

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda



12 February 2024 at 7pm

**Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Duke Street,
Chelmsford, CM1 1JE**

Membership

Councillor J. Jeapes (Chair)
Councillor A. Thompson (Vice Chair)

and Councillors

V. Canning, H. Clark, P. Davey, A. Davidson, S. Davis, J. Deakin, S. Dobson, K. Franks, M. Steel, P. Wilson, and S. Young

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting remotely, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City. There will also be an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. These have to be submitted in advance to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk. Further details are on the agenda page. If you would like to find out more, please email jan.decena@chelmsford.gov.uk or phone Jan Decena in the Democracy Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606260.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

12 February 2024

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

2. Chairs Announcements

3. Minutes

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2023.

4. Decision and Action Sheet

To consider the decisions and actions from the previous minutes from the 20 November 2023 meeting.

5. 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.

6. 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 20 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.

7. Decisions Called-In

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

8. Cabinet Portfolio Update – Cabinet Member for a Greener and Safer Chelmsford

9. Annual Presentation by Safer Chelmsford Partnership and Essex Police

10. Presentation on Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit

11. Presentation on Essex Countywide Traveller Unit

12. Work Programme

13. 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 20 November 2023 at 7pm

Present:

Councillor J. Jeapes (Chair)
Councillor A. Thompson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors, H. Clark, A. Davidson, C. Davidson, S. Davis, S. Dobson, K. Franks, M. Steel
and S. Young

Also in attendance:

Councillor I. Fuller

1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillor V. Canning, Councillor P. Davey, and Councillor J. Deakin. The substitute for Councillor Deakin for this meeting was Councillor C. Davidson.

2. Chairs Announcements

No announcements were made for this meeting.

3. Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held on 19th October 2023 would be amended to include Councillor Deakin and Councillor Davey's attendances. The Committee also noted that there were small typos to be amended in the minutes.

Councillor Steel expressed dissent on the minutes regarding the vote on the Hylands PSPO. It was questioned that the vote was for the amendment put forward and not on agreeing with the Cabinet decision.

Subject to the typo amendments mentioned, the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2023 were agreed as a correct record with Councillor Steel dissenting on the approved minutes.

4. Decision and Action Sheet

The Committee considered the decision and action sheet since the last meeting on 19th October 2023.

It was noted that the terms of reference from the previous Theatre Capital Refurbishment Review Task and Finish Group would be circulated soon and there would need to be further clarification on the membership of the Task & Finish Group. The Committee also noted the changes in the Work Programme. It was confirmed that Essex Countywide Traveller Unit and the Deputy Chief Constable of Essex Police would present on 12th February 2024.

The Committee noted the decision and action sheet.

5. Declaration of Interests

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

6. Public Question Time

No questions were asked or statements made.

7. Decisions Called-In

To report on any Cabinet decisions called in and to decide how they should be progressed. No decisions had been called in.

8. Report on Cultural Strategy Task & Finish Group

The CEO of Culture Chelmsford, Claire Gevaux, provided the Committee a presentation summarising the overview of the first district-wide Cultural Strategy for Chelmsford. This also explained the rationale for establishing a Cultural Compact and set out its strategic roadmap. The Committee were also to be given options to monitor the progress and ensure engagement and outcomes for all local residents and their communities.

The Committee heard that Culture Chelmsford had commissioned the first ever district-wide Cultural Strategy which had been published on March 2023 and this included a ten-year plan. It was heard that the scope of the strategy was to define culture in the broadest sense, looking at the creative economy of Chelmsford, and recognising its rich heritage. Consultations were made over the last five years and reviewed on a desk research and further consultations were made in particular to the wider district and less represented voices at South Woodham Ferres, Danbury, and Writtle.

It was stated that the vision was for Chelmsford to be a culturally ambitious place. Culture Chelmsford focused on three strategic themes which were:

1. Nurture our Environment – which included both built and natural environments.
2. Improve Health and Wellbeing – which would reflect how culture would support and improve mental and physical health of communities.
3. Outstanding Festivals and Events – which included understanding how to be a city with outstanding festivals and events.

The Committee also heard the seven principles within those themes including young people being at the focus of the cultural strategy; equity, diversity and inclusion; collaboration and knowledge sharing in underpinning how the cultural sector operate at its best; transdisciplinary work as a city and bringing sectors together; sustainability and connection to land-scape and wider ecology; a strength-based approach rather than filling in gaps; and innovation. The idea was that the recommendations in the Strategy were how this would be brought to life and would ensure a city-wide commitment.

The Committee heard about the timeline Cultural Chelmsford was working to. This included a community engagement session in the Meadows and refocusing on delivering the strategy and an action plan. One of the recommendations was to create a Cultural Compact for Chelmsford which aimed for stakeholders to understand their commitment on putting culture at the forefront of their policies and listen to needs of communities. This includes having working groups which work on the ground and strategic oversight groups. Members heard further details and the responsibilities of the working groups that were set up currently and those yet to be set up which include Culture & Health Working Group, Festivals & Events Working Group, Destination & Marketing Working Group, Community Working Group, Ignite, and LCEP.

Regarding the Strategic Oversight Group, it was stated that this group of organisations would not only bring the commitment of the strategy being in their policies but also financial and income commitments. Members were made aware of the organisations that were interested in signing up to Culture Compact and Culture Chelmsford would itemise their offer and signing them to collaboration agreements which would include three-year commitments. There would be a meeting in March 2024 and a Chair would be appointed. It was also advised that there were organisations that were still to be approached with Cultural Compact.

The Committee heard the importance of the Cultural Compact and the work of the working groups especially on filling gaps in knowledge. The Committee was also made aware of the percentage investment from different organisations from different sectors with grants being the largest investments. The role of Culture Chelmsford was to leverage on those grants but also to build up a private donor base.

Another piece of work that was mentioned was a wider mapping piece which was supported by ARU. This would look at the creative assets within Chelmsford as it was still unclear on the population that work in creative industries, what kind of work, and what type of contracts. This would hopefully be completed on the first quarter of 2024. The Committee also heard plans for year two of the Cultural Strategy which included a pilot engagement programme and wider community engagement through National Lottery Bodies. In October 2024, Culture Chelmsford would then be focusing on larger trusts and foundations to look for bigger and deeper investment

programme. It was also hoped that by April 2025 a three-year cultural programme would be successfully established.

The Committee were advised of the recommended next steps and that it was recognised that a Task & Finish Group would not be the best way forward. The alternative recommendation was a cross-party representation on the Community Working Group that would hold the trust and its partners to account. It was also advised that the council involvement in the Cultural Strategy should be overseen by Chelmsford Policy Board.

In response to the comments and questions from members of the Committee, it was advised that;

- It was advised that there was a lack of data about the Creative Workforce in Chelmsford, in what they do, where and how they practice their work, what their needs were. When the asset mapping project, in partnership with ARU, was completed it would provide a clear indication on where and how we should prioritise investment.
- There was a balancing act between local organisations and bigger organisations, and it was important for the priorities of the local cultural organisation to be heard. With regards to the organisations on the Strategic Oversight Group, it was noted that they would be able to influence policy and strategic matters across the city.
- It was advised that officers would approach each party to nominate a representative for the cross-party representation on the Communities Working Group.

RESOLVED that;

1. For Chelmsford City Council to continue its support for Chelmsford's Cultural Strategy and its recommendations;
2. The oversight and responsibility for reviewing the Cultural Strategy and the Council's ongoing strategic support, shifts to the Chelmsford Policy Board;
3. A cross-party representation to be nominated to sit on a "Communities Working Group" set up by Culture Chelmsford.

(7.06 pm to 7.33pm)

9. Cabinet Portfolio Update – Cabinet Member for a Growing Chelmsford

The Committee received an update from Councillor Ian Fuller, the Cabinet Member for a Growing Chelmsford, regarding the work undertaken under their portfolio. The main responsibilities under this directorate were Development Management & Building Control, Spatial Planning, Car Parking, and Economic Development and Implementation. Councillor Fuller thanked all of the officers under their directorate for their hard work on the wide range of responsibilities.

Regarding updates on Development Management & Building Control, the Committee heard that 90% of the decisions were issued in time with 78% of appeal decision were found in favour of the Council. Councillor Fuller also highlighted the main challenges for 2024/25 such as delivering new housing and infrastructure in a falling market, the

New Building Safety Act, Biodiversity Net Gain, and shortages of resources and skills. It was noted that the planning application fee income had reduced compared to last year as the housing market slowed as with fewer planning applications submitted. However, it was advised that workload was still heavy and that targets were still being met within the timeline.

Councillor Fuller then updated the Committee regarding Spatial Planning. It was advised that there had been a number of masterplans being dealt with over the last year as well as significant projects such as the Norwich to Tilbury Pylons, the widening scheme of the A12, and the Longfield Solar Farm. Officers responded to government consultations on the National Planning Policy and Infrastructure Levy. Councillor Fuller also highlighted the work undertaken in the Chelmsford Garden Community and was moving pace. The Essex RAMS Project were also highlighted, with developers required to pay financial contributions to help protect important bird species on the Essex Coast. It was reported that a significant sum had been raised and that the number of rangers was increased.

The Committee also heard that officers were reviewing the local plan and noted that only 40% of local authorities had submitted a local plan in the last five years. Councillor Fuller also highlighted the Travelling Showpersons' Sites Planning Advice Note and was pleased that Chelmsford had taken an initiative on that. It was also reported that the Little Baddow Neighbourhood Plan was approved and a referendum for Sandon Neighbourhood Plan was imminent.

Regarding car parks, it was reported that they still generate encouraging levels of income above estimates. The Council also continued to invest in car parks with £90,000.00 used for waterproofing works on the top level of High Chelmer Multi-Storey Car Park. There were also funds from the South Essex Parking Partnership which would be used to improve stairwells and staircases. It was highlighted that city centre car parks were reaccredited with "Park Mark" quality standard in August 2023 and the Council would continue to manage the two park and ride sites.

Councillor Fuller also thanked Councillor Simon Goldman regarding the work done on Chelmsford Business Improvement District (BID). It was reported that more than 500 businesses had been supported with various programmes including workshops, training guidance, renewal plans, and advice. The North Essex Economic Board was also highlighted which involved seven local authorities aiming to deliver economic opportunity and bring in investments. Various events were also mentioned such as Skill Fest.

The Committee heard about various projects taking place and Councillor Fuller highlighted the success of the CIL which raised £35 million since 2014. This sum was used on various projects including improvement works on Trinity Road school. Members were also made aware of the 40 Blue Plaques in Chelmsford, the public art, and wayfinding signage. It was also reported that Chelmsford now has six changing facilities and a mobile unit had been rescued after it had been left underused. Councillor Fuller also advised of their attendance on other groups such as PATROL, Essex Coastal Forum, and Cycling Forum.

In response to a query regarding an increase or new facilities for sewage/water works in large developments and infrastructures being built, it was advised that the Council had commissioned consultants to produce a water cycle study with specialist

consultants and Anglian Water in identifying the capacity in the water recycling centres. It was advised that the main water Chelmsford water recycling centre has significant capacity. There were also smaller water recycling centres in the rural areas but their capacity would be limited.

RESOLVED that;

1. The Cabinet Portfolio Update be noted.

(8.13 pm to 8.31pm)

10. Cabinet Member for a Growing Chelmsford's Annual Report on Housing Delivery

The Committee received the annual report on housing delivery which was presented in the meeting by the Cabinet Member for a Growing Chelmsford, Councillor Ian Fuller. The annual report provided the Committee an overview of key housing delivery monitoring statistics for Chelmsford from April 2022 to March 2023. The report provided an update on housing delivery statistics, including performance against the annual housing requirement number and affordable housing delivery, as well as updates on national initiatives relating to housing supply and local initiatives to address housing needs.

The Committee heard that affordable housing was made available at below market levels which included affordable rents at least 20% below market rents and shared ownership housing which sold at share between 10% to 75% of the market value. It was reported that there had been an increase in the delivery of new affordable housing in this monitoring year compared to the previous year. There were also nine Gypsy and Traveller pitches. The overall net new housing completions had decreased slightly but were still above the housing requirement figure in the local plan. The number of new homes with planning permission had fallen however completions were forecasted to remain above the annual housing requirement.

The Committee heard that the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill had received Royal Assent and appendix 2 of the report contained the Council's response to one of its main elements, the Infrastructure Levy. It was noted that the consultations sought views on the technical aspect of the design of the Levy and the feedback was still being analysed. There would also be a consultation on the regulations and this was yet to occur. A further consultation was also heard regarding plan-making reforms and the deadline to submit plans under the current plan-making system was the 30th June 2025. This was also stated that the Council was working to submit the review of the local plan to the Secretary of State within this timeframe.

The Committee also heard that officers continue to maximise Government funding streams to tackle rough sleeping and secure supported housing for single homeless people. Funds had also been secured to increase the temporary accommodation offer for homeless households and provide homes on Afghan resettlement schemes. There was also an update on initiatives and interventions to meet priorities in the housing strategy, in addition to reporting on progress on strategic sites.

It was stated that the delivery of housing, especially affordable housing, remains a key priority of the Council. The Council would continue to respond to opportunities that support the delivery of housing and other essential infrastructure.

In response to comments and questions from members of the Committee, it was advised that;

- The shortage of four-bedroom housing was recognised and that the planning advice note was put in place to seek additional affordable housing for rent of this size on those strategic sites allocated in the Local Plan where the number of houses being built was above in the local plan. In terms of implementing the planning advice note and securing the additional four-bedroom houses, this would be implemented via Section 106 agreement.
- It was advised that the Council was closely monitoring planning applications against the mix from the Strategic Housing Needs Assessment.
- A new Strategic Housing Needs Assessment had just been published recently and it was found that the need for four-bedroom houses was still 10%.
- Regarding large units, it was advised that not every site would be able to accommodate this especially in consideration of on previously developed land such as brownfield sites and on urban areas.
- Most registered providers were keen to provide shared ownership due to demand. It was also advised that they should still follow a standard leasehold agreement produced by Homes England as this is a requirement of the s106 agreement.
- The Council was required to provide shared ownership units through the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure a mix of affordable housing.
- Regarding office accommodation redeveloped into residential units, it was advised that there had been a contraction in the office market mainly on the combination of post-COVID consequence of people working from home and the dynamic market. However, there were co-working spaces opening up in Chelmsford.
- It was advised that the Council could not require affordable housing on changes of use from office to residential that were permitted development, and other planning contributions that could be sought were very limited.
- It was also advised that on an economic development perspective, the conversion of office spaces to residential balanced out the office market in Chelmsford. It was also noted that there was still good office accommodation available in the city.
- Regarding larger developments, it was reported that viability was becoming an issue. It was also advised that building regulations have changed especially post-Grenfell which makes taller buildings less economically viable.
- Regarding the former Runwell Hospital, it was advised that the Council had not bought additional private rented dwellings in this location. It was also advised that Council would not be notified if an institutional investor was to buy units off plan.
- It was suggested that the private rental market was declining as a result of landlords selling properties and as a result of less supply in the market residents were being priced out.
- Processing bids could be time-consuming especially on bids where there was a relatively small chance on getting the money. Potential for success would be

looked at and prioritising bids that make the greatest contribution to meeting our most acute housing needs.

RESOLVED that;

1. The annual report on Housing Delivery be noted.

(7.33 pm to 8.13 pm)

11. Report on Decisions Taken Under Delegation to the Chief Executive

The Committee received a report summarising the decisions taken under delegation to the Chief Executive from the period 1st June 2023 to 10th November 2023. The Committee heard that there were three urgent decisions made during this period and their summaries were available as the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that;

1. The report be noted.

(8.31 pm to 8.32 pm)

12. Work Programme

The Committee considered a report on its work programme for the year 2023/24 which had been updated following the last meeting on 19th October 2023.

In response to questions and comments from the Committee, it was advised that;

- The first meeting for the Theatre Refurbishment Task & Finish Group would be scheduled soon once membership was confirmed and the terms of reference circulated.
- Regarding Youth Engagement, it was found that this posed to be a far-reaching project and officers were in the process of identifying the most useful approach for this discussion. The Committee was advised that proposals would be brought to the next meeting.
- It was also advised that Chelmsford City Council should not take on work that used to be on Essex County Council nevertheless some could be looked at should there be resources.
- Regarding ECTU, it was advised that the reason why this was to be presented was to further understand the relations with the police with regards to illegal incursions and what to do in these circumstances. It was also advised that the Committee also look on understanding relationships and the Council do have a relationship with ECTU.

RESOLVED that;

1. The Work programme be noted.

(8.32 pm to 8.37 pm)

13. Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.

Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Decision and Action Sheet

Summary of Decisions taken at last meeting		
Item Details	Decision taken at the meeting	Any comments
Item 3 – Minutes of last meeting	Minutes were agreed with one member dissenting.	N/A
Item 4 – Decision and Actions Sheets from the minutes of the last meeting	Decision and Action sheet was noted.	N/A
Item 8 – Report on the Cultural Strategy Task & Finish Group	Recommendations noted and approved.	Cultural Strategy to be moved to Chelmsford Policy Board.
Item 9 – Cabinet Portfolio Update – Growing Chelmsford	Update noted.	N/A
Item 10 – Cabinet Member for a Growing Chelmsford’s Annual Report on Housing Delivery	Annual Report on Housing Delivery noted.	N/A
Item 11 – Report on Decisions Taken Under Delegation to the Chief Executive	Report noted.	N/A
Item 12 – Work Programme	Work programme noted	Theatre T&F to reformulated and ToR to be circulated once membership has been completed.

Action Points			
Action Points agreed on 20 November 2023 meeting	Outstanding or Actioned?	Next steps	Officers to Action
<p>Work Programme to be looked at and amended as per Members' suggestions (as per agreed on July 2023 meeting):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Enforcement Inform & Debate - Essex Countywide Traveller Unit - Violence and Vulnerability Unit - Youth Engagement with Council 	Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officers to reconvene outside Overview & Scrutiny to make amendments to the work programme. - ECTU and VVU Reports/Presentations to be presented on February 2024 meeting. - Planning Enforcement Inform and Debate added to April 2024 O&S meeting agenda (as per agreed with Chair and Vice Chair) (<i>April 2024 meeting subject to change due to pre-election period</i>). 	Louise Goodwin, Keith Nicholson, and Jan Decena
<p>Theatre Capital Refurbishment Review to be reformulated and terms of reference circulated after the November 2023 meeting.</p>	<p>Actioned – T&F reformulated and first meeting commenced.</p> <p>Outstanding – Report of the T&F group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theatre T&F reformulated with previous and new members. - Terms of Reference approved by T&F members. - First meeting facilitated on 24th January 2024. - Second meeting to be facilitated – dates were sent to T&F members. 	Louise Goodwin, Marc De'ath, and Jan Decena

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 12th February 2024
Greener & Safer Chelmsford – Portfolio Update, Cllr Rose Moore**

Introduction – Outlining responsibilities, Director & Officer support

Areas of responsibility:

Technical Services

This includes

- facilities management
- building maintenance
- residual highways matters
- municipal engineering
- architectural design

Community and Safety

This includes:

- Public Health & Protection Services (PHPS)
- the development and management of play facilities and oversight of issues affecting young people
- the safety of the community and accident prevention, including emergency planning
- the aims of the Community Safety Strategy, in partnership with others

Recycling and Waste management

This includes:

- strategies for recycling and waste collection
- overseeing the functions of waste collection and recycling, street cleansing and minor works to the highway
- the operation of Chelmsford Market

Parks

- parks strategy and development including the development and management of play facilities
- open spaces, grounds maintenance, horticulture, allotments
- Biodiversity
- all matters relating to the cemeteries and crematorium (Bereavement Services)

Public Health & Protection Services

- Public Health & Protection Services consists of a broad range of services including Community Safety, Environmental Health, Housing Standards, CCTV and Licensing.
- The main essence of the service is to protect the public, through regulatory means such as ensuring businesses comply with food safety, health & safety or licensing requirements; public services such as taxi marshals and an out-of-hours noise team, and health improvement through general advice or other health initiatives.
- The key objective of the service is to continue to provide high quality public places, through education, regulation, and partnerships.
- The team's work makes a significant contribution to the corporate objectives of ensuring the Chelmsford City Council area becomes greener, fairer and more-connected, and encouraging healthy, active, and enjoyable lives.
- The service leads on public health. Although the whole Council contributes to tackling health inequalities and improving residents' health and quality of life, PHPS also leads corporately on health & safety, safeguarding and sustainable travel.
- The service also delivers a range of functions for neighbouring local authorities.
- The purpose of the service plan is to assist in providing an incremental improvement to service delivery through specific projects. These are often in addition to the significant amount of reactive core duties that the service achieves, and work that is driven by other plans, for example the Community Safety Action Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Plan.

May 2023 – New Term of Office and roles

May 2023 – new role:

Cllr Natacha Dudley - Cabinet Member for an Active Chelmsford

Oversight of Leisure Services (Jon Lyons), Active Chelmsford, Play In The Park (Antony Bensley), Hylands House (Lorraine Thorne), and Community Engagement (CCC & Chelmsford CVS)

Welcoming new Members -

Cllr Donna Eley – Cabinet Deputy for Community Safety (Spencer Clarke)

Cllr Terry Sherlock – Climate Ambassador (Love Your Chelmsford/Comms teams)

Induction sessions took place through May and June 2023, comprising visits to our main operational sites, and introductions to key members of staff.

Parks & Green Spaces

Introduction - refurbishments, investment, community engagement

Melbourne Park – winner of best new play area – November 2023:

[33 award wins for Chelmsford's playing fields | City Life](#)

Hylands Estate

1. [Our Volunteering programme](#) at Hylands Estate is led by Lyn McLay-Kidd and specialises in Conservation projects – coppicing, dead hedging, tree planting, ditching, culvert bridge building, path construction, live willow work, pond works. It's very popular and currently fully booked.

2. **Go Ape!** Tree-top adventures at Hylands Park - planning consent granted March 2023 – opens July 2023: [Go Ape Chelmsford opens at Hylands Estate | City Life](#)

3. **Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), December 2023** update / implementation

In October 2023, Overview & Scrutiny Committee approved a PSPO related to dog walking. A4 leaflets are available on-site at the Stables Visitor Centre. They can also be handed out by staff / officers patrolling. You can read the full details by downloading the [PSPO for dog walking at Hylands Park](#)

- [map showing the marked areas within Hylands Park](#)

4. **Improvements to lighting, Stables Visitor Centre/Car Park footpaths:**

Funding was released from the Green Investment Fund for the next phase of the City Council's LED replacement lighting programme [June 2023/January 2024 briefings

5. **Use of car parks and visitor footfall count**

6. **Space To Thrive**

Creation & management of species-rich grassland – 2nd and 3rd season implementation
Community engagement

Our first **Tree Giveaway** proved to be a great success. Promoted initially via emails to existing Parks subscribers from Monday 2nd October 2023, 1000 2yr-old whips were swiftly claimed – a choice of Crab Apple, Rowan, Silver Birch or Bird Cherry... all wonderful for wildlife.

Our Parks staff set up 3 tree collection points across the district & distributed the trees over 3 days in brown paper bags with a sprinkling of compost to protect the root ball, along with aftercare advice. Cllr Sherlock helped out at Compass Gardens (SWF) and I joined the team at Melbourne (CSAC) and Bell Meadow Plaza/Central Park.

[Free tree giveaway for Chelmsford residents | City Life](#)

7. **Tree-planting & mass greening** - end of season 2022-3

8. Green Flag Awards - Whole Service Accreditation - outcome of review, published June 2023

[Chelmsford retains Green Flag status for 17 parks | City Life](#)

9. Local Nature Reserves and John Shennan Field - Update

Relevant Policies and Strategies are available to view/download via the Love Your Chelmsford site: [Policies - Love Your Chelmsford](#)

Street Care

10. Local Environmental Quality - trends and 2022/23 performance, April 2023

11. Caring for our streets and public places - street care and street cleaning plan, April 2023

Recycling & Waste Management

12. Service update

Chelmsford Market

13. Overview and update

ShopMobility & Market Road WCs

14. Economic Development - Market Culture

Back in March 2020, as Lockdown descended, it was agreed by our political leadership team that market rents should be suspended and subsequently discounted for all traders, with a gradual restoration to full rent as restrictions eased. 2020 and 2021 were undoubtedly tough, and there remained a sense of uncertainty as restrictions were lifted. We've continued to support our traders through 2022 and 2023 – whether stall and kiosk-holders in the Indoor Retail Market or trading on the High Street - through turbulent and challenging times for retail. Our traders have voiced their appreciation of all the support the Council continues to give them.

The increasing use of home-delivery services and online shopping continues to redefine retail and poses a threat to high street retail outlets. Market Traders continue to add value and character to the city centre, whether on the High Street or indoor retail market at High Chelmer Car Park – and we're actively investigating how to regenerate our city centre as a Destination, working across council directorates and the local community.

This Administration will continue to support and celebrate Market Culture, to ensure it continues to weave character and variety into the cityscape.

Public Health & Protection Services

15. Highlights:

Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement, considered at Cabinet on 14 March 2023: [81-modern-day-slavery.pdf \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

Green Dog Walkers scheme, launched September 2023 at Chelmer Park [Nicola Tansley]:

[Green Dog Walkers scheme \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

[Council launches Green Dog Walkers scheme | City Life \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

20 new EV plates for our taxi fleet:

[Chelmsford miles ahead with twenty electric taxis on the road | City Life](#)

16. Housing Standards

Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2), November 2023

17. ASB/Noise Nuisance

18. Food Standards

19. Vaping Motion (December Full Council) - Update

Summary: The council acknowledges the role vaping products may play in aiding adults to stop smoking, and that vaping products carry a small fraction of the risk, and exposure to toxins, that are associated with cigarettes. However, vaping is not risk-free; particularly for those who have never smoked. Council recognizes the Local Government Association has raised concerns about the sale of vaping products to children. They have called for vaping products to be regulated in a similar way as tobacco products, with plain packaging and a requirement for products to be kept out of sight behind shop counters. They have also called for mandatory age-of-sale signage on vaping products, a ban on free samples of vaping products being given out to people of any age, or if they contain nicotine, and a ban on the sale of single-use vaping products in the UK. The council will commit to not allowing the sale of vaping products in any Chelmsford City Council run premises.

Health & Wellbeing

20. Livewell Chelmsford – Update

- PHAB funding supports trailblazing healthcare pilot at Sanctus
- Health & Wellbeing Plan – refresh, outreach work with CGC council
- Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Review – June 2023

21. Chelmsford Food Plan - approved at Cabinet, September 2023:

[72-food-plan.pdf \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

22. Air Quality

- New Air Quality Strategy for Chelmsford: [Dashboard](#) available on
- CCC consulted on proposed revisions to national Air Quality Strategy
- Revocation of Chelmsford's AQMA zones - approved by Cabinet, 30th January 2024

23. Litter Enforcement Plan/Environmental Crime/FPNs

Increased levels of fines were approved by Cabinet in September 2023:

[Environmental fines \(FPN\) \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

[Increased fines of up to £1,000 for environmental crimes | City Life \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

Bereavement Services

24. Overview and Update

25. Cemetery & Crematorium - Investment & improvements 2023-4

Love Your Chelmsford

26. Update

The Love Your Chelmsford team, based at Freighter House, encourage Greener, more sustainable lifestyles, and organise volunteering sessions for litter-picks, as well as loans of litter-picking equipment.

The Carbon Literacy Project has awarded Chelmsford City Council with an exciting accolade! We have received Bronze Award accreditation, recognising Chelmsford City Council as a Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO).

A Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) is an organisation that has demonstrated its commitment to action on climate change and creating a low-carbon culture. The Carbon Literacy Project awards the accreditation to organisations that are demonstrating Carbon Literacy through its organisational behaviour. The CLO accreditation is a tiered system with Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels; increasing levels of commitment that incentivise bold action.

Chelmsford City Council is proud to announce we are **the first district council in Essex with the CLO Bronze Award accreditation**. Being carbon literate means we are aware of carbon costs and the impacts of everyday activities on climate change, utilising our influence to reduce emissions.

Last year, we introduced carbon literacy training to our staff, in a drive towards our mission to net zero emissions by 2030 and support the local area to influence a lower carbon footprint. We look forward to taking this further, offering the training to more staff and aim to become a Silver level accredited Carbon Literate Organisation.

Carbon Literacy training sessions for staff are run at Freighter House by Emilia Ayms.

[New environmental status achieved by Chelmsford City Council | City Life](#)

The LYC team also produce content for the dedicated website www.loveyourchelmsford.co.uk, and use LYC social media platforms to promote our aims and objectives, in line with the Council's Declaration and Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan, and promote wider messages from *Love Essex, Love Food, Hate Waste*, etc.

"Find your nearest green space" continues to prove popular - celebrating the local area, walkable/bikeable and accessible open spaces.

LYC content is based on the Council's Climate & Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

It includes videos and tutorials that fit within different areas of the website, e.g. 'How to make a bee home', 'How to plant a tree in your garden', 'Family-friendly Cycle routes in Chelmsford'. Any new content is also shared on our social media platforms (FB, Twitter, Instagram.)

Love your Chelmsford is a point of reference for 'all things green' in Chelmsford; providing inspiration, advice, options and opportunities to access a programme of activities and events, to get actively involved in helping to address the Climate and Ecological Emergency and meet the carbon reduction challenges for the area.

Whether planning a visit to explore local green spaces or looking for 'green lifestyle' changes, 'Love Your Chelmsford' encourages us to take direct responsibility and make a real difference in tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency by choosing to live and work in a more environmentally responsible way, for the benefit of current and future generations.

The programme currently has ten main workstreams – activities are given priority as opportunities arise and resources allow:

‘Green living’ work streams:

- A. Business engagement
- B. Re-use and Renew
- C. Reducing and recycling your waste
- D. Cleaner Chelmsford
- E. Greening Chelmsford [including mass tree planting and woodland creation]

‘Green living at home’ work streams:

- F. Green cleaning
- G. Eating green
- H. Green energy
- I. Greener Travel
- J. Sustainable clothing and fashion

At a Cabinet Member briefing in June 2023, we reviewed objectives and positioning of the programme.

Highlights, 2023-4

Campaigns:

Restoring Nature: [Space to Thrive \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk)

Caring for our waterways: [Over 100 abandoned shopping trolleys found during Chelmsford river clean-up | City Life](#)

Positive Action to tackle ASB, dog-fouling and Environmental Crime

[Council launches Green Dog Walkers scheme | City Life \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

[Litter prevention action plan \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

Accreditations:

Green Flag Whole Service Accreditation (Parks & Green Spaces)



Awarded Bronze – First District Council in Essex

Comms:

Grassland Policy

EV plates

Hylands PSPO

Green Flag Accreditation

Big Tree Giveaway

Freighter House Open Day

Littering & Fly-Tipping enforcement

Space To Thrive

Council-wide and ongoing action:

[Climate & Ecological Emergency – Action Plan](#)

Decarbonisation programme

Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Advocate for Chelmsford's [Women's Safety Charter](#) (October 2023)

Women's Safety - What Part Do You Play?" [Women's Safety Charter \(chelmsford.gov.uk\)](#)

Spoke at the launch event, The Studio, Chelmsford Theatre

Contributed to [Women's Safety in our City – discussion](#) at Patch, with Karen Whybro and Sara Tupper (Chelmsford For You/BID)

I joined Community Safety colleagues for Chelmsford city centre's **Nights of Action** (2022-3), and the **Purple Flag Assessment** in November 2023

Supported the proposal for a **Knife Angel legacy artwork** and educational outreach in Frank

Whitmore Green, in association with [KI100 Essex](#)

Highlighted the [Make Space for Girls](#) initiative to Community Safety colleagues and recently took part in outreach work and discussion with students from Boswells School

Contributed to [Thriving Places](#) Workshop sessions, suggesting prioritising health & wellbeing, and carrying out a mental health impact assessment, when planning new development

Media: Essex Chronicle, Essex Live, Chelmsford Community Radio, BBC Essex, Look East – features, phone-ins and interviews.

Outside Bodies:

Member of the **Essex Waste Partnership Board**, attending quarterly meetings with Keith Nicholson, Director of Public Places. We highlight good practice, align Love Your Chelmsford campaigns with Love Essex/national initiatives, and are helping to shape the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Essex (to 2050). The draft strategy is now going through stages of public consultation. This draft was substantially re-worked following feedback from Chelmsford, ahead of going out to public consultation.

Member of **Essex Flood Partnership Board**, attending quarterly meetings with Keith Nicholson, Director of Public Places. My priorities are forging stronger relationships with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, district-wide opportunities for nature-based flood resilience in new development, e.g. rain gardens, Public Awareness campaigns, accessing/promoting grant-funding for infrastructure, and properties at risk of flooding.

Thank You – any questions?



Chelmsford City Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

12 February 2024

Work Programme

Report by:

Director of Connected Chelmsford

Officer Contact:

Jan Decena, Democratic Services Officer, email: jan.decena@chelmsford.gov.uk, tel: 01245 606260.

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 20 November 2023.

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

- 1.1. The Committee's work programme has been updated following the meeting held on 20 November 2023 and is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2. Any changes to the programme since the last meeting are indicated by an asterisk and bold text in Appendix 1.

2. Conclusion

2.1. Member's comments are invited on the work programme.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Background papers:

None

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

(For new or revised policies or procedures has an equalities impact assessment been carried out? If not, explain why)

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

APPENDIX 1

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>
Report/s to be confirmed:	
Performance Review Items	
*Theatre Refurbishment Project Evaluation Task and Finish Group	Marc De'ath Chelmsford City Culture Services Manager
*Presentation on Youth Engagement	Marc De'ath Chelmsford City Culture Services Manager
22 April 2024 (Subject to Change)	
Performance Review Items	
Cabinet Portfolio Updates	Cabinet Member for an Active Chelmsford Cabinet Member for a Fairer Chelmsford
Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies	Jan Decena Democratic Services Officer
*Planning Enforcement Inform and Debate	Keith Holmes Planning Development Services Manager Kirsty Dougal Planning Environment Manager