

# EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Committee:** Cabinet **Date:** Monday 4 December 2023

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 7.30 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors N Bedford (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair), R Balcombe, S Patel, J Philip, H Whitbread and K Williamson

**Other Councillors:** Councillors R Brookes, S Heap, J Parsons and J M Whitehouse

**Other Councillors (Virtual):** Councillors C McCredie and D Wixley

**Apologies:** C Whitbread and S Kane

**Officers Present:** G Blakemore (Chief Executive), T Carne (Corporate Communications Team Manager), J Gould (Strategic Director and Chief Operating Officer), V Messenger (Democratic Services Officer), R Moreton (Corporate Communications Officer), A Small (Strategic Director, Corporate and Section 151 Officer), J Warwick (Service Director (Contracts, Partnerships and Procurement)) and G Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services)

**Officers Present (Virtually):** N Finney (Interim Implementation Team Manager) and M Picking (Democracy & Elections Apprentice)

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## 63. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Deputy 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.

## 64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Members' Code of Conduct.

## 65. MINUTES

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 November 2023 be taken as read and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

## 66. REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

There were no verbal reports made by Members of the Cabinet on current issues affecting their areas of responsibility.

**67. 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.

**68. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

The Chairman, Councillor D Wixley, reported that at the last meeting on 21 November 2023 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed the draft Place Delivery Strategy for Epping Forest District. Also, members pre-scrutinised the Qualis Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring Report and Qualis Business Plan. The Committee heard that Mr B Johnson was the new Chair of the Group Board, and the Financial Director was Mr A Howarth. On the 12 December, the Committee and the Cabinet would be discussing the draft budget for 2024/25 but the meeting would be held in private session.

**69. RISK MANAGEMENT - CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

Councillor J Philip (Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder) reported that the Audit and Governance Committee had reviewed risk management and the Corporate Risk Register at its meeting on 30 November 2023. The Portfolio Holder emphasised the importance of delivering a balanced budget. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be looking at the draft budget on 12 December 2023. The Council had to have a balanced budget and that was a risk. In relation to Shared Services if business was being delivered then it was working. Shared Services had the potential to help EFDC going forward and in the future.

Councillor C McCredie remarked that climate change (reference SUS001) was in the red category so would this meet the target of net zero in 2030? The Portfolio Holder replied that the Risk Register showed the likelihood against the impact of risk and more detail was given on page 20 of the agenda for SUS001. This was what EFDC could achieve and mitigate the risk as much as possible.

The report set out the options considered, if any, and the reasons for the recommendation and the decision.

**Decision:**

- (1) That the Cabinet approved the current Corporate Risk Register and considered that the risks were appropriately scored.
- (2) That the Cabinet considered there were not any new or emerging risks to the Corporate Risk Register that should be referred to the officer Risk Management Group.
- (3) That the Cabinet approved the revised Risk Management Policy and Strategy.

**70. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LOCAL PLAN**

Councillor N Bedford (Place Portfolio Holder) introduced the report which provided the Cabinet with an update on the progress of Local Plan implementation in relation to the Strategic Masterplans, Concept Framework Plans and Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) within the District, including major projects and planning applications dealt with by the team. The Infrastructure Funding Statement to financial year 2022/2023 set out s106 legal agreements completed in that year, the types and

values of contributions included in the agreements and the monies paid to the Council.

District & County Councillor H Whitbread commented that Essex County Council Highways were consulted on planning applications but did not consult with the Local Highways Panel (LHP) or on detailed schemes Essex County Councillors were involved with. What extra steps would the Council be taking as she recommended that County Councillors were consulted on draft master plan applications? N Finney (Interim Implementation Team Manager) replied that on large schemes the County Council was involved with pre-application negotiations, which went beyond highway safety. He did take the LHP on board and would feature it in the future. He agreed with Councillor H Whitbread that County Councillors would be consulted on draft master plan applications.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked if s106 values were indexed linked for interest. N Finney replied s106 monies were index linked to the point they were paid and then spent as soon as possible, given the inflation situation. There was a large amount in the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (EFSAC) mitigation monies. Some had been passed to the City of London Corporation, other s106 monies covered air quality mitigation schemes, affordable housing provision for EFDC Housing and primary healthcare, as the new Integrated Care Board was established.

Councillor D Wixley asked about the mitigation measures the monies were being spent on for Epping Forest. N Finney replied that a range of measures were being investigated and some monies were being used on monitoring and updated traffic surveys. Councillor J Philip advised Councillor Wixley to look at the Council minutes during 2016 when he gave a response on this.

Councillor J Philip sought clarification in Appendix A on the 'Delivery due to commence dates' for the Masterplan and Concept Frameworks areas. Councillor N Bedford replied that discussions were taking place on the hospital in East Harlow and developers had come forward. The Quality Review Panel were reviewing planning proposals on development schemes, so there was ongoing progression.

The report set out the options considered, if any, and the reasons for the recommendation and the decision.

**Decision:**

- (1) That the Cabinet noted the progress of Strategic Masterplans and Concept Frameworks, including the use of Planning Performance Agreements and the progress of proposals at pre-application and application stage (see Appendix A of the agenda report).
- (2) That the Cabinet agreed the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/2023 (see Appendix B of the agenda report) for online publication by 31 December 2023.

**71. AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR OFF-STREET PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

Since 2016, off-street parking enforcement had been undertaken through a parking enforcement contract with Marston Holding Ltd (via NSL Limited) which expired on 31 March 2024. A new contract for off-street car park enforcement was required from 1 April 2024. Therefore, a tendering exercise had been undertaken to procure the enforcement services and achieve best value for money. Following the evaluation of tenders, it was recommended that the contract for off-street enforcement be awarded

to Marston Holdings Ltd, the Council's incumbent contractor. Councillor J Philip stated that the cost of the contract would be funded from the existing parking enforcement contract budget. As the new contract would generate a saving to the Council, it was important not to spend more money than the Council brought in.

The report set out the options considered, if any, and the reasons for the recommendation and the decision.

**Decision:**

- (1) That the Cabinet agreed the contract for off-street parking enforcement be awarded to Marston Holdings Ltd from 1st April 2024 for a period of five (5) years with an option to extend by two (2) years.
- (2) That the Cabinet agreed the yearly contract cost of £229,830.03, subject to yearly uplift of CPI, be allocated from the existing budget provision.
- (3) That the Cabinet agreed to the trialling of IPS pay & display machines at two car parks (free of charge by the contractor) to enable EFDC to assess its performance and consider replacing the existing parking equipment.

**72. CALENDAR OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2024/25**

G Woodhall (Democratic and Electoral Services Team Manager) outlined the report, which the Cabinet considered each year prior to its final approval by the Council. The calendar of meetings has been developed over time to meet the changing needs of the authority and no fundamental changes have been proposed for 2024/25. Next year's religious festivals and Party conference dates had been taken into consideration.

The report set out the options considered, if any, and the reasons for the recommendation and the decision.

**Decision:**

That the Cabinet agreed to recommend to the Council for adoption the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2024/25 (see Appendix A of the agenda report).

**73. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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

**CHAIRMAN**