

**MINUTES OF**  
**CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL CABINET**

on 7 June 2022 at 7.00pm

Present:

**Cabinet Members**

Councillor S Robinson, Leader of the Council (Chair)  
Councillor M Goldman, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Connected Chelmsford  
Councillor C Davidson, Cabinet Member for Fairer Chelmsford  
Councillor M Mackrory, Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development  
Councillor R Moore, Cabinet Member for Greener and Safer Chelmsford

**Opposition Spokespersons**

Councillors K Bentley, R Gisby, R Hyland, I Roberts, M Steel,  
A Thorpe-Apps and R T Whitehead

Also present: Councillors A Davidson and N Gulliver

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Massey, R Poulter and M Sismey, Opposition Spokespersons, and Councillor S Rajesh, Cabinet Deputy.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

Members of the Cabinet were reminded to declare at the appropriate time any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any of the items of business on the meeting's agenda.

### 3. Minutes and Decisions Called-in

The minutes of the meeting on 15 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record. No decisions at that meeting had been called in.

## 4. Public Questions

A member of the public attended the meeting to make a statement about the impact on Chelmsford of National Grid's East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project for a new high voltage network reinforcement between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury. He said that many residents were concerned about the effect the scheme would have on the landscape, environment and wildlife and asked that the City Council take strong concerted action with other local authorities and organisations to oppose the scheme in its current form and press for one that would have less visual and environmental impact.

The Leader of the Council said that the Council's response to the consultation on the proposal would be considered by the Chelmsford Policy Board on 14 July 2022, after National Grid had granted an extension to the deadline for its response. Without pre-judging or inferring what that response might be, the Leader said that the Liberal Democrat Party opposed the proposal and was pressing for a co-ordinated response in the East of England. It was their view that Local Energy initiatives provided a better and more sustainable alternative to major energy infrastructure projects of this kind and that the government should be doing more to promote them.

## 5. Members' Questions

Councillors who were not members of the Cabinet asked the following questions:

- (a) Councillor A Thorpe-Apps on why, when compared with other local authorities, the Council had been relatively slow in preparing its response to the National Grid's GREEN project.

The Leader of the Council said that, as his response to the earlier question on the subject from the member of the public showed, there was no lack of concern on the part of the Administration about the proposal and the Council was preparing an effective and defensible response to the consultation on it.

- (b) Councillor I Roberts on the Leader's recent statement which appeared to suggest that councillors for South Woodham Ferrers had not raised concerns about the masterplan for the development of land north of the town. He said that local representatives had raised questions about the masterplan, especially the effect of the development on the road network, at several meetings at which it had been considered.

The Leader replied that, for clarity, he had been referring to the fact that whilst local ward councillors may have raised concerns about the masterplan when it was considered by the Policy Board, they had not approached him about it before its consideration by the Cabinet.

Councillor Roberts added that although he had not approached the Leader he had raised his concerns with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.

(7.12pm to 7.18pm)

## 6. Masterplan for Site of Former St Peter's College (Sustainable Development)

### Declarations of interest:

None.

### Summary:

The Cabinet considered a revised masterplan prepared by Essex Housing for Strategic Growth Site Policy 1b, the former St Peter's College site, Fox Crescent. The Chelmsford Policy Board had previously considered the original masterplan for the site and a subsequent addendum that took into account the Board's observations on the original plan. The revised masterplan reflected the content of the addendum and other changes required by officers.

### Options:

Approve the masterplan, with or without further amendment.

### Preferred Option and Reasons:

The masterplan as presented demonstrated how the requirements of the Local Plan would be delivered on the site, achieved a high quality development which was well related to its context, provided a sound framework to guide successful placemaking, and supported the planning application process.

### Discussion:

In response to questions from opposition group spokespersons, the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development said that:

- At this stage, there was no detail about the provision of charging points for the new dwellings within the development – that would come at the planning application stage. The provision of UV charging points for the new and existing parking areas on Fox Crescent was outside of the scope of the planning process.
- It was the general preference of the Council that open spaces provided as part of new developments be adopted and maintained by it. As it stood, however, no decision had yet been made on the management of the open space being provided as part of this development.
- Similarly, whether gas infrastructure would be provided as part of the development had yet to be determined.
- Biodiversity net gain and monitoring progress towards its achievement would be addressed as part of the detailed planning application and was likely to be covered by conditions associated with any permission.
- Excluding the provision for independent living, 35% of the housing within the development would be affordable.
- There had been an identified need for the two special schools to be provided as part of the development and the County Council had concluded that this was an ideal opportunity and site to help meet the shortfall. Although the Education Authority had not commented on whether there may be a need for additional primary and secondary

school places arising from the development, it presumably had concluded that existing provision in the area could meet the demand. However, the City Council was mindful of the combined effect the development of this and the Warren Farm sites would have on demand for school places in that part of Chelmsford and, if necessary, would press for the expansion of Lawford Mead school if it was considered that provision was insufficient.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Masterplan for the former St Peter's College site as presented in Appendix 5 to the report to the meeting be approved.
2. The Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, be authorised to make any revisions requested by Cabinet.

(7.18pm to 7.36pm)

## 7.1 Frankland Fields, South Woodham Ferrers – Declaration as Local Nature Reserve (Greener and Safer Chelmsford)

### Declarations of Interest:

None

### Summary:

The report to the meeting set out a proposal to declare part of Frankland Fields, South Woodham Ferrers, as a Local Nature Reserve and to register it as such with Natural England.

### Options:

Declare or not declare the area as a Local Nature Reserve.

### Preferred Option and Reasons:

The declaration would further the City Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan and the Green Infrastructure Plan adopted as part of the Local Plan.

### Discussion:

The proposed declaration had been welcomed by councillors for South Woodham Ferrers, who had also appreciated the consultation carried out on it. In response to a question at the meeting, it was confirmed that there would be no additional cost to the City Council of declaring the area a Local Nature Reserve.

RESOLVED that the declaration of part of Frankland Fields as a Local Nature Reserve be supported and that Natural England be requested to include the site on the Natural England register of Local Nature Reserves.

(7.36pm to 7.42pm)

## 7.2 Air Quality Strategy (Greener and Safer Chelmsford)

### Declarations of Interest:

None

### Summary:

In accordance with the recommendation of the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs the Council had prepared an air quality strategy which described how it would meet its statutory duty in respect of air quality. The Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report to the meeting set out the importance of air quality, the Council's duties in respect of monitoring it, the Council's policies and actions that would contribute to improving air quality, and the indicators to be used to assess the success of the Strategy.

### Options:

Adopt or not adopt the Strategy, with or without amendments.

### Preferred Option and Reasons:

The proposed strategy would meet the Council's statutory duty to monitor air quality and help to reduce air pollutants.

### Discussion:

The meeting was informed that a key beneficial part of the Strategy, the provision of real time updates and data on air quality, would be available to the public from 1 July 2022.

RESOLVED that the Air Quality Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

## 8. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

## 9. Reports to Council

None of the items to the meeting needed to be referred to the Council for approval.

### Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for item 10 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A to the Act (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).

## 10. Extension of 2a Rainsford Road (Fairer Chelmsford)

*Public interest statement:* It is not in the public interest to release details of this report at present, on the grounds that the report contains information that is commercially sensitive and to place the information in the public realm will be detrimental to the negotiations to be.

### Declarations of Interest:

None

### Summary:

The Cabinet was requested to approve a scheme for the extension of 2a Ransford Road to produce an additional six units of temporary accommodation. The report set out the development cost and programme for the budget and the means by which it would be funded.

### Options:

Proceed or not with the project.

### Preferred option and reasons

The extension of the property would provide additional units and improved accommodation to address the homeless need in the City.

RESOLVED that

1. The capital budget for Housing Initiatives to Support the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and Affordable Social Housing be increased as detailed in the report to the meeting to meet the cost of extending 2a Rainsford Road.
2. The Director of Public Places be authorised to conclude negotiations and enter the contract for the required building works.

(7.48pm to 7.50pm)

The meeting closed at 7.50pm

Chair