



CABINET
Tuesday, 20th April, 2021

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Cabinet**, which will be held at:

Virtual Meeting on Zoom
on **Tuesday, 20th April, 2021**
at **7.00 pm** .

G. Blakemore
Chief Executive

Democratic Services
Officer

A. Hendry (Democratic Services)
Tel: (01992) 564246 Email:
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Members:

Councillors C Whitbread (Leader of the Council & Leader of the Conservative Group) (Chairman), , N Avey, N Bedford, A Patel, J Philip, S Kane and H Whitbread

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND

WEBCASTING/FILMING NOTICE (VIRTUAL MEETINGS)

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

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

Therefore by participating in this virtual meeting, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should ensure that their video setting throughout the virtual meeting is turned off and set to audio only.

In the event that technical difficulties interrupt the virtual meeting that cannot be overcome, the Chairman may need to adjourn the meeting.

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

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

1. This virtual meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to unmute before speaking.

2. The Chairman will read the following announcement:

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

Please also be aware that if technical difficulties interrupt the meeting that cannot be overcome, I may need to adjourn the meeting.”

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To be announced at the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To declare interests in any item on this agenda.

4. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 16)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 March 2021.

5. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

To receive oral reports from Portfolio Holders on current issues concerning their Portfolios, which are not covered elsewhere on this agenda.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE CABINET

To receive any questions submitted by members of the public and any requests to address the Cabinet.

(a) Public Questions

To answer questions asked by members of the public after notice in accordance with the provisions contained within Part 4 of the Constitution (Council Rules, Rule Q3) on any matter in relation to which the Cabinet has powers or duties or which affects the District.

(b) Requests to Address the Cabinet

Any member of the public or a representative of another organisation may address the Cabinet on any agenda item (except those dealt with in private session as exempt or confidential business) due to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions contained within Article 7 of the Constitution (The Executive, Paragraphs 27 and 28).

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

To consider any matters of concern to the Cabinet arising from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function and to identify any matters that the Cabinet would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to examine as part of its work programme.

8. DELIVERY OF BAKERS LANE LEISURE CENTRE (Pages 17 - 30)

Environmental & Technical (C-073-2020-21) – proposal for a new leisure centre in Epping.

9. ACCEPTANCE OF TENDER - CONTRACT 102, CONTROLLED DOOR ENTRY SYSTEMS (Pages 31 - 46)

Housing and Communities - (C-074-2020-21) - In order to undertake the repair, planned maintenance and installation of audio-controlled door entry systems to Council-owned properties.

10. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY (Pages 47 - 64)

Planning and Sustainability – (C-075-2020-21) - This report sets out the changes proposed to be made to the draft Green Infrastructure Strategy that was agreed by Cabinet for the purposes of consultation on 15 April 2020.

Appendices to this report will be distributed separately.

11. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN (Pages 65 - 114)

Planning and Sustainability (C-076-2020-21) - This report provides members with a summary of the objectives and purpose of the Climate Change Action Plan.

12. QUALIS QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT - Q1 2020/21 (Pages 115 - 136)

Commercial and Regulatory Services – (C-077-2020-21) - Qualis has provided the Council with the Quarters' Management Accounts for the Council consideration.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, together with paragraphs 6 and 24 of the Council Procedure Rules contained in the Constitution requires that the permission of the Chairman be obtained, after prior notice to the Chief Executive, before urgent business not specified in the agenda (including a supplementary agenda of which the statutory period of notice has been given) may be transacted.

In accordance with Operational Standing Order 6 (non-executive bodies), any item

raised by a non-member shall require the support of a member of the Committee concerned and the Chairman of that Committee. Two weeks' notice of non-urgent items is required.

14. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Exclusion

To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) or are confidential under Section 100(A)(2):

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
Nil	Nil	Nil

The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, which came into effect on 1 March 2006, requires the Council to consider whether maintaining the exemption listed above outweighs the potential public interest in disclosing the information. Any member who considers that this test should be applied to any currently exempted matter on this agenda should contact the proper officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Background Papers

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

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

The Council will make available for public inspection one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers for four years after the date of the meeting. Inspection of background papers can be arranged by contacting either the Responsible Officer or the Democratic Services Officer for the particular item.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET MINUTES

Committee: Cabinet **Date:** 11 March 2021

Place: Virtual Meeting on Zoom **Time:** 7.00 - 7.56 pm

Members Present: C Whitbread (Chairman), N Avey, N Bedford, A Patel, J Philip, S Kane and H Whitbread

Other Councillors: R Baldwin, P Bolton, L Burrows, S Heap, S Heather, H Kauffman, J Lea, A Lion, S Murray, C C Pond, M Sartin, D Stocker, D Sunger, B Vaz, J H Whitehouse and D Wixley

Apologies:

Officers Present: G Blakemore (Chief Executive), N Dawe (Chief Operating Officer), A Small (Strategic Director Corporate and 151 Officer), A Blom-Cooper (Interim Assistant Director (Planning Policy)), J Houston (Specialist Partnerships & Economic Development), S Lloyd-Jones (Sustainable Transport Officer), R Pavey (Service Director (Customer Services)), M Warr (Economic Development Officer), J Warwick (Service Manager (Contracts)), T Carne (Corporate Communications Team Manager), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), J Leither (Democratic Services Officer) and S Mitchell (PR Website Editor)

155. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Leader of Council made a short address to remind everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet, and would be capable of repeated viewing, which could infringe their human and data protection rights.

156. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pursuant to the Council's Member Code of Conduct, Councillor J H Whitehouse declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 11 – 'Update on Business Database Development', by virtue of being a trustee of Epping Forest Re-use. The Councillor had determined that her interest was non-prejudicial and that she would stay in the meeting for the consideration of the item.

157. MINUTES

Decision:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 21 January and 11 February 2021 be taken as read and would be signed by the Leader as a correct record.

158. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

The Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor Philips reported that they had launched 'Click it Local', a local traders click and collect service. So far

20 businesses had signed up to it. Other authorities have also joined this scheme or were looking to join. He encouraged the public to visit www.clickitlocal.co.uk where they would find a number of businesses within our district that they could make use of.

The Commercial and Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor Patel updated the meeting on the incident at North Weald Airfield on Tuesday night. A single engine plane had experienced problems with its landing gear, but eventually made a successful landing. During this incident both the Air Ambulance and the Fire Services had been alerted but were not needed.

The Customer and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Kane asked members to keep their eyes open on Social media and the Epping Forest website for a new platform called 'Develop Me', an interactive Job website designed to help residents find jobs, build their profiles and skills and write their CVs. This platform works across three districts (including Harlow and Uttlesford).

The Housing and Community Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor H Whitbread, noted that last night they had a virtual public meeting with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, where they had a lot of public engagement and received a lot of interesting questions. She went on to flag that at next Stronger Communities Select Committee they would have the District Commander for Brentwood and Epping Forest,

Antony Alcock, where they would also be reporting back on the Community Safety Partnerships annual report.

159. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE CABINET

The Cabinet noted that no public questions or requests to address the Cabinet had been received for consideration at the meeting.

160. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that they had not had a meeting since the last Cabinet and therefore had nothing to report. However, she noted that they had now received answers to questions from NEPP and these would be put into the Council Bulletin for information.

161. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LOCAL PLAN: UPDATE ON PROGRESS

The Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bedford introduced the report on the update of the implementation of the Local Plan.

He noted that this report provided members with an update on the progress of Strategic Masterplans, Concept Frameworks and Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) within the District, including major projects and planning applications dealt with by the team. Scheduled meetings and workshops were taking place with site promoters and developers in accordance with project plans agreed within PPAs, albeit virtually. Project programmes were being adjusted where necessary to account for the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular community engagement arrangements.

The Council had adopted the Interim Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy. Following consultation on the draft strategy approved by Cabinet on 20 July 2020, Natural England had now confirmed that if the measures identified in the Interim Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy were secured through appropriate policy wording within the emerging Local Plan to provide the necessary link between the Habitat Regulations

Assessment and the mitigation they consider that it could provide a sound strategy for the purposes of avoiding and mitigating air quality impacts on Epping Forest SAC that result from plan led development. The Council would be proposing Main Modifications to Policies DM 2 and DM 22 to the Inspector to address this matter and would be finalising the HRA to take account of the latest evidence. Pending the adoption of the Local Plan the Council can adopt the strategy to support the Local Plan HRA process and facilitate the determination of planning applications which have the potential to have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Epping Forest SAC in relation to atmospheric pollution without mitigation.

Councillor Philip welcomed the renewal of the Quality Review Panel contract noting that this would be of benefit to the District and also lined up with the Governments drive for higher build quality. He asked when the appendix of allocated sites was updated as he thought the second site listed there had changed status since. Councillor Bedford said that he would have this checked out.

Councillor Janet Whitehouse asked about the South Epping Masterplan, noting that the ward councillors had not seen this as yet. Could they have a copy. Councillor Bedford noted that this was not yet in the public domain, but he would get officers to speak to her privately about this.

Decision:

That the progress of Masterplans and Concept Frameworks, including the use of Planning Performance Agreements and the progress of other proposals at pre-application and application stage was noted.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To ensure that members were kept fully up to date on the progress of Masterplans and Concept Frameworks and other major proposals being promoted within the District.

Other Options for Action:

Not to update members on the progress on the above issues would be contrary to the commitment made by the Implementation Team as noted in the 18 October 2018 Cabinet Report.

162. SUSTAINABILITY GUIDANCE FOR THE DISTRICT AND HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN

The Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bedford introduced the report.

The Council's emerging Local Plan set out policies in relation to sustainable and high quality design and construction of developments. On 19 September 2019 the Council declared a Climate Emergency, including a resolution to do everything within the Council's power to make Epping Forest District carbon neutral by 2030. To support these policies and this declaration, the Council had produced draft Sustainability Guidance and Checklist documents for use across the District; Volume 1: Major Developments (10+ units) and Volume 2: Minor Developments (1-9 units). These documents were in addition to the draft HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklist, which had been produced for sites located both within Epping Forest District and the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. All three draft documents were approved by Cabinet for the purposes of public consultation on 19 October 2020.

This report set out the changes proposed to the draft EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist documents (Volume 1: Major Developments and Volume 2: Minor Developments) and the draft HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklist following the consultation process and sought Cabinet endorsement of these documents.

The report provided members with an update of progress in respect of Volume 3 and outlined a summary of the aims, objectives and purpose of the Volume 3 guidance. Further, the report requested that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Sustainability was given delegated authority to approve the final draft of Volume 3 for public consultation. Following public consultation and any updates arising, the final Volume 3 guidance would return to Cabinet for endorsement as a material consideration in the determination of householder planning applications.

Councillor Philip welcomed the report and the new Director of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town whose appointment had been announced recently.

Councillor Heap also welcomed the report but noted that he could not see the difference between major and minor developments; there also seemed to be no cost benefits mentioned; and there was still no insistence for PVs on all new dwellings. He also wanted to know how SP3 became SP2. He was told that that they had renumbered the policies as one (SP1) had been removed.

Councillor Wixley wanted to know what LETI stood for, as it was mentioned in paragraph 12 of the report. He was told it was the London Energy Transformation Initiative, a network of built environment professionals that gave guidance to support a path to a zero carbon future.

Decision:

(1) The Cabinet noted the public consultation process and outcomes and endorsed the Epping Forest District Sustainability Guidance and Checklist documents (Volume 1: Major Developments Appendix A and Volume 2: Minor Developments Appendix B) as material planning considerations for the preparation of masterplans, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes within the District.

(2) The Cabinet noted the public consultation process and outcomes, and endorsed the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) Sustainability Guidance and Checklist (Strategic Sites) (Appendix D) as a material planning consideration for the preparation of masterplans, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes within the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.

(3) The Cabinet agreed that the Planning Services Director, in consultation with the Planning and Sustainability Portfolio Holder be authorised to make minor amendments to the EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist documents (Volume 1: Major Developments and Volume 2: Minor Developments) and HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklist prior to their final publication.

(4) The Cabinet noted progress made on the Draft EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist Volume 3: Extensions and Refurbishments (Appendix F) and gave delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder to approve the Guidance for public consultation for a six week period.

(5) The Cabinet noted that, following consultation and any subsequent revisions, it was intended that the final EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist Volume 3 would be considered by Cabinet for endorsement as a material planning consideration for assessing householder planning applications (for extension or refurbishment work to an existing building), pre-application advice, and any other development management purposes within the District.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that both the EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist documents (Volume 1: Major Developments and Volume 2: Minor Developments) and the HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklist were afforded suitable planning weight by endorsing them as material considerations in the planning process. This would ensure that development proposals across the District contributed to the Council's sustainability ambitions, and that clear parameters were established for future pre-application advice, preparation of masterplans, assessing planning applications and any other development management purposes.

To agree that the draft EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist Volume 3: Extensions and Refurbishments was delegated to the Portfolio Holder to agree for the purposes of a 6 week public consultation period.

Other Options for Action:

Not to agree the EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist documents (Volume 1: Major Developments and Volume 2: Minor Developments) and HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklist or endorse the three documents as material considerations in the planning process, which would mean that there would be no guidance to support the delivery of development proposals and achieve the objectives set out in the Council's emerging Local Plan policies SP3, DM5, DM9, DM11, DM15-22.

Not to agree the draft EFDC Sustainability Guidance and Checklist Volume 3: Extensions and Refurbishments is delegated to the Portfolio Holder to agree for the purposes of a 6 week public consultation, which would mean that there would be no mechanism to support the delivery of sustainable extension and refurbishment of existing dwellings.

163. DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS FOR ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

The Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Philip introduced the report on digital infrastructure investment.

Epping Forest DC and Essex + Herts Digital Innovation Zone, which the council initiated, had been working, since its formation, to deliver digital infrastructure investment across the DIZ geography, including in Epping Forest District. The council, working with its partners at Essex CC and with the private sector had helped lever in approximately £24m in investment in digital infrastructure in the district. Key achievements in this work programme were set out in the report.

This investment was considered critical to current economic development and the district's future economic resilience and was a fundamental underpinning layer to support the Council's ongoing work to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The infrastructure was central to maximising the ability of the district's residents and businesses to engage in an increasingly online world whether that is

through delivering goods and services online, working from home, studying from home, shopping locally using online platforms or accessing vital public services digitally.

Additionally, the DIZ has been working to build the reputation of the area as a place to invest and progress on this workstream.

Building its reputation has led to an approach from Connected Places Catapult to potentially fund an Internet of things (IoT) project focused on air quality at and on route to schools. The project would analyse and identify patterns in air quality in order to engage with, and influence the behaviour of, school children and their families in respect of healthy and sustainable travel to school. Public health was a key priority for the Council and this project would seek to enable residents to make informed decisions about how they might improve their health and living environment through the choice of alternative routes and transport. The DIZ was liaising with partners over the funding requirement for such a project and this report sought Cabinet approval in principle for the council to potentially be the single or prime funder for such a project. Approval was sought for up to £35,000 funding for this project, the funding to come from existing allocations of resources in the Capital Budget for environmental and climate change related projects.

Councillor Bedford welcomed this report especially the monitoring of contamination around school gates.

Councillor Patel also welcomed this report in preparation for when businesses started to function again.

Councillor Lion said that this gave amazing returns in investment to the council. The GP programme was moving forward and this was good to see.

Councillor C Whitbread thanked Councillor Lion for his input into these projects over the years. The value for money gained from these were superb. The important thing learned from this was the importance of digital innovation, which the past 18 months has shown and these changes would be great for our communities in the future.

Decision:

(1) The Cabinet noted and endorsed the contribution of the digital infrastructure investment approach, developed and pursued by the Essex + Herts Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) and EFDC Economic Development team, to the economic resilience of Epping Forest district and the district's ongoing recovery response to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

(2) The Cabinet agreed, in principle, to the potential investment of up to £35,000 of partnership funding to explore an IoT project with the Connected Places Catapult and Digital Catapult to monitor air quality at and on route to school gates, the funding to come from existing Capital Budget allocations for environmental and climate change related projects.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The DIZ is liaising with partners over the funding requirement for such a project and this report seeks Cabinet approval in principle for the council to potentially be the single or prime funder for such a project.

Other Options for Action:

A reduced maximum investment in the air quality project could be agreed. This may impact on the council's ability to secure participation in the project. The council could also choose not to agree any funding for this project which would mean any participation would be dependent upon other organisational partners of the DIZ choosing to fund the project and locate the pilot site within the district.

164. UPDATE ON BUSINESS DATABASE DEVELOPMENT

The Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder introduced this report.

In July last year members approved a series of measures to assist economic recovery in the district. The development of the database and new methods of communication were a key element underpinning this process.

There were in excess of 8,000 businesses in the Epping Forest District. 92% of these were categorised as micro (0-9 employees), with a further 3% defined as small. Epping Forest businesses have, like so many other businesses in the UK suffered severe disruption with the effects of COVID and needed support and advice from the local authority. To assist the Council to effectively engage with local businesses, a database had therefore been purchased from an external company which included contact and email addresses. A staged approach to further develop the database and Economic Development's capacity to engage with and support local businesses was set out in the report.

Councillor Patel welcomed the report noting that one of the difficulties the council had was in communicating information with local businesses, this was a welcomed way to overcome this.

Councillor H Whitbread said that this was really good piece of work that she welcomed; it was a useful tool for the local businesses. She noted that Essex County Council had a really good Economic Development newsletter with useful links and information for businesses and asked if it would be publicly available? Councillor Philip said that the current intention was just to send it out to the people on the database, but he would see if they could share it with members.

Councillor Bedford said that he was very pleased with this piece of work and was glad that it was now coming together.

Councillor Janet Whitehouse was please to see this report but was concerned that this seemed primarily concerned with limited companies as the sole traders would also benefit greatly by this database. It was hoped that the newsletter would be shared among the traders, but also, if it could be shared with members, they could share it with the smaller businesses.

Councillor Sunger said that it was good to reach out and it was vitally important that we reached out to local businesses.

Councillor Philip commented that that he would encourage members, that if they were passing the newsletter onto businesses, they would want to get them on the list and get their information on our database. We also know that the vast majority of businesses in our district were micro or small so they making sure they got this across the range of businesses.

Councillor Heap asked how we were informing businesses of this. He was told that was part of the work they were doing at present but if a councillor wanted to assist in this, they should point any business they were in contact with to our Economic Development team.

Decision:

Cabinet noted and endorsed:

- 1) the progress in development of a corporate business database to assist the council to engage with and support local businesses; and
- 2) Plans to develop an online, monthly economic newsletter, sent directly to local businesses, including information on grants and other support, new initiatives, surveys etc.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To support the Council's economic recovery programme and underpin the Council's digital outreach to, and support of, businesses in Epping Forest District.

Other Options for Action:

To continue with the current corporate approach and direct mail.

165. CALENDAR OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2021-22

The Customer and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Kane introduced the report on the Calendar of Council meetings for 2021/22.

He noted that the Cabinet considered the calendar of meetings each year prior to its final approval by the Council. The calendar had been developed over time to meet the changing needs of the authority and again no fundamental changes had been proposed.

Decision:

That Cabinet recommended the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2021/22 to the Council for adoption.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To review the proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22, prior to its final adoption by the Council.

Other Options for Action:

Individual frequencies of meetings could be varied. In practice, additional meetings are added as and when issues dictate. Similarly, meetings can be cancelled if there is a lack of business.

166. AMENDMENTS TO THE ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT POLICY FOR BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Customer and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder along with the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder introduced the report on the amendments to the additional restrictions grant policy for business support.

They noted that the pandemic had impacted on businesses right across the Epping Forest District. The Council had worked hard to ensure the timely distribution of central government and local government support funding direct to local businesses. This direct support was critical to the continued survival of many businesses in a variety of different sectors. This report reviewed current performance, suggested revisions to policy and approach linked to experience of administration and the needs of local businesses. Amendments to current policy and establishment of new funding priorities for local action were included.

Councillor C Whitbread had nothing but praise for the officers getting these grants out to the various businesses; he noted that it had not been easy, but they had worked tirelessly to achieve this. These grants were very important to the businesses and we have the grants there, so we want them to come forward and apply for what they were entitled to.

Decision:

The Cabinet approved:

1. That those businesses already awarded a grant under the Additional Restrictions Grant Policy received a further payment for the same amount;
2. That the ARG scheme be extended to:
 - a) taxi drivers licensed by EFDC who would receive a single payment of £500 each;
 - b) driving instructors with Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) registration who would receive a single payment of £1,000 each;
 - c) kennels and catteries.
3. The use of up to £500,000 to fund key programmes in the priority areas identified in the report as part of an Economic Resilience Fund.
4. That future changes to the ARG scheme were delegated to the Customer Service Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Corporate Services and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure practice on business grant distribution and business support reflects changes in the needs of local businesses and the local economy.

Other Options for Action:

To maintain the current approach.

167. COVID 19 - DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS - TRAVEL LOCAL DEMAND RESPONSIVE TRANSPORT (DRT) TRIAL

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental and Technical Services, Councillor N Avey introduced the report on the Travel Local Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) Trial.

He noted that in December 2020, Cabinet approved a three-month trial of a 'hybrid' Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT87) service with Epping Forest Community Transport (EFCT), to replace Arriva's 87 service which ECC felt unable to subsidise further. The trial commenced on time on 2nd January. Given it was a new concept, set up with very little notice and run during a lockdown suppressing all but essential travel, it could be judged to have been a success, justifying strong consideration of extension further into 2021. By industry norms, a three month trial was also too short to prove and refine the marketing approach and to fully test and show the benefits of new technology such as the journey booking app which was still in beta trial in Q1.

Councillor Philip welcomed the report. He was pleased to see that significant use was being of this service and he expected this to be used more in the coming months. He was looking forward to seeing the council using the best environmental transport methods as possible. It would be good to extend it for a further year to establish if a service like this would work in this district and was happy to see it was within budget.

Councillor H Whitbread said that she would like to see more promotion of this project. Councillor Avey said that he was looking at more promotion and publicity for this service.

Councillor Bedford said that this was a good initiative, essential for our key workers and key for our future. Councillor S Kane also supported it and expressed the hope that the second route went through Waltham Abbey.

Councillor Chris Pond noted that a good start had been made on this service, but there had been considerable public confusion. The registration process was cumbersome, but there was potential to be more useful in the future. Councillor Avey said that they would look at the registration process to make it simpler.

Councillor Heap said it was a good system but did need to be made easier to use. Councillor Murray agreed.

Councillor C Whitbread thanked the officer team for their hard work in setting this trial up.

Decision:

- (1) The Cabinet noted the good progress being made on the commencement of trial flexible Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT87) bus service which commenced on 2 January 2021 and the challenges posed by ongoing restrictions due to Covid-19;
- (2) The Cabinet agreed to extend the trial for a full year from 1 April 2021 to enable the service to build on experiences in the lock down period and benefit from higher number of journeys and vehicle capacity once the lockdown eased;
- (3) The Cabinet agreed, to allocate £85,000 from the Sustainable Travel Projects for a full year trial of the Demand Responsive Transport (DaRT87) bus service to be operated by Epping Forest Community Transport (EFCT); to be offset by fare revenue returned by EFCT;
- (4) The Cabinet agreed that a report be presented to Cabinet post election with the progress of the trial and opportunities to extend the DRT service to other parts of the District to improve connectivity; and

(5) The Cabinet agreed to set aside Procurement Rules to enable the extension of the Contract with EFCT.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To accept the positive trajectory of the initial trial (against the odds) as evidence of demand for a novel service such as DaRT87 which can grow a lot more as Covid restrictions relax and potentially expand to cover other areas of the District. This report outlines evidence and assumptions that show a higher passenger capacity later in 2021 would mean the service can be closer to self-sufficiency or even generate a surplus for reinvestment. There are also possibilities for financial support from DfT's Covid Bus Recovery Fund if the trial is extended and has proven demand. The trial supports the Council's Climate Change Declaration and our Local Plan's focus on sustainable transport protection and growth, as well as retaining a much-needed connection between SW Harlow, Epping Green, Epping, Theydon Bois and Loughton.

Other Options for Action:

All the evidence, both county and UK-wide is that public subsidy of bus services will be under severe pressure for years. Ceasing the DaRT87 trial at this stage would leave residents open to further inconvenient and/or reduced bus options via a financially stressed ECC. It could be speculated that ECC and Trustybus would combine the 542 (Loughton-Debden town circular) and 418 routes to a single service replicating parts of the old 87, minus any direct link to Harlow and also effectively cutting off Epping Green and Theydon Bois from all or much of their bus service.

168. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration by the Cabinet.

169. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Cabinet noted that there was no business for consideration which would necessitate the exclusion of the public and press from the virtual meeting.

CHAIRMAN

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-073-2020/21

Date of meeting: 20 April 2021



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Environment and Technical – Cllr. N Avey

Subject: Delivery of Epping Leisure Centre at Bakers Lane, Epping

Responsible Officer: James Warwick (01992 564350).

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To note progress made on delivery of the Epping Leisure Centre at Bakers Lane, Epping;**
- (2) To delegate to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Technical the authority to agree the Deed of Variation to the contract with Places Leisure for delivery of the new centre, adjustments to the agreement to take account of the sale of current Epping Sports Centre at Hemnall Street to Qualis and the right to continue to use this facility until the new Bakers Lane facility is ready;**
- (3) To allocate £600,000 from existing Capital Programme provision for the Bakers Lane Leisure Centre, as agreed by Council in February, to progress detailed designs and further site survey work in order to arrive at cost certainty;**
- (4) Recognising that Qualis own a number of regeneration sites in Epping Town and the delivery of the Bakers Lane site is interdependent on Qualis progress, to agree to work with Qualis in a strategic delivery partnership with Qualis occupying the role of Infrastructure Manager with the responsibility of coordination for the delivery of all five sites in Epping Town and communications across the sites and agree an appropriate day rate retainer fee to reflect this;**
- (5) To delegate authority to section 151 officer to repay to Qualis costs incurred by them in preparing and submitting a planning application and outline design for the Bakers Lane Leisure Centre that is to be used by Places Leisure; the amount to be based on the actual justifiable costs incurred and upon consultation with the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Technical and Portfolio Holder for Finance; and**
- (6) That the final form of contract variation covering Management Fee income from the new Centre be brought to a future Cabinet for consideration.**

Executive Summary:

At the meeting on 21 January 2021 Cabinet agreed that the new leisure centre in Epping is delivered by its incumbent contractor Places Leisure. This includes the purchase of all designs and plans from Qualis once planning permission for the new facility is obtained.

To date, all the work Places Leisure have done with Qualis has been on a voluntary basis and in a spirit of partnership as the Council's leisure centres provider. Following Cabinet decision to have the new centre delivered by Places Leisure it is necessary to make the required amendments to the Contract to reflect this. To progress this project to the next stage Places Leisure need services of specialist consultants and legal advisers. It is standard practice that these costs are covered by the client, in this case the Council, as was the case for the delivery of Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre.

The contract with Places Leisure results in a net annual income of £1.3 million. This has been severely impacted by Covid-19. However as restrictions ease and user confidence increases it is expected that income levels will rise. It is too early, primarily due to the impact of Covid-19, to agree additional income from the new Centre. It is recommended that a final agreement on additional income to the Council is brought to Cabinet for approval later in the year.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To agree to have a Deed of Variation in the Contract with Places Leisure and approve budget to enable the necessary design and legal processes to enable Places Leisure to take over the scheme from Qualis and continue work at pace for the delivery of the new leisure centre.

The procurement advice received from Anthony Collins Solicitors is that Places Leisure should tender the construction contract through the Find a Tender Service (FTS formerly OJEU) which will mitigate any risk of challenge as well as demonstrate best value for the Council.

Other Options for Action:

It is possible to delay decisions until the outcome of the planning application. However the slippage in programme will delay delivery of the new leisure centre. Commencement of the construction of the new leisure centre is entirely contingent on the completion of the Multi Storey Car park at Cottis Lane and associated highway works.

Report:

1. At its meeting on 21 January 2021 Cabinet agreed a revised strategy for delivery of the Epping Leisure Centre at Bakers Lane, Epping. It was agreed to let the Council's partnering contractor Places Leisure deliver the new Centre. It was also agreed that the area of land of Bakers Lane Car Park on which the new Centre is to be built will not be transferred to Qualis and all designs and plans associated with the work leading up to the Planning application will be bought by the Council from Qualis at cost.
2. Qualis submitted planning application for the Epping Leisure Centre on 22nd December 2020. Qualis Commercial ran public consultations upon the future redevelopment of five sites in Epping that have been identified in the emerging Local Plan. The Bakers Lane site received 167 responses during the consultation. As with any large planning application a number of queries and clarifications have been raised by stakeholders, statutory consultees and residents. These are being dealt with by Qualis and their consultants. It is anticipated that the planning application will be considered in June.
3. Although no formal instruction has been issued to Places Leisure they have been planning their lead role in delivery of the new Centre. This is exactly in the line with how

the Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre was successfully delivered, DBOM (Design Build Operate and Maintain) arrangement under the contract. Places Leisure are acting in good faith and in the spirit of partnership however contractually it is necessary to issue a formal Deed of Variation which sets out their responsibilities. In order to expedite this process it is proposed that the Portfolio Holder is authorised to agree the Deed, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Service Manager Contracts, as soon as is practicable.

4. The Deed of Variation will not only cover the arrangements for the new Bakers Lane Leisure Centre but also update the contract to reflect the changes, for example the numbers and locations of leisure centres. The original decision at the time of contract award to Places Leisure in 2017 was to close Epping and Ongar leisure centres and construct a new centre at North Weald. This decision has since been revised by Council and it now intends to keep Ongar Leisure Centre operational, reflected by the recent investment of £1.3 million, as well as build the new centre in Epping Town and not North Weald.

5. The Deed of Variation is a legal and contractually binding change to the 20 year contract between the Council and Places Leisure. The Council will appoint external legal adviser to prepare the Deed. Some changes are easier than others, for example the retention of Ongar Leisure Centre, however some will require more work. These include the management fee income that the Council would seek once the new Centre becomes operational, a framework for procurement of contractors to ensure Council gets value for money.

6. Leisure Centres are complex structures and require input from specialist designers, architects and engineers. While Places Leisure have significant experience in building and operating leisure centres, they require the services of third-party agents and consultants. In order to progress the Epping Leisure Centre, they need to engage some of these service providers. There is also the need to undertake further site investigation work to fully quantify, as far as possible, the contaminated land risk. Additionally any costs associated with the change to the Contract will have to be borne by the Council as it is triggering the Deed of Variation. At this stage it is recommended that a sum of £600,000 should be allocated from the existing budget for the project already agreed by Council. Officer oversight on expenditure will be maintained through existing contractual processes.

7. The form of Contract between the Council and Places Leisure is DBOM (Design Build Operate and Maintain). This contains a mechanism for delivery of a new leisure centre, this mechanism was used to deliver the Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre in 2019. The Contract sets out the requirements, roles and responsibilities of all parties and associated risks. This arrangement reduces the risks to the Council by relying on the expertise of leisure service provider to use their commercial and operational acumen to deliver a facility on time and at optimum cost ensuring the best commercial return. In such an arrangement the Council will provide all capital costs and Places Leisure will deliver the scheme. Council officers will retain overall financial control. This is the same mechanism used for the Waltham Abbey Leisure centre development on time and on budget.

8. Whereas the responsibility for delivery of the new Centre rests with Places Leisure there is a recognition in the Contract that the client, the Council in this case, has a duty to ensure public funds are utilised appropriately, there is probity, value for money is demonstrated and the Council's interests are safeguarded. The DBOM arrangement has a role of a Specialist Leisure Independent Certifier. This is delivered by a competent agency, usually a consultancy, that has the requisite skills in the subject area. This arrangement worked well in the development of Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre. This offered Council officers reassurance that work was progressing as planned, payments to Places Leisure

were only made upon verification of each stage of the activity, to the desired quality. This process also avoided any disputes at completion as a thorough audit trail was available. The same arrangement is proposed for the delivery of the new Centre.

9. There are considerable interdependencies between the four sites in Epping (owned by Qualis) and Epping Leisure Centre especially around the road infrastructure, disruption during construction and liaison with external agencies like Essex Highways, utility companies, Epping Town Council, businesses and residents. Although Places Leisure will be delivering the new Epping Leisure Centre there is an important role for Qualis, working with officers from EFDC, in coordinating and sequencing all the projects to make sure that each party doesn't delay delivery by the other. They have acquired knowledge in preparing the planning application for the new leisure centre and this could be valuable to Places Leisure. It is recommended that the Council appoint Qualis as the Infrastructure Manager. This will enable Qualis to coordinate the work of all five sites in Epping Town, deal with highways and external agencies. Qualis will be responsible for coordinating the overall delivery of the five schemes in Epping Town whilst Places Leisure will be responsible for the delivery of the new Epping Leisure Centre. Details of the role will be covered in the Deed of Variation as well as the costs payable to them. The report recommends that the costs payable to Qualis for the expenditure incurred on the project so far will be agreed by the Section 151 officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Technical and the Portfolio Holder for Finance.

10. The contract with Places Leisure results in an average net annual income of £1.3 million. This has been severely impacted by Covid-19 and the Council is having to pay Places Leisure costs for keeping the leisure centres closed. It is anticipated that once lockdown restrictions ease users will come back. However there is a divergence of opinion on how soon leisure centre usage will get back to post pandemic levels. Officers are liaising with other local authority Client Officers and there is a general feeling of optimism that usage will improve however there is uncertainty on how soon this can happen.

11. There is no doubt that the new Epping Leisure Centre will attract new users and as a result Council should see an increase in the annual management fee income it gets from Places Leisure. However the uncertainty caused by Covid-19 means it is difficult to carry out a meaningful predictive income modelling. It is possible that once restrictions ease and public confidence increases leisure centre usage could be higher than pre Covid-19 years. Equally it may take a couple of years for public confidence to get to pre Covid-19 levels. If the Council agrees a management fee uplift too soon then there is a risk that it will lose out on dividends if future usage is relatively higher than pre Covid-19. It is recommended that the management fee uplift be given some further thought and a proposal brought back to Cabinet later in the year when more information on usage will be available.

Resource Implications:

At its meeting on 21 January 2021 Cabinet agreed to allocate £25 million to the delivery of new Epping Leisure Centre. Qualis has incurred costs in preparing planning application and the Council will have to purchase the designs and associated propriety rights at cost.

Places Leisure have been liaising with Qualis in the preparation of planning application for the new leisure centre. They have not charged for their services however once planning permission is granted and the scheme moves into detail design Places Leisure will need to allocate additional resources and it is reasonable for them to charge for their costs, the DBOM arrangement requires this.

Once planning permission is obtained for the new leisure centre Places Leisure will review planning conditions, in case there is a financial impact. Arrangements will be made to purchase all designs and associated details from Qualis.

Officers are working on preparing a Deed of Variation, the existing DBOM arrangement in the Contract will form the basis, which will set out costs for the various elements of the project. In order to avoid any delays while the Deed is being prepared it is recommended that a budget of £600,000 is made available to the project to allow Places Leisure to start to engage with the specialist third party agents. These include architects, designers, project managers, quantity surveyors etc. Fees for these works are being finalised by Places Leisure, Council officers will keep oversight of all expenditure and demand an audit trail to demonstration of value for money. Once finalised these will form part of the Deed of Variation.

Consultancy fees and estimated costs are noted below, these are in line with those for the delivery of Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool and Gym, Places Leisure will charge the same rates for the new Epping Leisure Centre. A contingency of around 8% is recommended to deal with any unforeseen circumstances. The costs below are exclusive of any payments due to Qualis for designs:

Places Leisure Fee	£75,000
Leisure Legal Costs	£75,000
EFDC Legal Costs	£75,000
Technical Consultants, preparation of Employers Requirements and procurement of Build Contractor	£100,000
Project Insurance	£75,000
Contingency	£50,000
Specialist Leisure Independent Certifier	£150,000
Total	£600,000

Places Leisure will charge the same fee as for the delivery of Waltham Abbey Centre and other charges will be validated through a selection process to ensure value for money.

Qualis have estimated construction cost of the new Centre at £25 Million. Places Leisure will carry out a procurement exercise to appoint a suitable build contractor. This will demonstrate value for money and hopefully market competition will deliver a favourable price. Council officers will influence the contractor selection criteria to ensure high quality outcome.

Legal and Governance Implications:

To enable Places Leisure to design and construct the new leisure facility, it would be necessary to carry out a variation to the Contract. This is because the price for the new centre, the timing of the build and the Employer's Requirements and Proposals for the new facility are not within the procurement documents or current Contract.

The procurement advice received from Anthony Collins Solicitors is that the Design & Build contract should be tendered through the Find a Tender Service (FTS formerly OJEU) which will demonstrate best value for the Council.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

This project will help Epping Forest District Council achieve a number of corporate objectives under stronger communities. The construction of a new leisure centre will work towards ensuring all residents have the opportunity to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. As well as helping to ensure wellbeing and social cohesion across all ages by providing opportunities for residents to enjoy local heritage, cultural and leisure activities in the district.

The construction of a new, modern leisure centre in Epping will work towards achieving the aim of the Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is that Epping Forest District residents across all demographics have the opportunity to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Consultation Undertaken:

Qualis public consultation on the proposed scheme which received 167 online comments. Planning application consultation as part of the application.

Leisure Management Partnership Board have been kept up to date with progress and will continue to be updated throughout the project.

Background Papers:

21 January 2021 setting out options and Cabinet agreeing the delivery strategy to be Places Leisure and existing DBOM, in other words like Waltham Abbey

Risk Management:

Risk of procurement challenge if Places Leisure do not tender through the Find a Tender Service (FTS formerly OJEU) which will demonstrate best value for the Council and mitigate any procurement challenge.

The unknown risk at this stage are the level of contamination in the ground and the complexity of the build due to the nature of the site. Further ground surveys will need to be conducted to understand the level of contamination and to get a more accurate cost of construction.

Risks are mitigated due to the positive working relationship that Epping Forest District Council and Places Leisure have established. Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool and Gym also provides a model of best practice where the DBOM model worked extremely well resulting in the project being built on time and in budget.

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
 - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
 - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
 - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
 - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
 - Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
 - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

Section 1: Identifying details
Your function, service area and team: Contracts (Leisure and Car Parking)
If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: N/A
Title of policy or decision: Delivery of new Epping Leisure Centre in Bakers Lane, Epping
Officer completing the EqlA: James Warwick Tel: 01992 564350 Email: jwarwick@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Date of completing the assessment: 17/03/21

Section 2: Policy to be analysed	
2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? NO
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): To agree actions to facilitate delivery of new leisure centre in Epping What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)? Agreement to delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Deed of Variation the Contract with Places Leisure, approve funding from existing capital allocation
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? Yes, a new sports facility in the Town of Epping will replace the existing dated Epping Sports Centre at Hemnall Street. Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate? No, the new centre will be operated by Places Leisure under the existing contractual arrangement
2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? Yes, it is estimated that the new Centre will cost £25 Million, however the final figure will be determined following a competitive market tendering exercise
2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?

	Yes, provision of leisure and sports facilities in lined with approved Leisure Strategy and Corporate Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy
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Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified? Existing Epping Sports Centre users are expected to join the new Centre along with new members, the new leisure centre will offer a wide range of facilities and opportunities</p>
3.2	<p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision? Yes, Qualis led on the design and planning application process and as part of that public displays were carried out in St John’s Church Epping. Comments and feedback has been received during the planning consultation. Overall the feedback from public consultation has been positive.</p>
3.3	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary: It may be necessary to engage with immediate neighbours and local businesses once impact of construction traffic is known. A comms plan will be put together to communicate to public and local residents the build programme and the various stages of developments.</p>

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	Some residents might suffer from reduced cognitive abilities and could be easily overwhelmed by literature and publicity	L
Disability	Those with caring responsibilities may find the disruption during construction difficult	L
Gender	There is limited information available to enable an assessment of the impact on this Characteristic.	N/A
Gender reassignment	It may be that they feel uncomfortable to speak with an officer to seek further information or clarification on the service.	L
Marriage/civil partnership	There is limited information available to enable an assessment of the impact on this Characteristic.	N/A
Pregnancy/maternity	There is limited information available to enable an assessment of the impact on this Characteristic.	N/A
Race	Some groups may feel uncomfortable to speak with an officer to seek further information or clarification on the service.	L
Religion/belief	In the case of Religion some groups may feel uncomfortable to speak with an officer to seek further information or clarification on the service.	L
Sexual orientation	There is limited information available to enable an assessment of the impact on this Characteristic.	N/A

Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No	No
			If ' YES ', use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.

Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: James Warwick	Date: 17/03/21
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Signature of person completing the EqIA: Qasim (Kim) Durrani	Date: 17/03/21
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Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-074-2020/21

Date of meeting: 20 April 2021



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Housing & Community Services – Cllr. H Whitbread

Subject: Acceptance of Tenders – Contract 102; Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio-Controlled Door Entry Systems to Council owned properties.

Responsible Officer: Dean Epton (01992 564166).

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That, Openview Security Systems Ltd be awarded a 1-year contract renewable annually for up to a maximum of 4-further years, for the repair, planned maintenance and installation of audio-controlled door entry systems to Council-owned properties in the sum of £1,022,194.64 with an overall weighted price and quality score of 90% being the most economically advantageous tender received; and

(2) That, should it not be possible to enter into contract with Openview Security Systems Ltd, that SCCI Alphatrack Ltd be awarded the contract as the reserve contractor, being the second most economically advantageous tender received, with a Tender Sum of £1,410,280.01; and

(3) That the overall value of the works be limited to the sum included in Housing Revenue Account for maintenance works and the sum within the Capital Programme for the installation and upgrades of audio-controlled door entry systems on an annual basis; and

(4) That, this contract be designated as a serial contract to facilitate the annual adjustment to the tendered rates in accordance with the BCIS ALLCOS Resource Cost Index of All Construction: Repair and Maintenance Work #7419.

Executive Summary:

In order to undertake the repair, planned maintenance and installation of audio-controlled door entry systems to Council-owned properties during the financial year 2021-22 and over the following 4-year period, it was necessary to undertake a procurement exercise based on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) taking cost and quality into account to satisfy the requirements of the Council's Procurement Rules.

The tender sum includes the planned Capital Programme of installing new audio-controlled door entry installations to 26 blocks of flats and upgrading the existing audio-controlled door entry installations to 42 blocks of flats over the next 5-year period.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The existing framework agreement for the repair, planned maintenance and installation of audio-controlled door entry systems to Council-owned properties with the current contractor is nearing the end of its term. Therefore, this is a new contract and the results of the tender exercise needs to be approved in accordance with Councils Procurement Rules. Undertaking a competitive tender exercise is not only a requirement of the Councils Procurement Rules, but there is also a requirement under Section 20 of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 where works are undertaken on communal areas of Council owned and managed blocks of flats.

To ensure the existing audio-controlled door entry systems installed at around 400-blocks are maintained and remain in full operation to ensure the safety and the security of the communal areas of the Councils sheltered housing schemes and general needs blocks of flats.

To ensure suitably accredited specialist contractors are available to provide an emergency response in the event of a failure of the audio-controlled door entry systems installed in the Councils sheltered housing and general needs blocks of flats.

To upgrade existing audio-controlled door entry systems that are installed with old technology such as key based access, obsolete control systems and with access doors that are beyond economic repair. Futureproofing the design and specification for upgrades and new audio-controlled door entry systems include a video ready design which allows the upgrade from audio-control to video with minimal costs, assisted door opening for physically challenged occupiers and a mobile Cloud based system for the management of access key tokens.

The new framework agreement will be let with a high degree of flexibility incorporated in the contract conditions, this will enable Housing and Property Services and Qualis Management to issue Works Orders based on operational requirements to a specialist contractor as and when required.

Other Options for Action:

The main alternative options considered are:

- (1) To re-tender the contract on an annual basis. However, this would be time consuming and inefficient. Re-tendering would not guarantee more competitive tenders.
- (2) To re-tender the works based on price alone. However, this would not necessarily return a more competitive tender and would not identify or quantify a quality commitment from the lowest tenderer.
- (3) To seek quotations for the repair, planned maintenance and installations of audio-controlled door entry systems on an ad-hoc basis by raising individual Works Orders for the work. However, this is very time consuming and is not cost effective as it would not generate the cost savings associated with economies of scale. Also, the volume of the repair and maintenance of existing audio-controlled door entry systems per annum would breach the Council's Procurement Rules C2 (9b) with the works exceeding £25,000 in value during one financial year.

Report:

1. The existing contract for the repair, planned maintenance, new installations and upgrades of audio-controlled door entry systems to Council-owned properties is nearing the end of its term and therefore it is necessary to re-tender the works.

2. An annual budget for Door Entry has been identified within the Capital Programme with £340,000 allocated for 2021-22 and £150,000 allocated in future years for undertaking the planned installation and upgrades of audio-controlled door entry systems. An estimated sum of £40,000.00 is currently allocated within the existing HRA Revenue Account for the repair and maintenance of existing audio-controlled door entry systems and annual expenditure will be managed within existing budgets.
3. A tendering exercise has been undertaken for the Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio-Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26 to Council owned properties. Due to the specialist nature of the work the schedules within the Price Framework incorporated the ad-hoc repairs, the planned maintenance programme and the planned Capital Programme for installations and upgrades of audio-controlled door entry systems.
4. Incorporating the lessons learnt from previous contracts, the Council has undertaken a tender exercise in accordance with the Council's Procurement Rules, based on and assessed in terms of the MEAT with the criteria based on quality and cost. The tenderers' qualitative responses make up a maximum of 40% of the overall evaluation with the tenderers' cost submission representing a maximum of 60%.
5. Tenderers were advised that the qualitative assessment would be based on a possible maximum total score of 40% which is split across a set of weighted quality assessment questions shown in the table below;

Quality Method Statement Questions;	Reference;	Maximum Score;
Management and Resources;	1.1 – 1.3	5%
Installation and Improvements;	2.1 – 2.2	15%
Technology Cost Benefit Assessment;	3.1 – 3.2	20%
Total;.		40%

6. Tenderers were also advised that the Cost Element Submission of the tender would be based on a possible total maximum score of 60% which is split across the 6-Schedules of Rates which make up the Price Framework shown in the table below;

Cost Element Submissions;	Reference;	Maximum Score;
Attendance and Call Out Rates;	01	5%
Routine Repair and Maintenance Rates;	02	10%
Urgent Repair and Maintenance Rates;	03	5%
All-Inclusive Repair and Maintenance Rates;	04	10%
Existing Door Entry System Capital Works Upgrade;	05	15%
Door Entry System Capital Work Installation Programme;	06	15%
Total		60%

7. Tenderers were required to provide individual costs for every schedule of rate item contained in the schedules even if the value of the item is a £0.00 cost. This will ensure a level and transparent tender exercise and that the tenderer has considered and competitively priced every item.
8. The contract, initially for a period of one-year is renewable annually up to a maximum of five-years, subject to the budget allocation within the HRA Revenue Account and the Capital Programme. The contractors benchmarked performance in terms of service delivery and quality of workmanship is also taken into account before the contract renewal.
9. The Interim Assets and Facilities Manager authorised the Contractor Selection Record Sheet for Invitations to Tender to be sent to 5-contractors who are registered on Constructionline in the Access Control Installations and Maintenance category on the 5th January 2021.

It should be noted that only two local contractors Ace Security & Electrical Ltd and ESS Essex Security Services Ltd as defined by Section 5.5(b) Procurement Rules 2021, are registered on Constructionline in workstreams for Access Control Installations and Maintenance. Both contractors were contacted by Operational Assets and Compliance and advised of the tender opportunity, however due to operational reasons Ace Security & Electrical Ltd declined.

10. Invitations to tender were issued by the Interim Assets and Property Manger on the 20th January 2021, to the following 5-contractors who are suitably qualified, registered on Constructionline and capable of carrying out the work;

Contractor;		Constructionline Registration Number;
1.	SCCI Alphatrack Ltd	62614
2.	Classic Security Ltd	31601
3.	Openview Security Systems Ltd	32077
4.	*ESS Essex Security Services Ltd	42246
5.	Clearview Communications Ltd	19772

*Local Contractor.

11. The tenderers were advised that their completed scanned Tender Submission for the Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio-Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26, must be uploaded into the Delta eSourcing Tender-box no later than 12 o'clock noon on Friday 19th February 2021.

During the Invitation to Tender period one contractor due to the challenges of Covid-19 and lockdown which delayed supply chain information requested a short extension of time through Delta eSourcing message centre.

The Interim Assets and Facilities Manager considered the request, and, on the 11th February 2021, an extension of time confirmation was issued to all tenderers through Delta eSourcing message centre confirming the tender box closing date has been extended until 12:00 noon on Friday 26th February 2021.

12. Late during the invitation to tender period on the 12th and the 16th February 2021 Operational Assets and Compliance received emails from ESS Essex Security Services Ltd and Clearview Communications Ltd withdrawing from the tender process.

The emailed withdrawal notifications were received by Operational Assets and Compliance to late in the invitation to tender period to invite substitute contractors and allow sufficient time to produce and submit a competitive and compliant tender return.

13. The tenders were opened by the Procurement and Contract Development Team on the 1st March 2021, through the Delta eSourcing electronic procurement platform with a unique Tender-box opening Access Code; 4F7C8367AF.
14. Invitations to tender were sent to 5-contractors and 2-contractors uploaded the tender return documents into Delta eSourcing Tender-box before the extended return date and time.
15. The results of the tender opening based only on the contractors tendered submission is shown in the table below;

Contractor;		Tender Sum £;	Position;
1.	SCCI Alphatrack Ltd	1,410,280.01	2 nd
2.	Classic Security Ltd	Did not return	
3.	Openview Security Systems Ltd	1,022,194.64	1 st
4.	ESS Essex Security Services Ltd	Withdrawn on the 12 th February	
5.	Clearview Communications Ltd	Withdrawn on the 16 th February	

16. A full Tender Evaluation Report was undertaken by Operational Assets and Compliance on the tenders submitted.
17. The Tender Evaluation Report included a full evaluation and weighted assessment of the tenderers' Quality Assessment Method Statement Questions and a full evaluation and weighted assessment of the tenderers' Cost Element Submission.
18. The tenderers' Quality Assessment Method Statement and Cost Element Submission have been evaluated strictly in accordance with the MEAT criteria referenced in the tender documents.
19. The Tender Evaluation confirms both contractors submitted fully compliant tender returns which included;
- The Price Framework schedule totals copied from the Excel Pricing Template;
 - The Collection Page and the Form of Tender including the information requested on the Settlement of Disputes Adjudication;
 - The Formal Declaration of Offer;
 - The Certificate that the Tender is a Bona Fide Tender;
 - A full Quality Method Statement Submission;
 - System Warranties;
20. The tenderers' Quality Assessment Method Statement Results which were based on a weighted assessment of the tenderers' responses to the Quality Assessment Method

Statement Questions were evaluated by Housing and Property Services - Officers between the 10th – 16th March 2021, the results are shown in the table below;

Quality Assessment Method Statement Question Results;				
Contractor;		Max % Score Available;	Total Weighted Score %;	Cost Element Result;
1	SCCI Alphatrack Ltd	40%	23%	2 nd
2	Classic Security Ltd	Did not return		
3	Openview Security Systems Ltd	40%	31%	1 st
4	ESS Essex Security Services Ltd	Withdrawn on the 12 th February		
5	Clearview Communications Ltd	Withdrawn on the 16 th February		

21. The tenderers' Cost Element Submission evaluated in the Tender Evaluation Report is based on the contractors submitted tender sums of the schedules that make up the Price Framework. The Cost Element Submissions have been priced consistently, in accordance with the tender return instructions and in completed full, no alterations, additions or omissions to the submitted tender sums were required.
22. The tenderers' Cost Element Results were based on a weighted assessment of the tenderers' Cost Element Submission and are shown in the table below;

Cost Element Results;				
Contractor;		Max % Score Available;	Total Weighted Score %;	Cost Element Result;
1	SCCI Alphatrack Ltd	60%	46%	2 nd
2	Classic Security Ltd	Did not return		
3	Openview Security Systems Ltd	60%	59%	1 st
4	ESS Essex Security Services Ltd	Withdrawn on the 12 th February		
5	Clearview Communications Ltd	Withdrawn on the 16 th February		

23. The evaluation shows that Openview Security Systems Ltd submitted the most competitive rates in 5 out of the 6-schedules that make up the Price Framework. In a direct comparison of the percentage difference between the submitted rates of Openview Security Systems Ltd and SCCI Alphatrack Ltd generally on a fully specified tender a maximum percentage difference of up to 20% is what you would expect though competitive tendering.

The evaluation highlighted three schedules contained in the Price Framework where the percentage difference was in excess of 20% and therefore the Tender Evaluation Report sought clarification that Openview Security Systems Ltd were prepared to stand by their submitted rates on the;

- Routine Repair and Maintenance Rates;

- Door Entry System Capital Works Upgrade Rates; and
- Door Entry System Capital Work Installation Programme Rates.

Openview Security Systems Ltd were given the opportunity to review their submitted tender rates and have confirmed that they are prepared to stand by their tendered sum.

24. The weighted percentage scores of the Quality Assessment Method Statement Results and the Cost Element Results achieved by each tenderer are then added together to determine the Overall Tender Evaluation Score.
25. The highest combined weighted percentage scores achieved by the tenderers' Quality Method Statement Assessment Results and their Cost Element Results demonstrate the most economically advantageous tender was received from Openview Security Systems Ltd as shown in the table below,

Overall Tender Results;					
Contractor;		Quality Assessment Total Weighted Score;	Cost Element Total Weighted Score;	Cost and Quality Total Score;	Overall Position;
1	SCCI Alphatrack Ltd	23%	46%	69%	2 nd
2	Classic Security Ltd	Did not return			
3	Openview Security Systems Ltd	31%	59%	90%	1 st
4	ESS Essex Security Services Ltd	Withdrawn on the 12 th February			
5	Clearview Communications Ltd	Withdrawn on the 16 th February			

26. The contractors Overall Positions are;
- Openview Security Systems Ltd in overall position 1;
 - SCCI Alphatrack Ltd in overall position 2;
27. It is therefore recommended that Openview Security Systems Ltd, be awarded the contract for the Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio-Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26, to Council-owned properties within Epping Forest District with annual expenditure limited to the budget included in the Capital Programme for Door Entry and the HRA Revenue Account for ad-hoc repairs and maintenance, for up to a maximum of 5-years in the sum of £1,022,194.64 with an overall weighted price and quality percentage score of 90%.
28. A review of the Constructionline Supplier Report has been undertaken on Openview Security Systems Ltd, which includes a financial credit check. The outcome revealed that in the latest set of financial accounts Openview Security Systems Ltd had a turnover of £54,566.386. A further Constructionline Supplier Report will be undertaken on Openview Security Systems Ltd prior to the contract award.
29. In order to mitigate the risk of the Council not being able to enter into a contract with Openview Security Systems Ltd for whatever reason or if in the future they cease trading or perform poorly, it is recommended that SCCI Alphatrack Ltd, be selected as the Council's Reserve Tenderer for the Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio-Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26 to Council owned properties. If necessary, and

subject to tender and financial qualification checks SCCI Alphatrack Ltd, the Council's Reserve Tenderer be awarded an annual contract for up to five-years, being the second most economically advantageous tender received, with Overall Tender Results of 69%.

30. It should be noted that when the contract is extended beyond the first year, all tendered schedule of rate items are to be increased annually in accordance with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) BCIS ALLCOS Resource Cost Index of All Construction: All Repair and Maintenance Work #7419.

Resource Implications:

The budget for Door Entry Installations and Upgrades currently allocated within the existing Capital Programme 2021-22 is £340,000. Expenditure will be limited to the existing Door Entry budget within Capital Programme 2021-22 and the following 4-year period.

Revenue Expenditure on the repair and maintenance of door entry systems is estimated at £40,000.00 per annum for next five years the sum identified within the Housing Revenue Account.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The estimated annual expenditure of £3500,000 for the new Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26 framework contract is below that require an OJEU Procurement Exercise. Therefore, this tender complies with the requirements as set out in the Council's Procurement Rules

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

To maintain and improve the safety and security of the communal areas at the Councils sheltered housing units and general needs blocks of flats within the Epping Forest District.

Consultation Undertaken:

Notice of Intention under Regulation 5 (1) of Schedule 1 of The Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003.

Notice of intention to enter into a long-term agreement. Pre-tender consultation (Section 20 notice no.1) was undertaken with the leaseholders of the blocks of flats.

Background Papers:

A Tender Evaluation Report for Contract 102 - Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26 to Council-owned properties.

Risk Management:

The new Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio Controlled Door Entry Systems 2021-26 framework contract is being let based on a 1-year term, and renewable for up to a maximum of 5-years.

The contract will be let with a high degree of flexibility incorporated in the contract conditions to enable Property and Housing Services and Qualis Management to issue Works Orders based on Operational requirements as and when required.

A review of the Constructionline Supplier Report has been undertaken on the current Gold Constructionline Membership of Openview Security Systems Ltd with a Profile Status listed as;

- Current Level GOLD – Verified
- Company Details – Verified
- Financial and Insurance Information - Verified
- Corporate and Professional Standing - Verified
- Enhanced Health and Safety - Verified
- Health and Safety – Verified
- Equal Opportunity and Diversity - Verified
- Environmental Management - Verified
- Quality Management - Verified
- Building Information Modelling (BIM) - Verified
- Corporate and Social Responsibility - Verified
- Supplementary Questions - Verified

A further review of the Supplier Report will be undertaken prior to the contract award.

Annual contract extensions are subject to a performance and quality review.

As these works are issued under individual Works Orders and the contractors' invoices are not settled until the works have been completed and inspected by Council Officers, these works are therefore considered to represent a low financial risk to the Council.

Due Regard Record

This page shows **which groups of people are affected** by the subject of this report. It sets out **how they are affected** and how any **unlawful discrimination** they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how **access to the service(s)** subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to **understand each other better** as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

A Housing Repairs Service and Asset Management Customer Impact Assessment has been carried out for all responsive repairs and planned maintenance works, which includes works to Council properties. This includes identifying housing need, identifying equality related evidence and monitoring customer satisfaction.

The priority for the planned Capital Programme of new installations of audio-controlled door entry systems to 26 blocks of flats and upgrading existing installations to 42 blocks of flats over the next 5-year period is based on the age and condition of the system rather than the individual characteristics of the occupants.

The Council must undertake repairs, planned maintenance and audio-controlled door entry system installations and upgrades to maintain and improve the safety and security of the communal areas to the Councils' sheltered housing and general needs blocks of flats. Repairs and planned maintenance works are required to meet the legislative requirements that are imposed on all landlords and to maintain the safety of existing audio-controlled door entry systems.

All contractors are required to produce an Equality and Diversity Policy, which is assessed independently as part of the vetting process for the Gold Constructionline Membership of Openview Security Systems Ltd as part of the tender evaluation.

The Equality Impact Assessment produced by Operational Assets and Compliance have been reviewed by the Council as part of this tender exercise and have been found to be acceptable.

The Equality Impact Assessment is available as a background document.

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
 - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
 - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
 - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
 - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
 - Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
 - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

Section 1: Identifying details

Your function, service area and team: Housing and Property Services.

If you are submitting this EqlA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team:

Title of policy or decision: Acceptance of a Contract 102 - Repair, Maintenance and Installation of Audio-Controlled Door Entry Systems to Council owned properties.

Officer completing the EqlA: Tel: Haydn Thorpe X4162
Email: hthorpe@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Date of completing the assessment: 16th March 2021.

Section 2: Policy to be analysed

2.1	<p>Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project?</p> <p>This is referenced in an existing policy - Housing Repairs and Maintenance (incorporating Council house-building programme and work to Void Properties).</p>
2.2	<p>Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision):</p> <p>EFDC undertakes responsive repairs to all its 6,500 Council homes and undertakes specialist door entry repairs and maintenance works to around 400 blocks of flats around the district. EFDC has a planned Capital Programme of new installations of audio-controlled door entry installations to 26 blocks of flats and upgrading existing installations to 42 blocks of flats over the next 5-year period.</p> <p>What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)?</p> <p>For the current specialist contractor to continue with the repairs, planned maintenance, installation and upgrades to EFDC audio-controlled door entry systems over the next 5-years.</p>
2.3	<p>Does or will the policy or decision affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• service users• employees• the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? <p>Yes – it will provide safe and secure homes for Council tenants.</p> <p>Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate?</p> <p>No</p>

2.4	<p>Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources?</p> <p>No</p>
2.5	<p>Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?</p> <p>The Councils Procurement Rules and sections of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 Regulation 5 (1) of Schedule 1 of The Service Charges (Consultation Requirements) (England) Regulations 2003 dictates the procedures the Council needs to follow concerning the tender process and award of contract.</p> <p>The Council must undertake repairs, planned maintenance and audio-controlled door entry system installations and upgrades to maintain and improve the safety and security of the communal areas to the Councils' sheltered housing and general needs blocks of flats. Repairs and planned maintenance works are required to meet the legislative requirements that are imposed on all landlords and to maintain the safety of existing audio-controlled door entry systems.</p> <p>Well maintained Council properties are essential to meet the legislative requirements that are imposed on all landlords and these works are essential to ensure safe and secure communal areas.</p>

Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified?</p> <p>The works are undertaken on Council owned sheltered schemes and general needs blocks of flats will not affect individual groups of the population. Priority for works is based on the lack off or condition of the audio-controlled door entry system rather than the individual characteristics of the occupants.</p>
3.2	<p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p> <p>Not required.</p>
3.3	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:</p> <p>Community engagement is not required as the work is undertaken within Council owned properties.</p>

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	Positive; The work will have a positive effect on all of the identified equality groups as both the tenants and visitors to the blocks will benefit from well maintained, safe and secure communal areas.	M
Disability		M
Gender		M
Gender reassignment		M
Marriage/civil partnership		M
Pregnancy/maternity		M
Race		M
Religion/belief		M
Sexual orientation		M

Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' YES ', use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.

Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Stuart Mitchell

Date: 1 April 2020

Signature of person completing the EqlA: Haydn Thorpe

Date: 1 April 2020

Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqlA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqlA for your records. If this EqlA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-075-2020/21

Date of meeting: 20 April 2021



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Planning and Sustainability – Cllr N Bedford

Subject: Green Infrastructure Strategy

Responsible Officer: Nigel Richardson (01992 564110)

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To agree the Green Infrastructure Strategy (attached at Appendix 1) as a material planning consideration for the preparation of Strategic Masterplans, Concept Frameworks, pre-application advice, assessing planning applications and any other development management and implementation related purposes within the District; for submission to the Local Plan Inspector; and used to inform the Council's update to the Habitats Regulations Assessment to support the emerging Local Plan.**
- (2) To agree that contributions will be sought from residential developments in the parishes of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Theydon Bois towards site specific projects to mitigate the impact of recreational pressure on Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation in the sum of £716 per dwelling (see paragraph 24)**
- (3) To agree the Green Infrastructure Strategy as a framework for guiding partnership working and investment in green and blue infrastructure as part of the Council's response to the Climate Emergency.**
- (4) To agree that the Planning Services Director, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder be authorised to make minor amendments to the Green Infrastructure Strategy, including any mapping and links and the addition of a glossary, prior to publication.**

This report, recommendation and Green Infrastructure Strategy (Appendix 1) was considered and approved by Stronger Place Select Committee at their meeting held on 29 March 2021 without modification.

Executive Summary:

The Council's emerging Local Plan sets out policies in relation to the provision and enhancement of Green and Blue Infrastructure, the protection of the District's ecological assets and achieving high quality design. To support these policies and address the requirement to provide suitable avoidance or mitigation measures to manage any potential impacts of growth on protected sites, including the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Council

has developed a Green Infrastructure Strategy ('the Strategy'). The Strategy will ensure that high quality Green and Blue Infrastructure, including the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and Infrastructure Enhancement Projects, is delivered alongside the growth proposed in the District as part of the emerging Local Plan.

This report sets out the changes proposed to be made to the draft Green Infrastructure Strategy that was agreed by Cabinet for the purposes of consultation on 15 April 2020. The consultation was undertaken in June and July 2020. The Strategy proposed for adoption is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

- To give the Strategy planning weight by endorsing it as a material consideration in the planning process This will ensure that development proposals will achieve the Council's ambitions for the provision of Green and Blue Infrastructure, and that clear parameters are established for the development of masterplans and concept frameworks, the provision of pre-application advice, the assessment of planning applications and any other development management and implementation related purposes within the District.
- To comply with the Council's general obligations as a competent authority under the Habitats Directive [article 6(3)] and the Species and Habitats Regulations 2018 [Regulation 9(1)].
- To respond to the Local Plan Inspector's Advice dated 2 August 2019 (ED98) following the hearing sessions of the Local Plan examination in relation to mitigating the effects of recreational pressure upon the Epping Forest SAC.

Other Options for Action:

Not to agree the Strategy and endorse it as a material consideration in the planning process would mean that there would be no mechanism to support the delivery of development proposals and achieve the vision and objectives set out in the Council's emerging Local Plan, or the application of the policies within it. In addition, there would be no overarching framework in place to achieve the implementation of important initiatives intended to support the Council's response to the Climate Crisis.

Background Report:

1. The Council's emerging Local Plan promotes a joined up, collaborative and proactive approach to the planning and implementation of development across Epping Forest District. In particular the approach to masterplanning and bringing forward strategic site allocations will ensure that development proposals are brought forward in a coordinated and coherent way in accordance with high quality place making principles (see Cabinet report of 15 June 2017 which agreed the approach to the production of Strategic Masterplans and Concept Frameworks EB107).
2. As indicated in the Cabinet Report on Delivering Infrastructure in the District: Developer Contributions Strategy (11 July 2019 EB145 and EB145A) the delivery and/or enhancement of Green and blue Infrastructure will be expected as part of development proposals in accordance with the guidance contained in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (EB1101A & EB1119) and Open Space Strategy (EB703).
3. In parallel to these requirements to support the policies in the emerging Local Plan, the Council has legal obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) ("the Habitats Regulations") as a 'competent authority'

under Regulation 63. This requires the Council to ensure that plans and projects do not have an adverse effect on the integrity of internationally important ecological sites, including the Epping Forest SAC.

4. The responsibility for the development of an approach to avoid or mitigate any harm to the Epping Forest SAC arising from recreational pressure lies with the Council as the competent authority. On 18 October 2018 the Cabinet agreed an interim approach to managing recreational pressure on the Epping Forest SAC to mitigate any adverse effects on its integrity as a result of recreational pressures arising from new residential development. The interim approach incorporated Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) measures. Other measures are also required to ensure that a comprehensive approach is taken by the Council in order to demonstrate that planned growth within the District will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Epping Forest SAC. This includes the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) as part of a number of proposed strategic sites, together with the identification of Infrastructure Enhancement Projects, focused in the Debden, Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Theydon Bois areas of the District in order to encourage residents to use alternative places for recreation. The Strategy has responded to this requirement by taking an integrated approach to the design and delivery of green and blue infrastructure provision in the District. The Strategy will therefore form the Council's response to Action 6 of the Local Plan Inspector's advice note of 2 August 2019 which asks the Council to provide clear evidence that the necessary SANG can be delivered over the Plan period, including proposals for SANG required in the first five years of the Plan itself and to prepare any Main Modifications needed to ensure that all site specific SAMM or SANG requirements are reflected in the Plan.
5. The production of the Strategy is supported by:
 - National Planning Policy and Guidance which encourages local planning authorities to take a strategic approach to the provision and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure within local plans and implementing planning decisions through an evidenced based approach;
 - The provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (reflecting the emerging mandate in the government's Environment Bill);
 - Ensures the future provision of green and blue infrastructure assets to support the needs of new and existing communities, and that the District's existing natural assets are managed in a coherent and sensitive way;
 - Responds to the climate change emergency, as agreed by the Council in September 2019, and supports healthy lifestyles through active travel and enhanced recreational opportunities;
 - Provides a framework for the long-term sustainable management and maintenance of green and blue infrastructure by identifying potential stewardship models;
 - Provides information on the costs for securing delivery and management through the planning process and supports applications for external funding; and
 - Provides a delivery timeline and targets for the provision of green infrastructure over the course of the Local Plan period (up to 2033).

Vision

6. The Council's overarching vision for the Green Infrastructure Strategy is:

'By 2033 a well-connected network of Green and Blue Infrastructure will have been created and secured for the future to ensure that both existing and new communities are supported by high-quality, well-maintained multi-functional spaces which are safe and sociable, support peoples' health and wellbeing and are accessible by all.

The District's important ecological, natural heritage and landscape assets will have been protected and enhanced and links to the wider area will have been strengthened. Net gains in carbon capture and biodiversity will have been achieved and a design-led approach to the provision and integration of Green and Blue Infrastructure will have been at the heart of creating the District's new places.'

7. The Strategy incorporates 'Green Infrastructure' i.e. a network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features such as parks, public open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, and allotments, and 'Blue Infrastructure', which includes natural features such as rivers, streams and ponds, semi-natural features such as sustainable drainage systems, bio swales and canals, and other engineering features such as dams, weirs and culverts.

8. There is a focus on the role of strategic developments to deliver new, and enhance existing, green and blue infrastructure assets, bring new and existing communities together, and connect to the countryside. However, the Strategy also identifies the contribution that smaller developments can make, links with other Council and partners projects, and provides a framework against which to seek funding opportunities as and when they arise.

9. The Strategy seeks to:

- Raise awareness of and support for the delivery of high quality and well-managed green and blue infrastructure in the District;
- Set the Council's expectations for landscape-led masterplanning;
- Support the development of a local network of spaces and routes to link existing communities with proposed site allocations;
- Set out the proposed provision of measures to avoid or mitigate the potential impacts of growth on protected sites, including the Epping Forest SAC, and;
- Sets out requirements for high quality landscape-led design.

The Purpose of the Strategy

10. The principle purpose of the strategy is to act as a practical guide in the design, development management and implementation processes to ensure the creation of a sustainable network of high-quality, multifunctional spaces that provide greater connections between existing and new communities, other amenity spaces and the local countryside.

11. There is a focus on design, in particular landscape-led design in masterplanning, to achieve high quality provision to maximise social, environmental and economic value, while also establishing a framework for community engagement and setting out tangible

steps to successful delivery.

12. The Strategy reflects and recognises the wealth of the District's existing green and blue infrastructure assets. It seeks to make the most of these existing assets to maximise their functionality and create a connected network of spaces which frame sustainable, sociable and healthy communities.
13. The Council will work with a range of partners including with local communities, farmers, large landowners, the Conservators of Epping Forest, Natural England, Essex County Council and through cross boundary initiatives such as the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and the Green Arc (One Partnership) to improve green and blue infrastructure in the District.
14. The design of new development must be, wherever appropriate, landscape led and cross disciplinary and should inform a proposal from its initial scoping through to detailed design and subsequent submission of a planning application. It is important that this design process is iterative involving Council officers, stakeholders; and that, where appropriate, it is informed by use of the Council's Quality Review Panel.

Proposed Approach

15. The proposed approach to the Strategy (attached at Appendix 1) responds to the need to design and deliver different types and scales of green and blue infrastructure in the District, and different intended audiences or delivery partners for these green and blue spaces. The Strategy has a focus on integrated green and blue infrastructure in the context of District-wide and community projects, and within new developments and strategic sites.
16. The Strategy sets out clear requirements for the design of development to be landscape led and to be brought forward across all green and blue infrastructure typologies, as well as identifying local projects. Identified projects for the provision of green and blue infrastructure will require long term management and maintenance arrangements to be put in place as appropriate, with the intention for these to be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which is a 'live' document that will be monitored and updated regularly. An extract from the current IDP showing related projects is attached at Appendix 3.

Consultation

17. The Council undertook initial informal engagement prior to the development of the draft Strategy which was published for formal consultation for a six-week period from 4 June 2020 - 16 July 2020. The consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement and included the following approaches:
 - The creation of a webpage with an accessible format draft document, a short survey, FAQs page, email address and postal address for comments, and link to book phone call with officers;
 - A telephone surgery was available for the general public to discuss the strategy with officers;
 - An online Q&A session with the Epping Forest SAC Oversight Group, which includes neighbouring authorities;
 - Internal workshops and briefings across EFDC Service Departments via the Local

Plan Implementation Forum and Stronger Place Leadership Group.

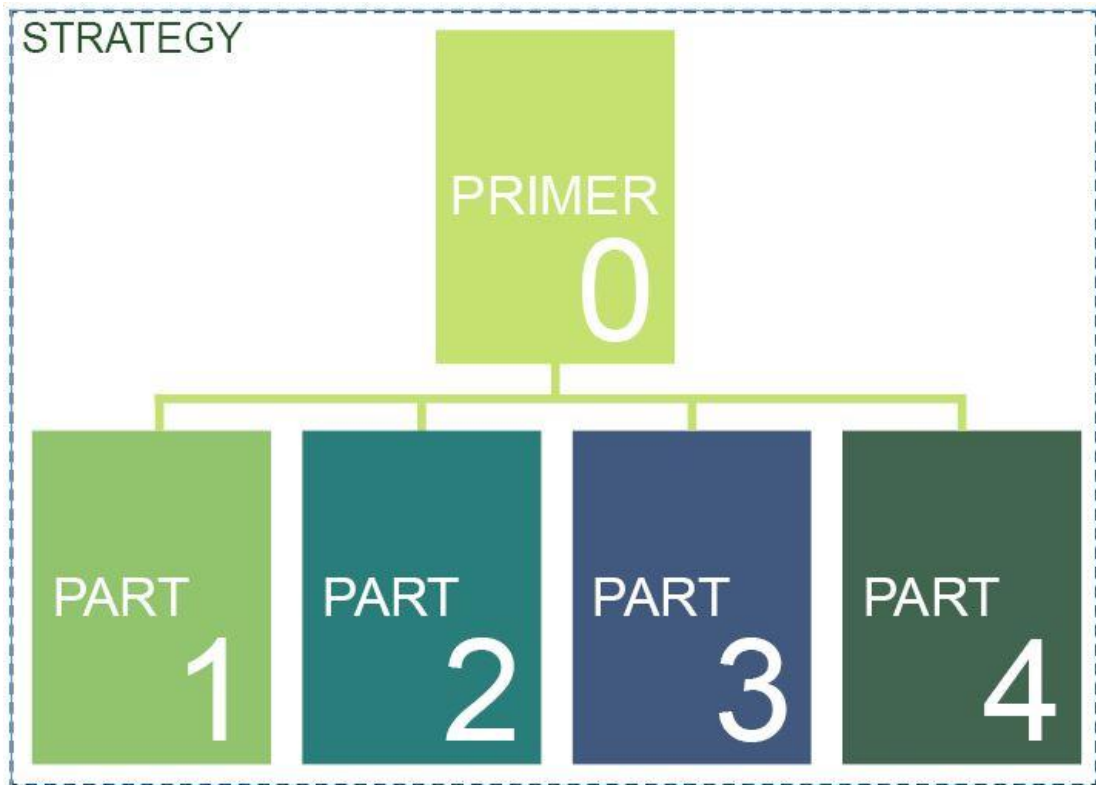
- An online EFDC Developer Forum workshop/Q&A session with 35 developers and agents in attendance;
 - An online workshop/Q&A session with District, Town and Parish Councillors
 - An online EFDC Youth Council workshop/Q&A session with 23 young people aged between 12-17 years.
18. The consultation took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, consequently communications and advertising of online events and workshops and telephone surgeries was undertaken through both digital and non-digital means, such as internal and external magazine and newsletters, posters, and social media.
19. The Council received comments from 175 respondents, through the survey and emailed/posted comments, and engaged with over 90 people in online events workshops and telephone surgeries. A schedule of the representations received (over 900) together with the officers proposed response is attached at Appendix 2. As there were a large number of comments which related specifically to Epping Forest SAC matters, and which had similar themes, a separate overarching response has been provided at Appendix 6.
20. The draft Strategy was also reviewed twice by independent experts with planning and strategic landscaping knowledge through the Council's Quality Review Panel (QRP), in March 2020 and September 2020 (see QRP reports attached at Appendix 4 and 5).
21. The comments received in response to the consultation (see Appendix 2 and 6) can be broadly categorised into the following themes:
- Issues around legibility and accessibility of Strategy, including clarity needed on the Vision and Objectives of the Strategy, with more specific local emphasis, who the Strategy is intended to be used by and how/when objectives will be actioned.
 - More evidenced approach to demonstrating that planned development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Epping Forest SAC, requests for more site specific SANG guidance, including specific quantum requirements, and mechanisms for implementation and funding. SAMMS process to be recognised and included in Strategy and the need to include site specific projects to avoid or mitigate an adverse effect as a result of recreational pressure on the Epping Forest SAC
 - Additional information on environmental net gain, climate crisis and blue infrastructure would be beneficial, and how the Strategy ties into other strategies, neighbouring areas and partnerships on these and other aspects.
 - Clearer role for monitoring and management of Green and Blue Infrastructure outcomes and spaces.
 - Comments relating to specific projects and locations (District-wide, community, local and strategic sites).
 - Of the 121 surveys completed:
 - 91.7% of respondents would like to be kept informed about the work on green and blue infrastructure (5.8% would not, 2.5% did not answer this question).

- 31.4% agreed that the consultation draft of the strategy included all of the GI assets within the District and assessed them correctly in Section 2 (31.4% disagreed, and 37.2% did not answer this question)
- 33.9% of respondents agreed with the Vision and Objectives, (24% disagreed, 42.1% did not answer this question).
- 39.7% of respondents agreed with the multi-functional approach to green infrastructure (23.1% disagreed, 37.2% did not answer the question) and 33% of respondents agreed that the right themes had been identified in the Strategy (20.7% disagreed, 46.3% did not answer this question).

Revisions for Final Green Infrastructure Strategy

22. Key updates and changes to the strategy, to respond to the consultation comments, include:

- Restructuring of the Strategy. This was undertaken in order to respond to comments raised through the consultation and from the Quality Review Panel. This has resulted in some restructuring of the draft Strategy that was published for consultation. Consequently, whilst certain elements have been moved, the key components of the draft Strategy have not changed. The Strategy now consists of five parts as summarised below:
 - Primer: Introducing Green and Blue Infrastructure
 - Part 1: Implementation – Enhancing Our Existing Network (*focus for community, Town and Parish Councils, authority officers*)
 - Part 2: Implementation – Landscape Led Design (*focus for planning applicants, designers and authority officers*)
 - Part 3: Implementation – Strategic Allocations and Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) (*focus for strategic site developers, designers, authority officers and policy makers*)
 - Part 4: Implementation – Infrastructure Enhancement Projects (*focus on projects in Debden, Loughton, Theydon Bois and Buckhurst Hill to mitigate the effects of development on the Epping Forest SAC*).



- The Primer is to be read first, to familiarise the reader with the purpose, District context and vision and objectives of the Strategy. The different parts of the strategy (1, 2, 3 and 4) then each have a particular focus, which may be more relevant to different audiences, depending on where their interest lies.
 - Providing District-focused key messages upfront in the Primer document.
 - Language and appearance of Strategy made clearer throughout, focussed on the intended audiences for each Part and use of plain English to enable accessibility.
 - Further information provided on stewardship and funding mechanisms for green and blue infrastructure projects in Parts 1 and 2, including for community-focused projects
 - Provision of a delivery programme aligned with the Local Plan housing trajectory and potential smaller community projects to show when and how the green infrastructure in the District will be delivered up to 2033.
 - Clear reference to, and monitoring/ assessing of, key objectives of the Strategy (landscape-led design, biodiversity, provision of multifunctional and high-quality spaces), through the draft EFDC and HGGT Sustainability Guidance and Checklists documents within their green and blue infrastructure pages and other sections.
 - Key changes in relation to Epping Forest SAC matters in Part 3 following ongoing discussion with Natural England and the Conservators of Epping Forest and a new Part 4 providing guidance on specific infrastructure projects required to be delivered in order to mitigate the impacts on recreational pressure on Epping Forest SAC
23. The final Strategy has sought to address the issues raised in the consultation including by key partners and stakeholders, to ensure that a robust, measurable and clear Strategy has been produced, with a number of action points to carry forward to continue

this important work of designing and delivering green and blue infrastructure in the District.

24. Part 4 has introduced site specific infrastructure projects that are required to be delivered in order to avoid or mitigate an adverse effect on the integrity of the Epping Forest SAC as a result of recreational pressure. This includes two infrastructure projects that are intended to address the recreational impact of growth anticipated in Loughton/Debden, Theydon Bois and Buckhurst Hill – namely improvements to Roding Valley Recreation Ground and improved links to the Theydon Bois Wood. The update to the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan in September 2020 (EB1118) sets out the need to upgrade the Roding Valley Recreational Ground, to improve signage to the Roding Valley area and Woodland Trust site in Theydon Bois and improve the play areas (see references LOU 28, 29 and 31). The costs of these two projects were not previously identified but implementation and maintenance of them is now included at an overall cost of £428.915. Based on the 599 dwellings proposed for allocation in the emerging Local Plan within the parishes of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Theydon Bois (having taken account of the Inspector's advice note of 2 August 2019 ED98) the cost per dwelling is calculated at £716 per dwelling.
25. Next steps include: ongoing work with strategic site developers and planning applicants to ensure that landscape-led design, as set out, is being achieved; consideration of green and blue infrastructure aspects of design coding for strategic masterplan and concept framework sites; taking forward the design and delivery of the Infrastructure Enhancement Projects; potential for engaging communities on local green and blue infrastructure projects through the setting up of cross-service digital platforms; and ensuring that the Strategy is understood and disseminated to key Service areas and officers within the Council.

Resource Implications:

The work to support the Strategy as a supporting document to the emerging Local Plan is covered by existing budgets.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council has legal obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) ("the Habitats Regulations") as a 'competent authority' under Regulation 63. This requires the Council to assess the implications of plans and projects on internationally important ecological sites, including the Epping Forest SAC, and develop any approaches necessary to avoid or mitigate any adverse effect on the integrity of such sites.

The Strategy has been developed in the context of Government Planning Policy and Guidance.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The delivery of the Strategy will contribute to the Council's safer, cleaner, greener objectives by planning for sustainable development.

Consultation Undertaken:

Informal engagement with statutory consultees including Natural England and Conservators of Epping Forest, Cooperation for Sustainable Development Officer and Member Boards, Leadership Team and Local Plan Officer Working Group was undertaken.

A six-week formal period of public consultation was undertaken in June-July 2020, as set out above in paragraphs 18-24.

Background Papers:

Cabinet Report C-035-2019/20 Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy 15 April 2020 (EB149)

Inspector's advice note dated 2 August 2019 (EB98)

Cabinet report C-001-2017/18 Local Plan Implementation 15 June 2017 (EB107)

Cabinet report C-001-2018/19 Interim Approach to Managing Recreational Pressures on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation 18 October 2018 (EB143)

Cabinet report C-007-2018/19 Delivering Infrastructure in the District: Developer Contributions Strategy 11 July 2019 (EB145)

Open Space Strategy 2017 (EB703)

Landscape Character Assessment 2010 (EB709)

Epping Forest Visitor Surveys 2017 (EB715) and 2019 (EB716)

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (EB1101A 2017 & EB1118 2020)

Risk Management:

If the Council does not demonstrate that it is taking a pro-active approach to developing and implementing an approach to managing the effects of recreational pressure and air quality arising from development on the Epping Forest SAC there is a risk that the emerging Local Plan will be found 'unsound' which would have adverse social, environmental and economic consequences for the District.

Section 1: Identifying details
Your function, service area and team: Planning Service
If you are submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: N/A
Title of policy or decision: Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy
Officer completing the EqIA: Alison Blom-Cooper Email: ablomcooper@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Date of completing the assessment: 4 January 2021

Section 2: Policy to be analysed	
2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? No
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): <i>The report is to provide the justification, aims and objectives for a Green Infrastructure Strategy to support development management and implementation decisions.</i> What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)? <i>To ensure the Strategy is adopted as a material planning consideration</i>
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? <i>The report provides the background to the Green Infrastructure Strategy which has been consulted on in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement – once adopted it will be support policies in the emerging Local Plan in relation to Green and Blue Infrastructure, the protection of ecological assets and high-quality design and will be a material consideration in the development management and implementation process.</i>
2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? <i>No – the work is covered by the Local Plan budget.</i>
2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes?

The work being undertaken is required to support policies in the emerging Local Plan in relation to Green and Blue Infrastructure, the protection of ecological assets and high-quality design and to comply with Habitat Regulations. The Strategy will inform development management and implementation processes to ensure delivery of high-quality Green and Blue Infrastructure alongside proposed growth in the District.

Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified?</p> <p><i>The current position affects the District as a whole.</i></p>
3.2	<p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision?</p> <p>The Council has consulted stakeholders, including Natural England, on the form and content of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. The approach to the strategy has been presented to town and parish councillors, developers, landowners and conservators with a workshop held with council members to consider the issues and opportunities for green infrastructure provision across masterplan areas in the District. It was the subject of a 6 week consultation in June/July 2020 and all comments have been recorded and taken into account when finalising the Strategy.</p>
3.3	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary:</p> <p><i>The Council has sought to keep communities informed by providing updated information on the Council's website.</i></p>

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	None	N/A
Disability	None	N/A
Gender	None	N/A
Gender reassignment	None	N/A
Marriage/civil partnership	None	N/A
Pregnancy/maternity	None	N/A
Race	None	N/A
Religion/belief	None	N/A
Sexual orientation	None	N/A

Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqlA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	✓ No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	If ' YES ', use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

No actual or likely adverse impacts have come to light.

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.

Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service: Nigel Richardson

Date: 4 January 2021

Signature of person completing the EqlA: Alison Blom-Cooper

Date: 4 January 2021

Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqlA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqlA for your records. If this EqlA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-076-2020/21

Date of meeting: 20 April 2021



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Planning & Sustainability – Cllr. N Bedford

Subject: Draft Climate Change Action Plan

Responsible Officer: Nick Dawe (01992 562541).

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To agree that the Draft Climate Change Action Plan be approved for public consultation for a six-week period in June 2021; and

(2) To agree that the Planning Services Director, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder be authorised to make minor amendments to the Draft Climate Change Action Plan.

Executive Summary:

The draft Climate Change Action Plan states the steps to be taken to deliver on the Climate Emergency that was declared on 19 September 2019 with the motion to do everything within the Council's power to make Epping Forest District Council area carbon neutral by 2030. The plan aligns with the corporate objectives of keeping the district moving sustainably and enabling residents to access new opportunities for employment, and to reduce the carbon footprint across the district and within our council. There are also links to the environmental and sustainable travel Policies T1, DM 2 and DM15-22 in the Emerging Local Plan.

This report provides members with a summary of the objectives and purpose of the Climate Change Action Plan. The intention is that following public consultation and any updates arising that, the final action plan will return to Cabinet to endorse adoption of the plan.

For context, human activities have already caused global temperatures to rise by 1°C from pre-industrial levels. The IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in October 2018, describes the impacts that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared to a 1.5°C rise. These impacts include higher average temperatures and more extreme weather events such as droughts, flooding, heat waves and storms. A 1.5°C may still be possible but ambitious and coordinated action across all elements of society is required for this to be achieved.

The Climate Change Action Plan examines the main sources of carbon emissions both within the Council's own operations and across the District. It outlines direct action the Council are taking to reduce emissions of its own activities. As well as steps that can be taken to facilitate and influence emissions reductions in the wider District, enabling the area to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Reaching this target will be a considerable task involving collaboration and engagement from staff, residents, businesses, suppliers, and partners, along with policy support from the UK Government. The plan will be regularly updated to account for further developments in national legislation, regulation, technology, and policy. Where activities and monitoring are to be confirmed these will be updated following consultation feedback.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure that members are kept up to date on the progress of the draft Climate Change Action Plan

Other Options for Action:

Not to agree the draft Climate Change Action Plan can be published for a 6-week consultation, which would mean that a delay in providing a plan to address the declared Climate Emergency.

Report:

1. The draft Climate Change Action Plan states the steps that will be taken to deliver on the Climate Emergency that was declared on 19 September 2019 and included a motion to do everything within the Council's power to make Epping Forest District Council area carbon neutral by 2030. The plan aligns with the corporate objectives of keeping the district moving sustainably and enabling residents to access new opportunities for employment, and to reduce the carbon footprint across the district and within our council. There are also links to Policies T1, DM 2 and DM15-22 in the Emerging Local Plan.
2. Climate change action requires a whole organisation approach therefore development of the Climate Change Action Plan has involved officer input from many different service areas across the council. The action plan reflects this by looking at several themes, the initial Council Operations section focuses on the Council's own emissions from buildings, business practices and staff travel. The subsequent themes examine emissions from travel, buildings and waste in the wider District. Actions to address the related themes of air quality, natural greenspace and climate change mitigation are then explored.
3. The scope of the plan is split into the Council Operations and the wider District. This is to acknowledge the level of control that can be exerted over the emissions within each boundary. More direct action can be taken to address emissions of the Council however in the wider District the Council's role will be to facilitate the reduction either through direct initiatives, partnerships, using statutory powers or by influencing behaviour change.
4. The scope of the Council's operations are to include Qualis as a fully owned subsidiary of Epping Forest District Council. The Council will work closely with Qualis representatives to collate the necessary emissions data and to set clear boundaries to avoid double counting of emissions.

5. To become a carbon neutral District is a challenging task and this will require communities and businesses to also take responsibility for their own significant emissions reductions. It will also require a large shift in behaviour change from society to change the way we consume and travel. Changes in national policy and financial intervention from the UK government, as well as advances in technology and decarbonisation of the national grid will be key to enable this.

Objectives

6. The principle objective of the Climate Change Action Plan is to demonstrate actions being taken by Epping Forest District Council to deliver on the pledge to do everything within our power to be carbon neutral by 2030 and address the declaration of the Climate Emergency. The document focuses on the identification of carbon emissions and the actions to reduce them both within the Council and across the wider District area.
7. Within this objective the plan also looks to highlight existing policy, strategy and initiatives within the Council that aim to reduce carbon emissions from our own service provisions, new development, and through the provision of more sustainable travel options. It also captures the Councils ambition to provide a sustainable network of high-quality, multifunctional green spaces that will compliment emissions reduction by giving an opportunity to capture carbon, increase biodiversity and improve air quality.
8. The largest source of emissions in the District is from on-road travel both from the local network and from the national network, M11 and M25. A comprehensive section of the plan therefore looks to increase the share of journeys made by sustainable means. Actions in this area look to increase active travel, address public transport provision, reduce the need to travel and facilitate conversion to electric vehicles.
9. The Council will work with partners at all scales including with local communities, farmers, large landowners, the Conservators of Epping Forest, Essex County Council and through cross boundary initiatives such as the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and the Green Arc Partnership to improve the sustainability of activities across the area and encourage further climate action to both meet our climate targets and protect the Epping Forest SAC.
10. It is important to recognise the co-benefits that climate action is known to deliver such as valuable social and economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings, market opportunities and health benefits. These are likely to improve the standard of living and promote the notion of making Epping Forest District a good place to live, work and visit.
11. Identified actions within each theme of the plan will require long term management, the portfolio holder for each action is to be specified to give continued accountability through to 2030. The action plan will be regularly updated to capture further developments within the Councils service provision and as further data is gathered on the state of emissions. Revisions will also account for developments in national legislation, regulation, technology and policy. Where activities and monitoring are to be confirmed these will be updated following consultation feedback.
12. The intention is for the Climate Change Action Plan to be the subject of public consultation prior to adoption by the Council. Following public consultation and any

updates arising, the final action plan will return to Cabinet to endorse adoption of the plan, which will show how the Council is taking steps to address the Climate Emergency.

Programme for consultation

13. Early engagement on the Climate Change Action Plan has taken place with officers from a variety of service areas including planning, housing, community, countryside, technical and regulatory services. Officers gave input at a workshop, follow up sessions and provided feedback on the draft document.
14. Members have been engaged on the draft Climate Change Action Plan, to provide early comments and queries in order to shape the document. An EFDC Member workshop was held on 18 February 2021. Further engagement with members will be scheduled during the public consultation period.
15. The original motion to declare the Climate Emergency stipulated the involvement of the Youth Council in the development of the action plan. The Youth Council were engaged on 08 December 2020 on the theme of sustainable travel. The themes of the Climate Change Action Plan were explored in a Youth Council meeting on the 02 February 2021 and participants asked questions and provided feedback on topics important to them.
16. In accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), the Council is required to consult stakeholders and the general public on the draft Climate Change Action Plan. The proposed period of consultation in line with the SCI is six weeks. All those on the Council's relevant databases will be notified, information including the documents and an online survey/ questionnaire explaining the document will be made available on the Council's website and by notification to statutory consultees. Following the consultation, the results will be collated and where appropriate amendments made to the plan. The plan will then be brought back to Cabinet for formal endorsement for adoption of the plan.
17. Depending on the roadmap of lifting restrictions there could be some restrictions on in-person engagement due to COVID-19. In person events will take place where possible but it may be that the audience will be reached primarily through digital means.
18. Consultation arrangements will be put in place and will be advertised ahead of the consultation, in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

Resource Implications:

The work to support the draft Climate Change Action Plan is covered by the Climate Change Officer and the Sustainable Transport Officer with valuable input from other teams. A sum of £500,000 was identified in the 2021/22 Budget to fund approved projects.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Climate Change Action Plan has been reviewed by legal colleagues and no implications have been raised.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The draft Climate Change Action Plan seeks to drive down carbon emissions across the District to become carbon neutral by 2030. Actions will include measures to increase the provision of sustainable development, energy efficiency and consideration of the natural environment.

The largest proportion of emissions in the District arise from on-road transport therefore, activities within the plan look to increase modal shift towards active travel and put in place measures to increase the uptake of electric vehicles. The co-benefits of these actions such as reduced fuel poverty, enhanced health and wellbeing and provision of jobs promote the notion of making Epping Forest District a good place to live, work and visit.

Activities to tackle carbon emissions will also help to improve air quality in the District, which will help with human health concerns and address the impacts of air quality on the Epping forest Special Area of Conservation.

Consultation Undertaken:

Informal engagement has been undertaken with officers, the EFDC Leadership Team, EFDC Councillors and the Youth Council

Background Papers:

None

Risk Management:

If the Council does not demonstrate that it is taking a pro-active approach to developing an approach to addressing the Climate Emergency this would lead to reputational damage. A delay to implementing the draft Climate Change Action Plan would put a risk on achieving the identified carbon reduction target of reaching carbon neutral by 2030.

Equality Impact Assessment

1. Under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010, when making decisions, Epping District Council must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, ie have due regard to:
 - eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and other conduct prohibited by the Act,
 - advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not,
 - fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
2. The characteristics protected by the Equality Act are:
 - age
 - disability
 - gender
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage/civil partnership
 - pregnancy/maternity
 - race
 - religion/belief
 - sexual orientation.
3. In addition to the above protected characteristics you should consider the cross-cutting elements of the proposed policy, namely the social, economic and environmental impact (including rurality) as part of this assessment. These cross-cutting elements are not a characteristic protected by law but are regarded as good practice to include.
4. The Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) document should be used as a tool to test and analyse the nature and impact of either what we do or are planning to do in the future. It can be used flexibly for reviewing existing arrangements but in particular should enable identification where further consultation, engagement and data is required.
5. Use the questions in this document to record your findings. This should include the nature and extent of the impact on those likely to be affected by the proposed policy or change.
6. Where this EqIA relates to a continuing project, it must be reviewed and updated at each stage of the decision.
7. All **Cabinet, Council, and Portfolio Holder reports must be accompanied by an EqIA**. An EqIA should also be completed/reviewed at key stages of projects.
8. To assist you in completing this report, please ensure you read the guidance notes in the Equality Analysis Toolkit and refer to the following Factsheets:
 - Factsheet 1: Equality Profile of the Epping Forest District
 - Factsheet 2: Sources of information about equality protected characteristics
 - Factsheet 3: Glossary of equality related terms
 - Factsheet 4: Common misunderstandings about the Equality Duty
 - Factsheet 5: Frequently asked questions
 - Factsheet 6: Reporting equality analysis to a committee or other decision making body

Section 1: Identifying details
Your function, service area and team: <i>Climate Change</i>
If you are submitting this EqIA on behalf of another function, service area or team, specify the originating function, service area or team: N/A
Title of policy or decision: <i>Draft Climate Change Action Plan</i>
Officer completing the EqIA: Tel: 01992 564217 Email: fedmonds@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Date of completing the assessment: 10 th March 2021

Section 2: Policy to be analysed	
2.1	Is this a new policy (or decision) or a change to an existing policy, practice or project? <i>No</i>
2.2	Describe the main aims, objectives and purpose of the policy (or decision): The report is to provide the justification, aims and objectives for a Climate Change Action Plan to support the declaration of a Climate Emergency and the motion to do everything within our power to become a carbon neutral District by 2030. What outcome(s) are you hoping to achieve (ie decommissioning or commissioning a service)? <i>To ensure members are fully briefed on the requirement for a Climate Change Action Plan and agreement that the draft Strategy can be approved for public consultation.</i>
2.3	Does or will the policy or decision affect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service users • employees • the wider community or groups of people, particularly where there are areas of known inequalities? <i>The report is to provide an overview of the Draft Climate Change Action Plan to be approved for public consultation. This decision will not affect any group at this stage as it is being recommended that the draft guidance documents should be subject to consultation.</i> Will the policy or decision influence how organisations operate? <i>No</i>
2.4	Will the policy or decision involve substantial changes in resources? <i>No</i>
2.5	Is this policy or decision associated with any of the Council's other policies and how, if applicable, does the proposed policy support corporate outcomes? <i>This work supports policies in the emerging Local Plan in relation to the environment and sustainable travel. The plan aligns with the corporate objectives of keeping the</i>

	<p><i>district moving sustainably and enabling residents to access new opportunities for employment, and to reduce the carbon footprint across the district and within our council.</i></p>
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Section 3: Evidence/data about the user population and consultation¹

As a minimum you must consider what is known about the population likely to be affected which will support your understanding of the impact of the policy, eg service uptake/usage, customer satisfaction surveys, staffing data, performance data, research information (national, regional and local data sources).

3.1	<p>What does the information tell you about those groups identified? <i>The current position affects the District as a whole.</i></p>
3.2	<p>Have you consulted or involved those groups that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision you want to implement? If so, what were their views and how have their views influenced your decision? <i>Early engagement has taken place to develop the Climate Change Action Plan. There has been extensive input from officers across various services and departments to gather information and feedback on a broad range of topics related to the plan. This has included a workshop, more topic specific discussions and feedback on the document, all of which have been used to shape the draft plan.</i> <i>The original motion to declare the climate emergency stipulated the involvement of the Youth Council in the development of the action plan. The Youth Council were engaged on 08 December 2020 on the theme of sustainable travel. The themes of the full Climate Action Plan were explored in a Youth Council meeting on the 02 February 2021 and participants provided feedback on topics important to them.</i></p>
3.3	<p>If you have not consulted or engaged with communities that are likely to be affected by the policy or decision, give details about when you intend to carry out consultation or provide reasons for why you feel this is not necessary: <i>Members have been engaged on the draft Climate Change Action Plan, to provide early comments and queries in order to shape the document. An EFDC Member workshop was held on 18 February 2021. Further engagement with members will be scheduled during the public consultation period.</i> <i>The Council intend to carry out a six-week public consultation in June 2021. This will be in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The Council is required to consult stakeholders and the general public on the draft Climate Change Action Plan. The proposed period of consultation in line with the SCI is six weeks. All those on the Council's planning policy database will be notified, information including the documents, an online survey/ questionnaire and potential video content explaining the document will be made available on the Council's website and by notification to statutory consultees.</i></p>

Section 4: Impact of policy or decision

Use this section to assess any potential impact on equality groups based on what you now know.

Description of impact	Nature of impact Positive, neutral, adverse (explain why)	Extent of impact Low, medium, high (use L, M or H)
Age	Adverse – potential for Covid-19 restrictions to make non-digital engagement more difficult. Potential for this to affect consultation with age groups (more likely children and the elderly) who are less digitally enabled.	M
Disability	Adverse - potential for Covid-19 restrictions to make non-digital engagement more difficult. Potential for this to affect consultation with those with disabilities that affect their ability to engage digitally.	M
Gender	Neutral – no impact	L
Gender reassignment	Neutral – no impact	L
Marriage/civil partnership	Neutral – no impact	L
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral – no impact	L
Race	Neutral – no impact	L
Religion/belief	Neutral – no impact	L
Sexual orientation	Neutral – no impact	L

Section 5: Conclusion

		Tick Yes/No as appropriate	
5.1	Does the EqIA in Section 4 indicate that the policy or decision would have a medium or high adverse impact on one or more equality groups?	No	
		Yes	If 'YES' , use the action plan at Section 6 to describe the adverse impacts and what mitigating actions you could put in place.

Section 6: Action plan to address and monitor adverse impacts

What are the potential adverse impacts?	What are the mitigating actions?	Date they will be achieved.
<p>Potential for Covid-19 restrictions to make non-digital engagement more difficult. Potential for this to affect consultation with age groups (more likely children and the elderly) who are less digitally enabled.</p>	<p>Utilise forums such as the authority's Youth Council to engage the younger audience and where possible hold non-digital staffed event or drop in which is COVID-19 secure. Advertise consultation in non-digital manner (Town and Parish Council magazine, posters and leaflets). Ensure that online material is accessible for all and easy to read and feedback and questionnaires are simple to understand and complete.</p>	<p>May-June 2021</p>
<p>Potential for Covid-19 restrictions to make non-digital engagement more difficult. Potential for this to affect consultation with those with disabilities that affect their ability to engage digitally.</p>	<p>Where possible hold a non-digital staffed event or drop in which is COVID-19 secure. Advertise consultation in non-digital manner (Town and Parish Council magazine, posters and leaflets). Ensure that online material is accessible for all and easy to read and feedback and questionnaires are simple to understand and complete.</p>	<p>May-June 2021</p>

Section 7: Sign off

**I confirm that this initial analysis has been completed appropriately.
(A typed signature is sufficient.)**

Signature of Head of Service:

Date:

Signature of person completing the EqIA:

Date:

Advice

Keep your director informed of all equality & diversity issues. We recommend that you forward a copy of every EqIA you undertake to the director responsible for the service area. Retain a copy of this EqIA for your records. If this EqIA relates to a continuing project, ensure this document is kept under review and updated, eg after a consultation has been undertaken.

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Epping Forest District Council Climate Change Action Plan 2021

Draft for Consultation - Version 6, April 2021

Contents

Introduction	2
Climate Change Context	2
Climate Change Action Plan Purpose.....	3
Policy Context	4
Epping Forest District Council’s Own Emissions	5
District Wide Emissions.....	8
Priority Actions for 2021/22	9
Council Operations.....	11
Actions	12
District Wide Actions.....	15
Behaviour Change and Engagement.....	15
District Travel	16
District Wide Buildings.....	21
Natural Environment	24
Air Quality	27
Waste	29
Climate Change Adaption	31
Glossary.....	33

Introduction

Climate Change Context

Climate change is a global issue primarily as a result of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activity and land use change. Communities, businesses and the natural environment are already feeling the impacts of the changing climate with higher average temperatures and more extreme weather events such as droughts, flooding, heat waves and storms. Continued change is now unavoidable and will disrupt everyday life, particularly for the more vulnerable where climate change will deepen existing inequalities.

More locally, flooding, water stress and overheating are the key changes projected for the East of England. Increased urbanization as well as changes in weather patterns can result in a reduced capacity for regions to absorb water, leading to more water surface runoff and increased flooding. Climate change projections suggest that in the period to 2050 and beyond, the UK will experience wetter winters and drier summers with overall summer precipitation likely to decrease by up to 15% leading to water stress. There is low awareness of domestic overheating as an impact of climate change, especially in urban areas. This can result in thermal discomfort and exacerbate underlying health issues.

In October 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published the Special Report on Global warming of 1.5°C that evidences the wide-ranging impacts of global warming with temperatures 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. In 2015, the UK committed to keeping global temperature increase well below 2°C by signing the Paris Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UK also set a statutory target in the Climate Change Act 2008 to reduce UK GHG emissions by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050. In June 2019, this was revised to reduce all GHG emissions to net zero by 2050.

After considering the overwhelming evidence on climate change Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019 and pledged to do everything within its power to make the area carbon neutral by 2030. This target is more ambitious than the UK target to take bold action and reduce emissions at a faster rate. Reaching this target will be a considerable task involving collaboration and engagement from staff, residents, businesses, suppliers, partners and support from the UK Government to reduce emissions throughout the District.

By stepping up action now there is a better chance of avoiding the catastrophic impacts that a global temperature increase of greater than 1.5°C would have. Many climate actions are known to deliver valuable social and economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings, market opportunities and health benefits that can help to make Epping Forest District a great place where people enjoy living, working, learning and leisure.

Climate Change Action Plan Purpose

The Climate Change Action Plan puts into practice the Councils ambition to do everything within it's power to become carbon neutral by 2030. The plan examines the main sources of carbon emissions, both within the Councils own operations and across the District, and outlines actions to reduce them.

Emissions reduction in the wider District will require close collaboration and action from residents, community groups, businesses and other organisations therefore this plan sets out how the Council plans to engage with these groups to influence and facilitate change.

The plan will be regularly updated to account for further developments in national legislation, regulation and policy. The Council is also undertaking further work to assess its indirect emissions; therefore, the plan will be updated when additional emission reduction pathways are identified.

The following main themes summarise the key emissions reduction pathways identified:



The Council Operations section describes how the Council aims to reduce it's own GHG emissions to become carbon neutral and displays actions on how this is to be achieved. Council operations include emissions reduction in Council buildings, including the Civic offices, museum and sheltered housing as well as emissions from the Councils purchased good and services, business travel, staff commuting, waste, and leased assets.

The further sections outline actions to facilitate the reduction in carbon emissions from all sectors across the District, either through direct initiatives, using statutory powers or by influencing behaviour change. This will include emissions arising from travel including activities as well as homes, businesses and the production, management and disposal of waste. Improvement of the natural greenspace in the area aims to capture carbon, increase biodiversity and relieve pressure on the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is a central feature of the District. Air quality and climate change are closely linked therefore measures to improve air quality in the District are discussed relating to both its effects on human health and the Epping Forest SAC.

Monitoring and reporting

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are listed within the document, these will be reviewed and published on an annual basis.

Policy Context

This document aligns with policy across the Council including the strategic objectives in the Corporate Plan to keep the district moving sustainably and enable residents to access new opportunities for employment and to reduce the carbon footprint across the district and within our council.

The Emerging Local Plan contains several policies that align with themes within the action plan, these are:

- DM1** Habitat protection and improving biodiversity
- DM2** Epping Forest SAC and the Lee Valley SPA
- DM4** Green belt
- DM5** Green and blue infrastructure
- DM9** High quality design
- DM10** Housing design and quality
- DM11** Waste recycling facilities in new developments
- DM12** Subterranean, basement development and lightwells
- DM15** Managing and reducing flood risk
- DM16** Sustainable drainage systems
- DM17** Protecting and enhancing water courses and flood defences
- DM18** On site management and reuse of wastewater and water supply
- DM19** Sustainable water use
- DM20** Low carbon and renewable energy
- DM21** Local environmental impacts, pollution and land contamination
- DM22** Air quality
- T1** Sustainable Transport Choices
- T2** Safeguarding of routes and facilities

Other related plans, strategies and guidance:

- EFDC Green Infrastructure Strategy
- EFDC Interim Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy
- Epping Forest District Cycling Action Plan
- Green Arc Strategy
- Infrastructure Development Plan
- Air Quality Action Plan
- Sustainability Guidance Vol. 01 (Major Developments), Vol. 02 (Minor Developments)

Epping Forest District Council's Own Emissions

Baseline and Methodology

Over 2020/21 the baseline carbon footprint for the Council's own estate and service provisions has been calculated from 2018/19 data sources. The new baseline considers changes to the Council's estate and has the most comprehensive data set before the Covid-19 pandemic caused marked changes in building usage and staff travel. The baseline will give the figures for comparison against emissions reported up to 2030.

Where the term carbon emissions is used throughout the Climate Change Action Plan, this refers to all GHG's expressed as carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e). GHG's are covered by the Kyoto Protocol and include carbon dioxide, methane, hydrofluorocarbons, nitrous oxide, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) publishes GHG Conversion Factors each year to aid calculation of carbon emissions for a range of activities.

To calculate the District's carbon footprint, we have used our own data multiplied by the BEIS emission factors for that activity to give the kilograms of carbon dioxide equivalent emitted. This is divided by 1000 to convert to tonnes.

An example for energy use is:

$(\text{Energy (kWh)} \times \text{emissions factor}) / 1000 = \text{tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent}$

Scope of the Climate Change Action Plan

Carbon emissions are categorised into three groups to define how emissions are generated and who is responsible:

Scope 1	Direct emissions from gas sources owned or controlled by an organisation. Including fuel combustion from heating buildings and council vehicle fleet.
Scope 2	Emissions from the generation of purchased electricity consumed by an organisation. Including lighting, heating and cooling in buildings.
Scope 3	All other indirect emissions from an organisations activity but from sources not owned or controlled by that organisation. Including emissions from business travel in cars not owned by the Council and purchased good and services.

Previously the Council have reported Scope 1 and 2 emissions, with emissions from business travel and electricity transmission and distribution losses reported as Scope 3.

However, with the declaration of a Climate Emergency the Council recognises the need to show leadership and demonstrate collaboration with our partners and suppliers across the District. Therefore, Scope 3 emissions reported will be expanded to cover purchased good and services, leased assets, waste and staff commuting. Work is currently underway to establish the scale of emissions in some of these areas.

The below tables and diagrams show the baseline emissions data the Council will use as a comparison for reporting up to 2030, unless stated the data is from the 2018/19 financial year.

Scope 1 – Direct emissions from gas sources owned or controlled by the Council.	
Category	Tonnes of CO ₂ e
Council Owned Operational Buildings	194
Fleet Fuel	237
Sheltered Housing Gas	867
Total	1298

Scope 2 – Emission from generation of purchased electricity consumed by the Council	
Category	Tonnes of CO ₂ e
Operational buildings electricity	445
Other purchased electricity	335
Electricity Sheltered Housing communal areas	85
Total	865

Scope 3 - All other indirect emissions from Council activity but from sources not owned or controlled by the Council	
Category	Tonnes of CO ₂ e
Business Travel (Grey Fleet)	103
Leased Assets including Social Housing	To be calculated
Staff Commuting	To be calculated
Purchased good and services	To be calculated
Transmission and distribution losses	74
Waste services	To be calculated
Total	TBC

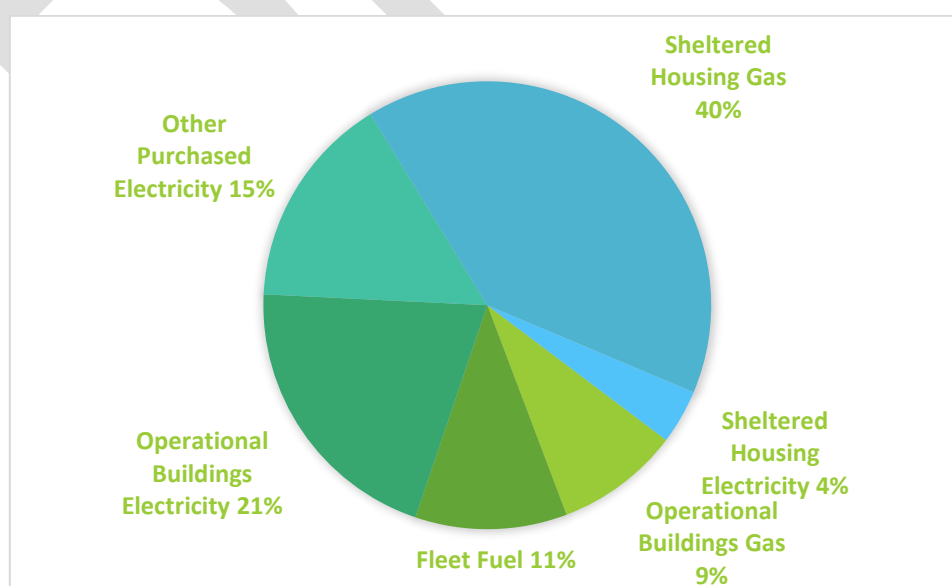


Figure 1. Councils Scope 1 and 2 emissions

The total emissions from Council controlled (Scopes 1 and 2) sources is 2,168 tCO₂e, this is equivalent to 250 homes' energy use for one year or 5.4 million miles driven by an average

passenger vehicle. The overall total including Scope 3 emissions is to be confirmed following further investigation.

The scope of the Council's operations is to include Qualis as a wholly owned subsidiary of Epping Forest District Council. As a newly formed entity Qualis has not had any property or paid utility bills up to March 2021. From April 2021 the Council will work closely with Qualis to collate scope 1 and scope 2 emissions data.

Approach to offsetting

Reducing emissions through direct interventions will be the Council's main approach to becoming a carbon neutral organisation. But there will be a certain level of emissions which are currently not practically or financially possible to reduce within nine years.

The Council are taking actions to increase tree planting and the provision of natural greenspace in the District, through an endorsed tree planting strategy and the Green Infrastructure Strategy. By taking steps now on tree planting this will allow woodland to become more established by 2030. Further offsetting will be considered closer to 2030, this will be influenced by the development of technology, but is likely to consider renewable technologies.

District Wide Emissions

The Council’s pledge shows a commitment to be carbon neutral across the whole District. Although the Council are unable to directly control District wide emissions, statutory powers and our role of community leader and facilitator can be used to influence emissions reductions. Data for these emissions comes from national data compiled for all local authorities in the UK, the scope of the District’s emissions will be limited to Scope 1 and 2 emissions as realistically these are the emissions that can be reasonably influenced.

To become carbon neutral on this scale is a challenging task and this will require communities and businesses to take responsibility for their own significant emissions reductions. Changes in national policy and financial intervention from the UK government, as well as advances in technology and decarbonisation of the national grid will also be key to enable the District to become carbon neutral by 2030.

District Wide Emissions – Scopes 1 and 2 (SCATTER)	
Category	Tonnes CO ₂ e
District Waste Operations	20,214
Transport (on-road, off road and aviation)	546,159
Industry and Commercial	125,822
Domestic	168,422
Agriculture and Land Use	-13,052
Total	837,565

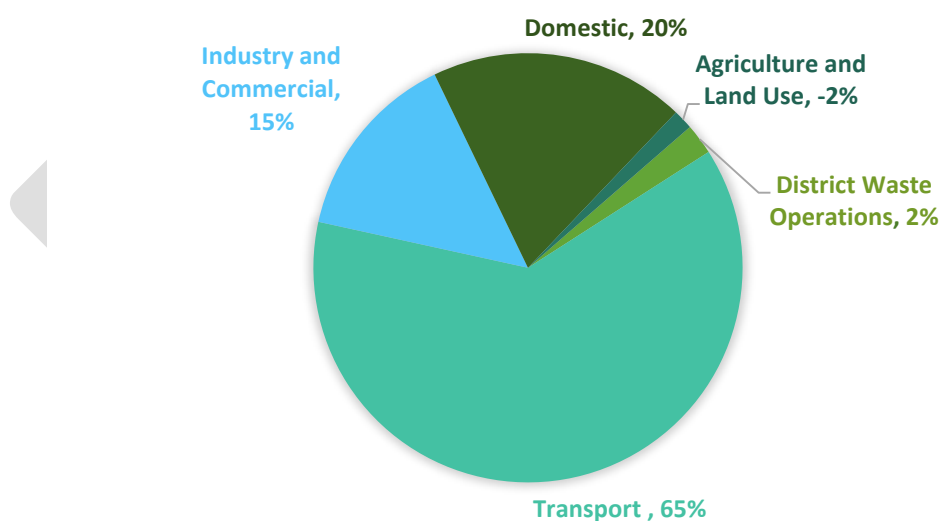


Figure 2. District Scope 1 and 2 emissions

Priority Actions for 2021/22

Council Operations

Action	Description	Timescale	Portfolio Holder	Resource
Waste contract review	As part of the ongoing contract review, consideration is to be given to provision of low emissions refuse vehicles and route efficiencies to reduce emissions.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Staff Travel Plan	To adopt measures that support sustainable travel into employee's place of work and by means of flexible working the need to travel to work will fall from around five days to two days per week.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Grounds Maintenance vehicle fleet upgrade	The EFDC Grounds Maintenance fleet is to be replaced in 2021 with lower emissions Euro VI vehicles and EV's where the market allows	2021	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Carbon Literacy Training	Engagement and education of staff	May 2021	Customer and Corporate Services	Internal budget identified
Measurement of Scope 3 emissions	Establish the Councils scope 3 emissions and identify key areas where these can be reduced	March 2021	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget identified

District Wide Actions

Action	Description	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partner	Resource
Develop a communication and engagement plan to facilitate behaviour change across the District	Educate, persuade and incentivise behaviour change in sustainable travel, air quality and climate change. Newsletters, one stop shop website, collaboration with community groups and partners. Link co-benefits of action such as health and wellbeing.	Now and ongoing	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget for newsletter
Initiatives to support walking, cycling and public transport use.	Investigation to implement recommendations and projects within the District. Includes Interim Public Transport Strategy, Essex Highways Study, Infrastructure Development plan and working with Essex County Council (ECC) on Epping Forest Cycle Action Plan.	Now and ongoing	Planning and Sustainability, ECC, Planning applicants	Through implementation of HGGT community masterplan sites, Planning Contributions

Electric Vehicle charge point provision on Council land	Rapid charge point provision in car parks, leisure centres and shopping centres.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Potential for expenses to be covered by Network Operator
Large Scale Tree planting	Internal call for sites ongoing, strategy underway to start tree planting by end of March 2021. Includes tree planting ambition in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Essex Forest Initiative call for sites and the Green Arc	March 2021	Planning and Sustainability	Internal Budget TBC, developer contributions
Domestic energy efficiency	Installation of energy efficiency measures in low income, low efficiency homes.	April 2021	Commercial and Regulatory Services	GHG LAD Phase 2 grant funding

Draft

Council Operations

From 2008/09 to 2018/19 reported Council emissions decreased by 51% due to the implementation of more energy efficient technologies in offices, installation of solar panels and the decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid. This is a good basis to build on but to become carbon neutral by 2030 critical changes will be needed in the way the Council operates.

Operational buildings and Council owned housing will need to be assessed on their ability to meet future needs and where suitable undertake deep retrofit to improve efficiency and resilience to the expected rise in temperatures. Modes of business travel and staff commuting will require a shift to active travel and ultra-low emissions vehicles (ULEVs). Consideration of the Climate Emergency will be required in all service areas to influence how services are delivered and how goods and services are procured.

Previous Successes

- In October 2020 the Council endorsed meeting Passivhaus standards for new build Council Housing
- In 2016 XkW of Solar PV was installed on Civic Centre offices roof and previously XXkW was installed on the Limes Centre.
- Refurbishment of the Civic includes more efficient boilers, lighting and heating controls, more efficient AHUs, 4 EV charge points and facilities to provide for cycling and active travel
- In January 2021 a revised procurement strategy was adopted that puts more emphasis on climate change and social value
- Up to the end of 2020/21, 2 Council owned electric vehicles (EV's) in the fleet and 12-month trial of 1 electric transit van.
- Reduction in business travel mileage reimbursement in staff's own cars (grey fleet)
- In December 2020 greener driver training was conducted for those regularly driving fleet vehicles
- Introduction of software to more accurately measure fleet emissions and fuel use
- Rapid response to enable staff to work from home effectively during the Civic refurbishment and Covid pandemic (includes process/system changes and grants for more ergonomic home office setup)

Actions

Council Buildings

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder	Resource
Review energy efficiency of Council owned building estate	Including operational buildings, community halls and the common parts of the sheltered housing units to assess and implement carbon reduction measures. Noting that the Condor Building is due to be vacated completely in early May and only two thirds of the remaining Civic Centre will be used by EFDC.	2021	Housing and Community Services	2021/22 – Internal budget identified 2022/23 onwards – capital budget to be requested
Review renewable energy potential at existing council owned sites	Assessment of suitability for measures such as heat pumps, solar PV and solar thermal.	2021	Housing and Community Services	2021/22 - Internal budget identified 2022/23 onwards – capital budget to be requested
Review energy efficiency of Council owned social housing provision	Build database to aid stock assessment processes Implementation of external wall insulation Deep retrofit energy assessments	Now and ongoing	Housing and Community Services	Grant funding
Review opportunities for water saving initiatives	Investigate water saving opportunities the councils own estate and encouraging water saving behaviours from staff	TBC	Housing and Community Services	TBC
Best practice in new Council Developments	Planning applications for new council facilities and developments to lead by example meeting Sustainability Guidance net zero by 2030 levels	Now and ongoing	TBC	TBC
Switch Utilities to 'green' tariffs	Switch electricity tariffs to 100% REGO and/or GoO certified renewable energy. Investigate feasibility of switching to a 'green' gas supply.	TBC – April 2021	Housing and Community Services	Internal utilities budget
Minimise waste within the council offices and promote recycling	Drive forward paperless and digital working to minimise paper waste. In line with procurement strategy consider 'end of life' requirements before purchasing goods. Information by bins to make recyclable waste clear	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified

Council Processes and Behaviour Change

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder	Resource
Staff engagement and training to influence behaviour change	Carbon Literacy training to be rolled out in stages across the organisation	May 2021	Customer and Corporate Services	Internal budget identified
Include consideration of the Climate Emergency in Council decision making processes	Investigate how consideration of Climate Change can be embedded at the project concept stage through to cabinet decision reports	TBC		
Alignment of policy across the organisation to consider the climate declaration	List and review of policies to align with climate pledge.	TBC		
Establish and analyse the Council's Scope 3 emissions	Calculation and analysis of indirect Scope 3 emissions using financial data.	2021	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget identified
Identification of carbon intensive contracts based on Scope 3 emissions analysis	Assess carbon reduction opportunities and develop a carbon reduction plan to eliminate waste in the supply chain and engage suppliers.	2021/22	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget identified

Staff Travel

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder	Resource
Make the Council an exemplar on staff commuting and business travel	Use held data and staff surveys to identify, analyse and deploy viable options to increase sustainable commuting. Enter for Modeshift accreditation for Civic Travel Plan	2021/22	Environmental and Technical Services	
Investigate options to encourage and incentivise sustainable commuting	Online personal travel planning tools, investigate bus/rail discounts, build on learnings from DRT trial to launch viable service, car share scheme launch, investigate park and ride options.	2021/22	Environmental and Technical Services	
Review the Council's own 'grey fleet' policies	Investigate further changes to mileage rates. Develop policy on using own car for business travel.	TBC		
Business travel in staff owned cars 'grey fleet'	Investigate demand for pool car options to increase % of electric vehicle mileage for business travel	TBC	Environmental and Technical Services	
Identify and bid for all OZEV and commercial funds to improve EV	Bid inputs given to ECC for OZEV/Connected Kerb funding bid for on-street EV chargers. Review	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	OZEV and other grant funding

experience including EFDC estate and fleet	of viability of emerging rapid charging network operators, suitable for EFDC estate use			
Improve experiences of EFDC staff working remotely to reduce the need to commute and travel for business	Consider further access to EFDC sites closer to where staff may live and/or are visiting on business (eg. Museum, Oakwood Hill sites)	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	

Monitoring

Key Performance Indicators	Baseline	Target
% reduction in reported Scope 1 and 2 Council emissions	2,168 tCO ₂ e	TBC
Average SAP rating of Council owned social housing	71 (2019)	TBC
% of staff certified as Carbon Literate	0% (2020/21)	TBC
no. of electric vehicles in the fleet	2 (2020/21)	TBC
% of staff using sustainable transport for their commute	XX% (2018 Staff Travel Survey)	TBC

District Wide Actions

Behaviour Change and Engagement

To become a carbon neutral District by 2030 wider behavioural and societal shifts are required to reduce emissions throughout everyday life particularly from transport and energy use. The Council are unable to directly influence most emissions within the District; therefore, success of this plan will be reliant on building awareness and active engagement in communities. The Council's role is to promote, facilitate and incentivise participation in emissions reduction action.

Actions within the District Wide section of this plan will be supported by engagement and education to inspire behaviour change. The themes each contain a section to highlight planned behaviour change and engagement activity to support residents, businesses and organisations in making informed choices and taking climate change action themselves. Adoption of lower emissions behaviours also has many co-benefits that will help to make the District a good place to live, work learn and play these include financial savings, improved health, better air quality and economic growth.

The District already has active community groups that focus on climate change and sustainable transport. By working together with these groups as well as our partners, broader community groups and the public, we are looking to expand our communication channels to reach a wide and varied audience.

District Travel

With 65% of the District’s carbon emissions coming from on road transport sources measures facilitating the change to Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV’s), encouraging sustainable transport choices and aiming to secure modal shift away from car travel will be a major component of this plan. Emissions from petrol and diesel vehicles have also been shown to be harmful to both human health and the health of the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation. Therefore, actions in this area will have wider benefits for the District.

The Epping Forest District Council area contains several key transport corridors that are not under the Councils influence such as the M11 and M25 motorways and the London Underground Central Line, the District are also not the Highways authority this is controlled by Essex County Council. Although this makes influencing emissions reduction more challenging there are opportunities to be innovative with proximity to transport hubs and to collaborate with ECC and transport operators such as TfL.

Previous Successes

- Local plan policies T1 and T2 requiring creation of viable sustainable transport corridors and choices, safeguarding of routes/facilities and better provision of EV charge points
- DRT (DaRT87) bus service pilot launched, replacing Arriva 87 service which ECC declined to continue subsidising at end 2020
- Funding and delivery of 10 public fast EV chargers at Epping Forest Shopping Park

Actions

Public transport – Work with Essex County Council and operators to make bus services more attractive and financially viable

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partner	Resource
Defend and grow bus usage	Understand and address declining bus patronage and cessation of some subsidised routes. Work with ECC and operators to promote. Publicise public transport options available. Bus Back Better Initiative for the DfT for Essex to create enhanced partnership with bus operators	July 2021	ECC	ECC
Modern technology at stops and on vehicles to enhance public transport experience	Installation of real time travel information at train stations and bus stops across the district; contactless and app-based ticketing and payment; multi-operator ticketing.	Now and ongoing	ECC	Developer contributions, ECC
Explore potential of new and more frequent bus services to connect key settlements	Including increased frequency of the Epping-Harlow and North Weald-Epping bus routes as suggested from EFDC Public Transport Infrastructure Strategy.	2016-2031	ECC, Developers, TfL, other operators	Developer contributions, ECC, transport operators

Ensure emission levels from bus services are minimised.	Lobby and work with ECC, to specify low emission vehicles (Euro VI) when contracting subsidised and commercial bus services. Join low emission bus trials and funding bids. Engage with operators on Euro engine standards, new and battery or fuel-celled fleet	Now and ongoing	ECC, transport operators	
Facilitate and encourage sustainable public transport focusing on rural community connection to key settlements.	DRT bus service stipulated as part of Dowding Way development. Private DRT staff service in use: Epping station to North Weald HMRC customs site. DaRT87 DRT trial retaining Theydon Bois and Epping Green's access to public bus service. Investigate further DRT and community bus options.	2021	Environmental and Technical Services	Budget in place for DaRT87 trial
Identify innovations likely to encourage DRT usage.	Phone booking service allows for inclusive demographics and IT literacy (concessionary passes accepted).	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Budget for payment app and contactless payment

Active travel

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder Area	Resource
Create and improve active travel routes in rural and urban areas	Work with ECC Rights of Way and EFDC Green Infrastructure Strategy team Ensure footpath and bridleway network maintenance plans meet resident's needs. Improve signage and highlight 'short cut' routes	Now and ongoing	Planning and Sustainability	Developer contributions
Encourage active travel to schools to address the impact of school traffic	Investigate community travel for school journeys, reinstate walking buses. Supporting school streets and school travel plans	TBC	ECC	ECC
Support and influence Essex County Council's cycling strategy.	Pan-authority meetings with adjoining boroughs started. To engage with Conservators of Epping Forest and the City of London. Engage with ECC cycling strategy team on urban options eg. collaboration with Redbridge	2021/22	Conservators of Epping Forest, CoL, ECC	

	Council on extending segregated lanes to Buckhurst Hill LCWIPs required to justify this and other ideas. Work with ECC to implement flagship Waltham Abbey cycle route as described in the Cycling Action Plan			
Raise standards and availability of cycle parking	Including at tube stations where some inadequacies noted. Engage with new Town Centres manager and Planning. Review best practice for new developments.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services, ECC, Parish and Town Councils	Internal budget identified in some areas
Review of one-way streets to assess scope for contraflows for walking and cycling lanes	To improve active travel network	TBC	EFDC, ECC, Developers	Developer contributions, grant funding
Commission Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans	Done for Harlow/HGGT. Funding bids required for others. To start in the South West of the District and Epping.	TBC		

Electric Vehicles and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partner	Resource
Increase availability of public EV charge points	In EFDC car parks and at public visitor trip attractors including private sector sites via Economic Development team. Active engagement with innovative providers of public rapid charge sites. Parking team feasibility review of EFDC car park EV bays, streetlight EV charging, power supply constraints	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Network providers, Finance from EFDC
Work with Essex Highways to provide on street charging infrastructure	Awaiting result of Connected Kerb/OZEV on-street charging bid via ECC Call for sites to understand EV charging demand and appraisal to ensure suitability Engage with Taxi licence holders to understand where home infrastructure is required	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services ECC	ECC, grant funding
Secure a switch from petrol cars to Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles	Preferential car parking rapid charging for electric vehicles	Now and ongoing	Planning and Sustainability, Environmental	

	Awareness raising of incentives to switch Provision of EV charging points in developments Potential for scrappage scheme		and Technical Services	
Raise awareness of funding for off street charging points for residents and businesses	Working with EFDC Economic Development team and innovative providers to identify suitable high traffic sites	Now and ongoing	Planning and Sustainability	N/A

Engagement with residents, community groups and businesses to secure behaviour change

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Develop a communication and engagement plan to facilitate behaviour change across the District	Aim to educate, persuade and incentivise behaviour change in travel, air quality and climate change. Health and its relationship to active travel	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services, Planning and Sustainability	
Identify and engage community groups and influencers.	Epping Forest Transport Action Group (EFTAG), Epping Forest Climate Action Group (EFCAG), EFDC community wellbeing initiatives, sport-driven schemes, NHS/CCG/GP led active travel messaging	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	
Help ECC target their business, housing development and schools Travel Plan (TP) processes to all suitable large sites in the District	ECC TP guidance and process review. Large TPs need to be secured via Section 106 to ECC Travel Plan team for 5-year monitoring post-build.	2021	ECC	ECC
Work with Conservators of Epping Forest and Essex County Council to encourage development of a Transport Access Management Strategy for Epping Forest.	Encourage visits to the forest by means other than the Car eg. developing a low emission Forest shuttle for visitors/ramblers.	TBC	Conservators of Epping Forest, ECC	
Design and run local social media and press campaigns to promote new and existing services	To increase bus use, car share, EV take up and active travel Use demographic tools to understand local populations.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	
Analyse trends for increased District van and light HGV traffic	Management of home delivery growth	TBC		

Promote car share options to residents and businesses.	Re-promotion of 'Liftshare' website Explore available data in partnership with the NHS to identify car share bubbles	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	
Identify broadband gaps and areas with no fibre to the premises (FTTP) option to support home working	Support of early 5G rollout in 'not-spot'/rural areas. Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) programme and Essex Broadband Improvement programme	Now and ongoing	Digital Innovation Zone	
Stipulate the most futureproof FTTP options in new developments.	Developer toolkit to ensure FTTP from outset. Openreach, Gigaclear, Hyperoptic, 5G operators have incentives and offers for developers/LAs, to identify and exploit	Now and ongoing	Planning applicants	Section 106 and/or planning conditions
Encourage co-working spaces for start-up business sites within large developments	Engage with Business Development team, Qualis	Now and ongoing	Digital Innovation Zone	
Reduce number of journeys by increasing EFDC's remote touchpoints for public and businesses.	Work with other businesses and public entities like NHS. EFDC customer services looking at online/cashless service delivery and support bridge 'digital divide'	TBC		
Explore public co-working from EFDC offices potentially at North Weald Airfield	Engage with EFDC Economic Development team, Qualis, DIZ	TBC		

Monitoring

Key Performance Indicator (ideas so far)	Baseline	Target
No. of EV chargers on Council public land	0	TBC

District Wide Buildings

Up to 20% of the District’s carbon emissions arise from the electricity and gas used to light, heat and cool buildings. This is second only to emissions from transport therefore to become carbon neutral by 2030 this will be a key area to address.

All new buildings are therefore expected to adopt a fabric first approach, minimise emissions from energy use, ensure fossil fuel free generation of energy and be able to adapt to climate change. Existing buildings will need to be assessed on their suitability to meet future needs and where appropriate undertake deep retrofit to be more energy efficient and resilient to the expected rise in temperatures.

Through the Emerging Local Plan policies and it’s supporting Sustainability Guidance the Council has decision making powers over new developments in the area. However, the degree of influence over existing buildings such as private homeowners and landlords in the domestic sector, and businesses and industry in the non-domestic sector is significantly reduced. The Council will work to engage with these groups to highlight the importance of energy saving behaviours as well as the incentives available to conduct improvements. This work will need to be supported by the UK government to introduce legislation and funding opportunities that help the wider District implement the required measures.

Previous Successes

- The Emerging Local Plan provides policies to improve the sustainability of development
- The Sustainability Guidance Vol.01 Major Developments and Vol.02 Minor developments sets out clear expectations for the design, energy consumption, provision of sustainable transport opportunities and use of renewable energy in new developments.
- Support of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO3 Flex) funding for energy efficiency improvements in domestic properties. This funding has helped 175 households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions since May 2019.
- Decent Homes Repayable Assistance or Small Works Grant are available to eligible residents in the private sector whose homes fail the Decent Homes Standard. The Small Works Grant is specifically for thermal comfort.
- A successful consortium bid with Essex County Council and 7 other District Councils for Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 1A installing insulation measures in private domestic properties at risk of fuel poverty.

Actions

New Developments

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Sustainability Guidance Vol.01 (Major Developments) and Vol.02 (Minor Developments); developed as material planning considerations	Encourages fabric first and sound design approaches. Considers Energy Efficiency and Carbon, Renewable Energy, Green Infrastructure, Sustainable Movement, Water, Circular economy, Waste Management, Air	Endorsed by Cabinet in March 2021	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget identified

	Quality and Social and Economic impacts			
Sustainability Guidance Vol.03 (Extensions and refurbishments); developed as material planning consideration	The document will aid submission of planning applications and inform asset owners of sustainability expectations.	March 2021 – approved by Cabinet for public consultation	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget identified
Training of Planning Officers on use of the suite of Sustainability Guidance documents	To guide the assessment of planning applications within the District, inform pre-application discussions and assist sustainable decision making.	2021	Planning Team	Internal budget identified
Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Sustainability Guidance and checklist.	Applies to the Garden Town masterplan sites within the District. Aims to help applicants meet the Garden Town goals of becoming net zero-carbon by 2030, and, to build strong and integrated communities across new and existing places.	Endorsed by Cabinet in March 2021	East Herts District Council Harlow District Council, ECC, Herts County Council	Internal budget identified

Existing Buildings

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Facilitate domestic energy efficiency improvements	Installation of energy efficiency measures in low income, low efficiency homes using grant funding. Maximise opportunities from central government grant funding.	April 2021	Commercial and Regulatory Services	Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 2

Engagement and promotion of incentives to encourage behaviour change

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Education and empowerment of residents to encourage reduction of household emissions	Campaigns to link emissions reductions to health, indoor air quality, savings on energy bills Housing Newsletter	March 2021 onwards	Planning and Sustainability	TBC
Proactively engage with housing associations to understand their carbon reduction plans	Highlight incentives related to implementing energy efficient and low carbon solutions. Introduce Carbon Literacy Training.	2021 onwards	Housing Associations	TBC
Actively engage with landlords and residents to promote grants that	Promotion of schemes on Council tax bills. Research inefficient housing and	Now and ongoing	Landlord associations	

improve home energy efficiency	those at risk of fuel poverty to target Publicise to tenant associations and through the Council's housing newsletter		and residents' groups	
Encourage businesses to take-up grants to implement carbon reduction initiatives	Investigate and publicise upcoming finance available through businesses newsletter. Highlight other incentives eg. Tax based incentives for green improvements	Now and ongoing		
Encourage Community Energy Projects	Suitable buildings for solar PV engagement with local groups. Promote funding available	TBC - 2022 onwards		

Monitoring

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Target
TBC	TBC	TBC

Natural Environment

Epping Forest District consists largely of agricultural land, with tree cover from the ancient Epping Forest and further pockets of woodland and mature trees sited across the District. Epping Forest provides important habitat and is labelled as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Therefore, this plan along with other Council policies and plans aims to protect the SAC by reducing emissions and air pollution while also building further natural greenspace to alleviate recreational pressure on the Forest.

The area is also home to the Roding Valley Meadows Site of Special Scientific interest, 9 other nature reserves and the Roding, Stort and Lea rivers with their tributaries. This green and blue infrastructure is important to help mitigate against climate change by contributing to carbon storage, cooling and shading, opportunities for species migration to more suitable habitats, and the protection of water quality and other natural resources. It can also be an integral part of multifunctional sustainable drainage and natural flood risk management. By conserving and enhancing the natural environment we can therefore bring a range of benefits, including addition storage of carbon, ecological connectivity, increased biodiversity and opportunities for communities to engage with nature to increase their health and wellbeing.

Previous Successes

- Implementation of Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) to ensure that high quality Green and Blue Infrastructure, including the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and Infrastructure Enhancement Projects are delivered alongside the growth proposed in the District as part of the emerging Local Plan.
- Tree planting activities at 16 schools in the area
- Promotion of community tree planting offers to Parish and Town Councils
- Development of the Longfields Allotment in Waltham Abbey in Summer 2020. The planting planner includes crop rotation and enhancement of the growing space to produce edible plants.

Actions

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Movement and wayfinding - Developing and supporting the implementation of a Strategy for the enhancement of the District's Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network	Provision of improved signage, removal of physical barriers to support access for all, provide more complete routes across the PRoW network and the introduction of maintenance regimes.	2021 onwards	Planning and Sustainability, ECC, Parish and Town Councils	Developer contributions, Highways England, Active travel grants
Increase the amount of natural and semi-natural greenspace	Such as the linking of different greenspaces to connect open space, linking of settlements, and provision of improved wildlife habitats.	2021-2033 alongside Local Plan development	Planning and Sustainability	Developer contributions
Roadside wildflowers - To implement cutting regimes for roadside	Work with ECC and Highways England to identify verges and roadside areas that are	2021 onwards	EFDC Countrycare,	Existing highway maintenance

verges, and undertake the seeding of areas, to provide for the creation of wildflower verges.	appropriate for wildflower planting. Encourage local communities to identify local opportunities for highway verge wildflower planting.		ECC, Highways England	budgets, Plantlife, Biffa Award for Rebuilding Biodiversity
Community Greenspace Improvements - through a community-led design approach, by developing a toolkit of guidance on initiatives and stewardship strategies.	Seek nominations from community-based organisations to establish a trial project. Advice provided by the Council and its Countrycare Service in relation to maintenance, stewardship and funding applications.	2021 Onwards	EFDC Countrycare, Community Groups Parish and Town Councils	The National Lottery Community Fund, Groundwork, s106 planning obligations, Town and Parish Council precepts
Veteran Tree Management Plan	Measures to address possible effects of predicted increases in nitrogen deposition rates. Potential to include further EFDC managed woodlands and veteran trees.	2021 plan adoption, Then on-going implementation	Planning and Sustainability, Conservators of Epping Forest	Financial contributions from planning applications
Tree planting strategy - new tree planting on appropriate sites, can be on rural or urban sites, and range from a few trees to extensive woodland	Implementation of a strategy to significantly increase tree and hedge planting across the District. In partnership with parish and town councils and community groups, help to implement planting using 'Right Tree Right Place' principles Work with ECC to coordinate schemes as part of its Tree Planting Forest Initiative	Now and ongoing	Planning and Sustainability, ECC, Parish and Town Councils, Schools, Landowners	Developer contributions, Capital budget, grant funding for community groups

Engagement and education to encourage behaviour change

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Engagement of residents in community growing projects	Residents to learn about and experience the wildlife attracted by the growing projects. Creation of planted sensory zones for wellbeing and to encourage biodiversity. Involvement of schools with recycling and planting projects. Weekly gardening sessions to learn organic growing methods, how to attract and provide for biodiversity and the health, cultural and	Now and ongoing	Housing and Community Services	Internal budget

	environmental benefits of growing techniques.			
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Monitoring

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Target
% of the high-quality Green Infrastructure projects in the Green Infrastructure Strategy that have been delivered.	0%	56% by 2026
Number of trees planted within the District	Xx (2018/19)	TBC

Draft

Air Quality

Poor air quality arises from sources and activities including; vehicle emissions, industrial processes, domestic and commercial gas and use of other fossil fuels, energy generation, agriculture, non-road mobile machinery, rail and construction activities to name a few. Air pollution is associated with many adverse health impacts including being a recognised contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer.

Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues, because less affluent areas are often more dense, closer to roads and near to industrial areas with poor air quality. The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16 billion. Measures in this plan look to mitigate negative impacts on human health and take into consideration the District's requirements in the local Air Quality Action Plan. There is also the risk of harm to the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), already under pressure due to current traffic levels.

Previous Successes

- Clean Air Day held annually with the aim of improving public understanding and awareness of air pollution and how it affects our health. Also explaining easy action we can all take to tackle air pollution.
- Adoption of anti-idling legislation
- Nitrogen Dioxide is monitored across the District using ongoing assessment, and appropriate action is taken if elevated concentrations are identified. This is reviewed annually.

Actions

Initiative/Activity	Description	Timescale	Portfolio Holder/ Partner	Resource
Liaise with internal departments on the emerging Local Plan ensuring policies facilitate mitigation to protect human health	Develop a guide for developers to outline Council expectations when assessing the impact of development on Air Quality and incorporate appropriate mitigation to minimise any impacts	2021	Commercial and Regulatory Services	Internal budget identified
Reduce concentrations of nitrogen dioxide in the Bell Common AQMA to below the objective	Liaise with Epping Forest Conservators and ECC Highways to improve air quality in the Air Quality Management Area, with the aim of making sufficient progress to continue updating the Air Quality Action Plan.	2021	Commercial and Regulatory Services	Internal budget identified
Reduce impacts of new development on existing receptors and ensure new developments are not subjected to poor air quality	Work with Development Control to update standard conditions on planning applications, ensuring they address current and future issues resulting from development.	2021	Commercial and Regulatory Services	Internal budget identified

Engagement and promotion of incentives to encourage behaviour change

Initiative/Activity	Description	Timescale	Portfolio Holder	Resource
Idling vehicles promotion campaign and enforcement	Continue to raise awareness of the impacts of idling vehicles and that idling is an offence that may lead to a fixed penalty notice (FPN). Use of powers granted to nominated officers in respect of the issuing of FPNs for idling stationary vehicles.	2021	Commercial and Regulatory Services	Internal budget identified
Campaign Raising Awareness of the effects of air pollution on the Epping Forest SAC	Highlight the long-term effects on habitat associated with driving through the Forest. Information on grants, incentives and benefits when switching to electric vehicles.	2021	Planning and Sustainability	Internal budget identified

Monitoring

No specific performance indicators identified; however, District Travel is closely linked to air quality therefore monitoring from this area will inform progress.

Waste

District wide waste and its disposal contributes up to 2% of emissions in the District. Whilst Essex County Council is responsible for decisions relating to the District's waste management disposal options, Epping Forest District Council have a clear ambition to prevent waste going to landfill. Therefore, the Council will continue to encourage residents and organisations to adhere to the waste hierarchy where reduction is the main priority followed by reuse, recycling, recovery and disposal as a last resort.

Through the Local Plan policies and Sustainability Guidance future developments are to explore innovative solutions to reduce waste at the design stage by increasing recycling opportunities and reducing household residual waste. Developers are to provide operational waste strategies, contribute to waste reduction campaigns and design in areas for local food production. New developments within Epping Forest District Council are also expected to promote circular economy outcomes and be designed to reduce construction waste.

Previous Successes

- Various campaigns have been run on a twice-yearly calendar to reduce different sources of waste across the District examples include signing up to reduce plastic waste, home composting, stamp out junk mail, shop Eco and the Food Lovers Cookbook.
- Trial Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) bins were introduced to a sample of flats in December 2020 to encourage recycling of electrical items that would have gone to landfill.
- From June 2020 until present there has been a roll out of further food waste bins in flats to increase recycling rates.

Actions

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder /Partner	Resource
Improve recycling and food waste collection in flatted areas.	Clear and accessible communications at the point of disposal. Consultation with stakeholders to introduce more bespoke collections. Design communal bin areas to increase accessibility and housing of bin compounds	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Facilitate further recycling opportunities for residents	Expansion of WEEE flat collection scheme. Investigate service improvements that would lead to higher recycling rates eg. Hessian sacks, research on mattress recycling.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	TBC for service improvements such as hessian sacks
Development of Personal Digital	To record data and report bin contamination and repairs.	2021 onwards	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified

Assistant (PDA) devices and software	Potential for targeted campaign use.			
Encourage innovation in waste reduction and collection in new developments	Planning applicants are to explore innovative ways to reduce waste at the design stage by increasing recycling opportunities and reducing household residual waste.	2021 onwards	Planning and Sustainability	Developers
Wider provision of recycling bins in public areas	With recycling information for the area on show.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Review of waste contract	To minimise emissions from waste collections and ensure climate change taken into account Review options for waste depot site	2021/22	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Essex Waste Partnership	New legislation under consultation for plastic deposit schemes and waste practices expected in 2030. Work together on county wide initiatives and campaigns.	2023	ECC	TBC

Education and engagement to encourage behaviour change of businesses, organisations and residents

Action	Activities	Timescale	Portfolio Holder /Partner	Resource
Promote good household recycling practices	Information campaign on recycling and contaminants to reduce high contamination rates.	Now and ongoing	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Household waste reduction	Reinvigorate behaviour change through publicity and awareness campaigns	TBC	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Promote a reduction in commercial waste	Educate businesses on circular economy principles to encourage waste reduction Consider supportive business rates and licensing conditions for businesses reducing food waste and/or eliminating single use plastic	2021	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified

Monitoring

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Target
% kerbside waste that is recycled, reused or composted	59%	TBC - 65% by 2030
Total Annual Household Residual Waste Collected	386kg per household per annum	TBC - 345kg per household per annum by 2025

Climate Change Adaption

The expected impacts of climate change in the East of England include both drier, hotter summers and wetter winters. Less rainfall in summer coupled with the Districts growing population, changing land use and a finite supply of water means action to secure availability of water for the future is required now. The Environment Agency has identified the District as being in an area of ‘serious water stress’. It is important that any new development does not lead to an overall increase in demand for water and that general water use in the District is reduced.

The heavier and more frequent rainfall expected in winter will increase the scale and severity of flooding in the District. The incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in new developments will limit surface run off by mimicking natural drainage and encouraging passive infiltration and attenuation. To make effective use of existing and planned drainage infrastructure, rainwater should be managed as a valuable resource rather than a waste product. A multi-functional approach to the delivery of SuDS can help to provide interest in the provision of public open space and increase biodiversity.

Previous Successes

- The Local Plan puts in place an approach which will secure the incorporation of water saving measures and provide targets for water efficiency standards.
- The Sustainability Guidance that supports the Local Plan policies specifies that new developments should make provisions for SuDS, water saving measures and promote the use of rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling measures.

Actions

Action	Activities	Timeline	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Tree planting for flood resilience	100 trees to be planted in the Roding Valley	2021	Environmental and Technical Services	Internal budget identified
Investigate opportunities with partner organisations for example the Environment Agency to support mitigation projects	Opportunities to support work on the River Lee catchment	2021	Environment Agency	

Education and engagement to encourage action from businesses, organisations and residents

Action	Activities	Timeline	Portfolio Holder/ Partners	Resource
Information to residents, businesses and landowners to prepare for predicted climate change effects	Including flooding, water shortages and heat waves. Ventilation and protection from over heating Increase of water storage	TBC		

Encourage retrofit of water conservation measures in housing and businesses	Rainwater harvesting and greywater re-use Promotion of water saving kits	TBC		
Encourage retrofit of measures to protect from overheating in housing and businesses	Passive solar shading methods and low energy ventilation to be explored	TBC		

Draft

Glossary

AQMA - Air Quality Management Areas are designations used by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) to manage areas with air pollution, that are unlikely to meet the Government's national air quality objectives.

Air Quality Action Plan - A document produced by the Council with Natural England setting out the steps that will be taken to reduce pollution within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). This could include steps to reduce car usage and promote public transport.

Biodiversity - The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.

Carbon Footprint - The amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the individual, organisation or community

Carbon Literacy - The awareness of climate change and the impact of humans on the global climate.

Carbon Neutral - no net release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, where some emissions remain these emissions are offset making the overall carbon dioxide emissions zero.

Carbon Offset - the process of trying to reduce the impact of releasing carbon dioxide into the environment by doing other things to remove atmospheric carbon dioxide, for example, by planting trees

Circular Economy - The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended.

Climate Change - A large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures.

Climate Emergency - The intention to take immediate action and develop policy to mitigate climate change beyond current government targets and international agreements.

DRT - Demand-responsive transport is a user-oriented form of passenger transport characterised by flexible routes and smaller vehicles operating in shared-ride mode between pick-up and drop-off locations according to passengers needs

EV – Electric Vehicles.

EPC – Energy Performance Certificate. A requirement under The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 for properties to have a valid EPC (valid for 10 years) when the property is rented or sold. The EPC provides an indicative rating for the energy efficiency of the property and an indicative rating for retrofit improvements that could be made.

Fabric First - buildings are designed so that they are extremely efficient and need less energy than a building of standard construction. This is done through several methods including maximising airtightness, insulation, optimising solar gain using openings and shading, optimising natural ventilation, using thermal mass of the building fabric and using energy generated by occupants and equipment.

GoO – A Guarantee of Origin is a document that proves the origin of electricity from a specific energy source. A guarantee of origin enables the traceability of renewable energy from the producer to the final consumer. It is worth noting that electricity networks provide electricity from mixed sources to the end user the document shows that the share of energy was produced from renewable sources.

Green House Gas - a gas that absorbs infrared radiation and reradiating it back to Earth's surface contributing to the greenhouse effect.

Green Tariff – A portion of or all the electricity purchased is matched by purchased or generation of renewable energy from the energy supplier. Renewable energy can be from sources such as wind, solar, tidal, hydroelectric or nuclear energy. Some tariffs do not contain nuclear energy.

Grey Fleet - is a term used to describe the business miles travelled by an employee in their own vehicle.

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, who published a special report in 2018 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius.

LCWIP - Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

Modal Shift - Modal shift means a switching of energy consumption methods, such as when people switch from fossil fuel reliant forms of transport (such as cars) to sustainable transportation options such as busses, trains and (electric) bicycles.

OZEV – The Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles formerly the Office for Low Emissions Vehicles (OZEV)

Passivhaus - a building in which thermal comfort can be achieved solely by post-heating or post-cooling the fresh air flow required for a good indoor air quality, without the need for additional recirculation of air.

PV – photovoltaics, also known as solar panels. PV is a technology that converts sunlight into electricity through its solar photovoltaic cells.

Renewable Energy - Renewable energy is energy that is collected from renewable resources, which are naturally replenished on a human timescale, such as sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves, and geothermal heat.

REGO – The Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin scheme is administered by Ofgem and gives transparency to consumers about the proportion of electricity that suppliers source from renewable generation.

Retrofit – modifications to existing buildings to improve its energy efficiency and/or decrease energy demand.

SAP – Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the methodology used by the Government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. Its purpose is to provide accurate and reliable assessments of dwelling energy performances that are needed to underpin energy and environmental policy initiatives.

SuDs - Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are drainage solutions that provide an alternative to the direct channelling of surface water through networks of pipes and sewers to nearby watercourses. By mimicking natural drainage regimes, SuDS aim to reduce surface water flooding, improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment. SuDS achieve this by

lowering flow rates, increasing water storage capacity and reducing the transport of pollution to the water environment.

ULEVs - a low emission car or van that emits 75g/km CO₂ or less, based on the NEDC test. ULEVs include pure electric vehicles, electric range-extender vehicles, and plug-in hybrids (PHEVs).

Draft

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-077-2020/21

Date of meeting: 20 April 2020



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Commercial and Regulatory Services – Cllr A. Patel

Subject: Qualis Quarterly Monitoring Report – Q1 2020/21

Responsible Officer: Andrew Small (07548 145665).

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

To discuss this report and agree any actions required.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Governance framework for Qualis, as agreed by Cabinet in February 2020, set the requirement that Qualis should report to Epping Forest District Council on its performance Quarterly.
- 1.2. This report presents the Qualis first Quarter's monitoring report for the Qualis trading year 2020/21 and covers the period from 1 November to 31 January 2021.
- 1.3. Attached to this report as Appendix A is the Qualis Board monitoring report for Quarter 1 as agreed by the Qualis Board on 18 February 2021.
- 1.4. With Housing Maintenance services having transferred to Qualis in Quarter 4 (end of September 2020) of the previous trading year, this quarter represents the first whole quarter of both service delivery activity, commercial investment and regeneration work.
- 1.5. The Covid19 associated delays in delivering elements of the business plan activities last year have now been reflected into the single year Business Plan approved by Council in December 2020. Therefore, this year's targets and delivery milestones should reflect the known obstacles predicted to occur during 2020/21 as a result of ongoing Covid19 impacts.
- 1.6. Performance can therefore fairly be measured against the business plan targets for 2020/21. The Board report highlights performance against these using the recognised Red, Amber, Green reporting system (RAG).
- 1.7. **Noting the objectives flagged as Amber and the explanations provided, Qualis has performed in line with expectations during the first Quarter.**

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The Qualis Shareholder agreement, as agreed by Cabinet on February 2020 includes the following paragraph,

‘The Company shall procure that quarterly management accounts and reports (including a balance sheet, profit and loss account and cash flow statement) containing such information as EFDC may reasonably require are provided to EFDC and EFDC’s Representative.’

- 2.2. The Cabinet resolution also requires that the Council’s S151, as the key conduit between Qualis and the Council, provides a commentary to the Council on the performance of Qualis at each Quarter review.
- 2.3. In compliance with this requirement Qualis has provided the Council with the Quarters’ Management Accounts for the Council consideration together with the commentary below from the Council’s S151 officer.

3. Commentary on the Trading Performance

- 3.1. The Qualis 1st year of operation was non-typical in that Qualis needed to create a management and staffing structure, secure finance and acquire both assets and services to manage before it could properly trade. Whilst this process remains ongoing Qualis had acquired both commercial property and the Housing maintenance by the end of its first operational year.
- 3.2. Whilst the first year was financially dominated by outgoings, the second year should be a balance of income and expenditure with a small forecast profit targeted within the single year Business Plan presented to Council in December. So, this year’s monitoring should be more typical of a trading company, recognising that revenue earnings will still gradually be built up over time.
- 3.3. The Qualis report attached at Appendix A meets the requirements placed upon Qualis within the Shareholder agreement. The Board report presents the Balance Sheets, P&Ls and a Cash Flow explanation. It also RAG rates key quarterly deliverables against the Business Plan.
- 3.4. **Cabinet should note that majority, (24 out of 28), of the deliverables for Quarter 1 are flagged as Green with the exceptions highlighted below.**
- 3.5. **Cash (flagged as Amber)** – Qualis reports as having a Cash balance at the end of the first quarter which is £335,766 (3%) lower than its £11.2 million target. In section 4 this is attributed to delays in securing the final (£10 million) commercial property investment from the balance of the £30 million funding loaned to Qualis in September 2020. Whilst Qualis targeted acquiring an acquisition before this date, it is important that an acquisition is carefully selected for fit, security and return and shouldn’t be unduly pressured in order acquiring a property that sits outside of their acquisition strategy in order to meet business plan cash targets.
- 3.6. **Income and Expenditure (flagged as Amber)** – The Board report includes losses in the 1st quarter of £696,837 (analysed in the table in 3.8) compared to a business plan expectation of a loss of £283,486. The reason given being largely associated with accrued expenditure on development sites which Qualis is unable to charge to its Balance Sheet as Work in Progress until planning consent is given. Once Planning

consent is awarded, this cost will be removed from the Profit and Loss account. Achievement of Planning consent has taken longer than originally anticipated but now has a scheduled date set for the combined applications to be considered by the District Development Committee in July. Should Planning consent not be obtained this cost will remain a charge in the Profit and Loss account until permission is resolved.

3.7. **Roundhills and Pyrles Lane Delivery Plans to Board (flagged as Amber)** – The business cases missed the Board deadline by 18 days. This target was missed by a matter of days and is therefore not considered as a concern.

3.8. The table below sets out the actual net income and expenditure against that expected for each of the Qualis companies.

Qualis Company	Expected £	Actual £	Variance £
Group	20,500	20,003	-497
Commercial	10,981	-434,909	-445,890
Management	-132,157	-237,511	-105,354
Living	-182,811	-44,420	138,391
Total	-283,487	-696,837	-413,350

3.9. The Balance Sheet position, showing Fixed Assets and accumulated net worth of Qualis, is set out in the table below. Fixed Assets are identified as the Council charges these for security purposes against the loans provided. The Net Worth position reflects the accumulation and carry forward of set-up costs to be offset by future planned profits.

Qualis Company	Fixed Assets £	Actual £
Group	-	36,383
Commercial	-	-1,406,645
Management	78,293	-509,464
Living	20,793,122	-227,337
Total	20,871,415	-2,107,063

3.10. Delivery of the £238,039 surplus contained in the single year Business Plan will largely depend upon successfully obtaining planning consent for the Epping regeneration sites. In all other respects the Qualis Business Plan objectives are being met and showing good performance against the individual targets (sections 4 through to 10) on the Qualis Board report), including progress on bringing forward the redevelopment sites in the District.

4. Change of Accounting Date

4.1. Qualis advised the Council that they wished to change their reporting date by 1 month, bringing it forward to the 30th September from the 31st October. This is considered a minor change and aligns better with the Council's budget preparation timetable and so has been agreed. As a consequence, the quarterly reporting cycle will also need to change to align to this revised date and so the next quarter's performance will be for only 2 months, covering February and March 2021. This will not affect the performance, only the dates it is reported.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1. The Epping Forest District Council Medium Term Financial Plan approved in February 2020 includes updated assumptions on the returns and income generated from Qualis.
- 5.2. The assumptions included are as follows;

Loan Purpose	Amount and Term	Interest Payments Per Annum £
Working Capital Loan	£5 million for 5 years	£225,000
Asset Purchase	£30 million 20 years	£1,800,000
EFDC Asset Purchase	£22 million 30 years	£1,605,000
Less EFDC Borrowing Costs		-£1,306,337
Net Receipts		£2,323,663

- 5.3. These assumptions were made pre Covid-19 and the information that underpinned these has now changed. For example, interest rates are now lower and the market value of assets to be transferred has reduced on the latest valuation and taken longer to complete.
- 5.4. Both these factors will reduce the expected gains to Epping Forest District Council and therefore add to the Council's ultimate cost of Covid-19 during 2019/20. Revised assumptions, factoring in the delays resulting from Covid19, have been used in preparing the Councils Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021/22.

6. Legal and Governance Implications

- 6.1. None contained within this report.

7. Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications

- 7.1. None.

8. Consultation Undertaken

- 8.1. None

Background Papers

Group Company Governance Document – Cabinet 6 February 2020



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

Finance and Performance Monitoring Quarterly Report

Year 2, Quarter 1, (1st Nov 2020 – 31st Jan 2021) **Final for EFDC**

- Subject:** Finance and Performance Monitoring
- Author:** Nick Dawe, Group Finance Director (finance)
Paul Hewitt, Group Operations Director (performance)
Sacha Jevans, Group Managing Director (summary)
- Decisions Required:** To approve the report and note the actions.
1. To note the figures and performance highlighted in this report.
 2. To support the key actions detailed in Section 12 of this report.
 3. To agree that this report should be passed to Epping Forest District Council in line with the Shareholder Agreement (with any agreed amendments).



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The Qualis Group Board regularly receives updates on financial and operational issues at its monthly Board Meetings.
- 1.2 In line with the Shareholder Agreement, the Qualis Group Board receives a quarterly Finance and Performance Report that tracks the success of the Group against the (EFDC) agreed Annual Business Plan and Annual Budget.
- 1.3 This formal monitoring will include any Board and subsequently Shareholder approved amendments to the Business Plan and Annual Budget.
- 1.4 The quarterly Qualis Finance and Performance Report will be passed to EFDC to allow scrutiny and to be noted.

2. Monitoring finance and operational performance indicators

- 2.1 The key performance indicators set out below are those proposed to be used for monitoring purposes in the future. They are top level indicators of the financial health and operation delivery of the Qualis group of companies.
- 2.2 Major exceptions are reported as are actions to remedy any exception.
- 2.3 In line with standard practice, the following colour coded performance flags are used:

Colour	Overall Performance	Detailed Measure
	Cyan, exceptional performance	For finance; over twice the expected figure, for operations, over one month ahead of target delivery.
	Green, good performance	For finance; positive performance up to twice the expected figure, for operations, up to one month ahead of target delivery.
	Amber, poor performance but will be remedied next quarter	For finance; negative performance variance of between 5% and 10% of the expected figure, for operations, one and three months behind target delivery.



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

	Red, poor performance but will be remedied in two further quarters	For finance; negative performance variance of between 5% and 10% of the expected figure, for operations, one and three months behind target delivery.
	Black, poor performance requiring immediate Board level intervention	For finance; negative performance variance in excess of 10% of the expected figure, for operations, over three months behind target delivery.

2.4 Direction of travel indicators

These will be: + better than last quarter, - worse than last quarter, = as last quarter.

3. Key performance indicators

Finance KPI	Measure	Target £	Actual £	
Cash	Cash held by Qualis Group of companies, target versus actual	11,206,878	10,871,112	=
Income and Expenditure	Total income and expenditure position of Qualis Group of companies, target versus actual	- 283,486	- 696,837	=
Balance Sheet	Net balance sheet worth of Qualis Group of companies, target versus actual		- 2,188,063	=



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

Operational KPI	Measure	Target	Actual	
Qualis Commercial	Delivery to plan Epping sites	Planning submission for Bakers and Cottis sites	December 2020	=
Qualis Commercial	Delivery to plan Waltham Abby Roundhills site	Business case details due to be received Year 2 Qtr 1	Business case to Board 18 th February 2021	=
Qualis Commercial	Delivery to plan Debden Pyrles Lane site	Business case details due to be received Year 2 Qtr 1	Business case for Pyrles Lane to Board 18 th February 2021	=
Qualis Management	Housing Maintenance improvement in productivity and other measures	Service Level Agreement Key Performance Indicators are near agreement and will appear from Q2 onwards	Early signs of improved productivity	=
Qualis Living	Return on investment asset portfolio.	6% minimum	6.5% (from first two properties)	=



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

4. Budget and business plan amendments this quarter

4.1 There have been no agreed amendments to the budget in respect of an increase in the quantum of income and cost. The adjustments have occurred as a result of the planned usage of the Contingency Reserve and are detailed on the following page.

Adjustments Already Made	Line	Action	WTE Impact	£ Impact
Pressure on Media Resource	Media consultancy	Add	0.00	54,800.00
HR Restructure	Vacancy	Alter	0.00	- 16,862.00
	Recruitment costs	Add	0.00	3,720.00
	Web page	Add	0.00	500.00
Net Impact on Contngency Reserve		Reduce	0.00	- 42,158.00
Total Actioned For Quarter 1			0.00	-

The proposed adjustments for Q2 are estimated as follows.

Adjustments for Quarter 2	Line	Action	WTE Impact	£ Impact
Health and Safety IT		Add		20,000.00
Mainstream IT, Optins and System	Estimate	Add		150,000.00
Benefits Broker	Estimate	Add		5,000.00
Insurance Broker	Estimate	Add		5,000.00
Extension of Auditors Term	Estimate	Add		9,000.00
Community Interest Company Set-up	Estimate	Add		3,000.00
Community Interest Company Primera	Estimate	Add		6,000.00
Community Interest Company Other	Estimate	Add		10,000.00
Net Impact on Conultancy	Estimate	Reduce		- 208,000.00
Total			0.00	-



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

5. Detailed financial performance, cash

5.1 The actual cash held by Qualis at the end of January was £10,871,112 against a target expectation of £11,206,878. The difference is because though two investment properties had been secured and are earning income, a prudent investment in the third asset has yet to present itself, and approximately £135,000 income has not been received.

5.2 Qualis was set-up based on loans supplied by EFDC as these provided certain and affordable funding to Qualis whilst giving EFDC immediate benefit from the margin made in loans. The loans drawn down in the first year are as follows:

- £6m working capital loan (5-year term, repayments of principal and interest half yearly).
- £30m asset investment loan (10-year term, principal repaid on maturity and interest half-yearly).

5.3 Work is continuing with EFDC regarding the finalisation of the remaining loans totalling £85m to cover asset purchases from EFDC and the subsequent development of these sites.

6 Detailed financial performance, balance sheets

6.1 Reflecting the leveraged position of Qualis and the fact that income earning assets have yet to be purchased and the Housing Maintenance Service has transferred with reactive maintenance now being undertaken and void and more extensive works following over the next 24 months. Please note that these are the interim balance sheets pending a review of the income and expenditure position and the finalisation of loans.

6.2 It should be noted that the costs of development projects are by convention treated as “work in progress”, i.e., an asset.

6.3 All loans pass through Qualis Group and therefore any uncalled balance remains shown at group level even if the destination of the loan is another company on the Qualis group of companies.



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

6.4 Qualis Group

		Actual £	Actual £
Assets		-	
Current Assets		35,827,675	
Current Liabilities		541,292	
Current Assets Less Current Liabilities			35,286,383
Long Term Assets			
Long Term Liabilities			35,250,000
Total			36,383
Profit and Loss Reserve			16,380
Profit and Loss Account			20,003
			36,383

6.5 Qualis Commercial



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

		Actual £	Actual £
Assets		-	
Current Assets		3,130,028	
Current Liabilities		4,536,673	
Current Assets Less Current Liabilities			- 1,406,645
Long Term Assets			
Long Term Liabilities			-
Total			- 1,406,645
Profit and Loss Reserve			- 971,737
Profit and Loss Account			- 434,909
			- 1,406,645

6.6 Qualis Management

		Actual £	Actual £
Assets		78,293	
Current Assets		2,117,675	
Current Liabilities		2,786,432	
Current Assets Less Current Liabilities			- 590,464
Long Term Assets			-
Long Term Liabilities			
Total			- 590,464
Profit and Loss Reserve			- 352,953
Profit and Loss Account			- 237,511
			- 590,464

6.8 Qualis Living



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

		Actual £	Actual £
Assets		20,793,122	
Current Assets		- 188,904	
Current Liabilities		20,831,554	
Current Assets Less Current Liabilities			- 227,337
Long Term Assets			
Long Term Liabilities			-
Total			- 227,337
Profit and Loss Reserve			- 182,916
Profit and Loss Account			- 44,420
			- 227,337

7 Detailed financial performance, income and expenditure.

7.1 The income and expenditure summary for the individual companies that form the Qualis Group of companies is summarised below. Note figures are cumulative to the end of Quarter 1 2021.

7.2 Qualis Group



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

	Target Cumulative YTD £	Cumulative Actual £	Variance £
Income	506,070	406,525	- 99,544
Expenditure	485,570	386,523	- 99,047
Net +Profit / -Loss	20,500	20,003	- 497
Tax Liability		-	-
	20,500	20,003	- 497

Key issues to note:

- Not all posts have been filled so expenditure is below budget. Recharges are based on current expenditure, so income is equally below target. In overall terms there is a small loss recorded at the end of Quarter 1, but no underlying concerns and issues need to be raised.

7.3 Qualis Commercial



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

	Target Cumulative YTD £	Cumulative Actual £	Variance £
Income	377,033	-	- 377,033
Expenditure	366,052	319,180	- 46,872
Net +Profit / -Loss	10,981	- 319,180	- 330,161
Loan Interest	-	115,729	115,729
Profit After Loan	10,981	- 434,909	- 445,890

Key issues to note:

- Operational costs incurred in delivering projects the costs that cannot be treated as “work in progress” until planning permission is granted. If the planning determination is positive, costs will be transferred to work in progress and be treated as project costs.

7.4 Qualis Management



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

	Target Cumulative YTD £	Cumulative Actual £	Variance £
Income	1,427,930	1,428,094	165
Expenditure	1,560,086	1,665,605	105,519
Net +Profit / -Loss	- 132,157	- 237,511	- 105,354

Key issues to note:

- The above includes set-up costs incurred before services were transferred from EFDC to Qualis in late September 2020. The original budget assumed that set-up costs would be incurred by EFDC and recovered over a five year Qualis has accepted these costs. This has allowed EFDC to declare an underspend on the Qualis Management set-up budget.

7.5 Qualis Living



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

	Target Cumulative YTD £	Cumulative Actual £	Variance £
Income, (less hand-through)	402,500	376,590	- 25,910
Expenditure	135,311	121,010	- 14,301
Net +Profit / -Loss	267,189	255,580	- 11,609
Loan Interest	450,000	300,000	- 150,000
Profit after Loan	- 182,811	- 44,420	138,391

Key issues to note:

- Delay in acquiring properties has resulted in operational underspend and no income receipt although it should be noted that two properties were acquired in October with a gross yield in excess of 6%.

8. Operational performance, Qualis Group



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

Item	Target	Status
A Risk and Audit Committee has been established	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
A Nominations, Remuneration and Governance Committee has been established	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
The permanent Board has been appointed along with a Company Secretary	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
The one-year Group Business Plan (2020/2021) has been approved	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
Set-up activities in terms of governance and procedures have been drafted and approved (in accordance with the Shareholder agreement).	By end of set-up year.	Achieved

9. Operational performance, Qualis Commercial.

Item	Target	Status
A planning performance agreement has been signed for the Epping Town Centre sites (including Bakers Lane, Cottis Lane, St Johns, Hemnall and Conder)	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
An outline business case has been prepared for the Epping Town Centre sites (including Bakers Lane, Cottis Lane, St Johns, Hemnall and Conder)	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
Planning applications submitted for Bakers and Cottis sites (leisure centre and multi-storey car park)	December 2020	Achieved
Options for the leisure centre operation have been	January 2021	Achieved



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

considered by EFDC Cabinet and details are currently being worked on		
Project managers, quantity surveyors and architects (up to Stage 1) have been appointed for the Epping sites. Consideration of these appointments to Stage 2 is being considered at the February Board	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
A preliminary view of the Waltham Abbey Roundhills site has been carried out and will be considered by the board in February,	February 2020	Pending for Quarter 2 report
A preliminary view of the Debden Pyrles Lane site has been carried out.	February 2020	Pending for Quarter 2 report

10. Operational performance, Qualis Management

Item	Target	Status
Progress with the TUPE plan for the housing maintenance and repairs staff has been agreed.	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
Systems and processes to support the transfer are being delivered to timescale.	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
A staff consultation plan has been agreed and has commenced.	By end of set-up year.	Achieved

11. Detailed operational performance, Qualis Living



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

Item	Target	Status
Acquisition of Wickes, Wyke Hill, Maldon complete	November 2020	Achieved
Acquisition of the Birchwood Building, Leatherhead complete	November 2020	Achieved
Investment strategy has been agreed	July 2020	Achieved
Weekly investment meetings taking place	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
Investment and Development Committee established	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
A strong network with investment agents has been established	By end of set-up year.	Achieved
Opportunity tracking and approval processes have been agreed	By end of set-up year.	Achieved

12. Key Actions for completion in the next quarter

Action	Responsible Manager(s)	Target Date	Resource Implications Over Budget
Qualis Management Complete fine tuning of Housing Maintenance SLA and final confirmation of operational and financial KPIs.	Ben Johnson	March 2021	None
Qualis Living Secure third investment property in Phase 1 of portfolio build	Paul Hewitt	March 2021	Will increase income to budget levels.
Qualis Living	Nick Dawe	May 2021	None



Qualis Group

Qualis Group, Qualis Living, Qualis Management, Qualis Commercial

Secure further loan of £30m as per approved Business Plan			
Qualis Commercial Complete asset purchases from EFDC for Phase 1 properties. Remaining questions currently with EFDC legal.	Paul Hewitt , Chris Ives	March 2021	None
Qualis Commercial Finalise remaining loans of £85m with EFDC as per the approved Business Plan.	Nick Dawe	March 2021	None
Qualis Commercial Confirm impact of EFDC retaining ownership of Bakers, recovering costs spent to date and confirm Development Management role	Paul Hewitt / Nick Dawe	March 2021	None

13. Summary statement from the Group Managing Director

The Qualis Group of companies continue to deliver its objectives and systems for reviewing financial and operational performance are in place. Qualis should achieve all agreed objectives by the end financial year ended 30th September 2021, (note date change to align with normal quarter date)

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