



### NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL to be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 21 February 2019 for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Macnab'.

Derek Macnab  
Acting Chief Executive

Democratic Services  
Officer:

Democratic Services Manager Tel: (01992) 564243  
Email: [democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

#### WEBCASTING/FILMING NOTICE

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

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

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

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

**BUSINESS****1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking. The Democratic Services Manager will read the following announcement:

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

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

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

**2. MINUTES (Pages 9 - 22)**

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2018 (attached).

[Click here](#) for the appendices to the Council Minutes on 20 December 2018 which include the following;

Members Allowance Scheme;  
Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy;  
Statement of Licensing Policy;  
EFDC Honorary Alderwomen/Alderman Scheme; and  
Part 3 Scheme of Delegation – Delegation approved by or on behalf of the Council.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- (a) Apologies for Absence
- (b) Chairman’s Announcements

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

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

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

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

## 6. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

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

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

The Council's rules provide that answers to questions under notice may take the form of:

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

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

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

## 7. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET (Pages 23 - 44)

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

- (a) Report of the Leader;
- (b) Report of the Business Support Services Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (c) Report of the Contract and Technical Services Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (d) Report of the Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (e) Report of the Community and Partnership Services Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (f) Report of the Customer Services Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (g) Report of the Housing and Property Services Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (i) Report of the Planning Services Portfolio Holder (attached); and
- (j) Report of the Strategic Projects Portfolio Holder (attached).

## **8. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**

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

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

The Council's rules provide that answers to questions without notice may take the form of:

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

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

## **9. MOTIONS**

To consider any motions, notice of which has been given under the Council's rules.

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

### **Reports of the Cabinet**

#### **10. PAY POLICY STATEMENT (Pages 45 - 54)**

(Business Support Services Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report.

#### **11. CALENDAR OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2019/20 (Pages 55 - 58)**

(Customer Services Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report.

#### **12. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2019/20 (Pages 59 - 60)**

(Customer Services Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report.

#### **13. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2019/20 (Pages 61 - 82)**

(Business Support Services) To consider the attached report.

**14. COUNCIL BUDGET REPORT (Pages 83 - 158)**

- (a) (Business Support Services Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report.
- (b) To hold a recorded vote on the recommendations contained within the report, in accordance with the Council Procedure Rule 17.6 'Voting at Budget Decision Council 18 February 2016 5 Meetings' which directs Members to comply with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, immediately after any vote is taken at a budget decision meeting there must be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the persons who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.

"Budget decision" means a meeting at which:

- (a) a calculation is made (whether originally or by way of substitute) in accordance with any of the Sections 31A, 31B, 34 to 36A, 42A, 42B, 45 to 49, 52ZF, 52ZJ of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended; or
- (b) a precept is issued under Chapter 4 of Part 1 of that Act,

and includes a meeting where making the calculation or issuing the precept as the case may be was included as an item of business on the agenda for that meeting. References to a vote are references to a vote not only on the substantive budget motions agreeing the budget, setting council taxes or issuing precepts, but also on any amendments proposed at the meeting.

**15. REPORT OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT SELECTION PANEL - APPOINTMENT OF A CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

(Councillor C. Whitbread (Chairman of the Panel)) To consider a report and recommendations (to follow) arising from the meeting of the Panel held on 12 February 2019).

**16. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - EPPING FOREST COLLEGE**

**Recommending:**

**That the Council consider the appointment of a member representative to the Board of Governors of New City College and the local advisory body for the Epping Forest Campus College.**

As the Council will be aware, Epping Forest College has become part of the New City College Group. New City College is primarily a London-based skills and education provider organisation, that operates several further education colleges across eastern London.

New City College has recently agreed a request of the Council that a member representative be appointed to Board of Governors of the College. It should be noted that the College is keen to secure the appointment of a member representative with financial experience and that appointment to the Board of Governors would be subject to successful interview, in accordance with the normal practice of the College. The Council is also advised that officers are working closely with New City College to seek the establishment of a local advisory body for the Epping Forest Campus College and that it would be appropriate for the same member representative to also be appointed to the proposed local advisory body.

The Council is requested to consider the appointment (subject to interview) of a member representative to the Board of Governors of New City College and the local advisory body for the Epping Forest Campus College. Such appointment is a matter for the Council, as it is to an organisation carrying out a non-executive function.

**17. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Pages 159 - 160)**

(a) To receive the report of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to answer any questions without notice asked in accordance with Council Rules.

**18. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS (Pages 161 - 164)**

(a) To receive the attached report from Councillor H Kane, as the Council's representative on the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mill Ltd;

(b) To receive the attached report from Councillor N Bedford regarding the Green Arc, following a request for further information from Councillor J. H. Whitehouse;

(c) To receive from Council representatives any other reports on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations and to answers to any questions on those bodies which may be put without notice; and

(d) To request written reports from representatives on joint arrangements and external organisations for future meetings.

**19. 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.

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

(a) disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based; and

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

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

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## EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

<b>Committee:</b>	Council	<b>Date:</b>	20 December 2018
<b>Place:</b>	Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping	<b>Time:</b>	7.30 - 9.19 pm
<b>Members Present:</b>	Councillors R Bassett (Chairman), R Gadsby (Vice-Chairman), N Avey, R Baldwin, A Beales, H Brady, P Bolton, R Brookes, L Burrows, G Chambers, K Chana, D Dorrell, A Grigg, S Heap, S Heather, R Jennings, J Jennings, S Jones, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, Y Knight, J Lea, A Lion, M McEwen, L Mead, A Mitchell, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, S Neville, M Owen, J Philip, C P Pond, C C Pond, C Roberts, D Roberts, B Rolfe, M Sartin, J Share-Bernia, P Stalker, S Stavrou, D Stocker, D Sunger, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse and D Wixley		
<b>Apologies:</b>	Councillors N Bedford, I Hadley, L Hughes, J Knapman, A Patel, B Sandler and B Vaz		
<b>Officers Present:</b>	G Blakemore (Strategic Director), S Hill (Service Director (Governance & Member Services)), D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), P Maddock (Assistant Director (Accountancy)), R Perrin (Senior Democratic Services Officer), T Carne (Public Relations and Marketing Officer) and A Rose (Marketing & Digital Content Officer)		

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### 60. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant Director, Governance 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.

### 61. MINUTES

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting on 1 November 2018 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Staff Code of Conduct, D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive) declared a personal interest in agenda item 17 (Appointment of Monitoring Officer, Returning Officer and Other Officer Delegations). He advised that he had determined that his interest was pecuniary and that he would leave the meeting for the consideration and voting on the matter.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor G Mohindra declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 10 (Motions) due to the mentioning of Section 106 agreements which fell under his responsibilities as the Economic Development Cabinet Member for Essex County Council.

**63. ANNOUNCEMENTS****(a) Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman informed the Council that since the last meeting he had visited many volunteering groups and attended carol services across the District. In addition to these events, he had taken part in a sleeping ruff event in Chelmsford and raised £450 for the Chess Homeless charity.

**(b) Flowers**

The Chairman announced that he intended to send the flowers from tonight's meeting to Abbeyfield Residential Care Home, Cunningham House, North Weald.

**64. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)**

The Council noted that there were no public questions submitted for consideration at this meeting.

**65. MEMBER REMUNERATION PANEL - ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chairman of the Remuneration Panel, S. Lye, presented a report following the annual review of the Members' Allowances Scheme, which included the following aspects;

- (a) Basic Allowance;
- (b) Special Responsibility Allowances; and
- (c) Revised Scheme and Guidance

There had been minor drafting amendments, primarily to reflect the Council's new structure arrangements. A Statement of Implementation had been prepared based on not increasing the Basic Allowance or implementing any new Special Responsibility Allowances and it would be publicised on the Council's website, once agreed.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:****Basic Allowance**

- (1) That no change be made to the level of Basic Allowance of £4,300.00 per member per annum, currently included in the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme for the 2019/20 municipal year;

**Special Responsibility Allowance**

- (2) That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Staff Appeals Panel be removed from the Members' Allowances Scheme from the 2019/20 municipal year;
- (3) That no other changes be made to the application or implementation of the Special Responsibility Allowances currently included in the Members' Allowances Scheme for the 2019/20 municipal year;

**Revised Scheme and Guidance**

- (4) That, subject to the above recommendations and other administrative matters set out in this report, the Members' Allowances Scheme and Guidance for 2019/20 attached as Appendix 1, be adopted and implemented with effect from 24 May 2019;
- (5) That the Statement of Implementation of the Special Responsibility Allowances set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2019/20, attached as Appendix 2, be agreed; and
- (6) That the Panel be kept apprised of the Council's intentions with regard to any future restructure proposals that directly affect the application of Special Responsibility Allowance for the specific member roles and responsibilities currently reflected in the Members' Allowances Scheme.

**66. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE**

The Council noted that there were no members questions under notice submitted for consideration at this meeting.

**67. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

The Council received written reports from the Portfolio Holders. The Chairman invited the Leader of Council, to provide an oral report and the opportunity for other members of the Cabinet to give updates.

(a) The Leader of Council

The Leader updated the Council on the modernisation agenda, which included stream lining the senior management structure and reorganised the service groupings, to drive efficiencies savings and improve the Councils response to customers. This also included realigning the Portfolio Holders responsibilities with the service groupings.

The Council continued to be able to invest in new and improved services for the Districts residents, including providing a £10m leisure centre at Waltham Abbey and progressing the St John's Road re-development, to potentially create a new leisure centre, cinema and retail space. Similarly, the relocation of the Council's back office services to North Weald and redevelopment of the Civic Offices site, would be beneficial in creating a valuable community hub consisting of a number of public services and protecting the vitality of Epping High Street. Additionally, the Epping Forest Shopping Park was now fully let and trading well, generating additional revenue for the Council's front line services.

The Council's decision to fund three additional Police Officers and establishment of the police hub were unique across Essex, were having a positive impact on crime reduction. In conjunction with this, the Council had been working with the Epping Member of Parliament and the District Commander, to address residents concerns and return all night street lighting across the District. The Council had obtained agreement and costs from the Essex County Council Highways Portfolio Holder, K. Bentley and the Council would be writing to Town and Parish Councils shortly regarding initiatives to fund this, as public safety was the responsibility for all tiers of Local Government.

Finally, the examination in public was due to start in February and once the Local Plan had been found sound and adopted, the Council would focus on delivering housing, new employment opportunities and improved infrastructure, to ensure that the special character of the District was protected.

The Leader thanked both members and officers for all their work they had contributed over 2018.

(b) Contract and Technical Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor N. Avey advised that the Government had announced the Resource and Waste Strategy, which included packaging reforms and consistency of household collections across the country. The principles of reuse, reduce and recycle were to be reinforced and the effects of this on the Council would be monitored. There would be many consultations and members views would be sought for the formal responses.

(c) Strategic Projects Portfolio Holder

Councillor A. Lion informed the members that his Portfolio would assist the Leader and work with a number of services areas for strategic projects across the Council.

He had recently deputised at the Leaders and Chief Executive meeting, where discussions were had regarding policing, transport and road upgrades. The Essex Authorities were also sending a letter to the Mayor of London, concerning the managing of homeless people from London into Essex. He would also represent the Council at the London, Stansted, Cambridge Corridor Board and Local Strategic Partnership.

He advised that some of priorities that he would be involved in included the Garden Town development, St John's Road development, the Accommodation Strategy, the People's Strategy and the ICT Strategy. Also there were a number of cross business projects to work on which included paperless agendas, street charging points for electric cars, parking enforcement on the Council's housing estates and driving forward the digital initiation zone.

(d) Community and Partnership Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor S. Kane updated members on a recent incident in Loughton involving a dozen youths and a taser. Following these two crimes had been reported and Essex Police had contacted and requested members of the public to formally report any crimes that had been suggested on social media. He advised that no prior intelligence had been received before the incident, although the Police were able to get 10 officers to vicinity and 8 additional officers would be patrolling the area surrounding the two schools that were still open.

(e) Business Support Services Portfolio Holder

The Local Government Settlement had been announced on 13 December 2018 and consultation responses were required by 10 January 2019.

## 68. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

(a) Homelessness

Councillor H. Whitbread asked the Housing & Property Services Portfolio Holder what the Council was doing to support and address homelessness in the District.

Councillor S. Stavrou advised the Council took the issue of homelessness extremely seriously and over the last couple of years, the budget from the Government had increased. The support grant had helped to pay for an additional Homelessness Prevention officer, to levitate and prevent homelessness in the district. The Council worked with many organisations that provided outreach programmes, to identify, contact and help rough sleepers.

The Council had been required to take a snapshot of homelessness in the District, which revealed 3 people. The Government had allocated £11m in 2019/20 to halve homelessness by 2022 and to end rough sleeping totally by 2027. The Council had put in a bid for the funding and if successful, it would be put towards another support officer, to give assistance the Homelessness Prevention Team.

(b) Lichfields Impact Study - The Broadway, Loughton

Councillor D. Sungen asked the Commercial & Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder when the Lichfields Impact Study concerning The Broadway, Loughton would be made available by the Council.

Councillor A. Grigg advised that officers had been analysing the impact assessment and it would be available to Ward Councillors on 4 January 2019 and publically available on 11 January 2019, when the Asset Management Economic Development Cabinet Committee agenda was published for the meeting on Thursday 17 January 2019.

(c) Epping Forest Libraries Services

Councillor S. Neville asked the Leader of the Council;

- (a) whether he agreed that the threat of closure to four of the Districts libraries, left this authority without a comprehensive library service as required under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964; and
- (b) what could be learnt from Thurrock Unitary Authority, who were trying to increase footfall and do everything they could to keep open the 10 libraries under threat in their authority.

Councillor C. Whitbread advised that it was the responsibility of Essex County Council, although all members and residents should respond to the consultation regarding the Districts libraries. Furthermore, there were also a number of other ways to run libraries, which had been demonstrated across the county such as community libraries and this should be considered.

(d) Crisp Pack Recycling

Councillor C.C. Pond asked whether the Contracts & Technical Services Portfolio Holder was aware of the initiative by Walkers crisps to recycle crisp packs and whether discussion could be had with Biffa to potentially include this in the kerb side recycling.

Councillor N. Avey advised that he had not been aware of the Walkers initiative, although he would discuss this with officers and potentially Biffa.

(e) Lichfield Impact Study - The Broadway, Loughton

Councillor C. Roberts informed the Commercial & Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder that he had requested a copy of the draft report for the Impact Study on The Broadway, Loughton on 13 December 2018 and would like to know when it would be available.

Councillor A. Grigg advised that the Ward Councillors, which were Councillors C. C. Pond and M. Owen, would receive a copy of the report on 4 January 2019 and the report would be published within the Asset Management Economic Development Cabinet Committee agenda on the 11 January 2019.

(f) Local Plan

Councillor J.M. Whitehouse asked the Planning Services Portfolio Holder when a full schedule of the proposed amendments to the Local Plan would be available and what the process would be for members input and agreement.

Councillor J. Philip advised that the Council would not be aware of all the amendments until the Local Plan had been through the Public Examination procedure. He advised that there were processes for making modifications and various levels. Furthermore, it was very rare that any plan got through the examination process without some amendments, which were called Major Modifications. These would be suggestions from the examiner about what the Council would need to do, in their view to make the plan sound.

Any other major changes required, would go through the standard processes and where required, the public would be consulted. The full list of amendments would be made available through a report to the Local Plan Cabinet Committee or Cabinet.

(g) The Broadway, Loughton

Councillor M. Owen asked the Commercial & Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder whether the Council had ever discussed the sale or redevelopment of land at The Broadway, Loughton; and if the Council had done enough for a tenant on The Broadway, who would be shortly closing their premises, due to the possible impact from another retailer at the Epping Forest Shopping Park.

Councillor A. Grigg advised that the Council was not selling The Broadway, but were trying to attract businesses and people to the area, which had led to some changes that current tenants at the Broadway were concerned about.

With regards to the individual tenant mentioned, it was noted that they had taken on an assignment from a previous tenant, and not directly with the Council. Information regarding the application of a competitive retailer on the Epping Forest Shopping Park had been known on the 10 April 2017, and considered by Loughton Town Council on 24 April 2017. This had been in the public arena before the tenant on The Broadway had taken the assignment. A payment plan had been arranged for the tenant, although the Council could not allow the situation to continue. Therefore the Council had done everything possible to assist.

(h) Volunteers

Councillor S. Murray asked the Leader of Council, if he recognised the many local residents that volunteer for a community service in the District and the service provided by Epping Forest Foodbank, which had seen a 40% increase since 2017.

Councillor C. Whitbread applauded all of the volunteers that gave their time to the local community.

The Foodbank provided a huge support to residents in the District and he noted the worth while service they provided. He advised that if the Foodbank contacted the Council, members would look at ways to help assist the service, through possible grants.

(i) Local Plan

Councillor L. Burrows asked the Planning Services Portfolio Holder for further information on the arrangements for the examination in public for the Local Plan.

Councillor J. Philip advised that the first meetings would start in February 2019. The enquiry would take place in the Committee Rooms at the Civic Offices, which would be opened out to one room. It would be webcast and the Council Chamber would be used as an overflow area, where the enquiry could be viewed. The examination was currently schedule for 15 days and the Council wanted the process to be accessible to everyone.

(j) Christmas Tree Collections

Councillor J. Share-Bernia asked the Contracts & Technical Services Portfolio Holder for information on the collection of Christmas trees after the festive period.

Councillor N. Avey advised that residents should leave their Christmas trees next their green bins for collection after Christmas and if the trees were more than 6 feet tall, they should cut into half.

(k) Black Plastic

Councillor D. Wixley asked the Contracts & Technical Services Portfolio Holder that following his update on the Governments Resources and Waste Strategy, whether anything had been raised about the issues of non-recyclable black plastics.

Councillor N. Avey advised that this would probably be picked up in the consultations about the Resources and Waste Strategy.

## 69. MOTIONS

(a) **Planning Delegations and Practice**

**Moved by Councillor H. Kauffman and seconded by Councillor C.C. Pond**

“That the Council requests the Constitution Working Group to add to its work programme a revision of planning delegations and practice, so as to permit Members to review the text of any substantial draft S106 or S278 agreement before it is finalised.”

**Amendment moved by Councillor J. Philip and seconded by Councillor P. Keska**

To replace the motion with the following;

“That the Council requests the Constitution Working Group adds a review of planning delegations and practise to examine the approach taken to section 106 and section

278 agreements.”

**Carried**

Motion as amended **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council requests the Constitution Working Group adds a review of planning delegations and practise to examine the approach taken to section 106 and section 278 agreements.

**70. LANDMARK SITE - SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL ESTIMATE**

**Mover: Councillor A. Grigg, Commercial and Regulatory Portfolio Holder**

Councillor A. Grigg presented a report for additional Capital expenditure required to undertake necessary alterations and the letting of the Council's units at the Landmark Building.

Report as first moved **ADOPTED**

**RESOLVED:**

That a Capital supplementary sum of £140,000 to undertake the necessary alterations and letting of the Council's units at the Landmark Building be approved.

**71. CAPITAL REVIEW 2018/19-2022/23**

**Mover: Councillor G Mohindra, Business Services Portfolio Holder**

Councillor G. Mohindra submitted a report seeking amendments to the Capital Programme for the five year period 2018/19 to 2022/23, taking into account any slippage and re-phasing approved in June 2018 and any new schemes and allocations proposed since.

**RESOLVED:**

That the following amendments to the Capital Programme be approved:

(a) A supplementary capital estimates of £56,000 for works to investment properties and £23,000 for the Shopping Park letting fees in 2018/19;

(b) the inclusion of a supplementary capital estimate of £140,000 for works to let the units at the Landmark Building in 2018/19 and £70,000 for the installation of a new sub-station at North Weald Airfield, pending a Cabinet report submission and approval;

(c) an additional allocation of £603,000 relating to the updated five-year planned facility management programme in 2021/22;

(d) the inclusion of Capital allocations of £1,706,000, including recommendation (b), and £323,000 into 2018/19 and 2019/20 respectively as approved by appropriate delegations;

(e) savings and reductions totalling £53,000 in 2018/19 and £10,000 in



2019/20 for General Fund projects;

(f) virements relating to the Accommodation Project, pending approval, of £25,000 in 2018/19 and £400,000 in 2019/20 to be taken from on-hold planned maintenance budgets;

(g) further virements in 2018/19 of £25,000 and £206,000 in 2019/20 within the General Fund and a transfer of a £33,000 potential savings within the car parking schemes;

(h) additional allocations, savings, reductions and virements in respect of the Council's housebuilding programme and other HRA capital schemes; and

(i) carry forwards totalling £2,294,000 and £7,473,000 from 2018/19 to future years for General Fund and HRA capital schemes respectively.

## **72. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

**Mover: Councillor G. Chambers, Chairman of Standards Committee**

Councillor G. Chambers advised that the Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on the Council and the local councils in the District, to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members. The requirements included having a Code of Conduct with which members must comply. The Act also required that authorities adopt arrangements for dealing with complaints about breaches of the Code of Conduct by members, which included making provision for the appointment of at least one Independent Person to support arrangements for dealing with standards matters.

### **RESOLVED:**

That, the Council endorsed the appointment of Mr. A. Brooks and Mrs. J. Clare to the current vacancies for Independent Persons on the Standards Committee.

## **73. ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY**

The Leader reported that the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy had been reviewed and considered by the Audit and Governance Committee. The Strategy had incorporated amendments around the prevention of bribery introduced by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and strengthened anti-corruption elements in light of the new United Kingdom Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2017-2022.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Council's revised Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, as attached at Appendix 3 to these minutes be approved.

## **74. LICENSING ACT 2003 STATEMENT OF POLICY - PERIODIC REVIEW**

**Mover: Councillor R. Morgan, Chairman of the Licensing Committee**

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee reported that the Council was required to review the Statement of Policy made under the Licensing Act 2003. The Licensing Committee had considered the updated Policy which had incorporated minor typographical corrections and consultations responses.

**RESOLVED:**

That the attached Statement of Licensing Policy at Appendix 4 be adopted.

**75. CONSTITUTIONAL WORKING GROUP****Mover: Councillor McEwen, Chairman of the Constitution Working Group**

Councillor M. McEwen presented a report regarding a review of the Planning Process and Local Council's Attendance; a review of the Petition Scheme; and a scheme for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen.

**RESOLVED:****PLANNING PROCESS REVIEW – LOCAL COUNCIL'S ATTENDANCE**

(1) That in the instance where a local council had not registered to speak at an Area Plans Subcommittee, or failed to attend, having previously advised the Council of their intention to attend and speak, relevant applications be automatically referred (without any consideration of the merits of the development proposal) to the Service Director (Planning Services) for determination in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation;

(2) That to facilitate (1) above, the following additions be made to the constitution:

(i) That in Part 3 of the Constitution – Scheme of Delegations from the Council: delegation CLD2, paragraph 3 (c) be reworded to read:

“3(c) An objection from a Local Council, material to the planning merits of the proposal is received and confirming in writing their intention to attend and speak at the meeting where the proposal will be considered. Should the relevant Local Council fail to register to speak, the application be referred (without any consideration of the merits of the development proposal) to the Service Director (Planning Services) for determination in accordance with Rule P2 (2) (Planning Applications) set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.”

(ii) That in Part 4 – Council Rules P2 (planning Applications, a further paragraph be added to read:

“P2 (2) That, pursuant to the scheme of delegation on planning applications set out in Part 3 of this constitution, where a local council have indicated, during the course of planning consultations, of their intention to attend and speak at the meeting where the proposal will be considered and then subsequently fail to register and attend, the application be referred (without any consideration of the merits of the development proposal) to the Service Director (Planning Services) for determination.”

**PETITION SCHEME – REVIEW**

(1) That the revised version of the Petition Scheme attached at Appendix 5, be adopted.

**APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN**

- (1) That the scheme for the Appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen, attached at Appendix 6, be adopted; and
- (2) That a District Development Fund budget of £3,500 to fund the implementation of the scheme, production of a supply of Badges of Office and Roll of Honour book be approved.

**76. APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER, RETURNING OFFICER AND OTHER OFFICER DELEGATIONS**

The Monitoring Officer presented a report to the Council regarding the appointment of the Monitoring Officer, Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer and other Officer Delegations.

**RESOLVED:**

Monitoring Officer

- (1) That Nathalie Boateng, be designated as Monitoring Officer with immediate effect in accordance with Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Sections 26-37 of the Localism Act 2011 for the purpose of performing the duties imposed by those sections; and to be responsible for any Parish or Town Councils which were affiliated for the time being to the Epping Forest Standards Committee under Chapter 7 of the Localism Act;
- (2) That the existing delegations to the Monitoring Officer attached at Appendix be noted;

Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer

- (3) That, in accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983 and all related legislation, Derek Macnab be appointed as Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) for the Council with immediate effect with authority to appoint deputy or deputies as may be required;
- (4) That, in terms of Section 41 of the Local Government Act 1972 and all related legislation, and with immediate effect, Derek Macnab be appointed as Returning Officer for the Council, with authority to act in that capacity for elections to the District Council and all or any parish and town councils within the Epping Forest District. This appointment to continue until a further review of this position when a new chief executive was appointed by the Council;
- (5) That the Council's Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer be also appointed or authorised to act in respect of all related electoral, poll or referendum duties, including those in relation to County Council elections, elections to the European Parliament (if required), and for national and regional or local polls and referendums;
- (6) That, in relation to the duties of Returning Officer or any other electoral, referendum or polling duties arising from such appointment, the Returning Officer shall be entitled to be remunerated in accordance with scale of fees approved by the Council for local elections, or the relevant scale of fees prescribed by a Fees Order in respect of national, regional or European Parliament elections, polls or referendums;

(7) That in all cases where it was a legal requirement or normal practice to do so, fees paid to the Returning Officer shall be superannuable, and the Council shall pay the appropriate employer's contribution to the superannuation fund, recovering such employer's contributions from central government or other local authorities or agencies where this could be done;

(8) That, in relation to the conduct of local authority elections and polls, and elections to the United Kingdom Parliament, and all other electoral duties where the Council was entitled by law to do so, the Council shall take out and maintain in force insurance indemnifying the Council and the Returning Officer against legal expenses reasonably incurred in connection with the defence of any proceedings brought against the Council or the Returning Officer and/or the cost of holding another election in the event of the original election being declared invalid (provided that such proceedings or invalidation are the result of the accidental contravention of the Representation of the People Acts or other legislation governing the electoral process, or accidental breach of any ministerial or other duty by the Returning Officer or any other person employed by or officially acting for him in connection with the election or poll); and

(9) That any such insurance carrying an 'excess' clause by which an initial portion of risk was not insured, the Council, through its internal insurance fund or otherwise, would indemnify the Returning Officer up to the value of such excess.

#### Other Officer Delegations

(10) That the proposed changes to the Council Scheme of Delegation reflecting changes to the Monitoring Officer, Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer and to the revised responsibilities of level 3 and 4 officers attached at Appendix 7 be approved;

(11) That consequential changes made by the Leader of the Council to the Scheme of Executive Delegation attached at Appendix 8 be noted;

(12) That the Monitoring Officer be granted authority to make changes to the Constitution, as required to reflect the new officer structure.

## **77. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor M. Sartin reported that the Strategic Director, G. Blakemore had made a presentation on the Council's progress concerning the People Strategy. The Committee had also considered a report regarding a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations; the Corporate Plan, Key Action Plan for 2018/19, which included quarter 2 progress; the various work programmes for the Committee and Select Committees; and progression for the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee Framework review.

Furthermore, Councillor M. Sartin informed the Council that a Task and Finish Panel had been set up to consider the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee Framework and members interested in participating would find details in the Members Bulletin or could contact Democratic Services directly.

**78. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

(a) The Council received a written report regarding One Epping Forest (Formally Local Strategic Partnership) from Councillor C. Whitbread. Councillor C.C. Pond enquired whether the Council had a full or part time member of staff supporting One Epping Forest. Councillor C. Whitbread advised that John Houston was the Local Strategic Manager. Councillor J.H. Whitehouse asked whether the minutes of One Epping Forest could be published in the Members Bulletin and what was the 'Vibrate Partnerships'. Councillor C. Whitbread advised that the Vibrant Partnerships was a trading name for Lee Valley Leisure Trust, which was committed to running venues and leisure facilities to the serve the region's communities. He would consult on whether the minutes of the One Epping Forest meetings could be published in either in the Members Bulletin or by another means.

(b) Councillor J.H. Whitehouse asked for a report on the Green Arc Board. Councillor C. Whitbread advised that Councillor N. Bedford had been involved in this organisation and he would ask him to report back to the Council.

**CHAIRMAN**

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

**Committee: Cabinet**

**Date: 21 February 2019**

**Subject: Business Support Services**

**Portfolio Holder: Councillor G Mohindra**

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Business Support Services Portfolio Holder be noted**

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### **Accountancy**

This meeting will receive the Budget and Council Tax setting report for 2019/20. The Budget has been considered by The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee and Cabinet prior to coming to this meeting. The settlement has now been confirmed and the Government has honoured its commitment to remove negative Revenue Support Grant. Other highlights include the decision not to increase the baseline for New Homes Bonus which has meant the Council being awarded more than originally thought and a one-off windfall returning some of the levy collected from authorities who have seen business rate growth.

The Settlement has also issued two consultation papers one relating to the Fair Funding Review (FFR) and the other to Business Rates retention. The first will look at the relative needs and resources formula that is used in arriving at the settlement and the second will look at how 75% Business rates retention might work in practice. The papers have been considered by the Resources Select Committee and a response submitted. The deadline is today.

As soon as the budget is set Accountancy will be turning their attention to the final accounts for 2018/19 and we have new Auditors this time round. Their initial planning and systems audit work have already commenced. The deadline for accounts closure and audit remain the same as last year 31<sup>st</sup> May for the Accounts to be presented for Audit and 31<sup>st</sup> July for approval.

As regards the Corporate Risk Register this is due to be reviewed over the coming months as it will need to be aligned with the new structure at the very least.

### **ICT Strategy**

#### **Desktop & Mobile Support**

The rollout of laptops to staff at the Civic Offices, Hemnall Street, Oakwood Hill and St John's Road is now complete, and all staff across those sites with roles that permit flexible working are now suitably equipped. Work is underway to upgrade the version of MicroSoft Office on remaining laptops which were not replaced to ensure commonality with the new hardware.

To further support flexible working, the current priority is to configure and rollout our new Mobile Device Management (MDM) System. This system will simplify rollout of

devices, and enhance the security of those devices. As part of this we are planning to migrate our mobile email solution to make use of Office 365. The implementation of our new MDM will enable two planned further large scale rollouts of mobile phones and tablets.

### **Application Support**

Following the successful upgrade of our document management system (Information@work) late last year, we are now working on the staged rollout of this system to Housing as a full workflow system, and the first teams have now gone live.

Following useful discussions with the Leadership team we have agreed our immediate priorities for Office 365, as part of this work continues on the configuration of SharePoint ahead of a planned go live for the Intranet in February. We are also working on the design of the file structure for SharePoint to replace our shared drives, but the high level structure cannot be implemented until the new Corporate structure has been designed.

The technical work in continuing to support the old website has provided some challenges, but the site remained operational long past its planned retirement date owing to delays with the website replacement project. Work is now focussing on reskinning our other web platforms to match the new site, but as this involves several suppliers it will be a gradual process.

ICT has also been involved in the Beta test of a replacement app for the [Modern.gov](#) committee management system which addresses the limitations of the current app. We anticipate a live release for this app in the Spring.

### **People Strategy**

The People Strategy target of £647,000 set for 2018/19 this has now been achieved and indeed exceeded which has meant some progress has already been made toward the 2019/20 target. Following the Common Operating Model (COM), eleven support teams have come together from across the organisation to build the Corporate Business Support Team and another team is due to go into consultation shortly.

Officers are consulting with Trade Unions on proposed changes to pay, grading and related terms and conditions. Three meetings have been held with a further arranged for 8 February. The objective of the negotiations is for the Council and Trade Unions to reach a Collective Agreement.

We are currently advertising for two corporate Management Trainees which has generated a lot of interest. It is hoped to make appointments by the end of March and the training programme will include attending a Degree course in management at Anglia Ruskin University and several projects sponsored by Leadership Team.

In addition to the Management Trainees officers are recruiting a number of specialist apprentices for example in Economic Development, Council Tax, PR and Project Management in addition to our usual cohort of business administration/customer service apprentices.



# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee: Cabinet**

**Date: 21 February 2019**

**Subject: Commercial and Regulatory Services**

**Portfolio Holder: Councillor A. Grigg**

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder be noted**

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## **Commercial and Regulatory Services - Portfolio Holder Report**

### **Private Sector Housing**

The Energy efficiency in privately rented properties Regulations have been introduced to tackle the least energy efficient properties in the country which impose unnecessary cost on tenants and the wider economy and contribute to avoidable greenhouse emissions. The regulations came into force for new lets and renewals of tenancies on 1st April 2018 and will apply, subject to certain exemptions, to all existing tenancies from 1st April 2020. In addition, properties that fail the minimum energy efficiency standards are also likely to present an increased likelihood of an excess cold hazard affecting the health and safety of occupants.

Using the GIS mapping tool and several Government databases, the Private Sector Housing Team have initiated a project to locate the worst energy efficient privately rented properties in the District and to take appropriate steps, including enforcement action where necessary, to ensure properties meet acceptable standards. Approximately 80 properties have been identified for further investigation.

### **Public Health**

Prior to Christmas, officers worked closely with Essex Police in dealing with a shooting range at junction 27 on the M25 Waltham Abbey. As a result of concerns about the range the Police had contacted the National Rifle Association (NRA) who undertook a site inspection. The subsequent report which was shared with EFDC identified safety issues of concern. A Prohibition Notice was served on the operator of the site (Full Metal Jacket Range Limited), under the Health and Safety at Work Act by the Public Health Team Manager on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2018. The Prohibition Notice prevents the site being used until the safety issues identified in the NRA report have been resolved. The Police are investigating separate offences by the operator. The site operator will also need to make a change of use application with our Planning Department.

Officers of the Public Health Team have been working with Public Health England in investigating a case of legionella which implicated showers at Scout Association HQ Gilwell Park. Officers have taken samples from the showers and are awaiting the results to determine if the showers are the source of infection. The Scout Association have a management regime for legionella onsite which includes risk assessments, routine sampling and preventative servicing and maintenance.

Officers of the Public Health Team have received intelligence from the Food Standards Agency and Essex Police and are currently investigating an allegation of an unregistered game larder. Hunters and their larders must be Registered as being a food business.

### **Building Control**

The Building Control team remains stable at present however they remain one FTE below establishment, the post having been frozen awaiting the outcome of the people strategy. The service income in October and November was well above the trend however December saw a sharp fall only to recover in January. These trends follow the pattern of previous years and were expected. The building industry is, according to business news, suffering from the uncertainty around Brexit, nevertheless, it is expected that overall income will exceed expenditure. This healthy position is helped by recent additional income from cross-border working with Uttlesford District Council who have suffered a reduction in their staffing.

### **Asset Management**

The Epping Forest Shopping Park is now fully let and trading. The Park is still proving extremely popular with customers. Following complaints from some traders on the Broadway that the Shopping Park is negatively affecting footfall and trade, the Council commissioned a further retail impact assessment. This has now been completed and was formally presented to the Council by Lichfields on 17th January 2019.

Cabinet has approved a report regarding the sale of Pyrles Lane Nursery on the 18th October 2018. The site is currently under offer to be sold to Durkan Developments who are in the process of conducting their legal and site due diligence. Solicitors have been appointed to progress the sale. The existing Nursery is due to relocate to Town Mead depot in refurbished premises. Initial enquiries have been returned to the buyer's solicitor.

The final version of the Leisure Centre feasibility study/options appraisal for the St John's Rd site is almost completed – there are some outstanding discussions to be had on financing options early in the New Year. However, the key recommendation of the study is that the St Johns Road site is the most viable leisure centre option rather than North Weald.

The majority of the site surveys have been completed in order to support any future development work. A renewed development brief is being commissioned based on previous work undertaken and taking into account the submission version of the Local Plan. This development brief will then support further planning applications.

The work in the preparation of a Planning Brief for the North Weald Airfield Master plan is ongoing, prior to the commissioning of a third-party consultant to assist in the preparation and submission of a planning application.

The legal process to document new terms for 2019 with Saunders Markets has commenced, after which the tender process can be undertaken to assess market demand and secure the best operator from January 2020.

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance have sent back queries related to their draft lease and it is hoped to be in a position to sign shortly. Construction of the new base for the National Police Air Service continues.

Following the withdrawal of interest from Co-Op and Costa Coffee in the Landmark Building on the Broadway, new marketing agents have been appointed. The lease for Units B, C & D are let to a local Mediterranean restaurant and fit out commenced in the New Year. Due to rear access issues, the Pub has now moved from Unit A to Unit F and the lease should complete by end February with fit-out to commence in March. The prospective tenants are

submitting the necessary planning and building regulation applications. Units A, E and G are on the market and are available for letting and agents are reporting interest.

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# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 21 February 2019

**Subject:** Contracts and Technical Services

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor N. Avey

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## **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Contracts and Technical Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Grounds Maintenance**

The grounds team had to take an unexpected break from their scheduled winter works to help clear the recent downfall of snow from paths and car parks at the Civic offices as well as at many of our Sheltered Housing units also badly affected by the recent cold snap. Armed with bags of grit, shovels and a tractor mounted snowplough the grounds staff worked hard to ensure safe access was maintained for our staff and visitors.

The autumn and winter months are when our main shrub & tree planting takes place, which this year, also included the planting of over 15,000 spring flowering bulbs. These new bulbs areas are located on various green spaces across the district and will provide a welcome splash of spring colour for many years.

## **Parking**

We have had our first snow of the year and we had the car parks gritted when required. The snow and icy conditions have had no adverse impact on parking services. The pay and display machines have worked well, a few frozen money slots were quickly defrosted by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) from our partner contractor NSL. We will monitor the weather and grit car parks accordingly.

Due to the free parking on weekends in December we deployed CEO to Epping Forest Shopping Park to assist with the marshalling of the car park in the run up to busy Christmas shopping period. This worked well and we will consider doing the same next year.

### *Loughton Broadway Parking Review:*

At the December meeting I informed Members that a meeting will be held once officers of the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) have assessed and collated responses to the public consultation. I will call the meeting as soon as I have confirmation that officers are ready with the information, I am confident that this meeting will be soon.

### *Epping Town Parking Review:*

The Epping Town Permit scheme became live on 21 January. The scheme is working well and has had the desired effect road safety and traffic flow has improved. I am pleased that we were able to accommodate local businesses by issuing Business Permits. As with all parking related schemes there has been the displacement effect. I have received complaints from residents where some displaced vehicles are now parking. We will have to consider these new roads very carefully and if majority of residents are in favour of new parking restrictions then I shall put these forward to NEPP.

### Tariff Change:

In September last year the Council agreed to update its car parking tariff. This was to address pressure on car parks and assist local businesses. Notices advising of the changes have gone up in the car parks as well as in the local paper. The change will be coming into force on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

### **Countrycare**

Since the last report Countrycare has worked on six different sites over eight days utilising on average 13 volunteers on each occasion.

At Chigwell Heath we spent a day eradicating the aspen and birch saplings and another creating glades in the woodland. In Linder's Field we continued with the fence erection which is now nearly finished. At All Saint's Church Nazeing we made a compost bin and planted up some gaps in the hedgerow. At Bobbingworth we renovated the hibernaculum making them more attractive for reptiles. Abbotts Wood received a new bridge connecting the wood to the recreation ground. And at Tree Top Meadow (the St John's development site) we planted a huge 424 trees with only nine volunteers on a very cold day.

On other sites without volunteers we have been doing routine maintenance of footpaths and strimming. The winter work plan is underway with coppicing and 225 trees are planned to be planted in February over four sites.

### **Leisure Management**

I shall be able to give a verbal update as the Leisure Management Partnership Board would have taken place on 13 February.

### **Waste Management**

Collections over the recent snowfall did not cause any significant disruption to services.

Biffa are considering rationalising collection routes in the coming months. This is normal practice to review collection arrangements every few years, for example to consider the growth in the District since the commencement of contract in 2014. The changes will result in a small reorganisation of collection routes (around 2,300 properties or 3.86% of all properties in the district). This could mean a change in the collection day for the affected residents. Members will be made aware of the relevant roads through the Bulletin. Affected residents will be informed through bin hangers which will give them details on the new collection arrangements. Biffa intend to introduce the change in collection towards the end of May.

At the last meeting I informed Members that there will be a change in the sub-contractor that Biffa employ to collect textiles from the door step. Once the new contractor has been appointed we are likely to see an increase in the collectable materials for example records, toys and books.

The district has again sold more compost bins via the ECC scheme than any other district. There will be a joint ECC/EFDC public information meeting on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> March at the civic offices on composting.

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date 21 February 2019**

**Subject:** Community & Partnerships Services Portfolio

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor S. Kane

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Community & Partnerships Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Environment & Neighbourhoods**

### **Fly-tipping**

To help promote compliance with waste duty of care, the Government has now introduced a new fixed penalty notice (FPN) to deal with household waste/fly-tipping offences. The aim of this law is to cut off the supply of waste that householders give to rogue traders, by requiring householders to check that the company they employ are an authorised waste carrier. This is a legal obligation on householders that previously could only be dealt with by prosecution or formal caution.

The FPN is now being used, with a default level of £200 and will be offered to most first time offenders, as a quick method of dealing with this offence, without any criminal record and court time. Investigating officers are often faced with an excuse that a householder (or business) did not record who they gave their waste to and therefore the fly-tipper cannot be traced. Guidance notes make it clear that if residents cannot demonstrate that who they gave their waste to was authorised i.e. at least provide their details as a starting point, it will be fair to assume they have failed in their duty of care. We have said before that “Your waste, is your responsibility”. This new FPN emphasises that is the case. The message is simple, householders must check, consider, record to protect themselves and reduce fly-tipping by rogue traders. Further information available at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-waste-duty-of-care-fixed-penalty-notice-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-waste-duty-of-care-fixed-penalty-notice-guidance)

### **“Wanted” poster:**

“Wanted posters” showing CCTV images of individuals “carefully” fly-tipping various items near to a bin store in Springfields, Waltham Abbey, have had several successes. Two offenders have already paid FPN’s of £200 and two more suspects are due to be interviewed, with four more posters currently in place. This particular site has now been clear of fly-tipping for a longer period than usual and officers are hopeful that the combination of warning letters, signs, an article in Housing news, new “wanted” posters and fines, will finally result in a reduction in fly-tipping.

It remains to be seen if the outcome is a change in poor behaviour and a reduction in fly-tipping overall, or simply re-locating the tipping to another area. Colleagues in Housing are in the process of installing new more explicit signs across the district, in Council owned bin stores. Later in 2019, we intend to ask Members to review the penalty levels for fly-tipping and household waste duty of care offences, which are currently at default levels set by Government e.g. £200 compared with a maximum level of £400 that can be set by Members.

## **Community, Health & Wellbeing**

### **Employee Wellbeing:**

As part of the Corporate Employee Wellbeing Strategy, an online Employee Health and Wellbeing Survey is being made available to all staff, to complete in February. The survey will give staff the opportunity to have their say in the development of a new healthy lifestyles programme and results will be used to develop a programme of activities and events for the Council's employees over the next 12 months. The programme will also involve the recruitment of Workplace Health Champions across all directorates who will liaise with their colleagues to give all staff the opportunity to shape the programme.

### **Memory Yoga**

New yoga sessions aimed at people living with Dementia have been developed and have commenced roll out in the district. Memory Yoga gives people with Alzheimer's the chance to release stress, relax and have fun. Carers are also welcome to these sessions. The sessions are available every Tuesday at Loughton Cricket Club from 10am -11.30am.

### **Nordic Walking**

Funding has been secured from Active Essex to develop new Nordic Walking sessions. Nordic Walking was originally a summer training activity for cross-country skiers and is based on using specially designed walking poles in a way that harnesses the power of the upper body to propel participants forwards as they walk. It is now a recognised way to turn a walk into whole-body exercise and it can be done by anybody, anywhere. Nordic Walking is suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels, with classes ranging from gentle walks for people with health concerns, to workout walks, which are a great way to improve fitness, lose weight and tone the whole body. The new weekly walks are currently being planned and will commence in March on a Tuesday morning.

### **Community Workshops for Adults in 2019**

A programme of monthly evening workshops for adults has been developed for 2019. The workshops are an excellent opportunity for people to learn new skills, reduce social isolation and have fun. Workshops this year will include; Food for Feet, truffle making, botanical leaf painting, BBQ fruit and vegetable garnishing art, fan making, crochet, bowl making, floral art, Victorian book art and soup making. All workshops will take place at the Hemnall Street office in Epping on a Tuesday evening.

### **Buckhurst Hill Social Inclusion Project, Community Crochet**

Building upon the work of the Buckhurst Hill Social Isolation Project, a community crochet class has been established in the Monkham's Pub, Buckhurst Hill. The popular weekly session takes places on a Tuesday morning and people have the opportunity to learn how to crochet, gain more confidence and make new friends.

### **Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY)**

CRY is a charity that aims to raise awareness of cardiac issues in young people. The aim is to prevent young people from sudden cardiac death through awareness, screening and research and to also support affected families. Community & Partnerships staff are supporting Della Tudisca, a local bereaved mum from Buckhurst Hill, to secure funding to run a screening event in June at Grange Farm, Chigwell so that over 200 young people (aged range 14-35) may be screened for any potential cardiac risks.



## **Strength and Balance Project for Care Homes**

A new project to improve mobility and increase older people's level of physical activity in residential care homes will shortly be delivered. The project is funded by Active Essex and 5 local care homes have expressed an interest in being part of the project to date. A qualified exercise instructor will visit each care home and deliver 7 weeks' of activity sessions to residents. Alongside this staff will train up Activity Co-ordinators based at the care home to be able to deliver safe and effective classes to their residents on a regular basis. This will include them attending a FABS course called 'Move it or Lose it' on 29th and 30th March. Activity cards will be developed as a resource for the care homes and will be distributed to Activity Co-ordinators to assist them planning their own sessions, therefore ensuring the long-term sustainability of the project.

## **Epping Forest Youth Council:**

A resource called "WE R SAFE" is a "Street Survival Guide" for young people which has been developed by the Youth Council. The project involves the production of 5 short films, which will be available free on YouTube. The clips aim to:

- encourage young people to report safety issues by clearly explaining the mechanisms around how to report an incident or crime
- encourage young people to trust their instincts and not be afraid to run away from a situation or say "No". The films explain to young people what to do if they find themselves in a situation that they don't want to be in.

The project highlights how Epping Forest young people may contribute towards building a SAFER community, going to SAFER schools, living in a SAFER environment and feeling SAFER. Additionally, the Youth Council recognised during their Drugs Project research, that local young people continue to need information about where, and how, to access the plethora of activities available in the district. Consequently, the Youth Council is currently reviewing their Tube Map style activities guide and this will be re-launched shortly.

## **Grant Aid to voluntary organisations:**

The Council's Grant Aid Scheme continues to support the local organisations that provide services for our residents. The last awards have now been allocated to groups for the current financial year and, in total 46 groups and countless residents will benefit from funding totally £83,450. All successful groups will be invited to attend a celebration event to thank them for their hard work within the district. This year's Grant Aid Celebration Event will be held on Friday 8th March 2019 from 1 – 2:30pm.

## **Museums, Heritage and Culture (MHC)**

### **Snapping the Stiletto Exhibition**

The museum's current exhibition 'Snapping the Stiletto' opened to the public on Saturday 12 January. The exhibition has been produced in partnership with Essex County Council and explores the history of Essex women over the last 100 years. Exhibits within the museum include a signed letter from Gandhi to Muriel Lester, a former resident of Loughton.

As part of the exhibition, the museum has organised and is hosting a charity auction on Thursday 7 March to raise money for Domestic Abuse Charity, Safer Places. The auction will include signed shoes from Actress Dame Helen Mirren and athlete Sally Gunnell OBE. A number of local businesses have been very supportive with their support for this event.

## **Museum Heritage & Culture Volunteers**

During December and January MHCs volunteer contribution totalled 291 hours which equates to over £2,400 in kind support. Volunteers are involved in a range of roles including collections documentation and digitization, looking after visitors and work on the museum garden.

### **Redevelopment of Lowewood Museum**

As part of our Service Level Agreement with Broxbourne Borough Council, MHC are working on a bid to the Heritage Lottery Funds' re-branded National Lottery Heritage Fund, for a re-development of Lowewood Museum. The bid will be a circa £2-2.5 million project focusing on a relocation of the museum to the nearby Spinning Wheel site (which used to be Hoddesdon's Open-Air Swimming Pool). Broxbourne Borough Council have committed over £200,000 funding for this, and a Stage 1 application to the Heritage Fund will be submitted later this year. Benefits for EFDC include an increased management fee to reflect our work on leading on the bid, along with greater commercial and community outcomes for the service.

### **Economic Development**

#### **Digital Innovation Programme & Superfast Broadband**

The new Phase 4a Superfast Essex broadband project remains at an early planning Stage although it remains the target that that all proposed works will be completed by July 2020.

A conference report has been produced following the Digital Innovation Zone Smart Place Seminar, 'Future Proofing Garden Towns Through Digital', which captures content of the day and the outcomes of the workshops, which will feed into a Garden Town section of the DIZ Digital Innovation Strategy, which is approaching completion and publication for consultation.

Officers have recently been working with colleagues at Essex County Council on a multi-million-pound bid to the DCMS Local Full Fibre Network programme, to boost connectivity in areas across the DIZ from hubs based at GP surgeries. This bid has already successfully navigated the initial government assessment stages and has been developed in detail, for consideration by the DCMS investment panel.

#### **Economic Development Strategy**

A strategy consultation document is being produced which will be used by the Council to consult with stakeholders and local residents, around future priorities and focus of economic development work. This is the initial phase of the development of a full Economic Development Strategy for the district which will focus on 'Place', setting out what the council will do and also identifying the focus for work across partners and stakeholders, where much of the impetus for growth and prosperity locally is located. This will link directly to the Local Plan and will include partners from the business community, ECC, the Local Enterprise Partnerships, Further and Higher Education and government departments. The strategy will also set out the sort of actions and initiatives the council, with the support of its partners, can take to stimulate and enable growth that is sustainable, fits with the aspirations and choices of residents and delivers prosperity everyone can share.

#### **Tourism**

One of the key objectives from the recent tourism conference was the need to build stronger partnerships with other councils in the area to promote tourism. A new Cross Border Partnership subsequently met on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January, with members from East-Hertfordshire, Broxbourne, Uttlesford and Harlow councils. Several key actions emerged from this meeting, including the need to look at adopting a cross-border tourism strategy that addresses local

infrastructure, joint marketing and building partnerships and the creation of a sub group to this board, with the intention of building joint marketing approaches. It was agreed to share information between the areas around tourism assets and establish baseline economic data on the value of the tourism visitor economy in the areas in the partnership. Initial analysis shows that this value will be well in excess of £500 million.

Visitor numbers to the 'Visit Epping Forest' website have significantly exceeded KPIs set internally. The trends have been for major visitors to the website during the summer and during weekends.

On May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Waltham Abbey Food Fair will be reinstated, it was previously known as the Cucumber Festival which last ran in 2012. It is expected that there will be around 5000 visitors to the event each day and officers are working with Waltham Abbey Town Council and Partnership, as well as other organisations running the event to support logistical preparations.

### **Green Arc**

Work continues to develop the green arc project in conjunction with colleagues from the City of London and other organisations. External consultancy support has been secured using Green Arc funds. Officers are in discussion with a number of other organisations such as GLA (Greater London Authority) and other councils to establish a cross border, cross sector partnership and a new steering board to lead the programme. This work is being led by Cllr Nigel Bedford.

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

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 21 February 2019

**Subject:** Customer Services Portfolio Holder report

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor H. Kane

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### **Recommending:**

**That the report of the Customer Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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It has been a busy period for the Customer Directorate as the new structure takes shape and teams prepare for annual billing and year-end processes for Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits.

On an extremely positive note I am pleased to bring before Members an extension to the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief policy which provides a much-needed easing of the Business Rates burden to local retail businesses. Hundreds of such businesses will share a reduction of around £1.5 million in their bills for 2019/20.

As reported at the last Council Universal Credit is now fully rolled out for new claimants within the District. The Secretary of State is currently reviewing the Universal Credit process for existing Housing Benefit claimants who are planned to migrate to Universal credit by 2023. We await the outcome of this work. In the meantime, a working group has been set up by officers to look at the impact of Universal Credit and other welfare reforms on our customers and service provision and their findings will be reported to members. At this meeting I am also bringing forward the Local Council Tax Support scheme for 2019/20 which is recommended to remain unchanged from this year.

Empty properties remain a wasted resource within our community at a time of a national housing shortage and the Government has provided additional discretion for Council's to impose additional premiums for long-standing empty properties. I have brought forward recommendations tonight to further incentivise owners of long-term empty properties to bring them back into use.

On a different note, the Council's new website has gone live and I hope that you have all tried it out. The emphasis of the website is to make it easier for customers, businesses and visitors to transact with The Council. I am always keen to hear feedback on how we can improve our services, and this equally applies to the website so please let me know your views.

Having introduced a new website it is vital that we can get as many members of our community to feel confident and able to use it. To this end my officers are about to start a Digital Inclusion project to help our community engage with digital solutions which will help them engage with us more effectively and efficiently but also help them in their daily lives

and skills more generally. This project will also include my fellow Members to help us towards a digital way of working.

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet **Date:** 21 February 2019

**Subject:** Housing & Property Services

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor S. Stavrou

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Housing & Property Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Rough Sleeping**

The Government has recently made a series of announcements relating to homelessness and rough sleeping, with the aim of halving rough sleeping by 2022 and bringing rough sleeping to an end by 2027.

In December, Councils were invited by the MHCLG (Ministry for Housing and Local Government) to submit expressions of interest for funding from the £11 million Rough Sleeping Initiative Fund for 2019/20, to support their work on rough sleeping. The Housing Service has made an expression of interest and will shortly submit the Council's final bid for funding later this month. In the event of a successful bid application, it is the intention that funds will be used to assist rough sleepers accessing accommodation within the private rented sector and to support partner Agencies such as CHESS, in their work on rough sleeping.

In addition, the Housing Service is about to launch a campaign to raise the profile of rough sleeping in the District. The key aim of this campaign is to inform members of the public what to do if they are concerned about someone sleeping rough and how to make referrals to StreetLink, so that their details can be passed to CHESS. CHESS provide a valuable outreach service for notified rough sleepers that are identified by StreetLink.

During the cold weather the Housing Options Team have been prepared to engage the SWEP (Severe Weather emergency protocol). However no rough sleeper has had to be accommodated under these provisions.

## **Homelessness Pods at Norway House**

The four pods at Norway House (three for accommodation and one for storage) are due for completion on 15<sup>th</sup> March. Occupation will commence during w/c 18<sup>th</sup> March and each pod will accommodate either two single residents or up to two single parents with one young child. Careful selection will be given to the residents. A risk assessment will be undertaken and potential residents assessed over a four-week period. The process of assessing potential tenants currently in bed and breakfast will start mid-February and this will ensure that we identify suitable residents for the pods as soon as possible.

The timeline for completion of this project has slipped by three weeks primarily due to concerns about unexploded WW2 ordnance on site. Although a prior UXO report categorised the working area as of Low/Medium risk, the subsequent requirement to excavate, by hand, two metre deep foundations resulted in additional investigation time to safely complete this stage of the construction. The project parties have also spent some additional time ensuring that the complex interface of the pods, which are pre-manufactured off site, with the existing services on site is right so that the pods are seamlessly installed once delivered.

## **Housebuilding Programme**

The latest timelines for the housebuilding programme by phase are as follows;

- Phase 1 – currently approximately half way through the defects liability period of 24 months and 50% of the retention held has just been released.
- Phase 2 – nearing completion. Phased handovers expected from March to June 2019.
- Phase 3 – with the exception of the Queens Road development, all of the units in Phase 3 have been handed over – Queens Road is due for completion in Autumn 2020.
- Phase 4,5 and 6 – we are due to commence demolition of 6 sites in Loughton and Ongar in March 2019. It is expected that we will see construction commence on these sites in late Summer / early Autumn 2019.

## **Home Ownership**

On 21<sup>st</sup> July 2014 The Housing (Right to Buy) (Limit on Discount) (England) Order 2014 came into force. It provides for an annual increase to the maximum right to buy discount in line with the Consumer Prices Index as of September each year. This increase takes effect on 6<sup>th</sup> April each year.

As of 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019, the maximum Right to Buy Discount will increase for the Epping Forest District from £80,900 to £82,800. These discounts apply to applications which are served on the landlord by the tenant on or after 6<sup>TH</sup> April 2019 and will not be applied retrospectively to applications made before 6<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

## **Facilities**

The conversion of Building 21 at Townmead depot is continuing at a pace with much of the work being undertaken in-house by the trades team from Housing Repairs. The nursery service will be able to relocate to their new accommodation soon.

At North Weald airfield, the project to install a new high voltage substation has commenced. This will enable electricity to be supplied through the Council's own network to the new National Police Air Service building currently being constructed, to Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust and to any future development on the commercial side of the airfield.

Continuing at the airfield, internal redecoration of the control tower is almost complete and improvements are taking place in the conference suites. Specifications are also being prepared for the replacement of life expired fire alarm panels and detectors in the tower and the gatehouse.

The lift refurbishment contract at the Limes Farm Estate is continuing well and to budget. Lift number six of nine has now been commissioned and the project is due to complete in April 2019.

The corporate PAT testing programme has just finished, with portable appliances and equipment safety inspected and tested across multiple sites.

At the Civic Offices, the aging "Janus" swipe card door access system is being replaced as it is no longer supported by the manufacturer. We are installing a new system call "Sateon" which is far more user friendly and flexible than the old one and can be linked in with other EFDC databases.



# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date 21 February 2019**

**Subject:** Planning Services Portfolio

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor J. Philip

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Planning Services Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **1. Local Plan**

The Local Plan hearing sessions started on Tuesday 12 February. The agendas, hearing statements submitted for the first set of hearings and the participants list are available on the Council's website. All those who made representations to the Regulation 19 publication of the Local Plan Submission Version have been advised of the sessions to which they are invited to participate. An additional date of 21 May 2019 has been added to the programme to consider Matter 1 Issue 5 – Have the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 been met. This is to allow participants to comment on the updated Habitats Regulations Assessment which was published on the Council's website on 24 January 2019. The current programme of hearing sessions therefore has 16 days of hearings in February, March and May 2019.

## **2. Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation and proposed mitigation strategy**

The Mitigation Strategy for the Epping Forest SAC will comprise two elements:

- a) Addressing recreational impacts; and
- b) Addressing the air quality impacts

The approach to the mitigation of recreational pressures is set out in the Interim Approach to Managing Recreational Pressure adopted by the Council on 18 October 2018. The projects, proposals and costs set out in the Interim Approach were provided by the Conservators of Epping Forest (as the Forest's custodians) and have been supported by Natural England. This includes the proposition that opportunities for SANG provision will be investigated further, recognizing that such provision is already being sought as part of the masterplanning of some strategic site allocations.

With regard to air quality impacts the strategy will build on existing national and international initiatives, which in their own right will contribute to an improvement in air quality over the course of the Plan period, as evidenced by the air quality outputs of the updated Habitats Regulation Assessment 2019. Considering the Epping Forest SAC within Epping Forest District as a whole, these national and international initiatives, combined with the other initiatives identified in the Local Plan Submission Version would result in a net reduction in nitrogen deposition and therefore result in no adverse effect. It is anticipated that an action plan will be completed by the end of April, although this date will be dependent on securing Natural England's support and the formal agreement by the Council.

Fuller details are on the Council's website at the following link:

### **3. Neighbourhood Planning**

The Examiner has now reported on the Chigwell Neighbourhood Plan. In his report dated 5 November 2018 he has concluded that the Plan should not proceed to referendum as it does not meet the basic conditions. A copy of the final report is available on the Council's website and a report was considered by Cabinet on 7 February 2019 for the Council to agree the recommendation not to proceed to referendum.

The Moreton, Bobbingworth and the Lavers Neighbourhood Plan has been published in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The publication period runs until 4pm on Tuesday 5 March 2019. Any representations received will be forwarded to the Examiner Nigel McCurk who has been appointed in conjunction with the Parish Council to assess the plan and will start the examination shortly after the end of the publication period.

### **4. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town**

Work continues apace on the Garden Town. The outcome of the capacity bid submitted to MHCLG to seek further funding to support the work is still awaited. The Council's representatives on the Board are currently Cllr Whitbread, Bedford and Philip. An independent Chair has been appointed – Guy Nicholson. The vision and design guide for the Garden Town which has been endorsed by this Council as a material planning consideration for the preparation of masterplans, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes for sites within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town has been finalised and noted by the 4 February 2019 Garden Town Member Board meeting for endorsement. A draft Transport Strategy for the Garden Town has been prepared and a report will be considered by the Council's Cabinet on 7 March 2019 to agree its publication for a six week period of consultation following the May elections.

### **5. Development Management**

Income for Development Control for January 2019 - period 10 was £90,632 (January 2018 equivalent was £81,966). The year to date turnover to January 2019 is £1,035,661 (January 2018 equivalent was £674,587).

Pre-Application income in the last three years has remained at just over £100,000 per year. Currently January 2019 income for the month is £17,373 (January 2018 £8,029) In addition, Pre-Application income for the first ten months of the year to January 2019 is £103,151 (April 2017 to January 2018 was £88,076) and indications are that the years Pre-Application income will exceed the budget of £110,000 by approximately £10,000 for the year.

It is possible at this rate, that at financial year end to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, Development Control's Planning Fees income will finish the year with a record breaking turnover of £1,219,261 compared to the budget of £1,200,000.

As a result, it is likely that the combined Planning Fee and Pre-Application advice income, for DC will reach £1,343,072 for 2018/19 (2017/18 £948,399)

In January 2018 Planning Fees were increased by 20% and indications are that this is generating approximately £200,000 in increased income that will be re-invested in Planning Services.

# ***Report to the Council***

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date 21 February 2019**

**Subject:** Strategic Projects Portfolio

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor A. Lion

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**Recommending:**

**That the report of the Strategic Projects Portfolio Holder be noted.**

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## **Accommodation Strategy**

Work is continuing on the delivery of the transformation plan. The Officer Steering group will produce a prospectus for the council offices to explore potential use as a 'public service Hub', maintaining footfall on the high street and co-locating public services that residents can access in one place. In addition, officers are exploring the use of the top floor as an incubation/business start-up centre to aid entrepreneurs in the district to take their enterprises to the next level. Officers are looking to find an external partner with experience in innovative delivery in this sector to manage and market this space.

## **Digital Innovation Zone**

The DIZ, which was established by Epping Forest District Council, with the remit to attract external investment and look at better ways to use digital to support local economic growth, continues to develop its work programme.

The last Smart Places Seminar, which reviewed the opportunities for ensuring the garden communities planned in the region were digitally resilient and fit for purpose, was successfully hosted at Chesterford Research Park in Saffron Walden. This was the largest event in the Smart Places series attracting almost 80 delegates from across eastern Hertfordshire and west Essex, and beyond. The purpose of these events is to share expertise and experience and bring those planning and delivering services together to aid joint working and coordination of investment. (the seminar conference report is available from the Economic Team). The feedback from this event will be incorporated in the Digital Innovation Strategy.

Work continues on the Digital Innovation Strategy which has been drafted with the support of ARUP. This is a key document that will be used to underpin bids for external funding and set out in some detail the strategic plan and practical steps that can be taken to make the local economy more 'future proof' and provide better platforms to deliver services in the future with external partners. The Strategy is funded by a consortium of 12 partners but is led by the One Partnership and EFDC. Members and officers are in a process of taking the strategy through the decision-making committees of neighbouring councils, and have just given evidence to East Herts Council Overview and Scrutiny Panel which has endorsed the plan.

The DIZ is currently seeking funding to undertake a Digital Census of resident's views, experiences and any barriers to the delivery of digital services. Market research agencies are being approached to undertake this innovative project, the data will be used to inform joint service planning and as baseline information for external bids. This will be a joint funded project.

A core element of the DIZ is to seek external investment that individually partners would be unable to access. A bid to develop a Full Fibre Network to link up more than 100 GP surgeries across west Essex and eastern Hertfordshire is being pursued and has already passed through the first stages of approval with DCMS. This seeks approximately £2.1m in government funding to bring the capacity for ultrafast speeds in surgeries, supporting the delivery of e-health initiatives and encouraging the private infrastructure provider to build out their networks from these points to neighbouring properties and deliver a better offer to local residents.

DCMS have recently awarded £25m (with an additional £25m potentially available at a later stage) to the West Midlands Combined Authority as part of the Urban Connected Communities Programme to develop 5G testbeds and trials. It is anticipated that DCMS will soon launch an equivalent initiative aimed at a Rural Connected Communities Programme and representatives of the DIZ have met with officials at DCMS to explore the opportunities for cross border partnerships such as the DIZ, which brings together partners from business, health, councils, education and the voluntary sector, to successfully bid. This work is ongoing.

### **London Stansted Cambridge Consortium**

Regular monthly meetings are held with the Director of the LSCC to ensure the district has influence on the work of the partnership and that its priorities and actions support the district's emerging plans. Members and officers also attend the meetings of the Board and the Officer Steering Group. Discussions are underway on the council taking a leading role in skills development in the corridor area. The council has participated in discussions with the LSCC and neighbouring councils to explore the establishment of a cross border, cross sector platform to promote and coordinate economic development in the area between London and Cambridge, similar to those operating elsewhere in Essex. This work is ongoing.

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

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 21 February 2019

**Subject:** Pay Policy Statement

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor G Mohindra (Business Support Services)

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### **Recommending:**

**The Cabinet recommends the Pay Policy Statement to Council.**

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1. Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year setting out details of its remuneration policy. Specifically it should include the Council's approach to its highest and lowest paid employees.

2. It draws on the Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector (Will Hutton 2011) and concerns over low pay.

3. The Council's Pay Policy Statement was first published on the Council's website in March 2012. This is updated on an annual basis.

4. The matters which must be included in the statutory Pay Policy Statement are as follows;

- The Council's policy on the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer
- The Council's policy on the remuneration of its lowest paid employee (together with its definition of 'lowest paid employees' and its reasons for adopting that definition)
- The Council's policy on the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers
- The Council's policy on specific aspects of chief officers' remuneration: remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance-related pay and bonuses, termination payments and transparency.

5. The Act defines remuneration in broad terms and guidance suggests that it is to include not just pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in/enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.

6. The Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 has been amended to reflect the Returning Officer fees paid in 2018/19.

7. The draft Pay Policy Statement for 2019/2020 sets out the Council's current practices and policies and is attached at Appendix 1. The amendments are highlighted.

8. The Council's attention is drawn to various parts of the Statement which refers to the current consultation process which is as a result of the Pay, Grading and Terms & Conditions review which is a work stream within the People Strategy. Any changes will be subject to member agreement.

9. Changes to the various policies and guidelines will continue to be agreed in accordance with current practices.

#### Conclusion

10. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

# EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

## PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20

### Introduction

Epping Forest District Council is located adjacent to three outer London boroughs and on the Central Line into the City of London. Residents have easy access to major motorway routes as both the M11 and M25 run through the district. There is a high incidence of commuting from the district which impacts on the local labour market and levels of pay, particularly for jobs that require skills that are in relatively short supply. There are some long standing recruitment difficulties and retention issues in key skill areas, the situation is not static and is capable of changing very rapidly, but the Council is currently consulting on steps over pay and allowances that are designed to assist with recruitment and retention.

This Statement reflects the Council's current pay, pension and leave policies and strategies which will be amended over time to deal with changing circumstances (the consultation process referred to above may require this document to be amended at a later date). These documents play an important role in attracting and retaining the best people to the Council.

All decisions on pay and reward for Chief Officers will comply with the Council's current Pay Policy Statement. Salaries for Chief Officers will be considered by Full Council.

**Glossary.** ([Hyperlink to Glossary 1](#))

**Hutton Review 2011** ([Hyperlink to Review 2](#))

The Hutton Review looked at the rise in executive pay in the private and public sectors. It suggested that the 'public overestimates how much public sector executives are paid' and that 'chief executive officers of companies with a turnover of between £101 million and £300 million earn more than twice their public sector counterparts'. It also suggested that pay multiples (between the highest and lowest paid employees) were much wider in the private than public sector.

The Review proposed that public bodies should publish information on senior managers pay and pay multiples between the highest and lowest paid employees and to that end some of these recommendations have been taken forward by the Localism Act 2011.

### Legislation

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires English and Welsh Councils to produce a Pay Policy Statement for 2012/2013 and for each financial year thereafter.

The Council's Pay Policy Statement;

- Must be approved formally by the Council;
- Must be approved each year;
- May be amended during the course of the financial year; and
- Must be published on the Council's website.

The Pay Policy Statement must include;

- The level and elements of remuneration for each of the Chief Officers;
- The remuneration of its lowest paid employees (together with its definition of 'lowest paid employees' and the Council's reasons for adopting that definition);

- The relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other Officers; and
- Other aspects of Chief Officers' remuneration; remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance-related pay and bonuses, termination payments and transparency.

Remuneration is defined widely, to include not just pay but also charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases/enhancements of pension entitlements and termination payments.

All salaries and calculations are based on full time equivalent (fte) figures and where applicable includes Inner Fringe Allowance.

## **Publication of the Pay Policy Statement**

The Policy has been made available on the Council's website and contains hyperlinks to associated documents.

## **Effect of this Policy Statement**

Nothing in this Policy Statement enables unilateral changes to employee's terms and conditions. Changes to terms and conditions of employment must follow consultation and negotiation with individuals and recognised trade unions as set out in other agreements and in line with legislation. At the time of approving of this Statement by full Council, a consultation process to change pay and allowances arrangements is ongoing.

## **Single Status Agreement**

In 1997, the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (a body that brings together public sector employers and trade unions) came to an agreement to introduce a new pay and grading structure covering all employees whose terms and conditions are governed by the 'Green Book'. In 2004 the NJC set a timetable that required all pay and grading reviews to be completed by 31 March 2007. Epping Forest District Council met this timetable and implemented Single Status in July 2003.

As a result of this process a new salary structure (*hyperlink to structure 3*) and a Job Evaluation Maintenance Procedure (*hyperlink to procedure 4*) were agreed between the trade unions and the Council. Collective Agreements, which set out a number of terms and conditions and pay arrangements, were also agreed with the trade unions (*hyperlink 5, 6 & 7 to agreements*). The Agreements are applied consistently to all employees.

**The content of these Collective Agreements is also currently subject to review.**

## **Pay Awards**

Major decisions on pay, such as annual pay awards, are determined for most local authorities in England and Wales by the National Agreement on Pay, arrived at through a system of central collective bargaining mechanisms between representatives of Local Government Employers and representatives of the relevant trades unions on the National Joint Council. **Currently, consultation is under way to discontinue adherence to the National Agreement on Pay and to implement local pay arrangements.**

## **Overtime and Evening Meeting Allowances**

Payments for working outside normal working hours are set out in the Council's Collective Agreements (**see the reference to consultation above**). (*hyperlink to Agreements 5, 6, & 7*).

## **Annual Leave**

The Council's Annual Leave Policy sets out leave entitlements for employees (**see the reference to consultation above**). (*Hyperlink to Policy 8*).



## **Flexi-Time Scheme**

The Council's Scheme applies to all employees with some exemptions due to service delivery needs (see the reference to consultation above). (Hyperlink to Policy 9).

## **Subsistence Policy**

Subsistence Allowances are paid in accordance with the Council's Subsistence Policy. The policy sets out when employees are able to claim, what to claim and how. (Hyperlink to Policy 10).

## **Car and Cycle Allowance Policy**

The Council pays Essential and Casual Car User allowances in appropriate circumstances which are in accordance with 'Green Book' rates. The Car and Cycle Allowance Policy sets out when employees are able to claim, what to claim and how (see the reference to consultation above). (Hyperlink to Policy 11).

The general principles of both policies are to ensure that employees only claim for additional expenses when undertaking work for the Council.

These policies are applied consistently to all employees.

## **Car Leasing**

The Council's Car Leasing Scheme terminated at the end of 2016/17 and there is no longer a scheme in place where the Council makes contributions.

The Council has implemented a Green Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme, accessed by all eligible staff with no Council contribution towards the cost of an employee's lease payments. Currently there are 17 employees on this Scheme a decrease of 4 employees on last year.

## **Professional Fees and Subscriptions**

The Council will meet the cost of a legal practising certificate for all those employees where it is a requirement of their employment. In addition the professional fees for the statutory roles of the s151 Officer and Deputy s151 Officer are paid. No other professional fee or subscription is paid. The Council does not differentiate between Chief Officers and other staff.

## **Pensions and Termination Payments**

On ceasing to be employed by the Council, individuals will only receive compensation:

- in circumstances that are relevant (e.g. redundancy), and
- that is in accordance with our published Pension Policy on how we exercise the various employer discretions provided by the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), and/or
- that complies with the specific term(s) of a compromise agreement.

All employees with contracts of 3 months or more are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which is administered by Essex County Council. Details of the contribution rates are set out below. In addition, the Council will automatically enrol employees into the LGPS if they meet the relevant criteria in accordance with the automatic enrolment provisions.

The Council has the option to adopt a number of statutory discretions under the;

- The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006.
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008.
- The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996 (as amended).
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) April 2014.

In general the Council has chosen not to exercise a range of discretions relating to the LGPS due to additional costs. The Council's Pension Policy ([hyperlink to Policy 12](#)) contains information regarding all its discretions and includes information regarding Flexible Retirement arrangements.

Payments on grounds of Redundancy are covered by the Council's Redundancy and Efficiency Payments Policy. ([hyperlink to policy 13](#))

All employees are treated in the same way with regard to the calculation of severance payments in situations of redundancy.

## Pension Contributions

Employee contribution rates for 2018/2019;

Salary	Contribution	
	Main Section	50/50 Section
Up to £14,100	5.5%	2.75%
£14,101 to £22,000	5.8%	2.9%
£22,001 to £35,700	6.5%	3.25%
£35,701 to £45,200	6.8%	3.4%
£45,201 to £63,100	8.5%	4.25%
£63,101 to £89,400	9.9%	4.95%
£89,401 TO £105,200	10.5%	5.25%
£105,201 to £157,800	11.4%	5.7%
£157,801 and above	12.5%	6.25%

Contribution rates for 2019/20 are not due to be released until the beginning of March 2019.

## Election Fees

Council employees engaged by the Returning Officer for election duties received payments under the relevant schedule of fees (i.e. polling and counting duties).

## Remuneration of Employees, Grades 2-12

### Pay Scale

Up to 2018/19 employees have been subject to the 'National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services' (commonly known as the 'Green Book'), using a pay spine that commences at national Spinal Column Point (SCP) 6 and ends at local SCP 58. This pay spine has been divided into 11 pay grades; 2 – 10 contain five incremental points and grades 11 and 12 contain 4 incremental points. Grade 2 is the lowest and grade 12 is the highest of these pay grades. Posts are allocated to a pay band through a process of job evaluation.

With effect from 1 April 2019 the Council intends to introduce local pay arrangements, replacing current grades 2-12 and no longer applying the National Agreement on Pay. **This is currently the subject of consultation.**

The Council currently uses the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme to evaluate all posts on grades 2 – 12. This also includes Craft Workers who are subject to the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees National Agreement on Pay and Conditions (commonly known as the 'Red Book').

The Council does not operate overlapping pay grades therefore, the minimum point of a pay grade is not lower than the maximum point of the preceding pay grade. *(Hyperlink to pay scale 3).*

Individuals would normally receive an annual increment, subject to the top of their grade not being exceeded. For grades 2 – 10 the 5<sup>th</sup> point each grade would only be awarded if the employee has at least 5 years continuous service with the Council. **The local pay arrangements currently the subject of consultation is unlikely to include the concept of incremental progression.**

An Inner Fringe Allowance of £857 per annum is paid to employees (this does not apply to Apprentices). **It is likely that this payment will be incorporated into local pay arrangements, subject to consultation.**

### **Assistant Directors**

Assistant Directors are paid on Grades 11 or 12 and are also currently subject to the NJC Job Evaluation Scheme. The salary ranges for these grades wef 1 April 2018 are;

Grade	Scale Column Points	Salary Range
Grade 11	SCP 51 – 54	£49,312 - £53,118
Grade 12	SCP 55 - 58	£55,253 - £59,543

The salary shown is inclusive of the Inner Fringe Allowance of £857 per annum (see the reference to consultation above).

**In the Council's new structure all Assistant Director roles have been deleted.**

### **Definition of Lowest Paid Employees**

For the purpose of this Policy Statement, employees on grade 2 are defined as our lowest-paid employees. This is because no employee of the Council is paid lower than SCP 6 which is contained in grade 2. At 1 April 2018, the fte annual value of this SCP 6 is £15,854 which includes an Inner Fringe Allowance of £857 per annum.

The exceptions to the lowest grade are Apprentices who are paid £150 per week.

### **General**

Currently the values of the SCPs in grades 2 – 12 are increased by pay awards notified from time to time by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. A national pay award was implemented to these grades effective from 1 April 2018.

An Inner Fringe Allowance of £857 per annum is currently paid to employees (this does not apply to Apprentices).

**Subject to the outcome of consultation, these arrangements will be replaced at 1 April 2019 by local pay arrangements and locally agreed adjustments from time to time of those arrangements.**

Annual salaries are paid pro-rata to part-time employees based on the hours contracted to work.

## **Remuneration of Chief Officers**

The Council will not agree any pay arrangement which does not reflect the correct employment and/or tax/NI status of a Chief Officer or employee.

It will be the responsibility of Council to agree the initial salaries for Chief Officers following external advice/evaluation/benchmarking.

### **Chief Executive**

Currently the Chief Executive role is filled on an acting up basis pending a permanent appointment. The Council is in the process of recruiting to the role on a salary of circa £120,000 which includes Inner Fringe Allowance of £857 and evening meeting allowances.

The Chief Executive is also the Council's Head of Paid Service and the Returning Officer.

### **Returning Officer**

The Returning Officer role attracts payment of fees and expenses, depending on the elections held in any year. The amount for such payments varies according to the particular elections held from year to year. These fees are taxable and subject to National Insurance and pension deductions.

The amount for such payments varies according to the particular elections held from year to year. These fees are taxable and subject to National Insurance and pension deductions.

Only a proportion of the fees were retained by the Returning Officer. The remainder were paid to employees who provide specific support in the organisation of elections which are outside the scope of the ordinary scale of election fees.

### **Returning Officer Fees**

#### **May 2018**

District Elections - £8,408.70

### **Strategic Directors**

In June 2018, Cabinet agreed a new organisation structure which established 2 Strategic Director roles with a spot salary of £95,000, inclusive of £857 Inner London Fringe Allowance. Postholders are entitled to claim for evening meeting allowances and essential car allowance in accordance with Council policies.

### **Service Directors**

The pay scale for Service Directors consists of 3 incremental points. The level of pay is locally determined following benchmarking with other public sector organisations and agreement by members.

As at 1 April 2018, the annual FTE salary range for the seven Director posts is £70,000 to £75,000, which includes the Inner Fringe Allowance of £857 per annum. The postholders are entitled to claim essential car allowance in accordance with the Council's Policy and evening meeting allowances.

## Statutory Roles

The statutory roles of Monitoring Officer and 'Section 151' Officer will be carried out by the Head of Legal and the Strategic Lead for Finance. The postholders will receive an additional £5,000 supplement for these statutory responsibilities.

## General Principles Applying to Remuneration of All Employees

On recruitment, individuals are currently placed on the appropriate SCP within the pay grade for the post that they are appointed to. Usually new starters will be placed on the bottom of the pay grade unless their current salary is higher. In these circumstances their starting scale point will match their previous salary at least. These arrangements will need to be amended upon the implementation of local pay arrangements (subject currently to consultation).

Access to appropriate elements of the Council's Relocation Scheme may also be granted in certain cases, when new starters need to move to the area.

The Council does not currently apply performance-related pay or bonuses, but this may change at a future date.

Market Supplements will be paid in accordance with the Council's Policy for Payment of Market Supplements. (Hyperlink to Policy 14) (Although local pay arrangements, currently subject of consultation, may provide alternative means to achieve the same outcome).

Honorarium or ex-gratia payments will be paid in accordance with our Additional Payments Policy. (Hyperlink to Policy 15)

These policies are applied consistently to all employees.

## Pay Multiples

The Hutton Review raised concerns about multiples in the order of 20 or higher between the lowest and the highest paid employees in local authorities. However the Interim Report noted that the most top to bottom pay multiples in the public sector are in the region of 8:1 to 12:1. The Council is therefore content that having due regard for the level of responsibilities and personal accountability between the lowest and highest paid roles, the current multiple of 7.3 seems to be both justifiable and equitable.

The council does not set the remuneration of any individual or group of posts by reference to a multiple. However, as suggested by the Hutton Review the Council will monitor multiples over time to ensure they are appropriate and fair and will explain significant changes in pay multiples. The multiples are as following;

Role	2016/2017		2017/2018		2018/2019	
	Multiple	Salary	Multiple	Salary	Multiple	Salary
Chief Executive compared to lowest salary	x7.8	£112,000	x7.4	£113,000	x7.1	£116,000
Directors compared to lowest salary (Strategic Directors)*	x6.3	£90,130	x5.9	£91,031	x5.8	£95,000*
Assistant Directors compared to lowest salary	x4	£57,225	x3.8	£57,797	x4.4	£72,500*

(Service Directors)*						
Average salary compared to Chief Executive	x4.1	£27,500	x4.1	£27,775	x4.2	£28,334
Average salary compared to lowest salary	x1.9	£27,500	x1.8	£27,775	x1.7	£28,334

- The Service Director salary used is the mid-point of the range
- The average salary is based on fte and has not been pro rata'd for part-time employees
- The lowest fte salary in the Council is £16,394

## Remuneration Panel

The Council is not at this time considering forming a separate Remuneration Panel to set pay rates for Council employees. The Council will continue to use an external body to evaluate Chief Officer roles when required and/or to provide benchmark pay information for these roles. It will also continue to use an internal job evaluation panel to evaluate those posts graded 2 – 12. The Council will consult on implementing job families alongside its current job evaluation scheme/process.

It will be the responsibility of Council to agree the initial salaries for Chief Officers following external advice/evaluation/benchmarking.

## Review

The Localism Act 2011 requires relevant authorities to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each subsequent financial year. Our next Statement is scheduled to be for 2020/21 and will be submitted to Council for approval as reasonably practical before 31 March 2020.

As referred to above, a consultation process is currently under way to implement local pay arrangements and to review allowance payments. Any changes made will be reflected in a future Pay Policy Statement that will be submitted to Members for approval.

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

**Committee:** Cabinet

**Date:** 21 February 2019

**Subject:** Calendar of Council Meetings 2019/20

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor H Kane (Customer Services)

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### **Recommending:**

**That, as attached at Appendix 1, the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2019/20 be recommended for adoption.**

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1. The Cabinet considered the calendar of meetings each year prior to its final approval by the Council. The calendar has developed over time to meet the changing needs of the authority and no radical changes have been proposed.

2. The draft Calendar at Appendix 1 is based upon the current year's calendar, with approximately the same number of meetings. It has been slightly amended in some places but wherever possible:

- (a) Miscellaneous meetings have been scheduled for a Monday evening;
- (b) Council, Overview and Scrutiny and Select Committee meetings have been scheduled for a Tuesday evening;
- (c) Planning (Sub-)Committee meetings have been scheduled for a Wednesday evening; and
- (d) Cabinet and Cabinet Committee meetings have been scheduled for a Thursday evening.

3. Friday evenings have continued to be kept free of meetings, and any encroachment into August has been kept to a bare minimum due to holidays. However, the Regulatory Committees have always continued to meet throughout August in the past and this practice has been continued.

### The Executive

4. Where possible all Cabinet Sub-Committees have been placed on Thursdays.

5. In line with previous years, the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee has not been included on the Calendar as the advice from Officers is that it meets as and when evaluations for the different sites are received. Therefore, no purpose would be served in scheduling regular quarterly meetings.

### Overview & Scrutiny

6. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to meet 6 times throughout 2019/20, to ensure that the committee can report to the Council and Cabinet the meetings have been scheduled at least two weeks before these meetings.

7. There are currently five scrutiny cycles and four Select Committees, although an Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee Framework Task and Finish Panel has been set up to consider the future Select Committee arrangements. With this in mind the calendar has included the four Select Committees although if this were to change, the dates could be easily reduced.

#### Standards Committee

8. The Council has previously agreed that the Standards Committee be convened to meet only when there is business to be transacted and no meetings were therefore scheduled for the current municipal year. However, at the request of the current Chairman of the Committee, provisional arrangements for two meetings to be held during 2019/20 have been identified, in order that these can be accommodated within the calendar of meetings for the next municipal year. The Chairman has confirmed that, should there be no business to transact at these meetings, they will be cancelled.

#### Miscellaneous Committees

9. Both the Youth Council and the Local Highways Panel have not been included in this schedule as it is felt that they are meetings that sit outside the Council. The Youth Council have their own programme, and although the Local Highways Panel involves both the County and District Councils they are not organised by the District Council.

10. The Summer meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee has been pushed back from the last week of June to the last week of July. This is to enable the Committee to examine the Statutory Statement of Accounts and report back to the Council meeting scheduled for the following week.

11. The Local Councils Liaison Committee has traditionally met three times a year. However, this Committee has reviewed its schedule and resolved to only meet twice a year.

#### Conclusion

12. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.



## Epping Forest District Council Calendar of Meetings 2019/20

		2019					2020									
Meeting		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		
<b>Executive</b>																
Council		23rd		30th		19th		5th	17th		25th		7th	21st		
Cabinet			13th	11th		5th	24th		5th		6th	26th	23rd			
FPM Cab Comm			20th	18th		26th		14th		23rd		19th				
AM & ED Cab Comm			27th				10th			16th			2nd			
Local Plan Cab Comm				1st			17th			30th			16th			
<b>Scrutiny</b>																
OS Committee			4th	16th		3rd		19th		28th		17th				
Resources Sel. Comm			25th			10th		12th		23rd		24th				
Governance Sel. Comm				2nd		17th		26th		14th		31st				
Neighbourhoods Sel. Comm				9th			1st		3rd	21st			14th			
Communities Sel. Comm				23rd			8th		10th		4th		21st			
Constitution Working Grp						24th						12th				
<b>Planning</b>																
District Development			5th	24th		18th		13th		22nd		18th		27th		
Plans East		8th	12th	10th	7th	4th	2nd/30th	27th	(11th)*	8th	5th	4th	1st/29th			
Plans West		15th	19th	17th	14th	11th	9th	6th	4th	15th	12th	11th	8th	13th		
Plans South		29th		3rd/31st	28th	25th	23rd	20th	18th	29th	26th	25th	22nd			
<b>Licensing</b>																
Licensing Committee							16th						1st			
Licensing Sub-Comm			4th	2nd	6th	3rd	1st	5th	3rd	7th	4th	3rd	7th			
<b>Miscellaneous</b>																
Member Briefings																
Audit & Governance				25th		23rd		25th		27th		23rd				
Standards Committee						2nd						2nd				
Joint Consultative Comm			17th			30th				20th			27th			
Local Councils Liaison						16th						16th				
Appointments Panel		9th-16th												14th		
Dev Mgmt Chairmen						9th						5th				
O&S Chairmen						12th						10th				
Webcast meeting:																
			<u>Easter 2020</u>			Fri 10-Apr-20 to Mon 13-Apr-20										
			<u>District Council Elections</u>			Thu 7-May-2020										
			<u>Provisional Date Only * for Plans East</u>													
			Subject to the outcome of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Framework Task and Finish Panel Outcome													

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

**Committee:** Cabinet **Date:** 21 February 2019

**Subject:** Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2019/20

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor H Kane (Customer Services)

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### **Recommending:**

**That the Cabinet noted the responses to the consultation on the scheme for 2019/20 and recommend to Council that the scheme for 2018/19 continues unchanged for 2019/20.**

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1. The Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS) replaced Council Tax Benefit in 2013. Each local authority must review its scheme annually. The Government brought in regulations to ensure that pensioners continue to receive the same level of assistance as they would have done if the Council Tax Benefit scheme was still in place. The Council can therefore only make amendments to the scheme for people of working age. The Council has approved the general principle that the Local Council Tax Support scheme should be cost neutral. In legislative terms the scheme needs to be approved by 11<sup>th</sup> March each year so for 2019/20 approval needs to be made at Full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019.

2. A consultation exercise was undertaken between 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 and 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018 based on there being no changes to the 2018/19 scheme for 2019/20. Whilst there was no legal duty to consult, as no changes were proposed, Members decided in its Cabinet meeting to undertake a shortened and focused consultation exercise.

3. Currently, the total expenditure on LCTS is £6,033,775, which is made up of £3,440,172 for elderly recipients and £2,593,603 for working age recipients. This is £33,000 up on last year's expenditure with a decrease of £23,277 for elderly recipients and an increase of £56,000 for working age claimants. The total number of recipients off LCTS is 6,231 comprising 3,174 elderly recipients and 3,057 working age. This compares with a total number of claimants at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 of 6,438. There has been a reduction therefore of around 200 claimants. This may look contradictory in terms of an increase in expenditure on the scheme but the average increase in Council Tax of 4.6% in 2018/19 needs to be factored in. However, the overall expenditure on the scheme will continue to be monitored over the year as the principle is that it is self-funding. This will form part of the review for the 2020/21 scheme.

4. Although the response to the consultation was disappointing it is argued that it shows no great desire for the scheme to be changed for 2019/20. The results of the consultation show that 211 people viewed it but that only 26 went on to attempt it. Further, only 6 people expressed an opinion that the scheme should be changed. The conclusion is that the proposal to keep the scheme unchanged for 2019/20 is sound and should be recommended to Council for approval.

### Conclusion

5. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

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

**Committee:** Cabinet **Date:** 21 February 2019  
**Subject:** Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20  
**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor G Mohindra (Business Support)

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### **Recommending:**

**The Cabinet recommend the following to Council for approval:**

- (a) Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20;**
  - (b) Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy;**
  - (c) Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2019/20 to 2021/22;**
  - (d) The rate of interest to be applied to any inter-fund balances;  
and**
  - (e) Treasury Management Policy Statement.**
- 

1. The Council is required to approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators and a statement on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) before the start of each financial year.

2. The strategies were scrutinised by the Audit and Governance Committee on 28 January 2019 and an update will be provided to Council on 21 February to cover any suggestions or proposed amendments.

### Introduction

3. The Council's treasury activities are strictly regulated by statutory requirements and a professional code of practice (the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management). There is a requirement for Council to approve its treasury and investment strategy and prudential indicators each year.

4. The Strategy was prepared in line with advice from our treasury advisors Arlingclose. The attached report at Appendix 1 shows the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20.

5. There have been no major changes to the strategy from the current strategy approved in February 2018. However, Members should be aware of the following:

### Minimum Revenue Provision

6. Each year the Council has to approve at Full Council its statement on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). In previous years the Council has been debt free and therefore, we did not have to provide MRP in our accounts. The Council took on debt of £185.5m in 2012 and this would normally require a local authority to charge MRP to the General Fund. CLG have produced regulations to mitigate this impact, whereby we can ignore the borrowing incurred in relation to the Housing Self-financing when calculating MRP and therefore, (for MRP purposes only) we are classed as debt free and do not have to make provision for MRP. However, the Council may undertake additional borrowing before or after additional capital spending. This will require MRP in the year following and it is currently anticipated that a charge of £514,000 will be required in 2019/20 (see Appendix D).

### Inter-fund balances

7. The Council has inter-fund borrowed for many years between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account and the interest charge made between the funds has been based on the average interest earned on investment for the year. Under regulations issued by CIPFA, it is now required that the interest rate applicable to any inter-fund borrowing should be approved by Full Council before the start of the financial year. As the Council has been undertaking inter-fund borrowing for many years, it is proposed to continue to use the average interest earned for the year on investments as the rate for any inter-fund borrowing.

### Policy Statement

8. The Treasury Management Policy Statement is a high level statement setting out how the Council's Treasury function will be undertaken. The Policy Statement was last updated as part of the 2018/19 Treasury Strategy. The Policy is attached at Appendix G for Cabinet to consider, no amendments are currently proposed.

### Current Investments

9. The Council's investments are all denominated in UK sterling and the treasury officers receive regular information from our treasury advisors on the latest position on the use of Counterparties.

### Conclusion

10. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

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

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 21 February 2019

Portfolio Holder: Councillor G Mohindra

Item:

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### **BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX DECLARATION 2019/20**

#### **Recommending:**

(1) That the list of CSB growth and savings for the 2019/20 budget (set out in Annex 1) be approved;

(2) That the list of District Development Fund and Invest to Save items for the 2019/20 budget (set out in Annexes 2 and 3) be approved;

(3) That the revenue estimates for 2019/20 and the draft Capital Programme for 2019/20 be approved as set out in Annexes 4, 5 (a-i) and 6 including all contributions to and from reserves as set out in the attached Annexes;

(4) That the medium term financial strategy be approved as set out in Annexes 9 a and 9 b;

(5) That the 2019/20 HRA budget be approved on the basis that a contribution to the self-financing reserve of £500,000 is made, and that the application of rent decreases resulting in an average decrease of 1% from £95.57 to £94.61, be approved;

(6) That the Council's policy of retaining revenue balances at no lower than £4.0M or 25% of the net budget requirement whichever is the higher for the four year period to 2021/22 be amended to no lower than £4.0M or 25% of the net budget requirement whichever is the higher during the four year period up to and including 2022/23;

(7) That the report of the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2019/20 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves (see Annex 10) be noted;

(8) That the Capital Strategy (see Annex 11) for the period 2018/19 to 2022/23 be adopted.

#### **Declaration of Council Tax**

(9) That it be noted that under delegated authority the Assistant Director of Resources, in consultation with the Business Support Services Portfolio Holder, calculated the Council Tax Base 2019/20:

(a) for the whole Council area as 54,159.4 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended); and

(b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as set out below and in Annex 7.

	Tax Base
Abbess, Beauchamp & Berners Roding	227.4
Buckhurst Hill	5,238.9
Chigwell	6,191.9
Epping Town	5,319.1
Epping Upland	413.6
Fyfield	415.7
High Ongar	562.6
Lambourne	895.4
Loughton Town	12,580.6
Matching	450.9
Moreton, Bobbingworth and The Lavers	591.3
Nazeing	2,089.4
North Weald Bassett	2,550.6
Ongar	2,730.3
Roydon	1,364.8
Sheering	1,356.9
Stanford Rivers	365.6
Stapleford Abbotts	523.2
Stapleford Tawney	85.0
Theydon Bois	2,002.7
Theydon Garnon	86.4
Theydon Mount	117.4
Waltham Abbey Town	7,763.4
Willingale	236.3

**(10) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:**

- (a) £116,208,277 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils;**
- (b) £104,300,368 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;**
- (c) £11,907,909 being the amount by which the aggregate at 10 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 10 (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);**
- (d) £219.87 being the amount at 10 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (the amount at 9 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);**
- (e) £3,650,767 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Annex 7);**
- (f) £152.46 being the amount at 10 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 10 (e) above by Item T (9 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic**



**amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.**

**(11) That it be noted that the County Council, the Police Authority and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the category of dwellings in the Council's area as shown in Annex 8 (to be tabled);**

**(12) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts in Annex 8 Part B (tabled) as the amounts of Council Tax for 2019/20 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.**

**(13) That in accordance with section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, Council determines that the amount of Council Tax shown at (9) (f) of £152.46 for 2019/20, being an increase of 0% from 2018/19 is not excessive and therefore there is no need to hold a local referendum.**

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### General Fund Budget Guidelines

1. The annual budget process commenced with the Financial Issues Paper (FIP) being presented to the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 26 July 2018. This continued the earlier start to the process and reflected concerns over the reform of financing for local authorities and highlighted the uncertainties associated with:

- a) Central Government Funding
- b) Business Rates Retention
- c) Welfare Reform
- d) New Homes Bonus
- e) Development Opportunities
- f) Transformation
- g) Waste and Leisure Contracts; and
- h) Miscellaneous, including recession and pay awards

2. There is now a little more clarity on some issues, but several are subject to consultations and will not be resolved for some time.

3. In setting the budget for the current year Members had anticipated using £306,000 from the General Fund reserves. There was expected to be a surplus of £994,000 on ongoing General Fund activities however it was agreed to make a transfer to the District Development Fund (DDF) of £1.3m to ensure the DDF remained in surplus. Also the MTFS approved in February 2018 showed a combination of net savings targets and use of reserves which still adhered to the policy on reserves over the medium term. Between 2017/18 and 2021/22 it was expected that a little under £1m would be used from the General Fund reserve bringing the balance down to £4.8m at the end of the period. This though was still well above the target of 25% of the 2021/22 estimated Net Budget Requirement of £3.233m.

4. The revised MTFS presented with the FIP took into account all the changes known at that point and highlighted the uncertainties around income from business rates. This projection showed the savings targets could be left unchanged at £300,000 in both 2020/21 and 2021/22 and still keep revenue balances comfortably above the target level at the end of the final year. However the significant uncertainties around funding beyond the next financial year are making forward funding projections extremely difficult.

5. Members adopted this measured approach to reduce expenditure in a progressive and controlled manner. The budget guidelines for 2019/20 were therefore established as:

- i. The ceiling for CSB net expenditure be no more than £12.1m including net growth/savings.
- ii. The ceiling for DDF net expenditure be no more than £0.553m.
- iii. The District Council Tax to continue to be frozen.

### The Current Position

6. The overall position on the budgets through the medium term is rather different now to what it was in July. Considerable progress has been made on implementing the People Strategy with the appointment of the new Service Directors in September and recruitment to the level 2 managers currently ongoing. The savings target set for 2018/19 has been achieved and indeed exceeded. In roads have also been made into meeting the 2019/20 target by virtue of the fact that some of the savings contributing to the 2018/19 target are only a part year effect with the remainder falling into 2019/20. Good progress has also been made on other aspects of transformation including the delivery of the ICT strategy. The original budget included an expansion in community safety spending to help address the district wide problem of anti-social behaviour and this is already having a positive effect. This increased expenditure has been funded by a 2.48% increase in the Council Tax.

7. Two consultation papers have also been issued requesting responses by 21st February 2019. The first relates to the Fair Funding Review (FFR) and the second looks at reforms to business rates retention.

#### a) Central Government Funding

8. The provisional settlement figures were released on 13th December after a short delay. There was a consultation period of four weeks until 10th January the final figures were confirmed on 29<sup>th</sup> January and apart from a minor adjustment to the business rate tariff figure were unchanged.

9. Back in July 2016 this Committee decided that the offer from MHCLG of a four-year settlement should be accepted. There are very few authorities that made a different decision as MHCLG announced an acceptance rate of 97%. Subsequent to the settlement being agreed, there were further reductions in all three remaining years which was rather disappointing including the slightly bizarre introduction of negative revenue support grant for 2019/20. The final settlement confirms that this has now be removed as the Government accepted that the proposal went against previous assurances it had given to local authorities. Having said that there is still a reduction in funding for 2019/20 compared to 2018/19 just less than previously expected. The position now compared to previous years is shown in the table below.

	<b>2015/16</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2016/17</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2017/18</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2018/19</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2019/20</b> <b>£m</b>
Revenue Support Grant	2.45	1.53	0.74	0.26	0.00
Retained Business Rates	3.02	3.05	3.11	3.20	3.27
<b>SFA</b>	<b>5.47</b>	<b>4.58</b>	<b>3.85</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>3.27</b>
Decrease £		0.89	0.73	0.39	0.19
Decrease %		16.3%	15.9%	10.1%	5.5%

10. This confirms the bleak picture for the four year period to 2019/20 with the SFA reducing over the period by £2.2m or over 40%. It is worth noting that 2019/20 is the final year of the four year settlement and the settlement was better than expected. Having said that we have little information yet on prospects after that.

11. The Settlement also released two consultation papers requesting responses by today. The first is a review of local authorities' relative needs and resources and looks at the distribution of funds across all councils and is referred to as the Fair Funding Review (FFR). The second looks at reforms to business rates retention and will explore how 75% retention by the sector might work in practice. Both these papers are significant and will inform how local authorities are funded in the medium term starting in 2020/21. The papers have been examined and a response has been considered by the Resources Select Committee. However, it is unlikely that any improvement in District Council funding will be seen in the near future and in the unlikely event of some additional funding it will likely come hand in hand with additional responsibilities. The FFR will not apply to funding outside the Local Government Finance settlement such as schools and policing but for this Council it is likely to affect New Homes Bonus, Housing Benefit Admin grant and more importantly how Business Rates retention is going to evolve over the next few years. New Homes Bonus and Business Rates Retention will be dealt with in more detail later.

12. The Council increased the Council Tax in 2018/19 by 2.48% which was below the 2.99% district referendum limit, to pay for additional policing for three years. The officers are now in place and based in the Civic Offices within the Community Safety team. There have already been some positive results seen from this and a review of how this has operated will be carried out in due course. This Council Tax increase was the first since 2010/11 and demonstrates how the Council's desire to keep the Council Tax low has been met over this time.

13. The settlement has left the referendum limit at 2.99% but it was again decided not to impose referendum limits on parishes, although this position remains under review. This means if parishes are unable to match the reductions in their Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) funding with efficiencies they are still free to increase their precepts.

14. In January 2018 the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee confirmed its previous decision that, in view of Revenue Support Grant disappearing by 2019/20, the LCTS grant to parishes should also be phased out.

15. It is difficult to know what the outcome of the FFR will be and we still do not have much to work with as the deadline for consultation responses is today. The Financial Issues Paper (FIP) has previously commented that the current funding formula might still be in place for 2020/21 but surely with the consultation having started this will not now be the case?

#### b) Business Rates Retention

16. As last year the Council was part of the Essex bid to become a 75% Business Rates pilot and like last year Thurrock did not take part. The settlement confirmed that the bid had been unsuccessful. Whether Thurrock's non-participation was a factor in this is open to debate. There were 15 successful bids including Hertfordshire and Norfolk these areas will be able to keep 75% of business rates without detriment to other areas. Having been unsuccessful the Council will continue to be part of the Essex Business Rates Pool which should mean some additional resources being available when compared to EFDC acting on its own.

17. The council is now into the sixth year of business rates retention. Since the introduction of business rates retention this Council has done rather better than the DCLG has predicted, as illustrated in the table below.

	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m	2017/18 £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m
DCLG	2.97	3.02	3.05	3.11	3.21	3.32	tbc
Actual/Est.	3.64	4.40	4.63	4.59	4.86	4.71	4.30
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>1.38</b>	<b>1.58</b>	<b>1.48</b>	<b>1.65</b>	<b>1.39</b>	<b>tbc</b>
Levy	0.34	0.24	0.37	0.56	tbc	tbc	tbc

18. For both 2013/14 and 2014/15 as the Council was not in a business rates pool we had to pay over half of the income above the DCLG estimate as a levy, in addition to the tariff that had already been paid. From 2015/16 a reduced levy is payable to the members of the pool who are top-up authorities, Essex County Council and Essex Fire Authority. The value of the levy is dependent on the performance of the pool as a whole rather than this Council's performance alone.

19. The table above illustrates that the rate of growth in business rate income has been higher than MHCLG estimated. Part of this divergence may have been caused by the number of adjustments to the scheme after it was constructed. These include the extension of small business rate relief, the capping of increases and the introduction of retail rate relief. As all of these adjustments reduce the bills that Councils would have issued, compensation is paid under what is known as Section 31 grant. With the introduction of the new rating list from April 2017 there were further new reliefs and the system has become quite difficult to administer and very messy. It is evident that Section 31 grant will be with us for the foreseeable future.

20. Whilst the amounts included in the MTFS exceed those calculated by MHCLG they are still felt to be prudent. Particular caution is needed over the estimates included and it is proposed that we assume no growth in 2020/21 at this stage as we simply do not know what the outcome of the consultation will be. We are also now in the second year which will be billed using the new rating list and there is still little data on appeals.

21. The complexity around the introduction of the new list has been made worse by changes to transitional relief and the appeals system. There were two levels of transitional relief but for reasons best known to the MHCLG the new list has three levels. This has then been compounded by the introduction of a new system of "Check, Challenge, Appeal" for businesses to use in challenging their bills. This process was introduced over a year ago and so far only about 16 appeals have reached the challenge stage and these have been on properties with quite small rateable values. I think it is fair to say appellants have struggled with the new system particularly those using agents who have had bulk appeals to submit as the system is more geared to those submitting single appeals. Some software changes designed to improve user friendliness are planned to make it work satisfactorily for ratepayers but this will again add further delays to the system. It is hoped that in the long term this system will be better for all parties and will indeed reduce the very lengthy delays that this system was designed to alleviate in the first place. However, the introduction of a new system means we have no past data that can be used to estimate the number of appeals and how they will arise and be dealt with through the life of the valuation list. Estimating business rates income has been extremely difficult in the past and if anything is even more so now but the figures will continue to be carefully monitored.

22. Having mentioned the difficulty with new appeals we should not lose sight of the appeals that are still outstanding on old lists. Progress on clearing these appeals has been extremely slow, but we are now down to 85 so about 20 appeals have been settled in the last six months! Most of those remaining relate to schools and supermarkets. Calculating an appropriate provision for appeals remains extremely difficult. Each appeal will have arisen from different circumstances and it is difficult to produce a uniform percentage to apply. This is a particular concern as there is one property in the south of the district which has a rateable value approaching £6 million and is currently being appealed. If a full provision was included in our calculations for the owners of this property being completely successful in their appeal there would be a significant shortfall.

23. Based on previous experience and discussions with the Valuation Office a provision has been calculated that is felt to be prudent, but given the size of the financial risk here it is worth mentioning the potential problem. The total provision against appeals at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 is £3.39m.

24. The settlement has announced that the amounts collected from local authorities in the form of the levy on business rates growth has been higher than that paid out in safety net payments and this is probably due to the aforementioned issues in para 19. As a result a one off windfall repayment is to be made to authorities during 2019/20. For this Council it amounts to around £50,000 and although it is not overly significant it is at least positive and given it's one off nature it makes sense to put this into the DDF.

25. As mentioned earlier a consultation on the future of business rates has been issued with responses required today. It will explore how 75% business rate retention might work in practice but it is unlikely we will have much in the way of further information in time. The figures used are very much an estimate based on the existing system and indeed the estimate for 2020/21 has been left at a similar level to that in the first version of the MTFs and increased by around 2.5% thereafter. As regards the consultation the business rates baseline will no doubt be amended particularly as the original baselines appear to have been set too low. The proportions allocated to each sector will also no doubt change though again it is unclear by how much and what the actual effect will be. Finally there will probably need to be some transitional measures put in place to prevent too many large funding swings between individual authorities and this is a practice that has previously been seen when funding changes are made. The Government will be issuing further consultations on this in the future.

26. One thing we can be certain of though is that 75% retention will not mean an increase in the business rate income we have to spend from £3.3m to £27m. What it actually means is that 75% will be retained within local government and no amounts of either base funding or growth will be paid over to the Treasury. The second point is that 75% retention will not solve funding problems for the local government sector. It has been made clear by the Government that the policy will be fiscally neutral, which means any additional funding will be matched by a transfer of additional responsibilities that have previously been centrally funded.

27. As stated earlier the new system is meant to be in place by 2020/21 at the latest, whether this happens remains to be seen.

28. It has been mentioned above that the Council has benefitted significantly from being in a business rates pool and consequently it has remained in a pool for 2019/20. Monitoring so far indicates that this should still prove beneficial but we are reliant on the outcomes from the other pool members. If it becomes evident through the monitoring for 2019/20 that this Council will not benefit financially from pooling a recommendation will be made not to pool for 2020/21.

### c) Welfare Reform

29. The current scheme of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) is based on the maximum level of support being 75%. A public consultation on the scheme was carried out in the second half of 2018 on the basis of no change to the existing scheme. Cabinet is recommending that the status quo be maintained.

30. The Universal Credit (UC) is now live across the District for all new claims relating to those of working age. The roll out, which has been ongoing for some considerable time, has been quite confusing for claimants as well as officers due to its fragmented nature and there have been some changes along the way which have generally at least improved things a little. The next stage is for existing claims for working age claimants to be migrated over a period of time up to 2023, though there is some suggestion that a ministerial review of this will be carried out so this could be subject to change.

31. One other aspect of welfare reform that continues is the DWP achieving their savings through reducing the grant paid to local authorities to administer housing benefit. Following a relatively modest reduction of £22,000 in 2015/16, £40,000 was taken in 2016/17 £42,000 in 2017/18 and £25,000 in 2018/19. A further reduction of £37,000, is proposed for 2019/20 which is a cut of around 27% over that time. An officer working group has been set up to assess the impact of UC on all Council services and customers

#### d) New Homes Bonus

32. During 2017/18 significant changes were made to the way New Homes Bonus (NHB) is allocated and the reductions in grant were far greater than had been anticipated. The reason for this much larger reduction was the introduction of a baseline of 0.4% for 2017/18. This meant that only growth above 0.4% of the taxbase qualified for NHB, in practical terms this reduced the number of qualifying properties from 241 to 11 or in cash terms the additional NHB for 2017/18 was £16,000 instead of £320,000. Increasing this baseline was one of the options being considered but the settlement has left the baseline at the existing level.

33. During 2017/18 the Council received a little short of £2m in bonus. In 2018/19 this had dropped to £0.849m a fall of over £1.1m. The original estimate for 2019/20 was £0.7m but because of increased growth in housing provision and also a significant increase in empty properties being brought back into use the figure is £1.049m. The amount awarded for 2019/20 being £0.452m. Having said that each amount is now only payable for four years rather than the original six and over half of the amount payable in 2019/20 will fall out in 2020/21 to be replaced by an amount as yet unknown. It is distinctly possible that NHB will fall again in future years not just due to this and any adjustment to the baseline but the FFR could well change the methodology completely so for that reason it is proposed to continue removing amounts of NHB from the CSB and instead placing them into the DDF.

34. The previous paper suggested that we might see NHB increases again now that the adoption process for the Local Plan can continue and logic would suggest that this should be the case with the additional development expected. But given its volatile nature and the possibility of changes to the scheme the course of action proposed in para 30 seems the best for the time being. This can of course be reviewed during each budget cycle depending on how things progress.

#### e) Development Opportunities

35. There is a separate Cabinet Committee for co-ordinating asset management issues so it is not intended to devote too much space to developments. However, it is necessary to touch briefly on the number of opportunities that currently exist in the district and their potential benefits. This is particularly important given the increased significance of retained business rates.

36. The retail park is now operational and all units are now let. There are rent free periods relating to a number of units so the full rental income will not be received immediately. The rent roll is £2.634m per annum but because of rent free periods the rent accounted for annually is slightly less at £2.498m.

37. With regard to the mixed use re-development of the St Johns area in Epping, having purchased the land with a view to selling the site on for re-development to include cinema, retail and residential the negotiations with the potential developer fell through during the summer. The process had become quite protracted and a lot of time and effort had been expended, so the failure to reach a satisfactory conclusion on the one hand was disappointing. Having said that this outcome has now presented the Council with an opportunity.

38. For some time now it has been known that Epping Sports Centre is close to the end of

its life and the centre at Ongar was not far behind. Members have been aware that we would need to re-provide the service on another site and to that end, when bids were submitted for the leisure management contract, an additional scenario was provided with the management fee to show the situation when and if this re-provision was to occur. Now that the intention is for the St John's site is to be re-developed by the Council it is possible that the leisure re-provision can be made here and indeed initial site investigations as to its suitability are already underway.

39. The capital cost of a new leisure centre is likely to be in the order of £16-20m and in order to pay for the construction the Council will need to borrow money. Whilst the overall leisure management fee is likely to reduce and some future costs, particularly maintenance related, will be avoided by the construction of a new leisure centre by the time borrowing costs including the need to set aside revenue for the repayment of debt have been factored in there will be an additional CSB cost to finance for the Council. How this is to be met will need to be considered. However, it is the intention to produce a full development appraisal for the whole of the St John's Road Scheme, which will identify what capital contributions may be available to off-set the costs of any new Leisure Centre, but the sale of the existing site in Hemnall Street and the sale of any housing units identified in the adopted Design and Development Brief. In addition, it will assume the likely revenue to be generated by any retail/focal beverage units provided as part of the development.

40. It is also worth mentioning the former Winston Churchill pub site. There have been some difficulties with the letting of the retail space and some additional funding has been agreed to ensure the scheme is brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The majority of the units are under offer or in negotiation and £250,000 should be achievable when all units are let.

41. It had been expected that we would need to borrow funds externally during 2018/19 but as of early February there was still around £20m in surplus cash available so borrowing is unlikely until early in 2019/20 but it must be noted that going forward any significant additional capital expenditure either HRA or General Fund will no longer be freely available and borrowing costs will need to be considered as part of any options appraisals.

#### f) Transformation

42. Since the last FIP an in-principle decision has been made to relocate back office functions to a new building on Council owned land at North Weald. This will release land earmarked for residential development in the Local Plan including the Conder building, the rear extension and car park. The intention is to retain the existing front offices for customer service, civic and democratic functions whilst the remainder is let out to local businesses and various partners. Initial discussions have been started to this end. Based on information available at this early stage it is expected that the project can be funded from the capital receipt generated by the sale of the site supplemented by existing capital provision held as a result of a number of Civic Office projects put on hold by the review which totals a little under £1.2 million.

43. As regards the people strategy target of £647,000 set for 2018/19 this has now been achieved and indeed exceeded which has meant some progress has already been made toward the 2019/20 target. An estimated allocation of the savings between the HRA (£210,000) and General Fund (£437,000) was made and more savings have accrued to the General Fund than expected with less to the HRA. The actual position is expected to be a saving of £716,000, £504,000 General Fund and £212,000 HRA. The next stage is to recruit to the level 2 manager posts, which is currently underway with the remaining areas to follow on with completion expected to occur by the end of the summer.

44. With regard to the ICT strategy progress is broadly on track though some projects that are affected by the accommodation review have been placed on hold and there could be some additional costs arising from a review of the current server hosting arrangements.

45. The remaining amount left on the Invest to Save (ITS) has been allocated to the

accommodation review so there are no unallocated amounts left. The ITS has been a useful mechanism for generating CSB savings and income but has generally funded quite small scale projects. A review of its effectiveness and purpose is probably due and perhaps a paper should come back to members to consider the future options for the fund. If the fund is to be continued the General Fund will need to provide the initial finance.

#### g) Waste and Leisure Contracts

46. Two of the Council's high profile and high cost services are provided by external contractors, Biffa for waste and Places for People for leisure. Following an extensive competitive dialogue procedure Biffa took over the waste contract in November 2014. The contract hand over and the first six months of the new service went well. But in May 2015 the service was re-organised on a four day week basis and considerable difficulties were encountered.

47. The service was procured at a lower cost and the savings were included in the MTFS. However, issues with recycling and service delivery mean that CSB growth of nearly £500,000 was included in the revised estimates for 2016/17 together with £200,000 of DDF expenditure. Since then there have been further increases relating to loss of recycling income of £150,000 which is DDF to the February 2018 Cabinet and in June 2018 additional funding to meet the issues relating to the Chinese recycling market £200,000 one off Capital and £50,000 ongoing CSB. These costs are not sustainable in the long term and options need to be discussed with Biffa at the Waste Management Partnership Board to examine how overall costs can be reduced in future years.

48. There is also the prospect of the consultation on the Resources and Waste Strategy 25 year environment plan. The consultation paper could be out as early as this month. The detail is not available yet but we should respond to the consultation as it is likely to have an impact on service delivery and costs.

49. The current Leisure Management contract started on 1 April 2017 with Places for People for a period of 20 years. Over the lifetime of the contract the average CSB savings will be more than £1m per year. The payments under the contract vary considerably between years and so the CSB savings are phased in over the first four years of the contract. If the whole CSB saving was included at the start of the contract there would need to be substantial transfers to the DDF for the first few years so it is better within the MTFS to match the economic reality of the contract. Experience so far has shown that there are also one or two issues that need to be dealt with as the contract progresses so the savings used in the MTFS have been tempered to allow for such issues to be addressed.

50. The contract assumes investment in both new and existing leisure facilities. The replacement facility in Waltham Abbey opened during November as expected and has been well received by the community.

#### h) Miscellaneous

51. In addition to the significant items mentioned above there are a number of other issues that need to be borne in mind. The economy goes in cycles and it is possible that a recession may occur and some commentators have suggested it is somewhat overdue. There has been a period of slow growth and inflation has generally been between 2 and 3% for some time. There is no point in speculating on if or when a recession will occur but we do need to be wary of the consequences of a slowdown in the economy. In any economic downturn property related income streams such as development control and rent from our commercial estate tend to suffer. This reduction in income in a downturn will be magnified as the proportion of our income coming from retained business rates increases. Added to the reduction in income will be increased pressure on services with greater spending on benefits and homelessness. Clearly it is in no one's interests to talk down the economy and talk up a recession but in a paper highlighting financial issues it is a subject that cannot be ignored.



52. The other issue to be aware of is the possibility of a no deal Brexit. There has been ample speculation around the possible effects that Brexit might have on the economy and business generally. Speculation more recently has concentrated on the effects of a no deal Brexit. The simple truth is that we do not really know what is going to happen but most commentators think a no deal Brexit will have a worse effect on the economy than leaving with a deal. It is possible that Brexit might trigger a recession in which case the effects would be similar to those outlined in para 45 above.

53. A new item appears in the budget this time round called 'Minimum Revenue Provision or MRP'. When capital expenditure is either unfinanced or financed by borrowing an amount has to be charged to either to the General Fund or HRA depending on which account is carrying out the borrowing. This amount is set aside for repayment of debt and needs to be spread over the life of the asset to which the borrowing relates.

54. The Council's single largest cost is the annual pay bill of around £23m. The pay award for 2018/19 averaged out at around 2.3% for this Council. The agreement itself is for the period to 2020/21 and includes a complete overhaul of the pay scales because of the increases to the National Living Wage over that time. In 2019/20 an average increase of 2.5% is expected as increases on the lower points will be rather more. The MTFs is based on increases at 2.5% in 2020/21 and 2021/22 and 2% thereafter.

55. When the adoption of the local plan occurs there will be 11,400 properties built within the district over the period of the plan generating additional Council Tax income. It is difficult to assess what effect this will have on council services other than additional waste collections. Based on the waste management contract the additional cost per property stands at a little over £60 per property per annum which is well short of the additional band D equivalent council tax of £152.46 per property.

The ceiling for CSB net expenditure be no more than £12.0m including net growth

56. Annex 1 lists all the CSB changes for next year. The MTFs in July included net CSB savings of £1,461,000 for 2019/20 and the revised 2018/19 budget had a net CSB reduction of £1,313,000. Overall with the inclusion of additional income from parking and changes in recharges to the HRA for corporate activities the CSB position for 2019/20 is below that targeted set in July. In July the MTFs had a CSB target for 2019/20 of £12.16m and the General Fund CSB total is £164,000 below this at £12.0m. Therefore it is proposed to reduce the CSB target to £12m.

The ceiling for DDF net expenditure be no more than £2.373m

57. The DDF net movement for 2019/20 is £2.373m, Annex 2 lists all the DDF items in detail. This has increased by £1.82m since the July MTFs and has been partly driven by the inclusion of slippage on the local plan and additional resources for the Garden Town amongst a significant number of other movements.

58. At £2.373m the DDF programme is substantially above the target for 2019/20. Though as in previous years most of this is really due to slippage rather than a significant increase in expenditure. The previous MTFs highlighted the fact that the DDF was likely to run short of money due to the demands on the fund, however by maintaining the previously agreed transfer from the General Fund and the better than expected New Homes Bonus for 2019/20 the fund does look somewhat more healthy. The DDF now shows the balance falling to £438,000 at the end of the period by virtue of allocating £900,000 from the NHB to the fund.

59. The above figures do not include anything additional apart from extending the spending on anti-social behavior. Any other additional spending will mean an increase in DDF total spending and possibly an increase in the size of the transfer necessary from the General Fund Reserve to the DDF. At the moment though there is more headroom available than at this time last year particularly in 2019/20.

### The District Council Tax be frozen

60. Members have indicated that they want to freeze the Council Tax in 2019/20. It has been assumed in the MTFS that for 2020/21 onwards it will be increased by 2.5% per annum.

That longer term guidelines covering the period to March 2023 provide for

*The level of General Fund revenue balances to be maintained within a range of approximately £4.0m to £4.5m but at no lower level than 25% of net budget requirement whichever is the higher;*

61. Current projections show this rule will not be breached by 2022/23, by which time reserves will have reduced to £4.63m and 25% of net budget requirement will be £3.407m.

*Future levels of CSB net expenditure being financed predominately from External Funding from Government and Council Tax and that support from revenue balances be gradually phased out.*

62. The outturn for 2017/18 added £0.518m to reserves and the revised estimates for 2018/19 anticipate a reduction of £0.922m. This would leave the opening revenue reserve for 2019/20 at £5.804m and with the estimates for 2019/20 showing an increase of £0.79m, reserves at the end of 2019/20 would be £6.59m, after a transfer of £0.6m to the DDF. The Medium Term Financial Strategy at Annex 9 shows deficit budgets in the final three years of the period. The level of deficit peaks at £0.917m in 2021/22 and reduces to £0.42m in 2022/23, although this is achieved through additional CSB savings of £100,000 in 2021/22 and £300,000 in 2022/23.

### The Local Government Finance Settlement

63. This has already been covered in some detail above and whilst the figures are currently subject to consultation it is not anticipated that they will change significantly.

### The 2019/20 General Fund Budget

64. Whilst the position on some issues is clearer now than it was when the FIP was written there are still significant risks and uncertainties. There is still significant risk around the valuation list for 2017 together with the changes to transitional relief and the amendments to the appeals process. This makes it extremely difficult to predict the level of income from retained business rates for 2019/20 and subsequent years.

65. The other area of concern highlighted in the section on Business Rates Retention is the large number of appeals that are still outstanding against previous rating assessments and the difficulty in calculating an appropriate provision. The backlog of appeals with the Valuation Office is reducing but the single largest appeal against us, on the property with the £6m rateable value, is still to be settled and so remains a significant financial risk.

66. It is clear that the Government now wants local authorities to be reliant on income from their activities and local taxation rather than central grants. This is a direction that we had seen coming and the work done to move the Council towards self-sufficiency means we are in a better position now than many other authorities.

67. The starting point for the budget is the attached Medium Term Financial Strategy, Annex 9. Annexes 9a and 9b are based on the current draft budget with no Council Tax increase (£152.46 Band D) in 2019/20. It has though been assumed that in future years the Council tax will increase by 2.5%.

68. Members are reminded that this strategy is based on a number of important assumptions, including the following:

- Future funding for 2020/21 and beyond is subject to the fair funding review and at this stage we have little information on what funding will be available. The figures included are felt to be prudent given the uncertainty that there is.
- CSB growth has been restricted with the CSB target for 2019/20 of £12m achieved. Known changes beyond 2019/20 have been included but if the new leisure contract fails to yield the predicted savings, the full savings from the people strategy do not materialise or waste management costs increase other efficiencies will be necessary.
- All known DDF items are budgeted for, and because of the size of the Local Plan programme a transfer in of £1.3m from the General Fund Reserve will be required in 2018/19 followed by a further £0.6m in 2019/20 to ensure funds are available through to the end of 2022/23.
- Maintaining revenue balances of at least 25% of NBR. The forecast shows that the deficit budgets at the end of the period will reduce the closing balances at the end of 2022/23 to £4.63m or 34% of NBR for 2022/23, although this can only be done with further savings in 2021/22 and 2022/23.

### The Housing Revenue Account

69. The balance on the HRA at 31 March 2020 is expected to be £2,057,000, after a deficit of £259,000 in 2018/19 and a surplus of £29,000 in 2019/20. The estimates for both years have been compiled on the self-financing basis and so the negative subsidy payments have been replaced with borrowing costs.

70. The process of Rent Restructuring to bring Council rents and Housing Association rents more in line with each other is no longer with us. Since 2016/17 local authorities have been required to reduce rents by 1% per annum and 2019/20 is the final year of this policy. However it has come to light that there is a potential problem in 2019/20 because there are 53 Mondays in that year. The Welfare reform act that introduced the requirement to reduce rents by 1% per annum can be interpreted in two ways, either the 1% is applied to the annual rent in which case the additional weeks rent will mean income actually increases and rents should be reduced by more than 1% to satisfy the requirements of the act or the 1% is applied weekly which means we can maintain the status quo and collecting the additional weeks rent in 2019/20 is fine. A number of authorities in liaison with the Local government Association have reached a consensus that the weekly approach is correct and have communicated this to the MHCLG. Their only response so far is that individual Local Authorities need to satisfy themselves that they are complying with the legal position.

71. Members are recommended to agree the budgets for 2019/20 and 2018/19 revised and to note that although there is a deficit in 2018/19 the HRA has adequate ongoing balances.

### The Capital Programme

72. The Capital Programme at Annex 6 shows the expenditure previously agreed by Cabinet. Members have stated that priority will be given to capital schemes that will generate revenue in subsequent periods and this has been emphasised by stating that new borrowing should only be taken out to finance schemes with positive revenue consequences. This position has been included in previous Capital Strategies and has been reinforced by the new position that capital spending will require borrowing and thus impacts on the general fund revenue balance through interest payments.

73. Annex 9b sets out the estimated position on capital receipts for the next four years. The capital programme as shown in the appendix to Annex 11 shows over £97m over five years, it is anticipated that the Council will still have £3.9m of capital receipt balances at the end of the period (although these are one-four-one amounts to be used in the house building programme). In order to finance the capital programme it is currently envisaged that £8.2m of borrowing will be required.

## Risk Assessment and the Level of Balances

74. The Local Government Act 2003 (s 25) introduced a specific personal duty on the "Chief Financial Officer" (CFO) to report to the Authority on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the budget and the adequacy of reserves. The Act requires Members to have regard to the report when determining the Council's budget requirement for 2019/20. Where this advice is not accepted, this should be formally recorded within the minutes of the Council meeting. The Council at its meeting on the 21 February will consider the recommendations of the Cabinet on the budget for 2019/20 and will determine the planned level of the Council's balances. Members will consider the report of the CFO at that meeting.

## The Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20

75. Since 2004/05 it has been necessary to set affordable borrowing limits, limits for the prudential indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy. These elements of the budget requirements were set out in a separate report to Cabinet on 7 February.

76. Due to the £185m of debt for the HRA self-financing the Council is no longer debt free and the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy have been amended for this. Ongoing difficulties persist in financial markets but higher capital requirements have eased concerns about some banks, Arlingclose still advise a very restricted counter party list but have allowed some increase in suggested investment periods.

77. The size of the Capital Programme means additional borrowing will be required during 2019/20. Members have indicated that borrowing should only be undertaken to finance schemes that produce net savings overall and this principle will be included in the updated Treasury Management Strategy.

## Council Tax

78. The revenue and capital budgets of the various spending portfolios are set out in Annexes 5(a)-(i). Annex 4 summarises the overall budget for the Council for the General Fund and the HRA and is grossed up for the effects of local parish and town council precepts. Annex 6 summarises the Council's Capital Programme. The budget as submitted produces a District Council Tax (Band D) of £152.46 for 2019/20 (£152.46 for 2018/19), which represents nil increase. The average (Band D) Council Tax including local Parish/Town Council precepts will be £219.87 (£217.45 in 2018/19), which represents an increase of 1.1%. Cabinet have also recommended the adoption of an empty properties premium in an effort to reduce the number of empty homes within the district. This report is elsewhere on the agenda.

## Council Tax Declaration

79. Under Recommendations (1) – (5) which include Annexes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5(a)-(i) the Council will agree its budget for the next year. The Authority must then proceed to declare a Council Tax. The appropriate technical recommendations are set out in Recommendations (9) onwards. These have been revised following changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 brought in as part of the Localism Act 2011. Under these changes the billing authority is now required to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year, not its budget requirement as previously. The standard form of declaration recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has been used as it is designed to avoid the possibility of legal challenge to the declaration of the Council Tax.

80. The Council Tax bases for each band in each area of the District were calculated by the Assistant Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder. These are reproduced in Recommendations (9) (a) and (b) and form part of the ensuing calculations. The amounts to be levied within the District in respect of Essex County Council, Essex Police Authority, Essex Fire Authority and Parish and Town Councils are notified to this Authority

and are matters on which the District Council has no discretion.

81. However, the precepts of Parish and Town Councils are levied on the District Council and then taken into account in the General Fund. Details relating to the District Council precept together with the precepts in respect of Parish and Town Councils are set out in the recommendations and analysis in Annex 7.

#### Guide to the Council Tax Calculation

82. The figures in Recommendation (10) draw on calculations contained within the report as follows:

**10(a)** is the total of the revenue expenditure items shown in Annex 4 summary of revenue including the total of the Parish/Town Council precepts;

**10(b)** is the total of the revenue income items shown in Annex 4;

**10(c)** is the difference between the revenue expenditure and income as shown in Annex 4 (in simple terms it represents the net budget requirement of the District Council plus Parish and Town Council precepts);

**10(d)** is obtained by dividing 10(c) by the Council Tax Base; this represents the average Band 'D' Council Tax for the District and Parish/Town Councils only;

**10(e)** as shown in Annex 4 is the total of Parish/Town Council precepts; and

**10(f)** represents the equivalent of dividing 10(e) by the Council Tax Base, the resulting figure being deducted from the figure shown in 10(d); this provides the average Band 'D' Council Tax for the District Council only.

83. This process culminates in the figures shown in Annex 7, which are the Council Tax amounts for the District Council and the Parish/Town Councils for each valuation band for 2019/20. To these amounts are added Council Tax figures supplied by the major precepting authorities and which are further summarised as the total Council Tax due for each valuation band in Part B of Annex 8.

84. Annex 8 relating to the precepts of various parts of the District will be tabled at the meeting.

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## **Council : 21 February 2019**

### **List of Annexes:**

**Annex 1 CSB Growth/Savings List**

**Annex 2 DDF List**

**Annex 3 Invest to Save List**

**Annex 4 Revenue Expenditure, Income and Financing Summary**

**Annex 5 Directorate Budgets (a – i)**

**Annex 6 Capital Budgets and Financing**

**Annex 7 District & Parish Council Tax Rates**

**Annex 8 Major Precepting Authorities Analysis (Tabled)**

**Annex 9 Medium Term Financial Strategy (a & b)**

**Annex 10 Chief Finance Officers Report on the Robustness of the Estimates within the 2019/20 Budget**

**Annex 11 Capital Strategy.**

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COUNCIL TAX RATES FOR DISTRICT & PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS 2019/20

ANNEX 7

Authorities	Tax Base No.'s	Precept 2019/20	Council Tax Band D	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>District Expenses</b>	<b>54,159.4</b>	<b>8,257,142</b>	<b>152.46</b>	<b>101.64</b>	<b>118.58</b>	<b>135.52</b>	<b>152.46</b>	<b>186.34</b>	<b>220.22</b>	<b>254.10</b>	<b>304.92</b>
Abbess, Berners and Beauchamp Roding	227.4	5,500	24.19	117.77	137.39	157.02	176.65	215.91	255.16	294.42	353.30
Buckhurst Hill	5,238.9	360,892	68.89	147.57	172.16	196.76	221.35	270.54	319.73	368.92	442.70
Chigwell	6,191.9	290,801	46.96	132.95	155.10	177.26	199.42	243.74	288.05	332.37	398.84
Epping Town	5,319.1	475,585	89.41	161.25	188.12	215.00	241.87	295.62	349.37	403.12	483.74
Epping Upland	413.6	17,994	43.51	130.65	152.42	174.20	195.97	239.52	283.07	326.62	391.94
Fyfield	415.7	12,084	29.07	121.02	141.19	161.36	181.53	221.87	262.21	302.55	363.06
High Ongar	562.6	10,412	18.51	113.98	132.98	151.97	170.97	208.96	246.96	284.95	341.94
Lambourne	895.4	38,970	43.52	130.65	152.43	174.20	195.98	239.53	283.08	326.63	391.96
Loughton Town	12,580.6	719,000	57.15	139.74	163.03	186.32	209.61	256.19	302.77	349.35	419.22
Matchingham	450.9	16,638	36.90	126.24	147.28	168.32	189.36	231.44	273.52	315.60	378.72
Milton, Bobbingworth and the Lavers	591.3	15,510	26.23	119.13	138.98	158.84	178.69	218.40	258.11	297.82	357.38
Nazeing	2,089.4	82,994	39.72	128.12	149.47	170.83	192.18	234.89	277.59	320.30	384.36
North Weald Bassett	2,550.6	219,256	85.96	158.95	185.44	211.93	238.42	291.40	344.38	397.37	476.84
Ongar Town	2,730.3	307,050	112.46	176.61	206.05	235.48	264.92	323.79	382.66	441.53	529.84
Roydon	1,364.8	32,207	23.60	117.37	136.94	156.50	176.06	215.18	254.31	293.43	352.12
Sheering	1,356.9	42,200	31.10	122.37	142.77	163.16	183.56	224.35	265.14	305.93	367.12
Stanford Rivers	365.6	20,704	56.63	139.39	162.63	185.86	209.09	255.55	302.02	348.48	418.18
Stapleford Abbots	523.2	11,619	22.21	116.45	135.85	155.26	174.67	213.49	252.30	291.12	349.34
Stapleford Tawney	85.0	1,537	18.08	113.69	132.64	151.59	170.54	208.44	246.34	284.23	341.08
Theydon Bois	2,002.7	110,854	55.35	138.54	161.63	184.72	207.81	253.99	300.17	346.35	415.62
Theydon Garnon	86.4	1,000	11.85	109.54	127.80	146.05	164.31	200.82	237.34	273.85	328.62
Theydon Mount	117.4	1,975	16.82	112.85	131.66	150.47	169.28	206.90	244.52	282.13	338.56
Waltham Abbey Town	7,763.4	851,000	109.62	174.72	203.84	232.96	262.08	320.32	378.56	436.80	524.16
Willingale	236.3	4,985	21.10	115.71	134.99	154.28	173.56	212.13	250.70	289.27	347.12
<b>Town and Parish Total</b>	<b>54,159.4</b>	<b>3,650,767</b>	<b>67.41</b>	<b>44.94</b>	<b>52.43</b>	<b>59.92</b>	<b>67.41</b>	<b>82.39</b>	<b>97.37</b>	<b>112.35</b>	<b>134.82</b>
<b>District, Town and Parish Total</b>	<b>54,159.4</b>	<b>11,907,909</b>	<b>219.87</b>	<b>146.58</b>	<b>171.01</b>	<b>195.44</b>	<b>219.87</b>	<b>268.73</b>	<b>317.59</b>	<b>366.45</b>	<b>439.74</b>

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## ***Report to Council***

***Date of meeting: 21 February 2019***

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

**Contact for further information: Councillor M. Sartin  
(Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Committee)**

**Democratic Services Officer: R. Perrin (01992 564532)**

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report from 18 December 2018 to the present be noted.**

### **Report:**

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 18 December 2018**

1. At the meeting on Tuesday 18 December 2018, the Strategic Director, G. Blakemore made a presentation to the Committee on the progress of the Council's People Strategy. She advised that the strategy encompassed five work streams which were developing leadership, developing the organisation, developing skills & capacity, resourcing the Council and the pay, grading & benefits.
2. A common operating model had been determined which focused on the Customer, Business Support and Specialist/Technical elements and processing mapping continued throughout the Council to enable efficiency savings. Furthermore, the creation of a Customer Contact Centre and Business Support brought together similar roles from different services areas.
3. In addition, the Council had also taken the opportunity to consider the Pay, Grading and Benefits of staff, to assist with the future of the organisation, manage costs, address external pressures and create equality and fairness across the Council.
4. Following the consultation with members on the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee Framework, members concluded that a Task and Finish Panel be set up to determine a way forward. The Task and Finish Panel has met twice and has considered developing the Select Committee's framework around the Council's three corporate ambitions; Communities, Place and Council. The next meeting would be held 27 February 2019.
5. Other items discussed included Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations; the Corporate Plan 2018/23 – Performance Report Quarter 2 (2018/19); the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions; and the work programmes for the Committee, select committees and external organisations.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 26 February 2019**

The next meeting is scheduled after the Council meeting and will include a presentation from the Youth Council; the Corporate Plan 2018/23 – Performance Report Quarter 3 (2018/19); considerations of topics and question to put to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership;

the outcome of the recent Call-in of the Accommodation Strategy (C-024-2018/19); and an update on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Framework Review Task and Finish Panel.

## WALTHAM ABBEY ROYAL GUNPOWDER MILLS COMPANY LTD

Report to Council by the EFDC representative Cllr. Helen Kane

Meeting of the Trustees on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2019 at 12.00 noon.

The Chairman Dr Jennifer Freeman opened the meeting wishing everyone a Happy New year. In her report she mentioned that the site is the centre of interest for several developers and the board of trustees will be talking to all interested in the site.

Their Business Plan and the Way forward is in good progress on all sections i.e. conservation, promotions, access etc.

By the end of May, they will be working together with the Foundation and Natural England on Ecological issues, as there are buildings that need immediate repairs.

They are working with Heritage England, Natural England and others for a long-term management plan of the built and natural heritage in the Scheduled Monument within the site, an area that lies outside of the possible development areas. They will be sharing information about this in due course with all stakeholders.

The trustees and some of the volunteers have visited other similar sites around the country to get an insight of their operational process and success

The AGM followed and trustees stood down and re-appointed as follows:

Dr Jennifer M Freeman- Chairman

Martin Ives -Vice Chairman

Wendy Newman

Geoffrey Hooper

Douglas Kent

Grahame Browne

Fiona Baxter

Jill Amador

David Sims

The CEO is still Mrs Stella Morris

The meeting closed after the Board of Trustees decided on future Board Meetings for 2019

Next meeting on Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2019

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## Green Arc: Briefing Note

### Introduction

The original Green Arc was a visionary project, with an ambitious scope: no less than to radically improve the environmental quality of the north-eastern quadrant of London's green belt, for the benefit of people and wildlife. The founding partners were Natural England and the City of London Corporation, with all of the relevant government agencies and environmental charities and other strategic partners. A website was established, and a number of valuable projects were carried out by the Green Arc partners, but the far-reaching ambitions were not achieved. The partnership became inactive other than an annual meeting.

However, the aims remain relevant, the need for the work is even more pressing, and the increasing importance of Green Infrastructure in government thinking on planning and economic regenerations creates a new opportunity. As a result, the Green Arc partners agreed that the One Epping Forest Partnership should be given the opportunity to revive the project, using the remaining funds for that specific objective.

### Making it happen

The One Partnership's undertaking to the Green Arc partnership is that it will ensure the future of the project by:

- Hosting regular meetings
- Coordinating the efforts of partners to meet the projects aims
- Ensuring liaison across the partnership
- Arranging an annual stakeholder conference
- Holding a partnership AGM
- Developing funding streams
- Stimulating increased partnership and promoting activity
- Developing active links to similar groups/ projects more widely.

The immediate priority is to re-establish the partnership as a coherent body, with leadership in the form of a steering board, under the Chairmanship of Cllr Nigel Bedford and with named contacts at the political, senior management and operational levels. There will be with an initial meeting of the board in February 2019.

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