

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda

8 June 2020 at 7pm

Remote Meeting

Membership

Councillor J. Galley (Chair)
Councillor S.M. Goldman (Vice-Chair)

and Councillors

L. Ashley, N.A. Dudley, I.D. Fuller, I.S. Grundy, R.J. Hyland, J.C.S.
Lager J.S. Lardge, M. Sismey, M.S. Steel, M.D. Watson, T.N. Willis,
R.T. Whitehead and S. Young

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City. There is also an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. These have to be submitted in advance and details are on the agenda page. If you would like to find out more, please telephone Daniel Bird in the Democracy Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606523 email Daniel.bird@chelmsford.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

8 June 2020

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

2. Minutes

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2020.

3. Declaration of Interests

All Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

4. Public Question Time

Any member of the public may ask a question or make a statement at this point in the meeting. Each person has two minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes is allotted to public questions/statements, which must be about matters for which the Committee is responsible.

The Chair may disallow a question if it is offensive, substantially the same as another question or requires disclosure of exempt or confidential information. If the question cannot be answered at the meeting a written response will be provided after the meeting.

Any member of the public who wishes to submit a question or statement to this meeting should email it to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk 24 hours before the start time of the meeting. All valid questions and statements will be published with the agenda on the website at least six hours before the start time and will be responded to at the meeting. Those who have submitted a valid question or statement will be entitled to put it in person at the meeting, provided they have indicated that they wish to do so and have submitted an email address to which an invitation to join the meeting and participate in it can be sent.

5. Decisions Called-In

To report on any Cabinet decisions called in and to decide how they should be progressed.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Updates

To receive updates from the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Connected Chelmsford and the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.

7. Quarterly review of the work of the Chelmsford Policy Board

8. Reports from representatives on Outside Bodies

9. Annual Report on the Scrutiny Function 2019/20

10. Decisions taken under delegation to the Chief Executive

11. Work Programme

12. Urgent Business

To consider any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

MINUTES
of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held on 10 February 2020 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor J. Galley (Chair)

Councillors L. Ashley, N.A. Dudley, S.M. Goldman, I.S. Grundy, R.J. Hyland, D.G. Jones, J.C.S. Lager, J.S. Lardge, L.A. Mascot, M.S. Steel, M.D. Watson and S. Young

1. **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sismey and Whitehead. No substitutions were made.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. **Public Question Time**

No questions were asked or statements made.

4. **Decisions Called-In**

The Committee noted that no decisions taken by the Cabinet had been called-in.

5. **Declaration of Interests**

All members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or other registerable interests where appropriate in any items of business on the meeting's agenda. None were made.

6. **Cabinet Portfolio Update**

Councillor Deakin provided an update on her duties as the Cabinet Member for Safer Chelmsford. The Committee heard that the Climate and Ecological Emergency impacted all directorates and that Full Council would be updated once regular data was available, other ideas were also welcomed. In Building Services, the Coval Lane window replacement program had been completed, some further refurbishments were due and it was noted that electricity was now 100% renewable across all City Council owned buildings. It was also noted that the Council had won a gold standard award for its travel plans which encouraged the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

It was noted that a full report on Waste and Recycling was due at the April meeting. Cllr Deakin informed the Committee that route optimisation had been rolled out and households were to continue to be supplied with one clear plastic bag per week for plastic recycling. It was also noted

that Freighter House continued to carry out MOT's and the possibility of EV/Hybrid MOT's was being explored. It was also noted that officers had been working closely with event organisers to ensure as much waste as possible was separated and recycled.

The Committee was informed that street care teams had continued to maintain public areas across the City and the anti-littering campaign from Love Your Chelmsford had been well received. The Committee also heard that partnership working had started with ECC on a car littering campaign. It was also noted that the market refurbishment had been completed on time and on budget.

Councillor Deakin informed the Committee that all 14 Council owned parks held the Green Flag award and work was due to begin in March, to widen the bridge for pedestrians and cyclists between Admirals and West Park. The Committee also heard that the tree planting scheme had been underway and by the end of this season 13,500 trees should have been planted. The Committee noted that anyone interested in volunteering to plant trees or suggest suitable areas should email lyc@chelmsford.gov.uk.

The Committee were updated on Leisure and Heritage Services, it was noted that Membership levels at Riverside had exceeded expectations and a new feedback system had been under development. It was also noted that some building work was still to be completed. The Committee were informed of a pilot Health and Wellbeing initiative 'With You in Mind' taking place at the Sports and Athletics Centre. It was noted that Hylands House continued to be very successful with weddings and corporate hires and had won the Best Historic Wedding Venue for the second year in a row. The Committee also heard that bright new signage had been developed which would be up very soon in the Hylands Estate.

Councillor Deakin also updated the Committee on Public Health and Protection matters. It was noted that Air Quality continued to be monitored and a clean air strategy was due to be looked at later in the year. It was also noted that the Health and Wellbeing Plan had been adopted and continued to be a living document and the work of the Mid Essex Livewell partnership had been ongoing.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford confirmed that;

- Extensive recycling for large events on Council premises would involve separate recycling bins being available which should make a significant difference.
- Littering from cars could be reported either directly to ECC or to the Public Health and Protection team at CCC. The email address environment.protection@chelmsford.gov.uk was noted by the Committee. It was also noted that dashcam footage had been very helpful in terms of successful prosecutions and that reliable witnesses such as Councillors or Council officers were helpful.
- The decision to provide one clear plastic bag a week for plastic recycling had been made as a result of the Council's intention to reduce single use plastics and after discussions with officers at Freighter House. It was noted that for the majority of households this was sufficient, but that any clear plastic bag purchased elsewhere could also be used.
- Dog waste bags were not provided as it was felt that this should be part of the responsibility of being a dog owner rather than for the Council.
- The works to the footbridge between West and Admirals Park would involve a short closure for a few days and ECC would be asked to help publicise this to residents.

The Committee discussed whether written reports should be provided for future Cabinet Portfolio updates. The Committee were informed that the initial decision had been that the decision was for the individual Cabinet Member. Some members of the Committee felt it would be useful for a written report or notes to be provided by the Cabinet Member rather than just a verbal update.

RESOVLED that the Committee's thanks for the update by the Cabinet Member for a Safer Chelmsford be noted.

(7.01 pm to 7.27 pm)

7. **Annual Presentation by Safer Chelmsford Partnership**

The Council's Public Protection Manager gave a presentation on behalf of the Safer Chelmsford Partnership, regarding its statutory duties, key priorities, key projects and funding in 2019/20.

The Committee was reminded of the Partnership's statutory duties, which were;

- Strategic Assessment and Partnership Plan
- Co-Ordination of Partnership activities
- Strategic Priorities plus Reducing Reoffending
- Prevent, Modern Day Slavery and Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Face the Public – combined with Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Essex Police.
- Survey Public opinion – fear of crime and perceptions
- Annual presentation to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee was also reminded of the Partnership's strategic priorities for 2019/20, which were:

- Tackling violent crime
- Driving down anti-social behaviour in public places
- Identifying and supporting vulnerable people
- Delivery of the Essex Police rural crime strategy

The key projects carried out in the last 12 months included;

- The Community Safety Hub going live on 26 March 2019.
- Partnership response to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour associated with rough sleeping and supporting our most vulnerable.
- Violence & Vulnerability – supporting young people being criminally and sexually exploited, Operation Enlightenment, Crucial Crew and StoryLab.
- J9 domestic abuse awareness training
- Education, awareness and community engagement
- Night time economy interventions – street pastors, taxi marshals, SOS project and Drinkaware Crews, Best Bar None and Purple Flag
- CCTV digital transformation – more intelligence led.

The Committee was informed about the funding arrangements which varied from the PFCC contribution to the Late-Night Levy. The Committee also heard about the strong links in the Community Safety Partnership Hub with Essex Police which had led to improved partnership buy in and joint working opportunities. In terms of Community Engagement, it was noted that this had

involved proactive work with neighbourhood watch groups and the use of WhatsApp by residents and police. The Committee was updated on the City's Purple Flag status which had been confirmed after a full overnight assessment in July 2019. It had been noted that there were good quality public areas with thoughtful design and the SOS bus and support for the vulnerable had been key. The Committee heard that the SOS project continued to be a significant success in assisting those using the night-time economy and regularly helped prevent expensive trips to A&E.

The Committee was updated on the work that had taken place to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour, which included the effective use of the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and effective use of enforcement tools and powers. The Committee also heard of the ongoing work around violence and vulnerability which included strategic and operational responses alongside preventative work with school students such as the Crucial Crew scheme. The Committee was informed of responsive work that had been taking place in hot spot areas, targeted education and the effective use of data and intelligence.

In response to questions from Members the Committee was informed that;

- The majority of preventative education was at Secondary level, but primary school students were still involved. It was noted that it was an important area and various options would continue to be explored, but that it was key to not duplicate work already undertaken by primary schools themselves.
- It was possible for local level CCTV, for example in parish areas to link up to the Councils monitoring centre. This was already in place with some parish councils and was something that the partnership would be keen to expand upon further.
- It was not easy to provide direct statistics on the success of schemes such as the preventative ones in schools. However, positive feedback was regularly received and stats that detailed the use of other services such as the SOS bus proved it was an effective service.
- In the future, Councillors could be invited to some events to detail further the type of work taking place.

The Committee thanked the Council's Public Protection Manager for attending and their presentation.

RESOLVED that;

1. the report be noted and;
2. the Committee's appreciation for the excellent work of the Safer Chelmsford Partnership and the detailed presentation from the Council's Public Protection Manager be noted.

(7.28 pm to 8.09 pm)

8. **Annual Presentation by Essex Police**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Temporary Chief Inspector for Chelmsford. The Committee were informed that the latest figures were from the end of December and detailed a rise of 14.6% in crime in Chelmsford. However, it was noted that there were circumstances that had led to this. He stated that, this was due to changes in the way certain crimes were logged, therefore leading to some duplications. It was also noted that the rise in figures could be attributed

to an increase in the amount of proactive work being undertaken by officers. It was highlighted that this had been very important and had led to increases in the amount of drugs and weapons being taken off the streets and helped to spread the message that it would not be tolerated in Chelmsford.

The Committee heard that burglary rates had decreased by 7% and that there had been a 16% increase in theft from motor vehicles. It was noted that this was due to more proactive officer patrols alongside an increase in stop and searches in Chelmsford. It was also noted that there had been 178 stop searches last month in Chelmsford of which 33% had a positive result such as an arrest or something being found. It was also highlighted that each one was scrutinised by the Independent Advisory Group and there were no demographic based issues. The Committee was informed that staff numbers had continued to increase along with a significant number of hours being worked by special constables voluntarily too.

In response to questions from Members the Committee was informed that;

- Regular patrols had taken place in certain areas when requested by Parish Councils, but the difficulty was in covering areas 24/7. It was key for issues to be reported however so resources can be in the right area at the right time.
- The take up in Community Special Officers for dedicated areas such as parishes had not been as successful as hoped. It was noted however that work would continue to develop this area.
- The '101' phone service wait times had been reduced from 17 to 11 minutes due to an increase in staff numbers.
- The use of WhatsApp had proved to be successful and it was hoped that a proposal to widen the approach would be approved. It was noted that despite not leading to high numbers of arrests, it had been a very important factor in satisfying public perception that issues would be investigated.
- Successful prosecution rates in Chelmsford had increased, in line with national rates.

The Committee noted that the work by Essex Police was of great importance and thanked them for their continued hard work in making Chelmsford a safe place for its residents.

RESOLVED that;

1. the Committee's appreciation for the work of Essex Police be noted and;
2. the Committee's thanks for the attendance of the Temporary Chief Inspector be noted.

(8.10 pm to 8.31 pm)

9. **Community Safety Communication (Interim Report)**

The Committee received an update on the work undertaken so far by the Community Safety Communication Task and Finish Group. It was noted that significant progress had been made against the set objectives, but it was a very broad area of work with a wide variety of data. It was also noted that a key aspect so far had been that different sets of people required different sets of information and the group were therefore filtering the requirements. It was highlighted that next stage of work was to focus on the provision of ward level police data and the development of a Member Sharepoint site to host the information. It was also noted that the group would continue to explore the most effective forms of communication with the public and stakeholders such as neighbourhood watch.

Members of the Committee and the Task and Finish Group, thanked officers and Essex Police for their work so far and welcomed the full report at a future meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(8.32 pm to 8.40 pm)

10. **Work Programme**

The Committee considered a report on its work programme which had been updated following the Committee's meeting on 13 January 2020.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. **Urgent Business**

There were no matters of urgent business brought before the Committee.

The meeting closed at 8.41 pm.

Chair



Working Groups Annual Report 2019/2020

Introduction

- a. The Chelmsford Policy Board met for its inaugural meeting on 6 June 2019. A key function of the Board was to establish working groups to examine in detail existing policies, develop new ones and to make recommendations on new or revised policies to the Chelmsford Policy Board.
- b. The aim is for developed Policies and Strategies to be seen as for Chelmsford as a whole and owned by the Community.
- c. In agreeing their scope and workstreams, the Board and Working Groups noted that the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency implied immediate priority actions across all directorates, led by the Cabinet rather than within the Policy Board.
- d. Though the Groups advisedly bear in mind that all possible ways forward have cost and budget implications, their deliberations and recommendations are not intended necessarily to be constrained by that and are intended to include short-, medium- and long-term goals and possible societal advances, scenarios and electoral cycles.
- e. The Policy Board meeting of Thursday 4 June 2020 will receive this report and provide the opportunity for further updates and discussion.
- f. Below is a brief description of the work which has been carried out by the Working Groups in the period 2019/20 and presently identified areas they intend to work on in 2020/21. Fuller detail and supporting papers are to be found in SharePoint.

Membership

- a. The Groups are Cross-Party and proportionate (presently 3:1:1 though potentially 4:2:1) but are open to other members to attend and participate. They are intended to work closely with residents, groups and stakeholders, through specific invitation and through workshops.
- b. Going forward, the expectation that they should be a significant opportunity for back-bench involvement is underlined by clarifying/intending that.

- c. Working Group members should not be Cabinet Members, Cabinet Deputies, or the Chair of the Policy Board. However, those relevant to particular Working Groups or workstreams are expected to be involved in deliberations.
- d. Working Group members can be, though do not need to be, members of the Policy Board.
- e. Substitutes are permitted.
- f. Where appropriate, an Essex County Council member or members may be invited to be a regular (though non-voting) member of a Working Group.

1. Affordable and Social Housing Working Group

Work so far:

- a. The Affordable and Social Housing Working Group was established to look at ways of improving the supply of social housing and appropriate private sector housing that is affordable in Chelmsford. It looked at how the housing need was assessed, how affordable housing was defined, how supply related to demand and following on from this, the type and size of affordable housing needed to meet demand and the impact of changes to the national benefits system. The main conclusions of the Working Group's research included the realisation that the planning system cannot meet all affordable housing needs in the timescale of the Local Plan. It was identified that there is a need to increase the overall supply of larger family-sized rented affordable housing and as a result the short-term priority of the Council should be the provision of further temporary housing and increasing the provision of three and four-bedroom social rented affordable housing.
- b. The Working Group identified three broad categories of intervention: policy-led options that the Council or Registered Providers could introduce outside of the Local Plan system; land-led options including using Council land to maximise the number and type of affordable housing; and property-led options involving the purchase of homes by the Council for use as temporary accommodation. The Working Group assessed the different options and agreed that all the options provided opportunities for additional affordable housing supply and Officers should continue to investigate these in the medium to long term.
- c. The Working Group put initial proposals to the Policy Board in March 2020, and the recommendations were approved based on the agreement that the approach would be considered by Cabinet when agreeing or recommending to the Council the revenue and capital budgets and business case for the proposals.

Membership of the Working Group:

Councillors:

- Cllr A Sosin (**Chair**)
- Cllr Daden
- Cllr C Davidson (attends as **Cabinet Member**)
- Cllr S Goldman
- Cllr Poulter
- Cllr Shaw

Officers:

- David Green (**Director Lead**)
- Jeremy Potter (**Co-ordinating Officer**)
- Paul Brookes
- Paul Gayler
- Liz Harris-Best
- Alison Hawkins

2. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Working Group

Work so far:

- a. The Working Group was created to develop, monitor and review the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy, ensuring it addresses all the issues required by statutory guidance, overseeing the process for consultation and engagement with all relevant agencies, incorporation of consultation into the final draft and agreeing an action plan, projects and work-stream for the Council and partners.
- b. The Working Group submitted an updated Strategy on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping to the Cabinet on 10 September 2019 for consultation. Work was carried out with other organisations to monitor the effectiveness of the Strategy and adapt and develop it as necessary. The idea would be the creation of a living document, reacting to changing circumstances and newly emerging challenges and initiatives. The Working Group recognised that one of the challenges was to build on and bring together the work of the many organisations involved in supporting the homeless and rough sleepers, and a workshop comprising relevant commissioned and voluntary groups met to begin that process.
- c. After consultation, the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2019-24 was considered by Cabinet on 19 November 2019 and referred to Council for formal approval, which was given, at the meeting on 22 January 2020. The Working Group met once more during the year to consider actions and the evolving situation.

Membership of the Working Group:

Councillors:

- Cllr Tron (**Chair**) (substituted by Cllr Bracken February-April 2020)
- Cllr P Clark

- Cllr C Davidson (attends as **Cabinet Member**)
- Cllr S Goldman (acted as Chair in Cllr Tron's absence)
- Cllr Pooley
- Cllr Poulter

Officers:

- Amanda Fahey (**Director Lead**)
- Paul Gayler (**Co-ordinating Officer**)
- Paul Brookes
- Alison Hawkins

Note on the merging of the Affordable and Social Housing & Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Working Groups:

The members of the Affordable and Social Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Working Groups noted that having identified their future work streams, they were keen to ensure that their activities are coordinated, and form part of an overall Housing Strategy. This led to the first joint meeting of the two Working Groups on 6 May 2020, where it was agreed that the two should formally merge and create joint priorities for the year ahead. The report on this matter will go to the Policy Board on 4 June to recommend a combined Housing Working Group to include a new Terms of Reference document.

Relevant Council Priorities for the year include:

- I. That the City Council acquires 20 larger family sized street properties for use as temporary accommodation in 2020/21
- II. Prioritise for development the four smaller and more deliverable Chelmsford City Council owned sites to provide affordable and social rent properties in the period 2021/22
- III. Promotion of Entry-Level Exception Sites for Registered Provider land-led schemes with Homes England in early 2020
- IV. Investigation of the acquisition of land by the Council for additional affordable housing and entry-level exception sites
- V. The scope of a strategy to coordinate voluntary and statutory agencies working on rough sleepers or single homeless people in need of support for accommodation and to include longer term measures to maintain provision for inclusion in the emerging wider Housing Strategy
- VI. Continued working with Essex County Council regarding opportunities for providing additional accommodation to meet the need of those who are homeless including rough sleepers
- VII. Continued working with owners of vacant offices and other premises for emergency and medium-term accommodation uses, to include for specific needs e.g. domestic violence, and for Day Centre, Assessment and Support space.
- VIII. Introduction of a "Tap To Donate" project in Chelmsford to raise funds for joint homeless and rough sleeper charities

3. Chelmsford Waterways Working Group

Work so far:

- a. At the inaugural meeting on 29 August 2019, the Terms of Reference for the working group were agreed. The areas of interest were discussed and the key workstreams identified. It was decided that the first areas of focus for the Working Group, would be around improving navigation, the future of the automatic flood gates on the River Chelmer and pulling together a workshop of river users and community groups.
- b. Following a feasibility study “Chelmer Automatic Weir Replacement – 17 January 2020”, a broad consensus was reached within the Working Group that the replacement of the automatic flood gates on the River Chelmer and provision of a lock to enable navigation between upper and lower Chelmer should be the proposed way forward to keep the automatic gates in action and to enable navigation upstream. This was preferred to further consideration of a link between the Chelmer and the Canal. A further detailed feasibility will be undertaken to proceed to develop the scheme into a project for implementation.
- c. A Waterways Working Group workshop was held on 14 February, and was well attended with 42 Working Group members, City Councillors, river users and community group representatives, all of whom listened to presentations and took part in discussion groups. In addition to discussion of b. above, the main conclusions from the day were as follows:
 - River use and navigation – the use and benefits of the waterways are many with varied users and stakeholders and it is important that their views and interest help make the most of future opportunities whilst seeking to overcome barriers for expanding and diversifying the waterways use.
 - Sandford Mill and wider country park – the site has huge potential on many levels, and it is recommended that a high-level strategic master plan for the Park and Mill is developed to build on the master planning associated with the nearby development sites. The plan needs to be based on testing user demand and requires some initial survey work. The Working Group can be used as the vehicle to review and evaluate the emerging strategic plan.
 - River environment and ecology – the key issues affecting water quality and ecology were identified and the group considered the possible solutions.

Relevant Council Priorities for the year include:

- I. The replacement of the automatic flood gates and provision of a lock to enable navigation; investigation of funding options
- II. Further investigation or funding options and design of replacement following the workshop, furthering cooperation between partners and stakeholders
- III. Consideration of best use of the Canal and Springfield Basin area

- IV. A high-level strategic master plan for the country park and Sandford Mill based on nearby development sites
- V. Discussing and developing further plans and actions for possible increased uses within and beyond the City centre both downstream and upstream, both of the waterways themselves and adjacent towpaths and amenities

Membership of the Working Group:

Councillors:

- Cllr Lee (**Chair**)
- Cllr Bentley
- Cllr Fuller
- Cllr Gulliver
- Cllr Moore (attends as **Cabinet Member**)

Officers:

- Keith Nicholson (**Director Lead**)
- Paul Van Damme (**Co-ordinating Officer**)
- Stuart Graham
- Jeremy Potter
- Joe Reidy
-

4. Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group

Work so far:

The Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group was developed to enable citizens to feel better represented, to improve their opportunities for participation in the community and decision-making and to create better connections between the community, voluntary bodies and local government. The Working Group is still in an early phase of its workflow. So far, it has considered initial proposals for the review of polling districts and polling places; received information on the options for a Community Governance Review of the unparished areas; considered a paper on improving turnout at elections; taken an initial look at increasing engagement; and discussed the possibility of a volunteering scheme for Council employees.

Relevant Council Priorities for the year include: (See also COVID19 below)

- I. Developing more detailed proposals for encouraging people to stand as candidates at parish council elections
- II. Detailed proposals for parishing the unparished areas
- III. To work up options for abolishing or modifying the special expenses mechanism
- IV. Developing project plans around methods which are likely to increase voting turnout
- V. Create a detailed plan for a supported staff volunteering scheme and how it would be implemented

- VI. Building on plans and experience of public access to and participation in council meetings and consultations

Membership of the Working Group: (see also COVID19 below)

Councillors:

- Cllr Springett (**Chair**) (has now stood down as a Councillor)
- Cllr Ashley
- Cllr Fuller (proposed to succeed Cllr Springett as Chair)
- Cllr M Goldman (attends as **Cabinet Member**)
- Cllr Hyland
- Cllr Whitehead

Officers:

- Louise Goodwin (**Director Lead**)
- Lorraine Browne
- Murphie Manning
- Brian Mayfield
- Ali Naqvi

5. Movement Around the City Working Group

Work so far:

- a. The proposed Terms of Reference for the new Movement Around the City Working Group were approved at the Policy Board meeting in March 2020, and further updated on 19 May. The Working Group was set up to look at ways of improving movement around the city that have the potential to reduce congestion and journey times, encourage safe and more sustainable travel choices and help improve air quality.
- b. The task is especially challenging given the limited direct responsibility and funding that the City Council has in these areas, and the Policy Board welcomes the willingness and enthusiasm of Essex County Council Officers and Chelmsford County Councillors, and of the Chelmsford Business Board, for this collaboration. The services provided by bus companies and the associated role of the County Council will also be included in the Working Group's work.
- c. The main work streams of the Working Group have been identified as:
 - To develop a cohesive sustainable transport and parking strategy for the whole of Chelmsford that matches provision to future demand, including encouraging sustainable transport usage, reducing traffic congestion and a business case for a third park and ride site.
 - To develop proposals to improve safe cycling and walking and public transport travel

- Explore opportunities to improve place making and urban regeneration through the promoting of sustainable transport
- Enable and facilitate collaboration between the City Council, transport providers, Essex County Council and other stakeholders.

Relevant Council Priorities for the year include:

- I. The development of a new sustainable transport and parking strategy
- II. The development of a third park and ride facility
- III. Improving the walking and cycleway network
- IV. Improving public transport travel
- V. Exploring and implementing/improving effective methods of collaboration

Membership of the Working Group:

Councillors:

- Cllr Lager (**Chair**)
- Cllr Bentley
- Cllr Grundy
- Cllr Mackrory (attends as **Cabinet Member**)
- Cllr Walsh
- Cllr Young

Officers:

- David Green (**Director Lead**)
- Claire Stuckey (**Co-ordinating Officer**)
- Michael Adewole
- Helen Morris (Essex County Council)
- Hannah Neve (Essex County Council)
- Jeremy Potter

6. Health & Wellbeing Working Group

Work so far:

- a. The Health and Wellbeing Working Group was set up to review the draft Health & Wellbeing Plan which was already in existence from the previous administration. The objectives of the group were to agree the purpose of the plan, understand how it fits into the wider health system including how other plans and strategies influence the Council's Plan and to understand the current public health issues within the population of Chelmsford and consider whether the draft plan contributed to tackling the current and likely future issues.
- b. The Working Group took an updated Health and Wellbeing Strategy to the Cabinet in November 2019 for adoption and implementation. The emphasis was on making it a living document that recognised that all organisations and stakeholders need to work

collaboratively, and that prevention and early intervention is key to tackling the wider cause of ill health particularly when combined with self-care and self-management.

- c. Chelmsford City Council's Health & Wellbeing Plan has been produced in the context of Essex County Council's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Relevant Council Priorities for the year include:

Focussing in turn on and strengthen or develop further proposals within each of the Plan's five priorities:

- I. Reduce excess weight and obesity and increase physical activity in adults and children
- II. Alleviate loneliness and social isolation
- III. Improve poor housing including fuel poverty and thermal comfort
- IV. Enable people to age well
- V. Reduce alcohol and substance misuse, and behavioural addictions

Membership of the Working Group:

Councillors:

- Cllr D Clark (**Chair**)
- Cllr Daden
- Cllr A Davidson (attends as **Cabinet Deputy**)
- Cllr Dobson
- Cllr Walsh
- Cllr Willis

Officers:

- Keith Nicholson (**Director Lead**)
- Paul Brookes (**Co-ordinating Officer**)
- Jon Lyons
- Amber Nyoni

COVID19

- a. One effect COVID19 had initially was to necessitate officer and member focus entirely on immediately needed actions and responses, so that the work of the Working Groups has been on hold until very recently.
- b. There are significant implications for the areas of focus of each Working Group, which will be reflected in their resumed deliberations, as soon as that is practicable. Though some of these are potentially negative, there are opportunities too. We should foresee an acceleration or increased urgency of some existing planned initiatives, including in response to:
 - Government guidance to accommodate rough sleepers as a Health risk
 - Implications for the property and debt markets, and particular industries

- Positive trends in the population's patterns of flexitime and home-working, virtual meetings, social-distancing, exercise, reduced car usage, and use of IT and social media
 - Particular hardship or vulnerabilities threatening the health and wellbeing of significant numbers of residents
 - Various Government funding or foreshadowed initiatives
- c. Thus, for example, the urgent meetings of the Housing-related Working Groups, (1. and 2. above) where, as a priority, the merged Working Group is currently investigating where the Council can house the rough sleepers, currently in the Travelodge following a directive from the government when the Coronavirus crisis began and those still sleeping rough or threatened with homelessness as impacts of the crisis continue to unfold.
- d. The Council's responses to COVID19 included setting up a member "Community Engagement Taskforce" (Chaired by Cllr Dudley, also including an ECC Councillor and in communication with Chelmsford Council Voluntary Service), to help ensure the needed support to the vulnerable and flow of clear and accurate advice, guidance and signposting. This witnessed the amazing response of Chelmsford's residents to help, through the NHS site, or Essex Welfare Service or local Groups and Charities, all the way to street-level and neighbourly support.
- e. At the same time the pressures on the staff and budgets in the NHS, Social Services, Charities, and the County and City Councils are considerable and the sustainability of services under threat.

VOLUNTEERING

- f. That said, over recent weeks, the willingness to volunteer in fact presently significantly exceeds the calls for help flowing through from the Essex Welfare Service. The Community Engagement Group sees a significant opportunity and role for the Council in conjunction with Chelmsford Council Voluntary Service to capture and sustain this resource, enabling volunteering to be well targeted and prioritised, the massive contribution of volunteers to be more clearly recognised and effective and voluntary Groups better connected and involved in service delivery.
- g. With a "new normal" beginning to emerge, therefore, it is proposed to merge the CE Group with the Local Democracy and Connectedness Group (4. above) with that additional workstream.
- h. That is intended to go to the next Working Group (postponed to July) to be defined and scoped, and membership agreed. Councillor Fuller (who succeeds Mark Springett as Chair) and Councillor Dudley are in conversation with each other and with relevant officers to progress towards that.

DATE: 28th May 2020

MINUTES

of the

CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD

held on 6 June 2019 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor G H J Pooley (Chair)

Councillors W Daden, C Finnecy, I Fuller, J Galley, M Goldman, S Goldman, N Gulliver, G B R Knight, R Moore, R J Poulter, I C Roberts, A Sosin, M Steel, M Springett, R T Whitehead and T N Willis

1. **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N Chambers, who had appointed Councillor M Steel as her substitute.

2. **Declaration of Interests**

All Members were reminded to disclose any interests in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they should do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. They were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they had not previously notified her about it.

3. **Public Question Time**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

4. **Appointment of Vice Chair**

Councillor M Springett was appointed Vice Chair of the Policy Board for 2019/20.

5. **Terms of Reference of the Board**

The Board received and noted its terms of reference, which had been agreed on the establishment of the Board at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 22 May 2019.

(7.05pm to 7.06pm)

6. **Chelmsford Draft Local Plan Update**

The Board received a report and presentation on the background to the preparation of the draft Local Plan, the current position with it and the next steps to be taken to publish and consult on the main modifications to the submitted Local Plan and subsequent changes to the Policy Map identified by the Inspector following the Independent Examination.

The Chairman informed the Board that the Council's new Administration was supportive of the current draft Local Plan but wished to be reassured that it provided sufficient flexibility to enable certain key concerns and objectives about the details of future development in the City to be addressed without threatening the soundness of the Plan. Members of the Board went on to outline the following as the matters they would wish the Council to be able to influence within the Plan's policies and principles:

The Officers set out the context and timeline of the production of the Local Plan. The Local Plan was submitted for Independent Examination in June 2018. It was the Inspector's role to assess whether the Local Plan was 'sound' and recommend any Main Modifications needed to in make it 'sound'. The issues requiring any Main Modifications to the submitted Plan should have already been discussed at the Examination Hearing Sessions and new issues could not be the subject of Main Modifications.

1. The mix of dwelling types and sizes. The Board was informed that Policy HO1 dealt with the appropriate mix of types and sizes of dwellings which provided an indicative mix of different sized dwellings evidenced within the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This allowed a level of flexibility to account for the specific nature of particular sites. Policy HO1 provided more detail on the mix of dwelling types and sizes than the existing Local Development Framework. Policy HO1 also required 5% of new dwellings on the larger sites to be self-build and specialist housing to meet local need. The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document provided more detail on the implementation of Policy HO1 to ensure that developers fully considered the type of housing needed in Chelmsford.
2. The ability of the Council to challenge developers' viability assessments, particularly with regard to the provision of social and affordable housing and Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 contributions. The officers said that the viability of the sites in the draft Local Plan had been tested on the basis of a 35% allocation for affordable housing and the approved CIL and Section 106 contributions for specific sites. These requirements had been fully considered at the Examination of the Local Plan and their inclusion in the Local Plan strengthened the Council's position when dealing with subsequent developers' claims about viability.
3. With some commercial units on the ground floor of mixed use residential and commercial development being difficult to let and empty for long periods, whether the Plan would enable the commercial units to be changed to residential use. The officers confirmed that the policies in the new Plan provided sufficient flexibility to do this outside the defined frontages and provided the appropriate mix of residential and commercial uses.

4. The scope for influencing the optimum phasing of infrastructure. The Board was told that the National Planning Policy Framework put the provision of infrastructure at the heart of the planning process and the Local Plan included two strategic policies which addressed infrastructure requirements and specific infrastructure identified in site policies. Section 106 agreements were also crucial to the timing of infrastructure provision. The Council sought to front load as much infrastructure as possible as early as possible through the application of its planning policies and using the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which was a 'living document'.
5. The extent to which public interest could be taken into account in considering new development and how people could be involved in drawing up masterplans for the development of individual sites. The officers informed the Board that the public interest was a valid consideration in determining applications for development, but like any material planning consideration needed to be considered in the overall balance when decisions were made. Officers also made clear that public consultation was central to the masterplan process of allocated Strategic Growth sites in the Local Plan.
6. The wish to improve Chelmsford's waterways as one means by which the wellbeing and health of residents could be enhanced and whether there was anything in the Local Plan that would make pursuit of that objective difficult. The Board was told that the draft Local Plan supported the use and development of the waterways and their environs and improvements to associated infrastructure. On the wider question of health and wellbeing, the Council was looking at a pilot 'Livewell' scheme with developers to address this issue as part of the design of schemes.
7. The ability of the Local Plan to address optimal energy consumption, the use of renewables and building heights. Officers said that when it came to energy efficiency of dwellings, the Council could not go beyond the requirements set by Building Regulations and introduce other matters not covered at the Examination Hearing Sessions. However, Officers would assess the potential for increased use of on-site renewables. With regard to building heights, planning and design policies and the impact of new development gave the Council some control over the height of development, but it also needed to take into account the recent relaxation by the government of controls over extensions to existing buildings.
8. The ability of the Council to remove potential development sites from the Local Plan without affecting its soundness and whether the removal of Site SGS 1c (the John Shennan playing field) could be accommodated within the buffer for housing provision contained in the Plan. The Officers confirmed that there was sufficient buffer to accommodate the loss of 200 houses if the John Shennan site did not proceed. Should the Council express a wish to withdraw the site from the Plan as landowner, it was likely that the Inspector would no longer regard the site's allocation as sound but, in the officers' view, this was unlikely to call into question the soundness of the overall Plan.

A Green Sheet of additions and alterations was distributed at the meeting which included an additional recommendation on how those eight matters should be addressed when the Main Modifications were put to the Cabinet for approval.

During the discussion on the draft Local Plan in general, members put forward a number of comments and questions on the draft Local Plan:

- The Council should not risk the soundness of the draft Plan by going beyond the Main Modifications required by the Inspector and adding its own changes. The Chair said that he would not wish the matters outlined as 1 to 8 above to call into question the soundness of the Plan and prevent its adoption. In that regard he believed that they did not constitute modifications and he was reassured that officers believed the Plan, once adopted, to be sufficiently flexible for those matters to be addressed.
- The consultation on Main Modifications should avoid the peak of the summer holiday season to enable as many people as possible to participate in it. The officers said that the consultation would be timed for the last two weeks in August to the end of September to allow for that.
- The draft Local Plan was required to comply with the 2012 version of the NPPF but that had been superseded and it was questioned whether any planning decisions now had to have regard to later versions. Officers confirmed that decisions on planning applications would be based on the 2019 version, which in some respects was beneficial as it would strengthen the Council's position on matters such as infrastructure and viability.
- With regard to the definition of "affordable housing" in the NPPF, officers informed the Board that this included homes for rent, starter homes, discounted housing and shared ownership.
- On the improvement of Chelmsford's waterways, account would need to be taken of the effects on all the rivers within the Chelmsford administration area, including the Crouch, not just the waterways in the City Centre.

RESOLVED that

1. the report on the draft Local Plan be noted and the process for confirming the Main Modifications to the Pre-Submission Chelmsford Draft Local Plan (Publication Draft) and subsequent changes to the Policies Map set out in section 4 of the report be approved; and
2. the report to the Cabinet on 1 July 2019 set out the key issues in the Chelmsford Draft Local Plan and numbered as 1 to 8 above, alongside an officer response.

(7.07pm to 8.45pm)

7. Priorities of the Chelmsford Policy Board

The Board was invited to decide its priorities for policy review and development.

Members were of the view that in most cases policies should be developed by working groups that comprised members of the Board, but which could also include other councillors, representatives of external bodies with an interest in the policy being considered and experts in the particular field. They agreed that the following three priority areas would benefit from that approach:

1. Affordable and social housing – how best to improve the supply of social housing and appropriate private sector housing that was affordable.
2. Chelmsford's waterways – how to improve and encourage the varied use of the city's waterways and their adjacent paths and spaces.
3. Connectivity and local democracy – how this could be developed and promoted to enable citizens to feel better represented, to improve their opportunities for participation in the community and decision-making, and to create better connections between the community, voluntary bodies and local government.

It was agreed that the environment would not be a specific topic for policy development as it was recognised that it was likely to be relevant to and have an impact on most policies in one way or another and would be taken into account and part of the development of those policies.

Draft strategies had already been drawn up for two other policy areas – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping and Health and Wellbeing – and the Board felt that working groups should be established to look at those strategies before their submission to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that

1. the Board's priorities for policy development be Social and Affordable Housing, Chelmsford's Waterways and Connectivity and Local Democracy and that members of the Board notify the Chair and Democratic Services if they wished to participate in the working groups to develop those policies; and
2. working groups be established to review and report directly to the Cabinet on the draft strategies for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping and Health and Wellbeing and that members who wished to participate in them notify the Chair and Democratic Services within the next three days.

(8.45pm to 9.21pm)

8. **Urgent Business**

There were no matters of urgent business.

9. **Reports to Council**

None of the reports to the meeting required reference to the Council for a decision.

The meeting closed at 9.21pm

Chairman

MINUTES

of the

CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD

held on 3 October 2019 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor G H J Pooley (Chair)

Councillors N Chambers, W Daden, I Fuller, J Galley, M Goldman, S Goldman,
N Gulliver, G B R Knight, R Moore, R J Poulter, I C Roberts, A Sosin,
M Springett, N Walsh, R T Whitehead and T N Willis

Also present:

Councillors K Bentley, D Clark, P Clark, C Davidson, J Deakin, M Mackrory

1. **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

It was reported that the Administration Group had appointed Councillor N Walsh to replace former Councillor C Finnecy on the Board. Her status as either a permanent member or a substitute would be confirmed after the meeting.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 6 June 2019 were signed as a correct record.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

All Members were reminded to disclose any interests in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they should do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. They were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they had not previously notified her about it.

4. **Public Question Time**

Questions were asked or statements made on the following matters:

1. Whether, before any further steps were taken to adopt the Local Plan, an ecological survey of sites for the Warren Farm site allocation could be carried out.

The Spatial Planning Manager said that a Chelmsford-wide Local Wildlife Site review had been undertaken as part of the evidence base that supported the Local Plan. As part of their site-specific submissions, the developers had undertaken an initial ecological assessment in respect of the West Chelmsford Site (Warren Farm). This was currently being updated and refined to be submitted as part of any future planning applications for the Warren Farm development.

2. How the estimated 480 long term empty properties in Chelmsford would be brought back into use, especially in the light of the Council's wishes to support sustainable development and reduce homelessness.

The Committee was informed that the Council was committed to bringing long-term empty properties back into use as soon as possible. It was constrained by the fact that many were in private ownership and the complexity of the procedures that needed to be followed, including seeking compulsory purchase orders. A degree of sensitivity was also needed as some owners faced difficult personal circumstances that had led to the properties becoming empty in the first place. It was acknowledged, however, that it was a problem that needed to be tackled.

3. Concern that the Local Plan had not been changed despite the many objections from the public about its general principles and specific proposals, and not having any Local Plan would be preferable.

The Committee was reminded that the Local Plan had been the subject of four stages of statutory public consultation. It provided a firm basis for ensuring the controlled development of Chelmsford to 2036 and the provision of the necessary infrastructure to support it. The Committee was also reminded that having no Local Plan raised significant risk of unplanned and speculative development which was not supported by necessary infrastructure.

5. **Livewell Development Accreditation Scheme**

A report was presented on the Livewell Development Accreditation scheme, which aimed to recognise developers who contributed to improving health and wellbeing through the design of their developments. The report outlined the process for achieving accreditation and the principles on which it was based.

During discussion of the report, the Committee was told that:

- the Livewell Development accreditation was a voluntary scheme, but was being encouraged as part of the masterplan process for strategic allocated sites within the new Local Plan and smaller development sites through the Developer Charter;
- it would be possible for a developer to lose their accreditation if they failed to meet the criteria in subsequent developments;
- the Livewell Development accreditation had now been endorsed by the Essex Planning Officers' Association (EPOA) with the expectation that it would be adopted by all Essex local planning authorities;
- the accreditation scheme was site, rather than developer, specific;
- the provision of affordable housing was not part of the criteria for accreditation as it was a separate planning policy requirement;

- the health and well-being initiatives arising from the accreditation of part of a development site would be a material consideration in the consideration of future planning applications for that site but as the Livewell accreditation was voluntary, it would have only limited weight in decision-making; and
- acronyms within the accreditation document were stated in full on their first use.

RESOLVED that:

1. the report on the Livewell Development Accreditation Scheme be welcomed and its promotion by the City Council be endorsed; and
2. the Director of Sustainable Communities, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford, be authorised to finalise the content of the guidance on the Scheme for developers, planners and designers and the Livewell Developer Charter submitted as appendices to the report to the meeting.

7.25pm to 7.48pm

6. **Masterplans Procedure Update**

The Board considered proposed amendments to the procedure for the preparation of masterplans for development allocations in the emerging Local Plan. An update was also given on progress with masterplans currently in production. A Green Sheet of amendments and additions to Appendix 1 to the report was distributed.

Members were told that the changes to the procedure addressed good practice that was already informally being followed and that the amendments proposed simply formalised the associated documentation. The Committee's attention was drawn to the intention to follow slightly different procedures for the sites in north-East Chelmsford and Chelmer Waterside owing to their particular circumstances and/or complexity.

In response to questions from the Board:

- all members in wards affected by a proposed development would be consulted as part of the masterplan process for that site;
- the process for the site to the north of South Woodham Ferrers had yet to reach Stage 1. At that stage, the Town Council and ward councillors would be consulted on the development principles put forward. Adjacent parish councils and Maldon District Council would also be consulted;
- new healthcare facilities as part of the Local Plan site north of Broomfield, whilst potentially desirable as part of the masterplan for the development site in that ward, was dependent on the NHS agreeing to its provision and funding. The Council was working with the NHS on the specific nature and delivery of health facilities associated with all developments within the Local Plan;
- the aim of public consultation on masterplans was to establish what local residents wanted as part of future development;
- Masterplanning Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) had been agreed with developers/promoters on all strategic Local Plan sites which helped meet the cost of officer time assisting with the preparation of masterplans; and
- the masterplanning procedure note would ensure that statutory bodies would be consulted/engaged rather than simply likely to be.

RESOLVED that the updated masterplan process detailed in Appendix 1 of the report to the meeting, as amended by the Green Sheet, be noted, its importance recognised and welcomed, and it be recommended to the Cabinet for approval.

(7.48pm to 8.20pm)

7. **Working Group Updates**

The Board received the following updates from the Chairs of its Working Groups.

Affordable and Social Housing

The Working Group had identified the need for information on what qualified as affordable housing, its supply and demand, the mix of supply, how the Council could influence supply, key worker housing and housing benefits. The Working Group had identified a number of work streams for future meetings and was keen to ensure that its activities were co-ordinated with those of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Working Group.

Chelmsford's Waterways

The Chair of this Working Group said that it had agreed at its first meeting the work streams it would pursue. It had subsequently looked at possible improvements to the navigation of the City's waterways and the prospects for their better use.

The Board suggested that the Working Group might also consider the feasibility of the weirs being used to generate electricity and the part the rivers and canals could play in reducing the risk of flooding.

Connectivity and Local Democracy

This Working Group had considered initial proposals for the review of polling districts and polling places; received information on the options for a Community Governance Review of the unparished areas; considered a paper on improving turnout at elections; taken an initial look at increasing engagement; and discussed the possibility of a volunteering scheme for Council employees.

Health and Wellbeing

The Working Group was now finalising an updated Health and Wellbeing Strategy for submission to the Cabinet in November. The emphasis had been on making it a living document that took into account the contributions that could be made by a number of organisations to the overall aims of the Strategy.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

This Working Group had submitted an updated Strategy on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping to the Cabinet on 10 September 2019 on which consultation was now taking place. The Working Group would continue to work with other organisations to monitor the effectiveness of the Strategy and adapt and develop it as necessary; this too would be a living document. It had been recognised that one of the challenges was streamlining the work of the many organisations involved in supporting the homeless and rough sleepers

RESOLVED that the updates from the Board's Working Groups be noted

(8.20pm to 9.16pm)

8. **Future Work Programme**

Members discussed possible topics for future consideration by the Board.

The Director of Sustainable Communities planned to submit the following to future meetings:

In January 2020 – Supplementary Planning Documents on Planning Obligations and Making Places

In March 2020 – a review of the Community Infrastructure Levy and consideration of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

The Chair said that he intended to discuss with officers existing policies and strategies of the Council to identify those that would benefit from consideration by the Board.

The Board went on to discuss whether a working group should be established on traffic congestion in the City. It was decided that draft terms of reference should be brought to its next meeting, when a decision on whether to set up such a group would be made.

RESOLVED that the planned items for future meetings be noted and that the Board consider at its next meeting draft terms of reference for a possible working group on congestion.

(9.16pm to 9.42pm)

9. **Urgent Business**

There were no matters of urgent business.

10. **Reports to Cabinet/Council**

The report on the Masterplan procedure (minute number 6) would be forwarded to the Cabinet on 15 October 2019.

The meeting closed at 9.42pm

Chairman

MINUTES

of the

CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD

held on 16 January 2020 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor G H J Pooley (Chair)

Councillors N Chambers, W Daden, I Fuller, M Goldman, S Goldman,
N Gulliver, G B R Knight, R Moore, R J Poulter, I C Roberts, A Sosin,
M Springett, N Walsh, R T Whitehead and T N Willis

Also present:

Councillors P Clark, R J Hyland and M J Mackrory

1. **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Galley.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 3 October 2019 were signed as a correct record.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

All Members were reminded to disclose any interests in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they should do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. They were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they had not previously notified her about it.

4. **Public Question Time**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

5. **Affordable and Social Housing Working Group**

The Board received a report setting out the recommendations of the Working Group established to look at ways of improving the supply of social housing and appropriate private sector housing in Chelmsford. Having examined the historic context for the provision of such housing, considered the role of the planning system and received information on the Council's delivery record, the Working Group had looked at how housing need was assessed, how affordable housing was defined and how supply related to need. The Working Group then looked at the type and size of affordable housing needed to meet demand and the impact of changes to the national benefits system.

The Working Group's report contained the main conclusions from its study and the options it had identified for Council-led interventions to address them. All those options would potentially help improve the supply of affordable housing, with the provision of further temporary housing and three and four bedroom social rented homes being the priorities.

In response to questions, the Committee was informed that:

- The financial implications of the Working Group's recommendations would be considered as part of the capital and revenue budgets being discussed by Cabinet and Council in the coming weeks. Until specific proposals for the acquisition of properties came forward, it was not known what the actual cost would be.
- Properties used as temporary accommodation were let on an occupation agreement/non-secure tenancy and the Right to Buy legislation did not apply to them.
- The fact that the rents of affordable properties in Chelmsford tended to be below the cap of 80% of market rents reflected the practice of Registered Providers, particularly in the case of larger properties, charging rents that were below local housing allowance levels; the lower rents were not indicative of the condition of the properties.

The Committee's discussion concentrated on the financial implications of the recommendations. The view was expressed that borrowing to pay for the capital expenditure involved was not the best fiscal approach and that the sale of assets like the John Shennan playing fields site would be a better way of meeting the cost of property acquisitions. Others pointed out that the saving on the cost of paying for short term accommodation for the homeless placed considerable pressure on Council resources and that the proposals to acquire properties for this purpose would, in the longer term, be to its financial advantage.

It was the general view that whilst the recommendations could be supported in principle, it needed to be made clear that they were subject to the Cabinet and Council providing the necessary resources and to the Cabinet being satisfied with the business case for individual proposals. This view was accepted and the recommendation amended accordingly.

RESOLVED that the following recommendations of the Affordable and Social Housing Working Group be approved and that the proposed approach be considered by the Cabinet when agreeing or recommending to the Council the revenue and capital budgets and the business cases for the proposals:

That the City Council:

1. acquires 20 larger family sized street properties for use as temporary accommodation in 2020/21, with further acquisition in future years to achieve the objective for all necessary temporary accommodation being owned/controlled by this Council;
2. prioritises for development four smaller and more deliverable sites owned by the City Council for 100% affordable housing to provide affordable and social rent properties (circa 40 units) in partnership with a Registered Provider (RP) in the period 2021/22;
3. promotes Entry-Level Exception Sites for RP land-led schemes with Homes England in early 2020; and
4. continues to investigate the acquisition of land by the Council for additional affordable housing and entry-level exception sites.

(7 04pm to 8.07pm)

6. **Movement Around the City Working Group**

The Board considered proposed terms of reference for a working group to look at ways of improving movement around the city that had the potential to reduce congestion and journey times, encourage more sustainable travel choices and help improve air quality.

It was agreed that the services provided by bus companies and the associated role of the County Council in that was an important consideration and should be included in the Working Group's work.

RESOLVED that:

1. the proposed terms of reference for the working group on movement around the city submitted to the meeting be approved, subject to the addition of the following as a fourth work stream:
 - d) enable and facilitate collaboration between the City Council, transport providers such as the bus companies and Essex County Council.
2. the working group comprise three Liberal Democrats, one Conservative and one Independent member, the membership to include Councillors Hyland and Lager.

(8.07pm to 8.18pm)

7. **Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan**

Castle Point Borough Council had sought the views of the City Council on its draft Local Plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. A suggested response to the consultation, generally welcoming Castle Point's commitment to meeting its housing needs in full but seeking assurances that its intentions were deliverable and clarification of housing numbers, was presented for the Board's consideration.

RESOLVED that the suggested response to the Regulation 19 consultation on Castle Point Borough Council's Local Plan set out in the appendix to the report to the meeting be approved.

(8.18pm to 8.22pm)

8. **Future Work Programme**

A proposed work programme for the Board had been circulated with the agenda and an updated was tabled for discussion.

It was noted that the programme was likely to be subject to change, with items such as the South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan being included for consideration later in the year and a supplementary list of possible items but without firm dates being added.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme of the Policy Board submitted to the meeting be approved.

(8.22pm to 8.30pm)

9. **Urgent Business**

There were no matters of urgent business.

10. **Reports to Cabinet/Council**

The report of the Working Group on affordable housing would be referred to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman

MINUTES

of the

CHELMSFORD POLICY BOARD

held on 5 March 2020 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor G H J Pooley (Chair)

Councillors K Bentley (substitute), W Daden, I Fuller, M Goldman,
S Goldman, R Moore, R J Poulter, A Sosin, M Steel (substitute),
N Walsh and R T Whitehead

Also present:

Councillors M J Mackrory

1. **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N Chambers and I C Roberts, who had appointed Councillors M Steel and K Bentley respectively as their substitutes, and from Councillor G B R Knight.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 16 January 2020 were signed as a correct record.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

All Members were reminded to disclose any interests in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they should do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. They were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the meeting, if they had not previously notified her about it.

4. **Public Question Time**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

5. **Making Places Supplementary Planning Document – Consultation Draft**

The Board considered a draft of the Making Places Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which, if approved by the Cabinet, would be published for public consultation. The purpose of the document, which would sit alongside the Local Plan, was to promote and secure high quality sustainable new development of all types and sizes. It set out detailed guidance on the policy requirements of the Local Plan and the standards the local planning authority would expect to see in future developments, including advice on how developers could go beyond those standards to create the most sustainable and environmentally friendly developments possible.

The SPD was welcomed by the Board, which thanked the officers for their work on it.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

1. the draft Making Places Supplementary Planning Document and its supporting Appendices submitted with the report to the meeting be approved for public consultation; and
- 2, the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford, be authorised to make any subsequent changes to the SPD and to finalise the consultation material.

7 03pm to 7.16pm

6. **Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document – Consultation Draft**

A draft of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document was submitted for the Board's consideration. It set out how the City Council would seek planning obligations needed to make development proposals acceptable in planning terms and detailed the obligations or contributions required, depending on the scale of development. If approved by the Cabinet the draft would be the subject of public consultation.

The following answers were given to questions from the Board:

- Legal advice had been obtained on whether it would be appropriate to include in paragraph 5.4 of the document, in the section on affordable housing, reference to specialist residential accommodation that was self-contained, whether or not on-site care was provided. The advice had suggested that the inclusion of such wording would not strengthen or clarify the Council's position on the provision of an affordable housing element in developments of that type as it was not clear whether such accommodation would fall within Class C2 or C3. Such accommodation would still be captured by Policy HO2 and the proposed wording in paragraph 5.4 was the favoured approach and would not enable developers or operators of self-contained residential care facilities to escape the requirement to provide a percentage of affordable housing.
- In lieu of the provision of an element of affordable housing in some of the developments of the type referred to above, a commuted sum may be acceptable. Greenfield developments were already likely to have been assessed for viability but those on brownfield sites were less likely to be viable.

- The difference between Tables 1 and 3 on pages 9 and 21 of the SPD was explained by the fact that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment used different methods for assessing the need for market accommodation to that which assessed the need for affordable housing.
- The Authority Monitoring Report would continue to be produced and submitted to Cabinet each year Any triggers that were invoked in the monitoring framework in the new Local Plan would be referred to Chelmsford Policy Board to consider the appropriate associated actions, which were also set out in the new monitoring framework,
- The reference to sites of between 11 and 15 units in paragraph 5.36 could apply to specialist residential accommodation where on-site care was provided. The wording as it stood would not prevent the Council seeking commuted sums in lieu of on-site affordable provision but it was thought that it was unlikely to do so in the large majority of cases. The Board feared, however, that developers of this type of accommodation may be more inclined to apply for an off-site contribution rather than include an on-site affordable element. The officers said that, subject to legal advice, the wording of paragraph 5.36 could be amended to make it clear that compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework would normally be expected in respect of the provision of affordable accommodation in developments of the size and type discussed but that the Council may be prepared in exceptional cases to accept a financial contribution in place of an on-site affordable element.
- It would be appropriate to add to the end of paragraph 5.26 the words “with 35% of the total number of residential units to be provided and maintained as affordable housing incorporating the mix of affordable housing set out in paragraphs 5.24. and 5.25
- The words “not more than” would be deleted in paragraph 5.69 to reflect the pressing need for more affordable housing for people living in rural areas.
- Whilst the negotiation of a bond to ensure the future maintenance of public open spaces in the event of a developer defaulting or going out of business had not been regarded by Planning Officers as the best option, the practicalities of doing so would be discussed with Legal Services. Another means might be the inclusion of a suitable guarantee in the legal agreement for the provision of the open space.
- There was a typographical error in para 14.19 which could be corrected with the removal of the word ‘have’ from the last sentence.

The Board welcomed the Supplementary Planning Document.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

1. the draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and its supporting Appendices submitted with the report to the meeting and as amended by the points above be approved for public consultation; and
2. the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford, be authorised to make any subsequent changes to the SPD and to finalise the consultation material.

7.16pm to 8.15pm

7. **Community Infrastructure Levy – Options for the Review of the Approved Charging Schedule**

The report to the meeting looked at how the approved charging schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) might be reviewed and concluded that it was best aligned to the review of the Local Plan. Given that the schedule had recently been viability tested, it was suggested that it would be logical to review both at the same time as any changes to the Local Plan could have implications for the charging schedule.

The Board was informed that the average property size of 80 square metres would attract a CIL of £15,000. Asked whether there would be a S106 contribution for self-build properties, officers said that these would generate very little such contributions. They would also be exempt from CIL, which was an anomaly the government appeared reluctant to rectify. It was confirmed that RAMS was a S106 contribution which would be in addition to the Planning Obligations and included in a viability assessment. It was also confirmed that in principle CIL could help address the shortage of health care facilities in an area.

RESOLVED that the review of the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule be aligned to the future review of the Local Plan.

8.15pm to 8.27pm

8. **Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group**

The Board received an update on the work of the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group.

The Working Group had made progress on most of its workstreams, including looking at options for the review of special expenses; agreeing the consultation arrangements for a Community Governance Review; considering how to encourage people to stand for election to parish councils and how to interest more young people in particular in voting in all types of elections; and reviewing the results of an engagement audit.

RESOLVED that the progress on the work of the Connectivity and Local Democracy Working Group be noted.

8.27pm to 8.34pm

9. **Chelmsford Waterways Working Group – Update on Work**

An update was submitted on the activities of the Chelmsford Working Group since the meeting of the Board in October 2019.

The Working Group had looked in particular at ways to improve navigation between the upper and lower Chelmer, the development of a masterplan for the creation of a riverside country park, and the future development of Sandford Mill.

It was confirmed that the City Council would be liaising with other bodies on the automatic flood gates and lock and would be seeking financial contributions from them. The feasibility study for the project would also examine the potential for generating power and providing a fish migration route.

The Board was informed that as the Margaretting flood alleviation scheme had stalled and was unlikely to go ahead, consideration was being given to other schemes that could prevent flooding both in Margaretting and elsewhere.

RESOLVED that:

1. the progress on the work of the Chelmsford Waterways Working Group be noted;
2. the replacement of the automatic flood gates and provision of a lock to enable navigation between upper and lower Chelmer, including costed options for hydro-electric/solar photovoltaic micro generation and a fish migration bypass (allowing migration past the flood gates/lock) be adopted as the City Council's agreed way forward (as recommended by the Waterways Working Group) and that further detailed feasibility is undertaken to proceed to develop the scheme into a costed project for implementation, including exploring alternative funding sources to implement the project; and
3. the Waterways Working Group recommendation that a high-level strategic master plan be produced for the riverside park and that Sandford Mill is developed building on the master planning associated with the nearby devolvement sites be adopted; and that the Waterways Working Group is used as the vehicle to review and evaluate the emerging strategic plan.

8.34pm to 8.53pm

10. **Urgent Business**

Members referred to the stage 1 consultation on the Bradwell B nuclear power station project and asked whether the Board would be agreeing the Council's response in view of the likely implications of the development on the city and its Local Plan.

Members were informed that officers would be submitting a response to the consultation which would emphasise the need for the developers to take into account the Chelmsford Local Plan when preparing strategic infrastructure plans such as new roads.

The meeting closed at 9.12pm

Chairman



Chelmsford City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8 June 2020

Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies

Report by:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Daniel Bird, Daniel.bird@chelmsford.gov.uk (01245 606523)

Purpose

To inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the activities of the Council's representatives on outside bodies.

Recommendations

That the updates be noted by the Committee.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive updates from those acting as representatives on outside bodies. The purpose is to make Councillors generally more aware of the sort of fields and activities in which those bodies work and are engaged, the contribution our representatives make to the work, and to keep under review the value to be gained from continued representation.

2. Reports from Councillors

2.1. The following Councillors have provided reports to this meeting, which are attached as the appendix.

2.2. Cllr Ann Davidson – Age Concern

Cllr Bracken – Business Improvement District

Cllr Bracken – Chelmsford Business Board

Cllr Moore – Essex Waste Partnership

Cllr Frasca – Cultural Development Trust

Cllr Frasca – Youth Strategy Group

Cllr Janetta Sosin – ECC Traveller Unit

Cllr Young – Chelmsford Voluntary Service

Cllr Shaw – YMCA

2.3 Members are asked to note the content of the report

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Reports from representatives on outside bodies

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

None

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Not Applicable

Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Outside Body Appointed to?

Chelmsford Age Concern

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

- To run a Day Centre (Mon – Fri) for residents over 60.
- To provide them with a 2-course hot lunch using fresh ingredients.
- To provide an opportunity for socialising and participating in activities.
- To help combat loneliness.

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

There are no meetings as such, but I call in on Fridays approx. every 6 weeks.

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

- Keeping up to date with developments at the Day Centre – they have been planning a first-floor extension for many years. They have now been granted the money to enable this to go ahead. I was included in discussions at the ideas stage.
- I like to go down for a couple of hours on a Friday as this is their busiest day. I catch up with the Freda Mountain and the staff and then try to spend as much time as I can chatting to the regulars.

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Yes. Age Concern receives an annual grant of £5,000 from CCC, and I think it is important that someone takes an interest in how they use it. They are providing a vital service for the older members of our community who rate it highly. By talking to the regulars, it also gives the opportunity to understand other challenges faced by our older residents.

Representative on Outside Bodies Report***Outside Body Appointed to?***

Board of the Business Improvement District

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

Overview of the strategic direction and management of the BID

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

10 - Monthly

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

Making joint strategic decisions on the future scale and type of activities the BID undertakes
Liaising with the BID and CC in overseeing projects such as improvements to street lighting and any council activities affecting businesses in the BID district.
Communicating the latest information to the BID on CCC's COVID-19 initiatives on business.
Hosting meeting with small businesses in Baddow Road and encouraging the inception of a Baddow Road Traders association

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Yes

Representative on Outside Bodies Report***Outside Body Appointed to?***

Chelmsford Business Board

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

To increase the networking of local Chelmsford businesses and to represent the views of Chelmsford to both the Essex Business board (Success Essex) and SELEP and other organisations.

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

3- quarterly

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

Liaising with the Business Board on all matters that involve CCC including transport around the city, innovations within the city and communicating the council's current advice on Covid – 19 and how it affects business.

Attending the relaunch of the Essex Business Board (Success Essex)

Attending as a substitute the Final meeting of the SELEP board before its new inception

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Yes

Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Outside Body Appointed to?

Essex Waste Partnership Board

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

The Essex Waste Partnership includes Essex County Council, our 12 district and borough councils and the unitary authority of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. Its purpose is to ensure cost-efficient and sustainable waste management services across the county and Southend. The key aim is to reduce and reuse as much waste as is physically possible.

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

One (24/10/19)

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

As Cabinet Deputy for Recycling & Ecology (Safer Chelmsford), I attended October's EWPB meeting and gained a wider understanding of other partners' waste & recycling strategy, national aims and objectives, and the role Essex County Council plays in bridging the gap between local and national services and policy guidelines. In turn, this helps to inform City Council policy, gives a good idea of our progress compared with other local authorities, and outlines areas for improvement.

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Yes. Reflecting on the Climate & Ecological Emergency, the official recognition of this crisis by City Council in July 2019 and our subsequent Action Plan, working collectively towards net-zero carbon by 2030 and highlighting the 'Reduce-Re-Use-Recycle' ethos has never been more important. It has benefited both the Council's own functions and our local communities. We also have the potential to influence businesses with a strong and consistent message. I believe that is important to maintain our connection with this outside body.

Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Outside Body Appointed to?

Chelmsford Cultural Development Trust.

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

- To support CC's ambitions for Chelmsford culture.
- To encourage collaboration in Chelmsford for cultural excellence + sustainable funding.
- To champion the role of Arts + Culture to enrich lives & help address key challenges such as youth engagement, improved well being and reduced social isolation.

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

8. (including extra meetings with Cabinet + for brainstorming.)

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

- Contributing to discussions that have led to clearer definition of CDT's role and purpose.
- Facilitating better links between the Trust and CC, encouraging the Trust to align themselves more closely with CC aims and the CC to value the potential and contribution of the Trust.

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Definitely - I believe the Trust has a very important role to play in the future of culture in Chelmsford - in all its aspects.

Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Outside Body Appointed to?

Chelmsford Youth Strategy Group.

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

- To champion the good health and well being of young people within safe communities.
- To support and provide guidance on the development of local provision.
- To support partners & stakeholders identify priorities.

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

4.

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

- To speak up for young people and represent their interests.
- To contribute to analysis of initiatives and their effectiveness.
- To support practitioners and offer constructive feedback.

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Yes - I think this is a vital service and it is absolutely crucial that young people are supported at critical times in their lives.

Essex County Council traveller unit



Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Outside Body Appointed to? Essex County Council Traveller unit

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

The traveller unit officers work with the police to deal with unauthorised encampments. This includes dealing with travellers' health and welfare, moving them off land they should not occupy and working with the police who seize stolen vehicles, remove troublesome families and deal with antisocial behaviour

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

Two

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

I attend the traveller unit committee to oversee their operations and consult with the City Council finance department over the budget provided annually to the County unit. I have also attended a liaison meeting with the police, officers from the unit and parish councillors .

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

I think it is very important to maintain this connection to understand the unit's continued relevance and the use of the pooled resources to provide a service which covers most of Essex

Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Outside Body Appointed to?

Chelmsford Council for Voluntary Service

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

Support, promotion and development of the third sector.

This includes securing funding , working in partnership with a range of agencies and providing a 'home' for the many charities within the Chelmsford area.

CCVA also coordinates and supports those wishing to volunteer their time, skills and experience

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

I have attended 2 board meetings and visited the centre for an induction session

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?

After a delayed start due to some communication issues and time constraints I have been on a steep learning curve but have been able to make some input to trustee discussions whilst primarily being an observer.

I am looking forward to attending their 25 year celebrations and meeting some of the charities that benefit from the support CCVA gives.

Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?

Yes. CCVA play a crucial role in supporting the third sector who are integral to the delivery of Our Plan. A visible presence with this group shows the value the Council places on the Voluntary Sector.

Representative on Outside Bodies Report

Board of YMCA Essex

Outside Body Appointed to?

It is an inclusive Christian charity, working with people of all faiths and none. Works mainly with young people, including offering support and advice, accommodation (in Colchester), family support, improving health and wellbeing and enabling young people to fulfil their potential. Centres in Chelmsford and Colchester provide the base for activities across a wide area of Essex. Provides positive activities, safe places to go, role models and mentors for young people.

What are the main functions or purpose of the outside body?

Two board meetings (on holiday for another). Initial meeting with CEO and Chairman of Board.

How many meetings of the body have you attended since May 2019?

Apart from the board meetings, I have been involved with their work in a local youth group and facilitating contact between the YMCA and new owners of Hamptons Sports and Leisure regarding opening a youth group there, at the request of the YMCA. I am also attending a YMCA 'Essex Vision' morning at the end of this month.

As a non-voting board member, I have not had a say in approving the recently presented annual accounts. However, after some delay, these appeared to be non-controversial.

In summary, what has your role on the outside body involved so far?***Do you feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative to the outside body?***

Yes, I do feel the Council should continue to appoint a representative.



Chelmsford City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8 June 2020

Annual Report on the Scrutiny function 2019/20

Report by:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Daniel Bird, Daniel.bird@chelmsford.gov.uk (01245) 606523

Purpose

To report on the activity of the scrutiny function of the Council for 2019/20, in accordance with the Local Code of Corporate Governance (Core Principle 6 – Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability), which was adopted by the Council on 23rd April 2008.

Recommendations

That the Council be recommended to approve the Committee's Annual Report on the Scrutiny function for 2019/20 for subsequent publication.

1. Background or Introduction

- 1.1. The Local Code of Corporate Governance was adopted by the Council on 23rd April 2008 (m6. 1, CL52,2008). Under the Code's Core Principle 6 – Engaging with local

people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability – the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to produce an annual report on its work for consideration by the Council and subsequent publication.

1.2. The Committee's Annual Report on the Scrutiny Function for 2019/20 is attached at Appendix 1 to this report and covers the following matters:-

- Statutory provisions
- Terms of reference
- Membership
- Publication of information
- Work undertaken in 2019/20
- Future work for 2020/21
- "call in" of Cabinet decisions
- Training and Development

1.3 Members are asked to recommend to Council that it approves the Committee's Annual Report for subsequent publication.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Annual Report on the Scrutiny Function 2019/20

Background papers:

Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Local Code of Corporate Governance



CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SCRUTINY FUNCTION 2019/20

Councillor J. Galley
(Chair – Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

www.chelmsford.gov.uk

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Background

(a) *Statutory Provisions*

Under the Local Government Act 2000 each local authority is required to establish at least one committee to review or scrutinise decisions taken by the Executive or any other part of the council and make reports to the council or to the cabinet. It can also report on any matters that affect the authority's area or its inhabitants. Its role includes both developing and reviewing policy and holding the Executive to account. The Committee has power to require Cabinet members and officers to attend before it to answer questions and it may also invite other people to attend its meetings.

Chelmsford Council chose, in 2005, to set up a single Scrutiny Committee. The Committee's first meeting was on 23rd May, 2005. It was later renamed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Council on 10th May, 2006.

New legislation came into effect in 2009 which placed additional duties on the Council and in respect of which it was required to make arrangements for their discharge. The legislation concerned was:

- The Police and Justice Act 2006 (Sections 19 -21), which placed a duty on all local authorities to scrutinise the activities of organisations comprising the local crime and disorder reduction partnership, and
- Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, which allowed councillors to ask for discussions to take place at an overview and scrutiny committee on issues of neighbourhood concern.

In December 2009 the Council agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee take responsibility for those functions and that its terms of reference were amended accordingly.

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (Commencement No. 3) Order 2010 brought into force on 15th June 2010 the requirement for local authorities to have a scheme for responding to petitions from people who live, work or study in the area. Petition organisers who are dissatisfied with the Council's response can ask for a review by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A report on this matter was agreed by Cabinet on 8 June and Council on 9 June 2010 and the Committee's terms of reference were again amended to reflect this additional function.

(b) *Terms of Reference*

The Terms of Reference of the Committee are contained in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution. They are as follows –

General role

To act as a channel for public involvement in the activities of the Council and other bodies operating in the City; to oversee the proper and efficient administration of the Council; to review the effectiveness of its work and services; and to support and complement the activities of the Cabinet, whilst at the same time scrutinising them and offering constructive comment or advice where appropriate.

Specific role

- monitor the performance of the Council's services, carry out detailed reviews of them where considered necessary and report any resulting recommendations to the Cabinet;
- review the decisions, decision-making processes and activities of the Cabinet, other Council bodies and in respect of the Committee's own work to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Constitution and the policies of the Council;
- monitor the activities and performance of external bodies, liaising with them where necessary, and carry out detailed assessments of the effectiveness of services provided by them if any apparent shortcomings are identified;
- scrutinise the work of the community safety partnership (Safer Chelmsford) and the partners who comprise it, insofar as their activities relate to the partnership itself and exercise all the other functions of a crime and disorder committee pursuant to Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006;
- consider Councillor Call for Action requests following agreement by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee after consultation with the Director of Corporate Services
- consider and respond to petitions, requesting that officers appear before the Committee to answer questions on functions, services or decisions for which they are responsible
- review the Council's handling of or responses to petitions where the petition organiser is dissatisfied with the action taken.

The Committee will also be responsible for

- providing opportunities for officers to acquaint members with the operation of the Council.

(c) *Membership of the Committee*

The Committee has 15 members, all Members of Chelmsford City Council. They are appointed by the full Council at its Annual Meeting in May of each year on a proportionality basis. No member of the Cabinet may be a member of the Committee.

In 2019/20 the membership of the Committee comprised the following members:

LD Councillors L. Ashley, N.A. Dudley, C.L. Finnecy, S.M. Goldman (Vice Chair), D.G. Jones, J.S. Lardge, C.R. Tron, and S. Young

CON Councillors J. Galley (Chair), I.S. Grundy, M. Sismey, M.S. Steel, M.D. Watson and R.T. Whitehead

IND Councillor R.J. Hyland

Following the Annual Meeting on 13 May 2020 the membership is as follows –

LD Councillors L. Ashley, N.A. Dudley, I.D. Fuller, S.M. Goldman (Vice Chair), J.C.S. Lager, J.S. Lardge, T.N. Willis and S. Young

CON Councillors J. Galley (Chair), I.S. Grundy, M. Sismey, M.S. Steel, M.D. Watson and R.T. Whitehead

IND Councillor R.J. Hyland

The Committee is currently chaired by Councillor J. Galley, who is a member of the Opposition group on the Council (the Conservatives).

(d) Programme of Meetings

The Committee met on three occasions in the municipal year 2019/20. It has five meetings programmed for 2020/2021. Additional meetings may be arranged as required, including any which may be necessary if any decisions of the Cabinet become subject to the 'call In' procedure mentioned in Part 3 of this Report.

(e) Publication of Information

The agendas for the Committee's meetings are published on the Council's website not later than five clear days before the date of each meeting. The minutes of each meeting are also published on the website as soon as possible after each meeting has taken place.

Work Programme 2019-20

The main areas of activity considered by the Committee during the municipal year (May to May) 2019/20 were as follows –

| <u>Subject</u> | <u>Date(s) considered</u> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Health and Safety Annual Report 2018/19 | 8 July 2019 |
| Decisions taken under delegation to the Chief Executive | 8 July 2019 |
| Annual Report on the Scrutiny Function 2019/20 | 8 July 2019 |
| Future Work Programme | 8 July 2019 |
| Future Performance Monitoring | 8 July 2019 |
| Cabinet Portfolio Update | 13 January 2020 |
| Annual Report on Housing Delivery | 13 January 2020 |
| Mid-Year Budget Review | 13 January 2020 |
| Parks and Green Spaces Performance Review | 13 January 2020 |
| Terms of Reference for Task and Finish Group on Riverside Leisure Centre | 13 January 2020 |
| Decisions taken under delegation to the Chief Executive | 13 January 2020 |

| | |
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| Future Work Programme | 13 January 2020 |
| Cabinet Portfolio Update | 10 February 2020 |
| Annual Presentation by Safer Chelmsford Partnership | 10 February 2020 |
| Annual Presentation by Essex Police | 10 February 2020 |
| Community Safety Communication (Interim Report) | 10 February 2020 |
| Work Programme | 10 February 2020 |

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee took on the role of scrutinising Safer Chelmsford to meet the requirements of the Police and Justice Act 2006, which stated that there must be a formal place where community safety matters can be discussed. The presentations on the Safer Chelmsford Partnership and by the Essex Police are both made to the Committee annually at its February meeting, so that cross-cutting issues can be identified and discussed.

‘Call-in’ of Cabinet Decisions

This Council’s Executive Arrangements, made under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, provide an opportunity for Members to require that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review a decision taken by the Executive (Cabinet) but not yet implemented. Depending on its conclusion, that Committee could then request that the Cabinet reconsider, and possibly amend, that decision.

The procedure for “calling in” Cabinet decisions is set out in the Council’s Constitution (Part 4.5 – Overview and Scrutiny Rules – Rule 4.5.11). In brief this provides that at least five Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must request the call-in in writing, setting out their reasons, and the request must be received by the Council’s Legal and Democratic Services Manager by 5 p.m. on the fourth working day after the Cabinet decision was taken.

During 2019-20 no decisions of the Cabinet were called in for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Future Projects

The Committee keeps its work programme under constant review. The items listed below are ones the Committee will be looking at in 2020-21, separate to its normal standing items.

- Leisure Management Performance (Riverside Examination)
- Recycling and Waste
- Climate Change Declaration Review
- Annual Review of ‘Our Chelmsford, Our Plan’

Training and Development

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee form small “Task and Finish” groups to look into a particular subject or service where appropriate. They work with officers to find out more about the service area and to identify possible improvements. They attend site visits, forums and meetings and undertake research as necessary in order to obtain further understanding and information to support the review. Their findings are fed back to the rest of the Committee in the form of a report and recommendations. In addition to ensuring value for money and that things are done correctly, ‘Task and Finish’ groups provide excellent

development opportunities for Members, help to maintain good Member/Officer relations, raise awareness of issues and services amongst Members and can identify gaps in Member training.



Chelmsford City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8 June 2020

Report on Decisions taken under delegation to the Chief Executive

Report by:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Daniel Bird, Daniel.bird@chelmsford.gov.uk (01245) 606523

Purpose

To report on the decisions taken under delegation to the Chief Executive for the period 1 November 2019 to 31 April 2020.

Recommendations

That the report be noted

1. Background or Introduction

- 1.1. The Constitution of the Council includes, at Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions), details of matters on which the officers of the Council are authorised to take decisions. These are known as delegations to officers and among them is the following, which is delegated to the Chief Executive:

“ Deal with any matter on grounds of urgency, following consultation with the Leader of the Council or the Chair and Vice Chair of the appropriate Committee in respect of non-executive matters.

- 1.2. The decisions taken by the Chief Executive under this delegation are recorded and notified to the public and members of the Council by publication on the Council's website. On 8 February 2010 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that a list of those decisions should also be brought to the Committee for information in June and November each year.

2. Latest Decisions

- 2.1. Three decisions was taken under delegation to the Chief Executive during the period 1 November 2019 to 31 April 2020. Summaries of those decisions are attached as appendices to this report.

- 2.2. Members are asked to note the content of the report.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Decision taken under delegation to the Chief Executive for the period 1 November 2019 to 31 April 2020.

Background papers: Nil

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

None relevant

DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Subject:

Discretionary Rate Relief

Date of Decision:

25 March 2020

Decision Number:

1/2020

Background:

It is necessary to amend the existing Discretionary Business Rate Relief policy to give effect to changes and additions to rate reliefs announced in the March 2020 Budget and subsequent measures relating to COVID-19, with effect from April 2020/21.

Decision and Reasons for Urgency:

The changes necessary are outlined in the attached briefing note from the Director of Financial Services and detailed in the appended revised policy. Normally this matter would have been referred to the Cabinet on 7 April 2020 but in view of the cancellation of that meeting and the need to introduce the amendments to the policy as soon as possible and give effect to the government's wishes, the Chief Executive accepted the need for to exercise his delegated authority to take urgent decisions and approve the amendments to the policy with immediate effect.

Supporting Information:

The Leader of the Council was consulted before taking the decision and had no objection to it.

DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATION TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Subject:

Sealing of Documents

Date of Decision:

30 March 2020

Decision Number:

2/2020

Background:

Paragraph 2.15.6 of the Constitution requires that:

“The Common Seal of the Council shall be kept secure by the Legal and Democratic Services Manager and shall be fixed as necessary to any official document of the Council. The Mayor or Deputy Mayor and the Chief Executive or the Legal and Democratic Services Manager, or such other person authorised by the Legal and Democratic Services Manager, shall witness the fixing of the seal to a document. The use of the seal shall be recorded in the Seal Register.”

The Legal and Democratic Services Manager has recently authorised the Director of Connected Chelmsford and the Principal Solicitor to witness the fixing of the seal, meaning that four officers are now able to carry out that function.

Decision and Reasons for Urgency:

In the present circumstances, the Chief Executive felt that it may not be possible, or wise, for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to attend the sealing of a document. However, now that four officers are able to do so, it is less pressing that the Mayor or Deputy Mayor act as witnesses and the function could be performed by any one of the authorised officers. For the duration of the coronavirus emergency, the Chief Executive has therefore authorised under his power to take urgent decisions the amendment of Paragraph 2.15.6 to read:

“The Common Seal of the Council shall be kept secure by the Legal and Democratic Services Manager and shall be fixed as necessary to any official document of the Council. Any one of the following officers shall witness the fixing of the seal to a document: the Chief Executive, the Legal and Democratic Services Manager, the Director of Connected Chelmsford or the Council’s Principal Solicitor. The use of the seal shall be recorded in the Seal Register.”

Supporting Information:

The Leader of the Council was consulted before taking the decision and had no objection to it.

DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATION TO THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Subject:

Discretionary Rate Relief

Date of Decision:

1 April 2020

Decision Number:

3/2020

Background:

It is necessary to amend further the existing Discretionary Business Rate Relief policy to give effect to changes and additions to rate reliefs recently announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in response to the COVID-19 emergency.

Decision and Reasons for Urgency:

The changes necessary are outlined in the attached briefing note for the Director of Financial Services and detailed in the appended revised policy. Normally this matter would have been referred to the Cabinet on 7 April 2020 but in view of the cancellation of that meeting and the need to introduce the amendments to the policy as soon as possible and give effect to the government's wishes, the Director of Financial Services accepted the need for to exercise her delegated authority to take urgent decisions and approve the amendments to the policy with immediate effect.

Supporting Information:

The Cabinet Member of Fairer Chelmsford was consulted before taking the decision and had no objection to it.

Chelmsford City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

8 June 2020

Work Programme

Report by:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Daniel Bird, Daniel.bird@chelmsford.gov.uk (01245) 606523

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to invite Members' comments on the Committee's work programme which has been updated since the Committee last met on 10 February 2020.

Recommendations

Members are invited to comment on the Committee's work programme, attached as Appendix 1 to this report and make any necessary amendments to it.

1. Background or Introduction

1.1. The Committee's work programme has been updated following the meeting held on 10 February 2020 and is attached at Appendix 1.

1.2. Due to current circumstances, some reports initially scheduled for the April and June meetings have been moved to later in the year.

1.3. Any changes to the programme since the last meeting are indicated by an asterisk and bold text in Appendix 1.

1.4. Any suggested future items that need assigning to a meeting are highlighted at the end of Appendix 1.

2. Conclusion

2.1. Members' comments are invited on the work programme.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Background papers:

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional: None

Financial: None

Potential impact on climate change and the environment: None

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030: None

Personnel: None

Risk Management: None

Equality and Diversity: None

Health and Safety: None

Digital: None

Other: None

Consultees:

Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

Not applicable

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Work Programme

** Any changes to the programme since the last meeting are indicated by an asterisk and bold text.*

| <u>Subject</u> | <u>Author</u> |
|---|--|
| 8 June 2020 | |
| Performance Review Items | |
| Quarterly review of the work of the Policy Board | Director of Public Places |
| *Cabinet Portfolio Update | Leader and Cabinet Members for Connected Chelmsford and Sustainable Development |
| Reports from representatives on outside bodies | Dan Bird Democratic Services Officer |
| Standing Items | |
| Report on Decisions Taken Under Delegation to the Chief Executive | Dan Bird Democratic Services Officer |
| Annual report of Committee | Dan Bird Democratic Services Officer |
| 21 September 2020 | |
| Performance Review Items | |
| Quarterly review of the work of the Policy Board | Director of Public Places |
| Climate Change Declaration Review | Director of Public Places |
| *Annual Report on Corporate Health & Safety | Paul Brookes Public Health & Protection Services Manager |
| *Recycling and Waste | Director of Public Places |
| *Leisure Management Performance (Riverside Examination) | Director of Public Places |
| Annual review of 'Our Chelmsford, Our Plan' | Chief Executive |

| 23 November 2020 | |
|---|--|
| Performance Review Items | |
| Cabinet Portfolio Update | Cabinet Member for Fairer Chelmsford |
| Quarterly review of the work of the Policy Board | Director of Public Places |
| Mid-year budget review | Director of Finance |
| Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford's Annual Report on Housing Delivery | Jeremy Potter Spatial Planning Services Manager |
| Standing Items | |
| Report on Decisions Taken Under Delegation to the Chief Executive | Dan Bird Democratic Services Officer |
| 1 February 2021 | |
| Performance Review Items | |
| Cabinet Portfolio Updates | Cabinet Members for Connected and Safer Chelmsford |
| Annual Presentation by Essex Police | Essex Police |
| Annual Presentation by Safer Chelmsford Partnership | Spencer Clarke Public Protection Manager |
| 26 April 2021 | |
| Performance Review Items | |
| Cabinet Portfolio Update | Cabinet Member for Greener Chelmsford |
| Quarterly review of the work of the Policy Board | Director of Public Places |
| Reports from representatives on outside bodies | Dan Bird Democratic Services Officer |

| Future Work to be scheduled |
|---|
| <p>Performance Monitoring Topic suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Digital Developments</i> - <i>Business Transformation</i> - <i>Museum</i> - Parks and Open Spaces Strategy <p>Task and Finish Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final report from Community Safety Communication - Reports from Riverside Project T&F |