

## **EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MINUTES**

<b>Committee:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 4 June 2018
<b>Place:</b>	Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping	<b>Time:</b>	7.30 - 9.35 pm
<b>Members Present:</b>	Councillors M Sartin (Chairman) R Jennings (Vice-Chairman) R Baldwin, N Bedford, P Bolton, L Burrows, D Dorrell, S Heather, S Murray, S Neville, A Patel, P Stalker, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse and D Wixley		
<b>Other Councillors:</b>	Councillors N Avey, A Grigg, L Hughes, H Kane, S Kane, A Lion, G Mohindra, J Philip, S Stavrou, D Stocker and C Whitbread		
<b>Apologies:</b>	Councillors J Lea		
<b>Officers Present:</b>	D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), S Tautz (Democratic Services Manager), M Chwiedz (Performance Improvement Officer), M Warr (Economic Development Officer), J Houston (Local Strategic Partnership Manager), D Haslam (Economic Development Assistant), S Kits (Social Media and Customer Services Officer), A Hendry (Senior Democratic Services Officer), V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer) and G Woodhall (Senior Project Manager)		

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### **1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

### **2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that there were no substitute members for the meeting.

### **3. MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the last Committee meeting held on 17 April 2018 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor G Mohindra declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item of the agenda by virtue of being a Cabinet member of Essex County Council .

- Agenda item 6 – Scrutiny of external organisations – Essex County Council - Passenger Transport.

Councillor N Avey declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item of the agenda by virtue of being the Chairman of Epping Town Council.

- Agenda item 14 – Corporate Plan Key Action Plan 2017/18 Quarter 4 outturn.

## 5. CHANGE IN ORDER OF THE AGENDA

With the Committee's permission the Chairman agreed to take agenda item 7 (Digital Innovation Zone) before agenda item 6 (ECC Passenger Transport).

## 6. WEST ESSEX & EASTERN HERTFORDSHIRE DIGITAL INNOVATION ZONE

The Portfolio Holder for Technology and Support Services, Councillor Lion along with Michael Warr (Economic Development Officer) and John Houston (One Epping Forest) gave a short presentation on the West Essex and Eastern Hertfordshire Digital Innovation Zone.

Mr Houston started by asking why was there this focus on digital technology. This was due to feedback from local business and our partners in the public service who have all invested heavily in this technology. Essex County Council would have spent or brought in £100million worth of investment on the superfast broadband network. Digital will also form a key part of the government's industrial strategy with talk of digital being the next industrial revolution. They were also looking at both internal and external transformation to bring a better service to our customers through better use of digital technology.

Councillor Lion noted that the 'Superfast Essex Rural Challenge Project' started up about 4 years ago, when a paper was presented to the Cabinet which received some funding to provide digital capability to our residents. EFDC put in about £84k and got £7.5million from the government to roll out broadband services to rural communities. We wanted to be the best connected district in Essex and had now about 97% connected and expect to reach approximately 99.7% of residents in the near future, which would leave about 207 homes not connected. This was great but his question was, "so what? Having got this, what do we do with it?" They were looking at how to roll out these services to everyone who wanted it and those who did not know how useful it was. This is what can be called external transformation and smarter working.

Mr Warr noted that there were a lot of buzz words floating around but they were keen not to be driven by these buzz words. Their first step was to research the 'smart agenda'; there was a lot of this for cities but our district was a semi rural area, close to large urban areas such as London and Cambridge, but with our own identity. We cannot be a smart city but want to be a 'smart place'. We were not necessarily big enough for infrastructure providers to be interested in and we needed to seek a collaborative approach with other district councils and public sector organisations areas involved. So the concept of the Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) was born which included 5 districts and 10 founding (and potentially) funding partners to start this process. The partnership now includes local government (Bromford, East Herts., Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford and Essex County Council), health (Princess Alexandra, West Essex CCG, Essex Partnership University Trust), education (Anglia Ruskin Uni., Epping Forest College, Harlow College and Herts Regional College) and various private and voluntary sector organisations. We might not be a city but we have 212,000 households and close to half a million residents.

They had come up with a work programme structured in to four different areas: the partnership; the strategy; the infrastructure; and the projects, products and profile.

Some of the projects they were looking into included a common assets register to list and map out all public assets including local government, national government, health, police, highways and education. They were also looking at an open data source a repository of open access public data. They would also be running a series of 'smart place' seminars for local stakeholders. They also aimed to raise the profile of the DIZ. They aspired to be the best connected place of its kind.

Councillor Lion noted that this was just a starting point; they were looking at how to take this further and were looking for new ideas. They have already gone out to a number of different players in the industry who were very keen to get involved. So this was just the starting point and would like to have O&S involved. He asked what would you like to be kept abreast of, or know, about the Digital Innovation Zone?

The meeting was then opened up to questions from members.

Councillor Baldwin noted that broadband speeds were quite low in this county compared with other high tech countries such as South Korea. Our infrastructure was old now (laid down in the 1980's), would it be replaced and who would deliver this as it would be very expensive. Mr Warr noted that the Rural Challenge Project that was due to be completed shortly, delivered the first investment of £7.5million that delivered fibre broadband into the area to around 4,000 properties. Providing fibre broadband to rural premises was expensive but that was the model the supplier used. He could not say anything about the next stage but a similar project would be needed and it should mean that each household could get up to 1GB speed, upload and download. Councillor Lion noted that the development of broadband services was moving quite fast and was being continually upgraded to meet the demands being placed on them. Fibre broadband could handle these speeds, but other technology needs to catch up. Mr Houston noted that there was two questions here the speed of the coverage and the scale of the coverage and would that future proof the district. Officers were looking at this at present. He also noted that there was a lot of investment happening in our area making the most of our infrastructure.

Councillor Janet Whitehouse noted that a list of partners was shown but the VAEF was not on it. Mr Houston replied that some of the voluntary bodies listed would act as a bridge to other bodies. Working with one organisation that would feed out into the wider structure.

Councillor Patel was impressed with our initial investment of £84k being supported by a government grant of £7.5million. He asked how the 'DIZ' would filter into our corporate plan, did it feature enough. Also had there been any problems in partnership working so far. Councillor Lion's initial question of "so what" was a good question to ask as it underpinned everything you were looking to achieve. He was looking forward to see what happens next. Mr Houston said that from the beginning they went out to meet with each of their partners and establish common ground. Everyone was enthusiastic about joining in. This was just the tip of an iceberg; there were so many more things that could be done in the future with this technology. We were at an early stage in our journey. Councillor Patel asked again how the strategy fitted into the corporate plan. Councillor Lion said that they were speaking to David Bailey on how to reflect this into the corporate plan and to make sure some of the things we were talking about are included in the plan, such as 'Telecare' emergency services.

Councillor Wixley asked about how the neighbouring districts meshed into this DIZ zone. Mr Houston said that we worked with organisations that were cross border organisations and where there were hard borders but these were not recognised by

the public. This was a key area they were looking into; how to manage the border interfaces with service providers such as the NHS.

Councillor Bedford mentioned 5G. Would you consider using us as a pilot area for this technology? Mr Warr replied that they were interested in pushing forward on the 5G agenda, but this was still to be defined in terms of technology and what it might do. They will keep watch for suitable opportunities for 5G in the future and respond when necessary.

Councillor Sartin noted that there would be about 207 properties that were not connected up. Are they all in one area or were they scattered around the district. Mr Warr said that were scattered around the district in small pockets, but this was still being looked into.

The Chairman thanked the officers and Councillor Lion for their presentation and for answering all the questions so thoroughly.

## **7. ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - PASSENGER TRANSPORT - SCRUTINY OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

The Chairman noted that County Councillor Ray Gooding who was due to attend tonight's meeting had cancelled due to a clash of commitments. However, in his letter to the Committee, which was tabled, he provided some answers to the questions that had been posed by the Committee previously. Councillor Sartin expressed her disappointment and suggested that Councillor Gooding be asked to attend a future meeting. The tabled paper with the prepared answers could be taken away by the members of the Committee to be studied at their convenience.

Committee members were surprised by this cancellation and the use of the terms 'summoned' and 'adversarial' in his letter. They agreed that Councillor Gooding and any officers he cared to bring with him should be invited to attend a future meeting where a two way dialogue could be set up and supplementary questions could be put to him to flesh out the written answers already received.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) The Committee noted the written answers received from Councillor Gooding to the questions that they had posed and originally sent to him; and
- (2) They agreed that another invitation be sent to Councillor Gooding, asking him to attend a future meeting so that he and his officers could answer any follow up questions arising from his written response.

## **8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS & REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

It was noted that there were no public questions or requests to address the Committee.

## **9. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS - CALL-IN**

There were no call-in of decisions to be considered.

## **10. FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS - REVIEW**

The Committee reviewed the Council's programme of key decisions for 2018/19.

### **Planning and Governance**

Councillor Murray asked where the item on of a District electoral review came from. Councillor Philip replied that this was a way of looking at transformation from the members side. What happened because of this depended on what they found in the review.

Councillor Murray asked if this was a legal requirement and was told that it was.

Councillor Dorrell noted a typo under the description heading where the word "or" should read "for".

### **Environment**

Councillor Janet Whitehouse asked about the item on grounds maintenance and what sort of vehicles were they looking to buy. The Acting Chief Executive said they were probably looking at some kind of commercial rotary mower.

Councillor Murray asked if it was council policy to replace a lost standard Green Bin with a smaller one, as this had happened to one of his constituents. Councillor Avey said that he would look into this if Councillor Murray could give him an address after the meeting.

### **Housing**

Councillor Bedford asked about the adoption of the fire safety policy. Would we be asking private landlords to take this up? Councillor Stavrou said she would pass this on to the officer concerned, Mr Pledger, to answer.

Councillor Murray noted that eventually a report on the Grenfell Tower fire would be published and recommendations made, could the Portfolio Holder assure the meeting that we would as a council take up the recommendations made. Councillor Stavrou assured him that they would.

### **Safer Greener and Transport**

Councillor Murray asked about the Vere Road car park and his concern about the retail business in the area. Would there be free car parking here. Councillor Sam Kane said that there were no plans to provide this.

### **Assets and Economic Development**

Councillor Murray asked for an update on the Epping Forest Shopping Park. Councillor Grigg replied that this had been considered at a recent meeting involving the Broadway Town Centre partnership meeting, but the minutes were not out as yet. They were looking to have a further retail impact analysis undertaken by the same company and to be completed by October this year.

**11. SELECT COMMITTEES - TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

The Committee considered the re-establishment of the Select Committee for 2018/19 and their Terms of Reference and Work Programmes for each of the Committees.

It was noted that a new Council management structure was being considered at present. The Committee noted that they would agree the structure of the Select Committees for this municipal year but would start work on a new structure by September, when the joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen would consider how to take this forward.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the four Select Committees, Communities SC, Governance SC, Neighbourhoods SC and the Resources SC, be re-established and their Terms of Reference and Work Programmes as amended, be agreed;
- (2) That no change be made to the current Select Committee framework before the commencement of the 2019/20 municipal year; and
- (3) That arrangements to review the current Select Committee framework to reflect the new senior management structure be considered at the joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to be held in September 2018.

**12. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES - MEMBERSHIP 2018/19**

Article 6 of the Council's Constitution required that the Committee determined the number of select committees and reviewed them. In addition, the membership of the select committees was to be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the first meeting each year, as such appointments were reserved to the Committee and not made by the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That, in order to reflect pro rata and achieve the cross party rules of the Council's Constitution, each of the select committees comprise 15 members for 2018/19;
- (2) That, the appointments to the select committees annexed to these minutes be adopted; and
- (3) That, appointments be made to the position of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each select committee for 2018/19, as set out in the appendix to these minutes.

**13. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

The Committee received the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2017/18.

Further to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 17 April 2018, the annual report had been amended incorporating comments made by the committee at that meeting. Members were asked to agree the report for referral to the full Council for its 31 July 2018 meeting.

Councillor Janet Whitehouse asked that the report be bound separately from the agenda as a stand alone document. This was agreed.

### RECOMMENDED:

That the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report for 2017-18 be recommended to the Full Council at its meeting on 31 July 2018.

## 14. CORPORATE PLAN KEY ACTION PLAN 2017/18 - QUARTER 4 OUTTURN

The Acting Chief Executive introduced the Council's key strategic document, the Corporate Plan, this sets out its priorities over a four year period, with strategic themes reflecting those of the community strategy for the district.

The annual identification of key objectives provides an opportunity for the Council to focus attention on how areas for improvement would be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered during the year.

The key objectives for 2017/18 were adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting in September 2016. The achievement of the objectives was supported by a range of individual deliverables and actions, with target dates spread throughout the year (and beyond in some instances). Some of the deliverables could only be achieved incrementally or were dependent upon the completion of other actions, and were intended to be fluid to reflect changes in priorities and other influencing factors.

At the end of the year:

• Achieved:	28 (56%)
• Under Control:	15 (30%)
• Behind Schedule:	6 (12%)
• Pending:	<u>1 (2%)</u>
Total	50 (100%)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was requested to review year-end progress against the key objectives for 2017/18.

**Objective 1.b – item 11:** Councillor Bedford requested an update on the St. John's Road site development. He was told that the council had recently received a draft document that had been agreed by the Town Council. Officers were now looking at the final draft and hoping to have it sealed by the end of this week.

**Objective 1.b – item 12:** Councillor Bedford asked about the comments in Q4 and what was happening. He was told that a report would be going to the June Cabinet meeting.

**Objective 1.b – item 3:** Councillor Neville asked when would the work start on phases 4,5 & 6 of the council house building programme and how many would be offered at an affordable rent. He was told that the Portfolio Holder would get back to him on the details and the rents would all correspond to the council's rent code as this would all be District Council housing stock.

**Objective 1.b – item 6:** Councillor Murray asked if the relocation of the Housing Repairs Service to Oakwood Hill could remain behind schedule as he was worried about losing all the greens in Loughton. Oakwood Hill estate was a densely populated area of the district and now the council wanted to take away the green.

The Leader of the Council replied that he wanted this back on schedule as soon as possible as it would be a benefit to our district, our residents and save money. Loughton had a lot of investment, more than any other area. Locating the service made sense and would save us £3million in doing so, by not having to build a further new depot.

Councillor Wixley said that he did not think that this was a good idea, building a car park that was not necessary.

**Objective 1.b – item 7:** Councillor Sartin asked if the Pyrles Lane nursery was on the market as yet? She was told that it had not as yet been put on the market.

**Objective 2.c – item 3:** Councillor Dorrell asked if the new leisure centre in Waltham Abbey was on target. He was told that it was on schedule but had not been achieved as indicated on the plan.

**Objective 3.b – item 2:** Councillor Sartin queried if this should be classed as 'achieved'. Councillor Lion said that it was on target, not achieved.

**Objective 3.c – item 2:** Councillor Sartin noted the status was under control but it had an old target date. She was told that this would be reset.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee noted the position of the Council's Key Objectives for 2017/18.

**15. TRANSFORMATION PROJECT - PROJECT CLOSURES**

The Performance Improvement Officer, Ms Chwiedz introduced the report on the transformation programme project closures. When a project comes to an end it was evaluated by the project sponsor and manager. The request to close the project then progresses through the programme management office and once agreed would formally recommend the closure to the Transformation Programme Board.

The committee noted the closure report for the project on Customer Satisfaction and Standards and that it was in budget and had achieved its end goal.

Councillor Patel asked how the sample was chosen and would the questions be the same next year to act as a baseline. He was told that she would find out how the sample was chosen and would get it to him. As for the questions, they would be the same questions asked year on year, with some flexibility on the questions asked around the set questions.

Councillor Janet Whitehouse noted that the Council had carried out tenant satisfactions surveys on a regular basis and it was shame that we could not take these into account.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Project Closure report be noted.

**16. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME - PROJECT DOSSIER**

The Performance Improvement Officer, Ms Chwiedz introduced the report on the project dossier for the Transformation Programme. The Committee was asked to



consider the list of active High and Medium complexity projects, known formally as the Project Dossier.

**P175** – Councillor Neville noted that the due date was only 2 days away but it was only 27% complete and there was no new deadline. He was told that this would now be extended.

Councillor Dorrell noted that there were some long term projects such as the staff transport plan that did not end until March 2023, a long way away. The Assistant Chief Executive noted that a lot of these hinged on the delayed accommodation review.

Councillor Patel commented that he had asked the same question as Councillor Neville. The table was fine up to the date it was printed out but would have moved on since. What was needed was an anticipated progress column for these reports. These showed progress, but in relation to what? Ms Chwiedz said that she would take this comment back.

**P162** - Councillor Janet Whitehouse asked about the current position of the staff transport plan and was told that officers were in the process of producing a new plan to address all these issues on accommodation.

**RESOLVED:**

That the latest Transformation Programme project dossier be noted.

**17. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES 2018/19 - REVIEW**

The Committee reviewed their draft work programme for the coming year.

They noted that Item 2 – Corporate Priorities for 2018/19 - should have gone to this meeting but would now go to their next one.

Under the reserve programme the comments for items 2 and 3 should be swapped around as they were in the wrong place.

Councillor Murray wondered where Epping Forest College was on the list. He would like them to return to us as soon as possible as he had concerns, especially about transport links with Redbridge.

**AGREED:** The Committee agreed to add this to the work programme.

He would also like officers to approach the County Highways again and ask them to attend one of our meetings. He was reminded that they did come last year and provided a private members briefing. Members commented that they were more likely to attend a member briefing but not a public one. Councillor Chris Whitbread agreed that they should be asked to attend especially now that the county had made an extra £2.5 million available for roads. We needed our fair share of this.

**AGREED:** Officers would approach Highways and ask again if they would like to attend one of our Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Patel said that he would like someone from the Mental Health Services to attend a meeting so that we could ask about how they would support our residents. Councillor Neville said that they should be invited to the October meeting.

**AGREED:** Officers to try and arrange for October.

Councillor Sartin noting the item on Stansted Airport said that we should open it out and receive a wider report from them on such matters as employment, rail infrastructure and taxi pricing. We would ask for any questions from councillors as to what topics we should cover before asking them formally to attend.

**AGREED:** Members to be consulted on what they wish to discuss with Stansted Airport.

**18. SCRUTINY OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS - REVIEW**

The Committee noted their schedule of recent external scrutiny carried out over the past few years.

**CHAIRMAN**

## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES

### APPOINTMENTS FOR 2018/19

<b>Communities Select Committee (15)</b>
<p><b>Chairman:</b> H. Whitbread</p> <p><b>Vice-Chairman:</b> J. Lea</p>
<p><b>Conservative Group (10):</b> K. Chana, S. Heather, L. Hughes, J. Lea, A. Mitchell, A. Patel, D. Stocker, D. Sunger, H. Whitbread, (+1 to be advised)</p> <p><b>Green Party Group (1):</b> S. Heap</p> <p><b>Liberal Democrat Group (1):</b> J.H. Whitehouse</p> <p><b>Loughton Residents Association Group (3):</b> A. Beales, C. Roberts, D. Roberts</p> <p><b>Independent Members (0):</b></p>

<b>Governance Select Committee (15)</b>
<p><b>Chairman:</b> G. Chambers</p> <p><b>Vice-Chairman:</b> D. Dorrell</p>
<p><b>Conservative Group (10):</b> L. Burrows, G. Chambers, D. Dorrell, R. Gadsby, L. Hughes, S. Jones, M. McEwen, M. Sartin, J. Share-Bernia, H. Whitbread</p> <p><b>Green Party Group (1):</b></p> <p><b>Liberal Democrat Group (1):</b> J.M. Whitehouse</p> <p><b>Loughton Residents Association Group (3):</b> R. Brookes, H. Kauffman, D. Wixley</p> <p><b>Independent Members (0):</b></p>

**Neighbourhoods Select Committee (15)**

**Chairman:** N. Bedford

**Vice-Chairman:** H. Brady

**Conservative Group (10):** N. Bedford, P. Bolton, H. Brady, K. Chana, I Hadley, S. Heather, L. Hughes, A. Patel, M. Sartin, D. Stocker

**Green Party Group (1):** S. Neville

**Liberal Democrat Group (1):** J.H. Whitehouse

**Loughton Residents Association Group (3):** A. Beales, R. Brookes, L. Mead

**Independent Members (0):**

**Resources Select Committee (15)**

**Chairman:** A. Patel

**Vice-Chairman:** P. Stalker

**Conservative Group (10):** N. Bedford, L. Burrows, K. Chana, D. Dorrell, I. Hadley, J. Lea, A. Mitchell, A. Patel, P. Stalker, B. Vaz

**Green Party Group (1):**

**Liberal Democrat Group (1):** J.M. Whitehouse

**Loughton Residents Association Group (3):** J. Jennings, M. Owen, C.P. Pond

**Independent Members (0):**