime of 2.5% for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	Data on crime levels presents a very mixed picture. Overall crime is up, but within that general picture there are wide variations in percentage terms (e.g. a 33% increase in assault without injury, but a 16% reduction in domestic burglary and a 23% reduction in millennium burglaries (breaking into houses to steal car keys and cars)). Overall vehicle crime is down, alongside a very small rise in anti-social behaviour. Continued increases in domestic violence is also a concern, although this may in part be due to the issue being a priority and victims being encouraged to report incidences.
	(b) To achieve an increased percentage of residents feeling confident about crime in the district;	The achievement of an increased percentage of residents feeling confident about crime in the district, as measured by National Indicator 17 (Perceptions of Anti-Social Behaviour) and National Indicator 21 (Dealing with concerns about Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime), by 31 March 2011;	Although reported incidences of anti-social behaviour have declined, public concern about it remains, especially given recent high profile reporting. Performance against National Indicators 17 and 21 is measured through Essex County Council's 'tracker' survey which is undertaken each October, and it is therefore not possible to report on these indicators at the present time.

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
(4) To enable the provision of additional affordable housing in the district, and other initiatives to assist people unable to purchase a property on the open market;	(a) To consider the viability of the establishment of a Local Housing Company to purchase properties for let at market rents to nominees from the Council's Housing Register;	(i) The establishment of a Local Housing Company by 31 December 2010;	The Cabinet has considered a detailed feasibility study into the formation of a Local Housing Company, and has decided not to proceed with this initiative.
		(ii) The purchase of at least three properties by the Local Housing Company, by 31 March 2011;	No longer relevant. See Key Objective (4)(a)(i) above.
		(iii) The purchase of the target number of properties by the Local Housing Company, 31 March 2012;	No longer relevant. See Key Objective (4)(a)(i) above.
	(b) To provide Home Ownership Grants to enable Council tenants to purchase an open market property, thereby releasing a Council property to be let to an applicant on the Council's Housing Register;	The provision of at least six Home Ownership Grants of £28,000, by 31 March 2011;	Following a marketing exercise, twenty-six applications for grants were received and a shortlist of seven applicants was formulated in accordance with the agreed criteria (one additional grant was carried over from the 2009/10 budget). A reserve list has also been formulated. Five of the seven applicants have now found properties, and the grant documentation is being processed by the Director of Corporate Support Services.
	(c) To provide Social Housing Grant to one of the Council's Preferred Registered Social Landlord Partners, to fund the purchase of 5/7 two and/or three bedroomed houses on the open market for let at affordable rents;	The provision of social housing grant of up to £375,000 to one of the Council's Preferred Registered Social Landlord Partners, by 31 March 2011;	It has not been possible to initiate this project until October 2010. However, to ensure that the project proceeds, a consultant is in the process of being appointed to undertake the required tender exercise amongst the Council's

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			preferred housing association partners.
	(d) To assess the development potential of difficult-to-let garage sites with vacancies in excess of 20% (and no waiting list), and the number of additional homes that could be provided on each site;	The assessment of the residential development potential of difficult-to-let garage sites, by 31 March 2011;	Since it is not currently viable for the Council to undertake the development of affordable housing itself, due to the negative financial effect on the General Fund, this Key Objective has not been progressed as a priority. However, difficult-to-let garage sites continue to be assessed for development potential, in readiness for such time as it is viable for the Council to develop affordable housing.
Page 54 To help mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses, through the development and implementation of appropriate initiatives;	(a) To retain car parking charges for 2010/10 at 2008/09 levels, including the provision of some free parking on Saturdays and in the run up to Christmas each year;	The retention of car parking charges for 2010/11 at 2008/09 levels, including the provision of some free parking on Saturdays and in the run up to Christmas each year;	The retention of car parking charges for 2010/11 at 2008/09 levels, including the provision of some free parking on Saturdays and in the run up to Christmas each year, remains the current policy of the Council. It is anticipated that this policy will remain in place.
	(b) To continue to pay undisputed local supplier invoices within twenty days;	The achievement of the payment of 97% of undisputed invoices within thirty days as measured by Local Performance Indicator 13, and undisputed local supplier invoices within twenty days, by 31 March 2011;	Current performance remains high, and cumulative performance against LPI 13 (thirty days) to the end of the second quarter of the year was 98%. Second quarter performance in respect of the payment of local supplier invoices within twenty days was 92%, which fell from 93% in the first quarter of the year.
	(c) To better publicise the contracts or opportunities available for the	The expansion of the information available on the Council's website	A business breakfast event to promote opportunities for engaging in

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
	supply of goods and services to the Council;	about forthcoming contacts, and to hold an event for local businesses to promote opportunities for the supply of goods and services to the Council, by 31 March 2011;	<p>business with the Council was held at Loughton College in June 2010. A number of other business events have subsequently been held in partnership with the local Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses.</p> <p>Revisions have been made to the Council's website in order to better publicise the contracts and opportunities available for the supply of goods and services to the authority, and further improvements will be undertaken throughout the remainder of the year.</p>
	(d) To continue with measures designed to assist those in housing need to cope with the impacts of the recession;	The provision of at least two mortgage rescues, by 31 March 2011;	To date, six mortgage rescues have been undertaken in partnership with Moat Housing, which is one of the highest numbers in the East of England. However, none of these have been completed in the current year, although there is a further mortgage rescue in progress which, if it proceeds to completion, should be completed this year. One of the difficulties is that the maximum property value to be eligible under the Mortgage Rescue Scheme is £200,000, which is relatively low in the District.
	(e) To continue to work towards the future development of key retail sites in the district, in particular the St. John's Road area of Epping,	The completion of consultation in respect of the Development Brief for the St. John's Road area of Epping, and the agreement of the	The Council and Essex County Council have continued to work with consultants to explore initial potential development options

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
	and to consult upon and agree a Development Brief for the St. John's Road area;	Development Brief by 31 March 2011;	for the St. John's Road area of Epping. Members will approve the consultation document, and consultation on the viable options is due to commence in early 2011.
	(f) To introduce other measures to lessen the impacts of the economic recession, which various panels of the Council, or the Local Strategic Partnership, have supported;	(i) The reporting on a regular basis, of the Council's achievements in mitigating the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses;	<p>Reporting measures so far identified, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business engagement events delivered to address subjects of importance to the business community (e.g. understanding business rates, accessing council contracts etc);; • sharing of information with businesses/business networks on funding, training opportunities etc; • press releases reporting on business events; and • the Council's 'Business Champion' (the Finance and Performance Management Portfolio Holder) communicating more strongly to the business community. <p>These measures are being taken forward by the Head of Planning and Economic Development.</p>
		(ii) The Local Strategic Partnership to review the nature and extent of the local impact of the economic recession through its 'Credit Crunch' Task and Finish Panel,	The Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) 'Credit Crunch' Task and Finish Panel has completed and reported on its work. A number of future priorities have emerged from

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		<p>and to assess the range of support services available to local communities and businesses, identify gaps and initiatives to respond, on an ongoing basis;</p>	<p>the work of the Task and Finish Panel around issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunities for improved access to external funding; • support for programmes to maximise access to Future Jobs support in the district; • identifying further opportunities for joining up existing support in the district; • the impact of advice-giving services such as Citizen's Advice Bureaux; • opportunities to support volunteering capacity in the District; • the growth of 'Credit Unions' in the District; • the role of the Council's 'Business Champion' and opportunities for developing the role; and • the development of a new economic development strategy in full consultation with key partners. <p>The LSPs Sustainable Communities Theme Group is taking these issues forward, and continues to work to provide and look to enhance engagement with key partners and identify key strategic objectives to support on-going work in relation to the local impact of the economic recession.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
(6) To deliver a sound Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework;	<p>(a) To publish an issues and options consultation for the Core Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • options for urban extensions to Harlow to contribute to Regional Spatial Strategy targets, which are generally in line with Policy HA1; • options for the distribution of new housing elsewhere in the district to meet the Council's housing targets identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy; • options for new employment land to meet Regional Spatial Strategy targets; • options to deal with any other issues raised in the Sustainable Community Strategy which have spatial implications; 	The publication of an issues and options consultation for the Core Strategy by 1 September 2010;	<p>The Coalition Government has abolished Regional Spatial Strategies and associated housing and employment targets, although an application for a judicial review has been sought by a property developer in respect of this decision.</p> <p>The emphasis of the new Government has been directed towards 'localism', full details of which are due to emerge in the Decentralisation and Localism Bill to be published in December 2010. This very significant change calls into question the principle of extensions to Harlow, and places the onus entirely on the Council to establish new housing targets, based on community engagement. A communications strategy has been developed to address this latter point in detail, and a revised timetable for the preparation of the Core Strategy is being prepared. It is anticipated that the Issues and Options stage (Stage 2) of the consultation for the Core Strategy will take place in Summer 2011.</p> <p>Stage 1 of the Core Strategy (visioning exercise) consultation was launched in November 2010.</p>
	(b) To establish formal arrangements to achieve co-ordinated working on the Core Strategies for the East	The establishment of formal arrangements for co-ordinated working with East Hertfordshire and Harlow	See Key Objective 6(a) above. Regional targets for housing growth have been abolished. Harlow

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
	Hertfordshire, Epping Forest and Harlow Districts;	District Councils by 31 December 2010;	District Council is pursuing a growth and regeneration agenda, but this Council and East Hertfordshire District Council still have to make decisions on whether urban extensions are acceptable in the changed political and planning climate. A joint member/Chief Executive meeting had been proposed for early 2011, to address relevant issues before any decisions can be made about the need for formal working arrangements.
	(c) To seek a joint member/officer meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning, to pursue the amendment or deletion of the 2007 Direction requiring the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document;	The holding of a joint member/officer meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning by 20 April 2010;	The 2007 Direction requiring the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document, was revoked by the Minister for Decentralisation on 6 July 2010.
	(d) To continue to deliver further permanent accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers as required by the Direction of the Minister for Housing and Planning in 2007, through the provision of thirty-four pitches (net) or until any subsequent agreement is reached with the Government;	The meeting of any agreed targets for the provision of additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches following the joint member/officer meeting with the Minister for Housing and Planning, by 31 March 2011;	See Key Objective 6(c) above. The regional target for the provision of thirty-four additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches by 2011, was also abolished as part of the revocation of the 2007 Direction requiring the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) in July 2010. The Council is continuing to consider applications for new pitches in the light of relevant local plan policies.

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
Page 60			<p>Discussions with some long-term residents on tolerated sites, and with planning agents about other unauthorised pitches, has encouraged the submission of some applications.</p> <p>The Coalition Government has indicated that it will be publishing new guidance on pitch provision and that, in the meantime, the targets in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) can be used, although these would not be binding on any Council. The GTAA for Essex, which was published in November 2009, gives a target of 32.4 additional pitches by 2013. The issue of future pitch provision will be addressed in the Core Strategy and subsequent DPDs.</p>
(7) To improve the performance of the Benefits Service;	(a) To improve performance in respect of the processing of new benefit claims, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 16;	The processing of new benefit claims within an average of twenty-five days, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 16 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	<p>Cumulative performance against Local Performance Indicator 16 to the end of the second quarter of the year is 24.95 days.</p> <p>Performance was adversely affected by the number of changes that normally occur at the start of the financial year and therefore showed longer processing times. However, since May, performance has improved and is on target for the year. Performance for July to September averaged 19.94 days.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			<p>The caseload has remained at just under 9400 for the second quarter of the year, which compares to a caseload of 8861 for the same period in 2009/10. The number of documents requiring processing also continues to increase at 23,710 for the quarter, compared to 17,769 for the same period last year.</p> <p>Methods of speeding up new claims processing times continue to be explored, and the Action Plan produced following the inspection of the Benefits Service by the Audit Commission (see Key Objective 7(c)), is being implemented.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
	(b) To improve performance in respect of the processing of changes of circumstance, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 17;	The processing of changes of circumstance within an average of eight days, as measured by Local Performance Indicator 17 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	<p>Cumulative performance against Local Performance Indicator 17 to the end of the second quarter of the year is 9.39 days.</p> <p>Performance was adversely affected by the number of changes that normally occur at the start of the financial year and therefore showed longer processing times. However, since May, performance has improved and is on target for the year. Performance for July to September averaged 8.17 days.</p> <p>Methods of speeding up processing times continue to be explored, and the Action Plan produced following the inspection of the Benefits Service by the Audit Commission (see Key Objective 7(c)), is being implemented.</p>
	(c) To implement the agreed key recommendations arising from the Benefits service inspection undertaken in January 2010;	The agreement and implementation of the key recommendations arising from the Benefits service inspection, within timescales to be agreed with the Audit Commission;	Following the Benefits service inspection, a Post Inspection Action Plan was developed to address the recommendations of the Audit Commission, progress against which is monitored by the Audit and Governance Committee. The Action Plan was last considered by the Committee at its meeting on 15 November 2010, and there is currently no significant slippage in terms of progress. This is reflected in improved performance for claims processing. See also Key Objectives

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			2(g) and 7(a) above.
(8) To further improve the Council's corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people as part of Essex County Council's Children's Trust arrangements;	(a) To ensure that all appropriate members and officers of the Council are appropriately trained and aware of safeguarding responsibilities;	The introduction and completion of a programme of staff training in respect of safeguarding responsibilities, at levels relative to individual roles and responsibilities, by 31 March 2011;	A whole staff audit is nearing completion, which will identify staff already trained in Safeguarding and their further training needs, other staff requiring training, and various levels of training required. Some Directorates have already encouraged staff to undertake Level 1 online training, which is to soon be available on iTrain, the Council's e-learning platform launched during October 2010.
	(b) To ensure that members and officers are confident in dealing with safeguarding concerns;	(i) The introduction and completion of a programme of member training in respect of safeguarding responsibilities, by 31 March 2011;	A member training session in respect of safeguarding responsibilities was due to be held during September 2010, but was cancelled due to a lack of participants. It is planned to provide two amalgamated Level 1 Safeguarding courses for staff and members by March 31 2011.
		(ii) The achievement of improved corporate 'buy-in' to Child Protection and Safeguarding arrangements, by 31 March 2011;	Two Directorates have been proactive in responding to the need to improve safeguarding across the Council, and have already encouraged staff to pursue training.
		(iii) The improved dissemination of information in respect of corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people throughout directorates;	Representatives from all Directorates have been nominated to the Corporate Safeguarding Working Group, including officers with responsibility for adult safeguarding. Service area procedures in respect of child protection have been

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 64</p>	(c) To continue to liaise with the West Essex Children's Trust Board via the Epping Forest Children's Partnership, and to review arrangements at a local level in line with Essex-wide developments;	The implementation of an appropriate initiative promoting safeguarding arrangements via the display of posters and leaflets, by 31 March 2011;	<p>reviewed in the Housing Directorate and the Community Services Team.</p> <p>Following publication of Essex County Council's Ofsted inspection (August 2010) which reported arrangements for safeguarding children as still 'Unsatisfactory', the County Council has revised its arrangements in respect of services for children and young people, and new arrangements are currently being implemented. There are only two services that will continue to receive committed funding, Safeguarding Children and Young People and Services for Looked After Children. The Essex Children's Trust structure has been slightly streamlined in an effort to improve services and governance arrangements.</p>
	(9) To achieve the level of savings identified within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy;	(a) To develop savings projects and an overall strategy for the achievement of the level of savings identified within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy;	The consideration of progress on the identified savings projects and the overall strategy, by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee, by 30 June 2010;
	(b) To achieve efficiency savings of £600,000 for 2011/12;	(i) The submission of reports to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee, on the progress of identified savings projects, on a regular	See Key Objective (9)(a) above. Reports have been made to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee during 2010/11, to update members

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		basis;	on savings and the Council's overall financial position.
		(ii) The achievement of the savings target for 2011/12, as measured by National Indicator 179 (Value For Money Gains);	<p>The Department for Communities and Local Government advised local authorities in October 2010, that the collection and submission of data for National Indicator 179 had ceased with immediate effect, alongside the requirement to include efficiency data on Council Tax bills and leaflets, which was previously sourced from information collected for NI 179.</p> <p>Management Board has considered the Council's future performance monitoring arrangements in view of the abolition of the National Indicator set, and it is intended to continue to monitor and report performance against each of the Key Performance Indicators for 2010/11 (including NI 179) for the remainder of the year. See Key Objective 2(b).</p>
		(c) To assess and determine the longer term future of the leisure management contract, to include contract extension negotiations or arrangements for re-tendering the contract,	The completion of the assessment and determination of the future of the leisure management contract by 31 March 2011;
(d) To identify the most appropriate and viable future method of delivering the Council's Arts Service, to ensure future delivery of the service across the district	The investigation of alternative methods of delivery of the Council's Arts Service, and the successful implementation of new or revised arrangements, by 31 March 2011;	Alternative options for delivery of the Council's Arts Service have fully investigated, and has included attendance at specific conferences and meetings with Arts and Cultural	

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			Trusts. However the potential costs of arranging TUPE transfers and negotiating pension schemes for staff prevents a viable outsourcing option. Further work has been undertaken into the potential for savings on support services and overheads, but it has been discovered that this is not possible without a complete re-structure. Therefore, the best option appears to be reducing the project budget for Arts delivery, with a net saving of £35,000.
	(e) To identify and develop mutually beneficial partnerships with external organisations;	The consideration of opportunities for joint working or the provision of shared services, by 31 March 2011;	<p>The Council has engaged in a number of studies into county-wide shared service arrangements which have been largely inconclusive.</p> <p>The feasibility of entering into arrangements for a joint building control service with Harlow and Uttlesford District Council's has been investigated, but led to the conclusion that there were too many financial risks to the Council in partnering with these authorities, who were running high deficits in their ringfenced building control accounts.</p> <p>The Council remains open to actively exploring shared service opportunities where these can be demonstrated to be in the authority's best interest, and/or where the Council's expertise can be sold to others.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
			Following satisfactory performance during an initial three-month trial period, the Council continues to perform an insurance claim handling service for Uttlesford District Council.
(10) To continue the improvement in the benefit the Council receives from its investment in information and communications technology;	(a) To complete the server virtualisation project, to achieve energy cost savings and the enhancement of business continuity and resilience arrangements;	The completion of the transfer from existing to virtual servers by 31 March 2011;	The server virtualisation project is progressing well, and should be completed before 31 March 2011.
	(b) To increase the use of the corporate document management system in order to improve administrative processes;	The implementation of the corporate document management system within the Local Land Charges Section and the Housing Directorate by 31 March 2011;	The completion of these projects is on-target. It is anticipated that the implementation of the corporate document management system within the Local Land Charges Section and the Housing Directorate will be completed by 31 March 2011;
	(c) To rationalise and consolidate relevant property databases in order to improve administrative processes;	The achievement of reduction in the number of property databases by 31 March 2011;	Further work has been undertaken in order to eliminate mismatches in data, and the targeted reduction in the number of property databases should be achieved by the end of the year.

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
(11) To continue to increase the Council's recycling performance;	(a) To improve performance in respect of the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting, as measured by National Indicator 192;	The achievement of target performance of 58% for National Indicator 192 for 2010/11, by 31 March 2011;	Cumulative performance to the end of the second quarter of the year is 61.25%. Performance remains strong, with recycling levels in excess of 60%. The recycling system is now settled, with a marked reduction in resident concern and complaint. It is anticipated that the 58% target for the year will be met, although this will in significant part depend upon the degree of fall-off in the collection of garden waste over the autumn and winter months of 2010/11.
	(b) To complete the assessment and provision of recycling facilities, so that all flats and similar communal buildings, where owner/manager consent for introduction exists, can benefit from appropriate recycling facilities;	The completion of the assessment and implementation of recycling facilities at flats and similar communal buildings, by 31 March 2011;	The completion of the assessment and implementation of recycling facilities at flats and similar communal buildings, is on target to be achieved by 31 March 2011.
		The achievement of an improvement in public satisfaction with the Council's waste and recycling services, by 31 March 2011;	The level of resident concern and complaint with the Council's waste and recycling services has fallen significantly. However, there remain resident concerns around access to a second garden wheeled bin, which may impact upon satisfaction ratings. It is felt that, now the system has settled, it should remain unaltered to increase public confidence and this will hopefully bear fruit in future satisfaction surveys.
(12) To review the Council's commercial landholdings in	(a) To agree a timetable and programme for the relocation or	(i) Further to the agreement of the Cabinet to the principle of	It is anticipated that a planning application to develop a retail park of

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
<p>order to coordinate competing land use proposals, to fulfil the authority's operational requirements and achieve value for money.</p>	<p>termination of current uses of the Council's depot site at Langston Road, Loughton, with a view to better utilising the asset either through development (in partnership or otherwise) or sale;</p>	<p>relocating the Council's services from Langston Road to a new site in Oakwood Hill, and the relocation of the Council's Museum Store to its vacant unit at the Brooker Road Industrial Estate in Waltham Abbey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the development of a cost benefit analysis and budgetary cost for the construction of new depot facilities at Oakwood Hill, and the agreement of capital financing by 31 March 2011; • the design, tendering and construction of a new depot facility at Oakwood Hill by 31 March 2011; • the relocation of identified services to the Oakwood Hill site by 31 March 2011; • the agreement of the future depot location of the Council's waste management contractor, in conjunction with the letting of a new waste management contract in either 2012 or 2014; • the issue of Notice to Quit to the Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) in respect of the current occupation of the 	<p>approximately 90,000 square feet plus mezzanine, will be submitted in December 2010 or January 2011. The services required to be relocated from the Council's depot site at Langston Road have been identified.</p> <p>Consultants have been engaged to undertake project programming in respect of the Langston Road redevelopment, and the development of a new depot at Oakwood Hill. The Council's property at 148 Brooker Road, Waltham Abbey has been identified and secured in order to relocate the existing Museum Store.</p> <p>The Director of Environment and Street Scene is preparing a specification of service requirements to form the basis of a planning application in respect of a temporary depot facility at North Weald Airfield, in connection with the Waste Management Contract.</p> <p>The Women's Royal Voluntary Service served Notice to Quit on the Council in April 2010, which expires in January 2011. In practice the WRVS has already physically vacated the site.</p>

Key Objective	Action(s)	Target(s)/How Measured	Progress (30 September 2010)
		Langston Road site by the WRVS, in accordance with lease terms, by 31 March 2011;	
		(ii) The development of a strategy for the development or sale of the Langston Road site when vacant, by 31 March 2011.	At its meeting in October 2010, the Cabinet indicated its preference at this time for a joint development to maximise income.



**Epping Forest
District Council**

THE EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME

INCORPORATING THE FORWARD PLAN

(COVERING STATUTORY PERIOD 1 December 2010 – 31 March 2011)

The Forward Plan

There is a legal requirement for local authorities to publish a Forward Plan setting out the key decisions to be made in the four-month period ahead. Each successive Forward Plan has to be published and available for public inspection at least two weeks before the first day of the first month of the four-month period. Copies of the Forward Plan are available for inspection at the Council's information offices throughout the District, as well as on the Council's website in the Local Democracy section.

The Executive Work Programme

The Executive (i.e. the Cabinet) is required by the Constitution to have a work programme, which indicates how the aims and objectives set out in the Council will be achieved. The work programme covers the year ahead, and by law the Council is required to state:

- Who will make the decision;
- When it is likely to be made;
- Arrangements for consultation and representations; and
- Background documents used.

TDAs all the items in the work programme involve key decisions, it has been agreed to merge the two into *The Executive Work Programme incorporating the Forward Plan*.

Key Decisions

The Council's Constitution defines key decisions as:

- (i) Any decision within budget and policy that involves expenditure/savings of £250,000 or more in the current municipal year;
- (ii) Any decision not within budget and policy that involves expenditure/savings of £100,000 or more in the current municipal year;
- (iii) Any decision that raises new issues of policy;
- (iv) Any decision that increases the Council's financial commitments in future years, over and above existing budgetary approval;
- (v) Any decision that involves the publication of draft or final schemes, which may require either directly, or in relation to objections to, the approval of a Government minister;
- (vi) Any decision that involves the passage of local legislation; and

(vii) Any decision that affects two or more wards, and has a discernible effect on the quality or quantity of services provided to people living or working in that area.

Borrowing or lending decisions undertaken under delegated authority by the Director for Finance and ICT are not defined as a key decision.

The Council has also agreed the following additional requirements in relation to key decisions:

- (a) Key decisions cannot be made by officers;
- (b) Key decisions not within budget and policy can only be made by the Council;
- (c) Key decisions within budget and policy but involving expenditure/savings in excess of £1million can only be made by the Cabinet and/or Council;
- (d) Key decisions within budget and policy but involving expenditure/savings between £250,000 and £1million can be made by the relevant Portfolio Holder;
- (e) Portfolio Holders can only make key decisions affecting their wards if the decision is based upon a recommendation by a Service Director or as one of a range of options recommended by a Service Director.

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Executive Priorities 2010-11

The Cabinet has determined that its Corporate Priorities for 2010-11, are:

- (i) To deliver a sound Core Strategy of the local development Framework;
- (ii) To help mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses, through the development and implementation of appropriate initiatives;
- (iii) To further improve the Council's corporate procedures for safeguarding local children and young people as part of Essex County Council's Children's Trust arrangements;
- (iv) To improve the performance of the Benefits Service;
- (v) To maintain the Council's sound financial position;
- (vi) To achieve the level of savings identified within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy;
- (vii) To work with the Epping Forest Safer Communities Partnership to further reduce levels of actual crime and the fear of crime in the District;
- (viii) To seek continuous performance improvement and the best use of resources;
- (ix) To enable the provision of additional affordable housing in the District and other initiatives to assist people unable to purchase a property on the open market;
- (x) To continue the improvement in the benefit the Council receives from its investment in information and communications technology
- (xi) To continue to increase the Council's recycling performance; and
- (xii) To review the Council's commercial landholdings in order to coordinate competing land use proposals, to fulfill the authority's operational requirements and achieve value for money.

Cabinet Membership 2010-11

Cllr Diana Collins - The Leader of the Council.
Cllr Chris Whitbread - Deputy Leader; Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder.
Cllr Lesley Wagland - Legal & Estates Portfolio Holder.

- Cllr Mary Sartin
 - Cllr David Stallan
 - Cllr Syd Stavrou
 - Cllr Richard Bassett
 - Cllr Brian Rolfe
 - Cllr Penny Smith
- Environment Portfolio Holder.
 - Housing Portfolio Holder.
 - Operational Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder.
 - Performance Management Portfolio Holder.
 - Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder.
 - Safer and Greener Portfolio Holder

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Sustainable Community Strategy	Approval of Sustainable Community Strategy.	Yes	25 October 2010 14 December 2010	Cabinet Council		Derek Macnab 01992 564050	One Epping Forest Board Papers
St John's Road Area Development & Design Brief	To agree report for public consultation.	Yes	6 December 2010	Cabinet	One to one meeting Stakeholder Workshop, Steering Group meetings	John Preston 01992 564111	Report to Cabinet 10 March 2008
Mayoral Referendum P-Budget Provision for 2011/12	Approval for budget provision for possible Mayoral referendum.	Yes	6 December 2010 15 February 2011	Cabinet Council	Public consultation via website.	Ian Willett 01992 564243	None
Review of Executive Constitution	Consideration of the results of Public consultation from May 2011 onwards, including the options of Leader & Cabinet and Elected Mayor and Cabinet.	Yes	6 December 2010 14 December 2010	Cabinet Council	Public consultation via the Council's website.	Ian Willett 01992 564243	Consultation Material on Website Letter dated 7.7.10 from Minister of Local Government to Leader of the Council
Corporate Plan 2011/12 -2014/15	Adoption of Corporate Plan 2010/11 – 2013/14.	Yes	31 January 2011 15 February 2011	Cabinet Council	Management Board. Local Strategic Partnership.	Stephen Tautz 01992 564180	File papers in Performance Improvement Unit
Community governance review - Moreton, Bobbingworth & The Lavers Parish Council	Review of warding for the area comprising the three lavers parishes within the MBL area. Results of stage one consultation. The proposal is to amalgamate three parish wards in the Lavers area into one new ward.	No	29 March 2011	Council	With residents of the Lavers' Parishes. Details on the Council's website.	Ian Willett 01992 564243	Consultation Material on Website

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Q2 Internal Audit Monitoring report 2010/11	To note progress and consider governance issues.	No	15 November 2010	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	File papers Internal Audit
Q2 Financial Monitoring	Monitoring of Expenditure against Budget.	No	22 November 2010	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Service Directors. Finance Scrutiny Panel. Portfolio Holders.	Peter Maddock 01992 564602	File papers in Accountancy
Insurance Excess Report	Annual Report	No	22 November 2010	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee		Edward Higgins 01992 564606	File papers in Accountancy
Fees and Charges	Annual review of Fees and Charges for: 1. Housing; 2. Licensing 3. Leisure; and 4. Car Parking.	Yes	22 November 2010	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee		Peter Maddock 01992 564602	None.
Capital Strategy	Annual Full Update of Strategy.	Yes	6 December 2010	Cabinet	Spending Control Officers.	Ms Teresa Brown 01992 564606	File papers in Accountancy
Corporate Risk Update	Quarterly update of corporate risks.	Yes	17 January 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Risk Management Group.	Bob Palmer 01992 564279	File papers in Accountancy
Final Budget 2011/12 Process	Final part of the Budget 2011/12 Process.	Yes	17 January 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	FPM Scrutiny Panel.	Bob Palmer 01992 564279	File papers in Accountancy
			31 January 2011	Cabinet			
			15 February 2011	Council			
Q3 Internal Audit Monitoring	To note progress and consider governance issues.	No	7 February 2011	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	File Papers in Internal Audit

Report 2010/11													
Q3 Financial Monitoring	Monitoring of Expenditure against Budget.	Yes	21 March 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Service Directors. FPM Scrutiny Panel. Portfolio Holders.	Peter Maddock 01992 564602	File papers in Accountancy						
Corporate Risk Update	Quarterly update of corporate risks.	Yes	21 March 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Risk Management Group.	Bob Palmer 01992 564279	File papers in Accountancy						
Q4 Financial Monitoring	Monitoring of Expenditure against Budget.	Yes	20 June 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Service Directors. FPM Scrutiny Panel. Portfolio Holders.	Peter Maddock 01992 564602	File papers in Accountancy						
Governance Statement	Part of the Statutory Statement of Accounts.	Yes	20 June 2011	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	File papers in Internal Audit						
Internal Audit Annual Report 2010/11	To approve the report and consider the effectiveness of Internal Audit.	No	20 June 2011	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	File papers in Internal Audit						
Q4 Internal Audit Monitoring Report	To note progress and consider governance issues.	No	20 June 2011	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	File papers in Internal Audit						
Statutory Statement of Account 2010/11	Approval of Annual accounts & out-turn reports. Statutory requirement to be agreed by 30 June.	Yes	20 June 2011	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Bob Palmer 01992 564279	File papers in Accountancy						
Annual Audit & Inspection Plan 2010/11	To receive and note the plan from the Council's External Auditors.	No	28 June 2011 20 June 2011	Council Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group. Finance Performance Management Cabinet Committee.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	None.						
Q1 Internal Audit Monitoring Report 2011/12	To note progress & consider governance issues.	No	22 September 2011	Audit and Governance Committee	Corporate Governance Group.	Brian Bassington 01992 564446	File papers in Internal Audit						
Financial Issues Paper	Part of Budget 2012/13 Process.	Yes	26 September 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Management Board.	Bob Palmer 01992 564279	File papers in Accountancy						
Corporate	Quarterly update of	Yes	26 September	Finance and	Risk Management	Bob Palmer	File papers in						

Risk Update	corporate risks.		2011	Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Group.	01992 564279	Accountancy
Q1 Financial Monitoring	Monitoring of Expenditure against Budget.	Yes	26 September 2011	Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee	Service Directors. Finance Scrutiny Panel. Portfolio Holders.	Peter Maddock 01992 564602	File papers in Accountancy.
Capital Programme Review	Annual Full Update of Programme.	Yes	24 October 2011	Cabinet	Spending Control Officers.	Ms Teresa Brown 01992 564605	File Papers in Accountancy

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Roding Valley Agreement with Buckhurst Hill Parish Council	To report back to Members the outcome of further Member discussions with Buckhurst Hill Parish Council.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet	Buckhurst Hill Parish Council.	Laura MacNeill 01992 564223	Papers held in Environmental Street Scene Performance and Operations unit

WORK PROGRAMME - 1 DECEMBER 2010 TO 31 MARCH 2011

PORTFOLIO - ENVIRONMENT

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Collection of Recycling from Bring Bank sites throughout the District	To award a contract for collection of recycling from Bring Bank Sites throughout the District.	Yes	24 December 2010	Environment Portfolio Holder		David Marsh 01992 564192	None.
Purchase of Bins and Containers for Flats	To award a contract for the purchase of bins and containers for flats.	Yes	31 January 2011	Environment Portfolio Holder		David Marsh 01992 564192	None.
Purchase of new vehicles for waste and recycling service	To consider options for purchase or hire of older vehicles on the waste service.	Yes	31 January 2011	Cabinet		John Gilbert 01992 564062	None.
Bring Bank recycling centre sites	To consider award of contract for collections from bring bank recycling centres, with or without suspension of some services as the Council provides a comprehensive door step collection service.	Yes	31 January 2011	Environment Portfolio Holder (if no change made to collections) Cabinet (if changes made to collections arrangements)		John Gilbert 01992 564062	None.

WORK PROGRAMME - 1 DECEMBER 2010 TO 31 MARCH 2011

PORTFOLIO - HOUSING

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Annual Waiver of Contract Standing Orders	To obtain approval to waiver for specified contracts.	No	6 December 2010	Cabinet		Paul Pledger 01992 564248	None.
Straw Bales Development - Millfield, High Ongar	To agree whether or not Council land should be sold to enable a straw bale housing development to be undertaken by a housing association.	No	6 December 2010	Cabinet		Roger Wilson 01992 564419	None.
Review of Home Ownership Grants	To review progress, and whether budget should be made for 1011/12.	Yes	6 December 2010	Cabinet	None.	Sandy Lindsay 01992 564035	None.
Changing RSLs for the Home Option Scheme	To consider some improvements to the scheme.	Yes	31 December 2010	Housing Portfolio Holder	Other members of Herts & Essex Housing Options Consortium Tenants and Leaseholders Federation	Roger Wilson 01992 564419	None.
Affordable Housing Scheme - Merlin Way, North Weald	To consider the transfer of land to a housing association to develop an affordable housing scheme.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet	Home Housing Group	Alan Hall 01992 564004	Housing Policy File H880
Off Street Parking Schemes	To consider tenders received and agree the schemes to be undertaken in 2010/11.	Yes	31 January 2011	Cabinet	Residents consulted on proposed schemes	Paul Pledger 01992 564248	Consultation Results
Review of Disabled Adaptations Budget	To consider changes to the budget.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet		Paul Pledger 01992 564248	None.
Development of Former Red Cross Hall Site	To consider whether or not to transfer the site to a housing association to develop for affordable	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet	Preferred Housing Association Partners.	Alan Hall 01992 564004	Housing Policy File H748

Waltham Abbey	housing.									
Additional Housing Capital Schemes	To seek budget provision and, if necessary, a Supplementary Estimate.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet				Paul Pledger 01992 564248	None.	
Replacement Vehicles for Building Maintenance Section	To agree leases of vehicles	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet				Paul Pledger 01992 564248	None.	
Permanent Appointments of Temporary Homelessness Prevention Officers	To consider whether these temporary posts should be made permanent.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet				Roger Wilson 01992 564419	None.	
Sale of EFDC Garage sites Stonyshotts, Waltham Abbey	To consider whether the Council's garage site, suffering from structural problems, should be sold for development land.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet				Paul Pledger 01992 564248	Structural report on condition of garages. Development feasibility drawing and associated instructions	
Virement - Funding of Piper Haven Alarm Equipment	To agree a virement of funds, to enable the Council's Piper Haven alarm equipment to be upgraded, before maintenance support is withdrawn.	No	31 January 2011	Cabinet				Roger Wilson 01992 564419	None.	
Review of "Mow and Grow" Scheme	To review the scheme and future funding.	Yes	1 March 2011	Housing Portfolio Holder				Roger Wilson 01992 564419	None.	
HRA Business Plan 2011/12	To agree the Plan	Yes	31 March 2011	Housing Portfolio Holder				Alan Hall 01992 564004	None.	
Review of Housing Service Standards	To consider performance against standards in 2010/11 and agree any required changes.	Yes	11 August 2011	Housing Portfolio Holder				Alan Hall 01992 564004	None	
Housing Strategy Action Plan	To agree a new Action Plan for 2011/12.	No	12 September 2011	Cabinet				Alan Hall 01992 564004	None	

2011/12 Housing Allocations Scheme	Annual Review of the scheme.	Yes	24 October 2011	Cabinet	Citizens Advice Bureaux. Tenants. Leaseholder Federation. Registered Social Landlords. Local Councils.	Roger Wilson 01992 564419	Current Scheme
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ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Parking Strategy	To seek approval of the Council's Parking Strategy.	Yes	6 January 2011	Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Standing Panel		Kim Durrani 01992 564055	None.
Civil Parking Enforcement across the District	To consider options for joining the new parking partnership lead by Colchester Council and consisting of Harlow, Tenterden, Braintree Uttlesford Councils.	Yes	31 January 2011 31 January 2011	Cabinet Cabinet	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder.	Kim Durrani 01992 564055	None.
Depping Parking Review	To review the recently implemented parking restrictions.	Yes	7 March 2011	Cabinet	Consultation with affected residents on proposals.	Kim Durrani 01992 564055	Cabinet reports
Buckhurst Hill Parking Review	To review the recently implemented parking restrictions.	Yes	18 April 2011	Cabinet	Consultation with affected residents on proposals	Kim Durrani 01992 564055	Cabinet reports
Broadway Parking Reviews	To review the recently implemented parking restrictions.	Yes	6 June 2011	Cabinet	Consultation with affected residents on proposals.	Kim Durrani 01992 564055	Cabinet reports

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Planned Preventive Maintenance Programmes for the Civic Offices, Operational Buildings and Commercial Property 2010/11 - 2014/15	To consider proposals for the five year period 2010/11 to 2014/15.	Yes	6 December 2010	Cabinet	Contractors.	Mike Tipping 01992 564280	None.

WORK PROGRAMME - 1 DECEMBER 2010 TO 31 MARCH 2011

PORTFOLIO - LEISURE & WELLBEING

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
Grant Aid 2010/11 - November 2010		Yes	30 November 2010	Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder		Chris Overend	Applications for various grants together with supporting information
Development of AWP @ Town Mead , Waltham Abbey	Award building contract tender.	No	20 December 2010	Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder	Community and Stakeholders in Waltham Abbey.	Julie Chandler 01992 564214	Cabinet report February 2010
Grant Aid 2010/11 - December 2010	Applications for determination and allocation of budget.	No	31 December 2010	Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder		Chris Overend 01992 564247	File papers in the Office of the Chief Executive
Grant Aid 2010/11 - February 2011	Applications for determination and allocation of budget.	No	28 February 2011	Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder		Chris Overend 01992 564247	File papers in the Office of the Chief Executive
Limes Farm Hall	Award building contract tender.	No	7 March 2011	Cabinet	Limes Farm Community & Stakeholders 2009/10.	Julie Chandler 01992 564214	Cabinet Report April 2010
Grant Aid 2010/11 - April 2011	Applications for determination and allocation of budget.	No	30 April 2011	Leisure & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder		Chris Overend 01992 564247	File papers in the office of the Chief Executive

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	KEY DECISION	DATE OF DECISION	DECISION MAKER	CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS	REPRESENTATION ARRANGEMENTS	BACKGROUND PAPERS
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Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 29 November 2010

Report of: Constitution & Members Services Standing Scrutiny Panel

SCRUTINY



Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio Holder: Leader

Subject: Statutory Guidance on Duty to Respond to Petitions

Responsible Officer: Chris Overend (01992 564247)

Democratic Services Officer: A Hendry (01992 564246)

Recommendations:

That a report be submitted to the Council recommending as follows:

(1) The introduction of a revised petitions scheme (as shown in Appendix) incorporating the following elements:

- requirements for and arrangements for responding to petitions;
- involvement of partner organisations in the petitions process;
- a percentage threshold of 2% of the District's population (2,400) in terms of signatories to a petition required to trigger a debate at Full Council;
- a percentage threshold of 1% of the District's population (1,200) in terms of signatories to a petition required to trigger attendance of a 'Senior Officer' at an Overview and Scrutiny meeting to give evidence on a matter;
- publication on the Council's website; and
- provision of a facility for making electronic petitions to be in place by 15 December 2010.

(2) The required revisions to the Council Procedure Rules, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, and other necessary amendments to the Constitution be made and reported on by the Assistant to the Chief Executive in due course.

(3) The operation of the revised petitions scheme and its impact be reviewed in the summer of 2011.

Report:

Introduction:

1. At our meeting on 24 June 2010, we received a report setting out the main provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, and subsequent statutory guidance, in respect of the duty to respond to petitions. We noted, in particular, the requirement for the new scheme to be approved by the Full Council; publication on the Council's website; provision of a facility for making electronic petitions to be in place by 15 December 2010; the requirements for responding to petitions; involvement of partner organisations in the petitions process; and the trigger levels required for there to be a debate of the Full Council or for a senior local government officer to give evidence at a meeting of the authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. At the 24 June meeting, we approved a draft containing the elements referred to above, to form the basis of the new scheme to be put forward for adoption by the Council. However, to be able to make a more informed decision about the trigger levels which should be applied, we asked for details to be made available of the types of issue referred to in petitions received, by the Council in recent years, and the extent of the geographical area impacted on by the different issues referred to in these petitions. These additional details were made available and discussed by us at our subsequent meeting on 9 November 2010.

3. In a letter of 24 September 2010 the Government advised local authorities that the statutory guidance was to be withdrawn, with local authorities to have more discretion on how to deal with petitions locally. Nonetheless the primary legislation, including the requirement to introduce a facility to make e-petitions, by 15 December 2010 remained in force.

Main Provisions

4. The 2009 Act requires all principal local authorities in England to establish a scheme for handling petitions made to the authority.

5. The scheme must be approved by a meeting of the full Council before it comes into force. In addition it must be published on the local authority's website and by any other method appropriate for bringing it to the attention of those who live, work or study in its area. It can be revised at any time but the revised scheme must be approved and publicised in the same way. A signatory to a petition can be anyone who lives, works or studies in the local authority area, including under 18's. Furthermore, petitions must be acknowledged within a time period specified by the local authority. Among the many possible steps that the principal local authority may choose to take in response to a petition, the following must be included in the options listed in the scheme:

- Taking the action requested in the petition;
- Considering the petition at a meeting of the authority;
- Holding an enquiry;
- Referring the petition to Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Holding a public meeting;
- Commissioning research;
- A written response setting out the authority's views on the request in the petition.

6. Petitions with a significant level of support trigger the requirement for a debate of the issue concerned at a Full Council meeting, Local authorities can determine this threshold but it can be no higher than 5% of the local population. Likewise, petitions with a requisite level of support trigger the requirement for a senior local government officer to give evidence at a meeting of the authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Rejection Petitions

7. Because established processes already existed, the following matters were excluded from the scope of the petitions duty:

- Any matter relating to a planning decision;
- Any matter relating to an alcohol, gambling or sex establishment licensing decision; and
- Any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity had a right of course to a review or right of appeal.

Involvement of Partner Bodies in the Petitions Process

8. As community leaders and place-shapers, local authorities have a key interest in issues which, although wider than the remit covered by their specific functions, affect the local area. Petitions are a valuable opportunity for local authorities to demonstrate strong

leadership on issues of concern to the community.

9. The Act requires top tier authorities (Counties and Unitary Authorities) to respond to petitions relating to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area – in effect this means they must deal with petitions which refer to the functions of partner authorities. There is no specific mention of such a duty on District Councils. However, we are of the opinion that including a reference to the functions of partner bodies in the petitions scheme would illustrate the fact that the District Council is acting as an advocate for the local community and working with partners to resolve the issue. Under the proposed scheme it would be for the Portfolio Holder (or Council) to determine how the Council would respond, which might include referral to another body or working with partners to find a solution. Accordingly we are recommending inclusion of arrangements for involving partner bodies, and the issues they are responsible for, in the new scheme.

Trigger Levels/Thresholds

10. To help us determine the trigger levels/thresholds which should be applied we considered an analysis of the various petitions received by the Council from the 2005/06 Council year to date, in chronological sequence, categorised by type and the area which would be applicable, in determining the relevant % population trigger. We noted that some issues are clearly 'locality specific' whilst others cut across a number of wards. There are those that impact on a District-wide basis and some which affect other Districts. We agreed that the list was useful as a means of not only identifying the types of issue raised, but helping the would-be Responding Officer to determine the geographical area which could be used in applying trigger levels.

11. We received information on population levels for various 'sample' local authorities and the trigger levels set by the local authorities concerned in their newly agreed petitions schemes. We noted that, whilst the maximum trigger level which could be applied is 5%, there was a range of trigger levels being used, starting from 1% of the population in respect of the requirement for a Council debate and 0.5% for senior officer attendance at Overview and Scrutiny Committee, up to the maximum of 5%.

12. We further noted that few local authorities make specific reference to a separate trigger level being applied in respect of 'localised' issues. Most schemes are silent in that regard. One authority which does make reference to these issues, however, is Brentwood and we were in receipt of details of the Brentwood Scheme. This sets a threshold of 200 signatories for a Council debate in respect of parish/ward issues and 100 for such an issue to be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a senior officer required to be in attendance.

13. After consideration of the options available, we agreed to recommend a 2% trigger level (2,400 signatories) for the requirement for a Council debate and 1% (1,200 signatories) for senior officer attendance. We decided not to set a separate trigger level for localised (ie Parish/Ward) issues but agreed that this option should be reconsidered when the first periodic review of the trigger levels and the operation of the new scheme was carried out.

E-Petitions

14. We noted that the 2009 Act applied the same requirements to electronic petitions as to paper petitions, except for the following:

- Local authorities are only required to respond to e-petitions made through their e-petition facility;
- Local authorities must decide, whether the petition was appropriate for publishing on their facility;
- Local authorities to decide what equates to a signature on a petition; and
- Local authorities were required to provide a facility for people to submit petitions electronically.

15. Principal local authorities, when designing their scheme, are expected to ensure that the scheme is appropriate to their area, that the process is easy for citizens to use and the scheme accessible to all. We took all these issues into account whilst also being mindful of practical considerations, such as extending the scheme to other petitioners' sites, tracking down and responding to petitioners, and validating the authenticity of signatures.

16. Whilst recognising that the Government is now indicating there is now more flexibility in terms of how to respond to petitions locally and what might be incorporated in a new scheme, we agreed that it was preferable to finalise the new scheme in readiness for the implementation of the e-petition requirements. Accordingly we are recommending implementation of the new scheme (as shown in the Appendix attached) along with the new e-petitions arrangements, incorporating all the aspects referred to earlier in this report, on 15 December 2010.

Review of the New Scheme

17. Given that several aspects of the new scheme represent a significant 'departure' from the previous scheme, and the difficulties in establishing appropriate 'trigger' levels, it is suggested that the operation and impact of, the new scheme be reviewed at an early stage. We are therefore recommending that the first review of the scheme take place in the summer of 2011.

Resource Implications:

Minor costs associated with the introduction of the new petitions scheme.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 sets out new requirements for local authorities in terms of dealing with petitions. The proposals, as set out in this report, indicate the means by which the District Council will meet these requirements.

Consultation undertaken:

Discussion with other local authorities regarding their petitions schemes.

Background papers:

Sample Petitions of other local authorities, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and subsequent guidance on implementation of requirements on petitions.

Key Decision reference: (if required): N/A

Petition Scheme – Epping Forest District Council

1. Introduction

Epping Forest District Council recognises the importance of petitions as a means of engaging more meaningfully with local communities, enabling the public to let us know about their concerns and as a mechanism for generating service improvements.

This Protocol sets out how the public can submit a petition, how it will be dealt with and what the Council can do to respond to the issues raised.

2. How to submit a petition

We accept paper based petitions, e-petitions or a mix of paper and e-petitions.

Paper petitions can be sent to:

Assistant to the Chief Executive
Epping Forest District Council
Civic Offices
High Street
Epping, Essex
CM16 4BZ

Or **e-Petitions** can be created, signed and submitted online by following this link to our e-petitions system [\[link\]](#)

All petitions sent or presented to the council will receive an acknowledgement from the council within 10 working days of receipt. This acknowledgement will set out what we plan to do with the petition. We will treat something as a petition if it is identified as being a petition, or if it seems to us that it is intended to be a petition.

3. Exceptions to Petitions

The following are examples of petitions that do not fall within the scope of this petitions scheme:

(a) We do not accept emailed petitions as email systems are not secure. You must use either paper or our e-petitions system.

(b) Petitions which are considered to be vexatious, abusive, anonymous or otherwise inappropriate will not be accepted. In the period immediately before an election or referendum we may need to deal with your petition differently – if this is the case we will explain the reasons and discuss the revised timescale which will apply.

- (c) We do not accept Petitions relating to a planning decision; (as the Planning application process deals with objections to applications), including about a development plan document or the community infrastructure levy.
- (d) We do not accept Petitions relating to a licensing decision; (as the Licensing scheme deals with objections to applications)
- (e) We do not accept Petitions relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal.
- (f) Any matter for which the Standards Committee has powers for determining complaints received under the Local Assessment process.
- (g) Any complaint made against an employee of the District Council.
- (h) Any matter which is substantially the same as a petition submitted in the previous 12 months.
- (i) Where the subject matter is subject to ongoing legal proceedings.

Where a petition submitted relates to one of the categories set out above the Council will write to the lead petitioner and explain why the matter is not covered by the authority's Petitions Scheme. In appropriate circumstances, the Council may advise how the public views can be considered via alternative means.

4. *What are the guidelines for submitting a petition?*

Petitions submitted to the council must include:

- a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition. It should state what action the petitioners wish the council to take.
- the name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition.
- contact details, including an address, for the petition organiser. This is the person we will contact to explain how we will respond to the petition.

The contact details of the petition organiser will not be placed on the website. If the petition does not identify a petition organiser, we will contact signatories to the petition to agree who should act as the petition organiser.

5. *Who can sign a petition?*

Anyone who lives, works or studies in Epping Forest District can sign to support a petition including those under 18. The Council may ask for a valid email address and/or postcode if you sign an e-Petition on the Council's website. For paper petitions signatories must provide their signature, name and address.

6. *What will the council do when it receives my petition?*

If the Petition is submitted fully completed, an acknowledgement will be sent to the petition organiser within 10 working days of receiving the petition. It will let them

know what we plan to do with the petition and when they can expect to hear from us again. It will also be published on our website.

If the petitioner contacts the Council to start an e-Petition, then the Council and the Lead Petitioner will agree the period over which signatures will be collected and to agree the final wording of the petition. The petition will then be available to sign 'electronically' for the agreed period on the Council's website. On the expiration of that time, the Council will respond in accordance with Section 7 below.

If we can do what your petition asks for, the acknowledgement may confirm that we have taken the action requested and the petition will be closed.

If the petition has enough signatures to trigger a council debate, or a Senior Officer giving evidence, then the acknowledgment will confirm this and tell you when and where the meeting will take place.

If the petition needs more investigation, we will tell you the steps we plan to take.

If the petition applies to a planning or licensing application, is a statutory petition (for example requesting a referendum on having an elected mayor), or on a matter where there is already an existing right of appeal, such as council tax banding and non-domestic rates, other procedures apply. We will advise you if this is the case and on the correct procedure to be followed.

We will not take action on any petition which we consider to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate and will explain the reasons for this in our acknowledgement of the petition.

To ensure that people know what we are doing in response to the petitions we receive the details of all the petitions submitted to us will be published on our website, except in cases where this would be inappropriate. Whenever possible we will also publish all correspondence relating to the petition (all personal details will be removed). When you sign an e-petition you can elect to receive this information by email. We will not send you anything which is not relevant to the e-petition you have signed, unless you choose to receive other emails from us. [link to account settings]

7. *How will the council respond to petitions?*

If your petition receives 2400 signatures or more it will also be scheduled for a council debate [link to section on Full Council Debates] and if this is the case we will let you know whether this will happen

Correspondence with fewer than 20 (needs to be determined) signatures shall normally be dealt with by the appropriate Service as ordinary correspondence, unless the Service Director concerned is of the opinion that the subject matter is sufficiently important or contentious to warrant referring the matter to the appropriate Portfolio Holder.

Petitions with less than 2400 signatures will be considered and dealt with by the relevant portfolio holder who may:

- (a) take action if he or she has delegated powers to act alone;

(b) refer the matter to the Cabinet or a Sub-Committee of the Cabinet for decision.

All decisions made by the Portfolio Holder will be recorded in writing and signed in the format prescribed in the Key Decision Regulations and notified to the public, the lead petitioner and all members of the Council.

In cases where a petition is received after a decision has been made by the Council on any matter, the following steps will be taken by the Service Director unless the petition meets the threshold for a Council debate:

(a) a letter of acknowledgement shall be sent, including a statement of the action already taken by the Council;

(b) in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder, Committee or Sub-Committee Chairman a decision will be taken as to whether the petition raises new evidence requiring further consideration by the Portfolio Holder or Committee concerned;

(c) if it is decided that no new matters are raised by the petition, the petitioners shall be advised accordingly;

(d) if new matters are raised then the petition will be treated as new under this scheme.

Our response to a petition will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but may include one or more of the following:

- taking the action requested in the petition
- considering the petition at a council meeting
- holding an inquiry into the matter
- undertaking research into the matter
- holding a public meeting
- holding a consultation
- holding a meeting with petitioners
- referring the petition for consideration by the council's overview and scrutiny committee¹ or to the Cabinet or a Cabinet Committee
- writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition

In addition to these steps, the council will consider all the specific actions it can potentially take on the issues highlighted in a petition.

If your petition is about something over which the council has no direct control (for example healthcare or transport) we will consider making representations on behalf of the community to the relevant body. Should a petition calling for support call for something that goes against stated Council policy, the District Council may choose to say 'no' to the request.

¹ Overview and scrutiny committees are committees of councillors who are responsible for scrutinising the work of the council – in other words, the overview and scrutiny committee has the power to hold the council's decision makers to account.

The council works with a large number of local partners and where possible will work with these partners to respond to your petition. If we are not able to do this for any reason (for example if what the petition calls for conflicts with council policy), then we will set out the reasons for this to you.

You can find more information on the services for which the council is responsible here [\[link\]](#).

If your petition is about something that a different council is responsible for we will give consideration to what the best method is for responding to it. This might consist of simply forwarding the petition to the other council, but could involve other steps. In any event we will always notify you of the action we have taken.

8. Full council debates

If a petition contains more than 2400 signatures it will be debated by the full council unless it is a petition asking for a senior council officer to give evidence at a public meeting.

This means that the issue raised in the petition will be discussed at a meeting which all councillors can attend. The council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will then take place at the following meeting. The petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes.

The council will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting. They may decide to take the action the petition requests, not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate, or to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by the Cabinet or a relevant Cabinet committee.

Where the issue is one on which the council executive are required to make the final decision (i.e within the financial and policy framework), the council will decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision. This confirmation will also be published on our website.

9. Officer evidence

Your petition may ask for a Senior Officer² to give evidence at a public meeting about something for which the officer is responsible as part of their job. For example, your petition may ask a Senior Officer to explain progress on an issue, or to explain the advice given to elected members to enable them to make a particular decision.

If your petition contains at least 1200 signatures, the relevant Senior Officer will give evidence at a public meeting of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee or if appropriate one its Panels.

You should be aware that the overview and scrutiny committee may decide that it would be more appropriate for another officer to give evidence instead of any officer named in the petition – for instance if the named officer has changed jobs. The

² For the purpose of this Scheme Senior Officer means Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Service Director or Assistant Service Director

committee may also decide to call the relevant councillor to attend the meeting. Committee members will ask the questions at this meeting, but you will be able to suggest questions to the chair of the committee by contacting Democratic Services up to three working days before the meeting. You will be informed when and where this meeting will take place.

10. E-petitions

The council accepts only e-petitions which are created and submitted through our website [\[link\]](#). E-petitions must follow the same guidelines as paper petitions

The petition organiser will need to provide us with their name, postal address and email address and contact details. You will also need to decide how long you would like your petition to be open for signatures. Most petitions run for six months, but you can choose a shorter or longer timeframe, up to a maximum of 6 months.

When you create an e-petition, it may take 10 working days before it is published online. This is because we have to check that the content of your petition is suitable before it is made available for signature.

If we feel we cannot publish your petition for some reason, we will contact you within this time to explain. Our reasons for not publishing a petition will be linked to the exceptions section above. You will be able to change and resubmit your petition if you wish. If you do not do this within 10 working days, a summary of the petition and the reason why it has not been accepted will be published under the 'rejected petitions' section of the website.

When an e-petition has closed for signature, it will automatically be submitted to either the relevant officer, portfolio holder or Council In the same way as a paper petition, you will receive an acknowledgement within 10 working days.

11. How do I 'sign' an e-petition?

You can see all the e-petitions currently available for signature here [\[insert link\]](#). When you sign an e-petition you will be asked to provide your name, your postcode and a valid email address. When you have submitted this information you will be sent an email to the email address you have provided. This email will include a link which you must click on in order to confirm the email address is valid. Once this step is complete your 'signature' will be added to the petition.

People visiting the e-petition will be able to see your name in the list of those who have signed it but your contact details will not be visible.

12. What can I do if I feel my petition has not been dealt with properly?

If you feel that we have not dealt with your petition properly, the petition organiser has the right to request that the council's overview and scrutiny committee review the steps that the council has taken in response to your petition. It is helpful to everyone, and can improve the prospects for a review if the petition organiser gives a short explanation of the reasons why the council's response is not considered to be adequate.

The committee will endeavour to consider your request at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will take place at the following meeting. Should the committee determine we have not dealt with your petition adequately, it may use any of its powers to deal with the matter.

These powers include instigating an investigation, making recommendations to the council or executive and arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of the full council. Once the appeal has been considered the petition organiser will be informed of the results within 5 working days. The results of the review will also be published on our website.

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