



NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

You are hereby summoned to a meeting of the EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL to be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 19 December 2023 for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the agenda.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Blakemore'.

Georgina Blakemore
Chief Executive

**Democratic Services
Officer:**

Gary Woodhall Tel: (01992) 564243
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

WEBCASTING/FILMING NOTICE

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. The meeting may also be otherwise filmed by third parties with the Chairman's permission.

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 entering the Chamber and using the lower public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for web casting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the upper council chamber public gallery area or otherwise indicate to the Chairman before the start of the meeting.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Public Relations Manager on 01992 564542.

BUSINESS

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

This meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to activate their microphones before speaking. The Democratic and Electoral Services Team Manager will read the following announcement:

“The Chairman 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).

If you are seated in the lower public seating area it is likely that the recording cameras will capture your image and this will result in the possibility that your image will become part of the broadcast.

This may infringe your human and data protection rights and if you wish to avoid this you should move to the upper public gallery.”

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To be announced at the meeting.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

4. MINUTES (Pages 6 - 75)

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the following meetings held on:

- (a) 4 April 2023 (attached);
- (b) 25 May 2023 (attached);
- (c) 25 July 2023 (attached); and
- (d) 5 October 2023 (attached).

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (a) Chairman’s Announcements

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

To answer questions asked after notice in accordance with the provisions contained within Part 4 of the Council Rules of the Constitution on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District:

- (a) to the Leader of the Council;
- (b) to any Portfolio Holder; or
- (c) to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Questions, if any, will follow if not received in time to be incorporated into the agenda.

7. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

To answer questions asked after notice in accordance with the provisions contained within the Council's rules in Part 4 of the Constitution on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the District:

- (a) to the Chairman of the Council;
- (b) to the Leader of the Council;
- (c) to any Member of the Cabinet; or
- (d) the Chairman of any Committee or Sub-Committee.

The Council's rules provide that answers to questions under notice may take the form of:

- (a) direct oral answer;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner.

Answers to questions falling within (a) and (b) above will be made available to the member asking the question one hour before the meeting. Answers to questions falling within (c) above will be circulated to all councillors.

Questions, if any, will follow if not received in time to be incorporated into the agenda.

8. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER & MEMBERS OF THE CABINET (Pages 76 - 110)

To receive reports and any announcements from the Leader and members of the Cabinet on matters falling within their area of responsibility:

- (a) Report of the Leader of Council (verbal);
- (b) Report of the Place Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (c) Report of the Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (d) Report of the Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (e) Report of the Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (f) Report of the Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder (attached);
- (g) Report of the Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder (attached); and
- (h) Report of the Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder (attached).

9. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

The Council's rules provide for questions by any member of the Council to the Leader or any Portfolio Holder, without notice on:

- (i) reports under the previous item; or
- (ii) any other matter of a non operational character in relation to the powers and duties of the Council or which affects all or part of the District or some or all of its inhabitants.

The Council's rules provide that answers to questions without notice may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer from the Leader or, at the request of the Leader, from another member of the Cabinet;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication;
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner; or
- (d) where the question relates to an operational matter, the Leader or a member of the Cabinet will request that a response be given direct to the questioner by the relevant Service Director.

In accordance with the Council's rules, a time limit of thirty minutes is set for questions. Any question not dealt with within the time available will receive a written reply. The Chairman may extend this period by up to a further ten minutes at their discretion.

10. MOTIONS

To consider any motions, notice of which has been given under the Council's rules.

Motions, if any, will follow if not received in time to be incorporated into the agenda.

11. REPORT OF THE MEMBER REMUNERATION PANEL - MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2024/25 (Pages 111 - 138)

Chairman of the independent Member Remuneration Panel, S Lye, to present a report to the Council recommending the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2024/25.

12. APPROVAL OF THE INTER-AUTHORITY AGREEMENT FOR THE HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN JOINT COMMITTEE (Pages 139 - 207)

(Place Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report of the Cabinet recommending approval of the Inter-Authority Agreement for the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee.

13. COUNCIL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024/25 (Pages 208 - 212)

(Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder) To consider the attached report requesting approval for the Calendar of Meetings in 2024/25.

14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To receive the report of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to answer any questions without notice asked in accordance with Council Rules.

15. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS & EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

(a) To receive from Council representatives the reports (attached - if any) on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations and to receive answers to any questions on those bodies which may be put without notice; and

(b) To request written reports from representatives on joint arrangements and external organisations for future meetings.

16. 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 for four years after the date of the meeting one copy of each of the documents on the list of background papers.

Agenda Item 4

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 4 April 2023, 7.00 pm - 8.45 pm

Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Members Present:	Councillors M Sartin (Chairman), D Sunger (Vice-Chairman), I Allgood, C Amos, R Balcombe, R Baldwin, R Bassett, N Bedford, P Bhanot, P Bolton, H Brady, R Brookes, L Burrows, S Heather, J Jogia, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Lea, J Leppert, A Lion, J Lucas, T Matthews, J McIvor, L Mead, R Morgan, S Murray, C Nweke, J Parsons, A Patel, S Patel, J Philip, Caroline Pond, C C Pond, K Rizvi, P Stalker, D Stocker, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, K Williamson, D Wixley and S Yerrell
Apologies:	Councillor(s) N Avey, D Barlow, E Gabbett, I Hadley, S Heap, R Jennings, J Jennings, C McCredie, M Owen, R Pugsley, S Rackham and B Vaz
Officers In Attendance:	Georgina Blakemore (Chief Executive), Andrew Small (Strategic Director, Corporate and Section 151 Officer), Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services) and Natalie Cole (Corporate Communications Officer)
Officers In Attendance (Virtually):	Jennifer Gould (Strategic Director and Chief Operating Officer) and Vivienne Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

[A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING](#)

79 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

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

80 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

81 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

(1) That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 February 2023 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record; and

(2) That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 March 2023 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

82 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (a) Harlow Rotary Club Abseil

The Chairman informed the Council that she would be undertaking the abseil down the water tower in Harlow, organised by the Harlow Rotary Club, in aid of her chosen charity and would welcome any sponsorship from Members.

(b) Essex High Sheriff

The Chairman announced that she had attended the declaration of the new High Sheriff for Essex in Chelmsford.

83 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

The questions received from members of the public, together with the answers, are attached as an Appendix to these minutes.

84 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

The Council noted that there were no questions by members under notice that had been submitted for consideration at this meeting.

85 REPORTS FROM THE LEADER & MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received written reports from Portfolio Holders. The Chairman invited the Leader of Council to provide an oral report and the opportunity for other members of the Cabinet to give updates on matters concerning their relevant portfolios.

(a) Leader of the Council

The Leader of Council reported that he had attended various meetings, including at City Hall to discuss London and the South-East planning issues, with other Leaders and Chief Executives from North Essex, as well as regular meetings with the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and Qualis Boards.

The report of the Leader of Council was noted.

(b) Place Portfolio Holder

The report of the Place Portfolio Holder was noted.

(c) Finance Portfolio Holder

The Finance Portfolio Holder added that the contract for the North Weald Airfield Market had been extended to the end of 2024 with a rent increase applied. It was good for both the Airfield and North Weald that the Market would be continuing.

The report of the Finance Portfolio Holder was noted.

(d) Housing & Community Portfolio Holder

The Housing & Community Portfolio Holder reported that the Council would receive £1.6million for the de-carbonisation of its properties. This would cover 130 Council-owned properties, particularly in the rural areas of the District.

The Portfolio Holder also added her thanks to Mr N Allston for his work as the High Sheriff of Essex.

The report of the Housing and Community Portfolio Holder was noted.

(e) Wellbeing & Community Partnerships Portfolio Holder

The report of the Wellbeing & Community Portfolio Holder was noted.

(f) Customer Portfolio Holder

The Customer Portfolio Holder requested Members to report any issues that they might experience, following the improvements to the website, to the Customer Services Team.

The report of the Customer Portfolio Holder was noted.

(g) Contracts & Commissioning Portfolio Holder

The report of the Contracts & Commissioning Portfolio Holder was noted.

(h) Technical Services Portfolio Holder

The report of the Technical Services Portfolio Holder was noted.

(i) Internal Resources Portfolio Holder

The report of the Internal Resources Portfolio Holder was noted.

86 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

The questions by Members without notice, and the answers given, can be viewed in full as part of the recording of the meeting available on the Council's YouTube channel; a link to which is available on page 1 of these minutes.

<u>Question asked by:</u>	<u>Question asked to:</u>	<u>Subject of the Question:</u>
Cllr J H Whitehouse	Technical Services Portfolio Holder Cllr K Williamson	The Council's response to the Government consultation on planning fee increases.
Cllr S Murray	Leader of the Council Cllr C Whitbread	Progress with internal investigation within Qualis.
Cllr T Matthews	Leader of the Council Cllr C Whitbread	Addressing the issue of potholes in rural areas.
Cllr L Mead	Internal Resources Portfolio Holder Cllr S Kane	Not being able to pay by cash for parking within the District.
Cllr S Heather	Housing & Communities Portfolio Holder Cllr H Whitbread	Update on Safer Streets scheme on the Ninefields estate, Waltham Abbey.
Cllr C Pond	Finance Portfolio Holder Cllr J Philip	Cost of compulsory redundancies, within the Council and Qualis.
Cllr D Wixley	Internal Resources Portfolio Holder Cllr S Kane	Reasons for holding the Election Count at the Waltham Abbey Marriot and not the Civic Offices.
Cllr C Nweke	Housing & Communities	Future plans for the

	Portfolio Holder Cllr H Whitbread	Oakwood Hill Estate, Loughton.
Cllr K Rizvi	Housing & Communities Portfolio Holder Cllr H Whitbread	Launch of Limes Farm Youth Club.
Cllr J McIvor	Housing & Communities Portfolio Holder Cllr H Whitbread	Use of Council-funded Police Officers to combat anti-social behaviour in North Weald.
Cllr J Parsons	Technical Services Portfolio Holder Cllr K Williamson	Measures being taken to combat fly tipping within the District.
Cllr I Allgood	Housing & Communities Portfolio Holder Cllr H Whitbread	Provision for new one-stop shop within Loughton following the closure of the Debden Cash Office.
Cllr J H Whitehouse	Leader of the Council Cllr C Whitbread	Update on the move of the Epping Library and a new café to the Civic Offices.

87 MOTIONS

The Chairman reported that there were no motions to be considered at the meeting.

88 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2023/24 AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURE

The Chairman of the Constitution Working Group, Cllr P Bhanot, presented a report on proposed changes to the Council's Scrutiny Committee structure for 2023/24. This involved the Stronger Council Select Committee being amalgamated with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and the two remaining Select Committees being renamed the Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Place Scrutiny Committee. In addition, it was also being proposed that nominations for all three Scrutiny Committees should be undertaken by the Appointments Panel in future, and that the position of Chairman for all three Scrutiny Committees should be filled by a member outside of the majority group.

The Internal Resources Portfolio Holder, Cllr S Kane, presented the rest of the report which sought agreement for the Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24, and that only the Chairman of a Committee should receive a paper copy of the agenda in future.

Cllr C Whitbread proposed an amendment to recommendation 1(f), seconded by Cllr J Philip, such that only the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee need be chaired by a Member outside the majority group not all three Scrutiny Committees. Some Members felt that all three Scrutiny Committees should be chaired by a Member outside of the majority group, as originally proposed by the Constitution Working Group, and one member suggested that this should be referred back to the Constitution Working Group for further consideration.

The amendment was carried.

Cllr C Whitbread proposed an amendment to recommendation (3), seconded by Cllr J Philip, such that the frequency of meetings for Area Plans Sub-Committees East and South should remain at their current four weeks. Both Sub-Committees met regularly and had full agenda for their meetings, and therefore it was sensible to retain their current four-weekly cycle. Area Plans Sub-Committee West and the District Development Management Committee would change to a six-weekly cycle of meetings as originally proposed.

The amendment was carried.

A small number of Members questioned the need for only the Chairman of a Committee to receive a printed copy of the agenda, and not the other members of the Committee as well. However, it was highlighted that the provision of paper agenda to Councillors incurred a cost to the Council and that it was time for Councillors to go digital.

Resolved:

(1) That the following proposed changes from the Constitution Working Group to the Council's Scrutiny Committee structure be approved:

(a) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be retained on the Council's Committee list;

(b) That the Stronger Council Select Committee be removed from the Council's committee list and its work programme be absorbed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

(c) That the Stronger Communities and Stronger Place Select Committees be retained on the Council's committee list and their work programmes continue to be aligned with the corresponding key themes within the Council's Corporate Plan;

(d) That the two select committees be renamed as the Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Place Scrutiny Committee;

(e) That nominations for all three Scrutiny committees be undertaken by the Appointments Panel and recommended to the Annual Council meeting for approval each year – therefore, the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June would not be required;

(f) That the position of Chairman for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be filled by a member outside of the majority group but experienced in scrutiny matters;

(g) That the position of Vice-Chairmen for all Overview and Scrutiny Committees need not all be filled outside of the majority group; and

(h) That the Monitoring Officer be delegated authority to make the necessary revisions within the Constitution to implement the changes above;

(2) That only the Chairman of Committees receive paper copies of agenda for their meetings from 2023/24; and

(3) That, as attached at Appendix 1, the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2023/24 be adopted, subject to the following changes:

(a) Area Plans Sub-Committee East to meet every four weeks; and

(b) Area Plans Sub-Committee South to meet every four weeks.

89 GAMBLING ACT 2005 - STATEMENT OF LICENSING PRINCIPLES

The Chairman of the Licensing Committee, Cllr R Morgan, presented a report on the reviewing

of the Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act 2005. All licensing authorities were obliged to publish a statement of licensing principles which they proposed to apply under the Act, and the Statement had to be reviewed every three years. Some minor amendments had been made to reflect the latest guidance.

Resolved:

- (1) That the revised Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act 2005 be adopted.

90 AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

The Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee, Cllr P Bolton, presented the Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report for 2021/22. The Committee had acknowledged that there had been issues with the external Auditor, hence it had been decided to seek a new provider.

The Finance Portfolio Holder, Cllr J Philip, thanked the Audit & Governance Committee for their diligence throughout the year. The position with the external Auditor was not acceptable, as the Statement of Accounts from two years ago had not yet been signed off. However, the failing of external Audit contracts was a national problem, and the Council would not want to see its fees rise as a result. Cllr J Philip stated that he would have further discussions with the external Auditor.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report for 2021/22 be noted.

91 ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY

The Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee, Cllr P Bolton, presented a report on the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy. Minor changes had been made in relation to the types of fraud to include some new responsibilities, and the Council was requested to approve the revised Strategy.

Cllr P Bolton added that the Council had yet to deal with any whistle-blowing issues, and that the Council's risk register was assessed on a regular basis with the general trend for the risks being downwards.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy be approved.

92 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS & EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

The Council noted the reports provided from the Grange Farm Centre Trust, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, and the Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership. Cllr H Kane added that the Royal Gun Powder Mills would be opening on Saturday 15 April 2023 with many activities available for visitors, and that the Waltham Abbey Town Centre Partnership had been very active in recent months.

(1) Question from J Nutton to Cllr N Avey, Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio Holder and wider Council Members:

"Despite having first brought this to the Council's attention prior to Covid Lockdowns - the state of the pathway between Centre Drive and Epping Tube Station is worsening and little, if anything, was being done to clear the litter or remove the graffiti (see attached pictures attached to the agenda). I would appreciate your views on this matter and some help in getting the problem resolved as soon as possible.

I would also like to ask the Council for an update on their 'Litter Strategy' that was passed last year, as there doesn't seem to have been any movement on this since. In the meantime, Epping and the surrounding streets are becoming a dumping ground."

Response from Cllr K Williamson, Technical Services Portfolio Holder, on behalf of Cllr N Avey:

"In response to the questions that you raise regarding the state of litter and graffiti on the pathway between Centre Drive and Epping Tube Station and what is being done, I can confirm that the location of the litter is not on the pathway, the pathway is kept clear and clean. The location of the litter is between fences on private land; therefore, it is the landowner's responsibility to remove this litter. Most of the litter is inaccessible due to fences that the private landowner has put up.

EFDC's Environmental Protection Team and Waste Management Team are working on a joint project to resolve the litter and graffiti issue and improve the area. As this is not public land, we require the co-operation of the private landowner to proceed and remove the rubbish and graffiti, which can take a considerable amount of time. The rubbish cannot be accessed as the landowner has erected a fence which traps the litter and will need to be removed to access the litter. Please be rest assured that we are working to improve the situation and remove both the litter and graffiti as soon as possible.

In terms of the litter strategy, EFDC continues to support national campaigns such as 'Keep Britain tidy' and clean up days through volunteering, supporting groups with equipment and collection of waste and use of social media. EFDC provides support to litter pick schemes with the public and internal and external partners by providing equipment, advice and guidance and the collection of litter. EFDC uses and promotes the Love Essex (an umbrella brand that acts on behalf of the Essex Waste Partnership and the Cleaner Essex group) messages via various media platforms. Through the Love Essex brand, we aim to inspire Essex residents to reduce the amount of waste they throw away, recycle more, and reduce environmental crimes such as littering and fly-tipping."

(2)) Question from D Saunders to Cllr H Whitbread, Housing & Community Portfolio Holder:

"Can the Cabinet Member for Housing and Community tell me about the £5million regeneration works for the Limes Farm Estate, and in particular, provide an update on the progress made to date and what is due to happen next?"

Response from Cllr H Whitbread, Housing & Community Portfolio Holder:

"We are pleased to confirm the regeneration works to the Limes Farm Estate have recently commenced (30 January 2023) with the site compound now set up and the early stages of scaffolding ongoing.

The Council's successful contracting partner's undertaking the works are Equan's Regeneration Ltd and they have been appointed following a successful procurement process to undertake the below planned maintenance and regeneration works:

- Roof repairs
- A review of all rainwater goods and remediation as necessary
- External cladding/brickwork and concrete repairs as necessary
- Replacement window and balcony doors
- Replacement of Front Entrance Doors with new Fire safe FD30 doors.
- Overcoating of walkway surfaces.
- Improvement works to the external staircases
- Balcony works as necessary to ensure all are watertight
- External communal lighting upgrades
- New controlled access systems
- Repairs to pram sheds
- Fire Risk Assessment works
- Redecoration of all previously painted surfaces including internal communal areas
- New vinyl floor coverings to internal communal areas
- Repair of public footpaths around the estate
- A review of below ground drainage and repairs as necessary
- Regeneration improvements, these include, new benches, new soft landscaping areas, new estate signage, outdoor gym space.

By way of a more recent works progress update see below:

- Scaffolding is ongoing to Yellow and Green blocks as well as block 216-230 Limes Avenue.
- 90% of windows and doors have been measured to these blocks.
- The window replacement pilot has been installed and agreed. Windows to green block have subsequently been ordered and await install.
- Fire safety works are ongoing
- Agree the level of works to the balconies and walkways
- Paint samples across the estate have been agreed. These allude to previously painted areas and will best match the existing colour scheme.
- The upgrade of controlled access entrances to blocks is ongoing.

In terms of what happens next:

- The project will continue to deliver the above works in accordance with Equan's programme. The completion date is early January 24. Most window and front entrance door installations will take place over the Spring/Summer months this year
- The project will continue daily communications with residents. Our next official residents progress meeting is 12 April 23."

	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24
Council	25		25			3		19		20		9	23
A&G		29	27				30			16	28		
Cabinet	30		10	21		9	13	4	15	5	18		
O&S			18			24			23			23	
Communities		27			26				16		5		
Place			4		19				9	27			
Appointment Panel	11,18												9, 16
Constitution Working Group			13			19					14		
GLC		15								1			
Licensing Committee				15							19		
Licensing Sub-Committee (Day Time)	16	6	11	1, 29	12,26	3,31	7,28	5,19	30	6,20	12	2,23	
DDMC		28		9	20		1	13	24		6	17	
Area Planning Sub-Committee South		21	19	16	13	11	8	6	3, 31	28	27	24	
Area Planning Sub-Committee East		7	5	2, 30	27	25	22	20	17	14	13	10	
Area Planning Sub-Committee West	31		12	23		4	15		10	7	20		

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday 25 May 2023, 7.00 pm - 8.55 pm

Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Members Present:	Councillors , D Sunger (Vice-Chairman), I Allgood, C Amos, R Balcombe, D Barlow, R Baldwin, R Bassett, N Bedford, P Bhanot, P Bolton, H Brady, R Brookes, L Burrows, E Gabbett, A Green, S Heap, S Heather, R Jennings, J Jennings, J Jogia, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Lea, J Lucas, M Markham, T Matthews, C McCredie, L Mead, L Morgan, R Morgan, S Murray, C Nweke, M Owen, L Paine, J Parsons, A Patel, S Patel, J Philip, Caroline Pond, C C Pond, K Rizvi, R Sharif, D Stocker, B Vaz, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, K Williamson, D Wixley and S Yerrell
Apologies:	Councillor(s) I Hadley, A Lion, C McCann, J McIvor and R Pugsley
Officers In Attendance:	Andrew Small (Strategic Director, Corporate and Section 151 Officer), Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services), Nathalie Boateng (Service Manager (Legal) & Monitoring Officer), Tom Carne (Corporate Communications Team Manager), Natalie Cole (Corporate Communications Officer) and Pat Seager (Chairman's Officer)
Officers In Attendance (Virtually):	Georgina Blakemore (Chief Executive), Jennifer Gould (Strategic Director and Chief Operating Officer) and Laura Kirman (Democratic Services Officer)

[A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING](#)

1 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

2 DISTRICT COUNCIL ELECTIONS - 4 MAY 2023

The Chairman welcomed the newly elected* and re-elected members of the Council at the election held on 4 May 2023.

Councillor	Ward
Andrew Green*	Broadley Common, Epping Upland & Nazeing
Aniket Patel	Buckhurst Hill West
Paul Keska	Chipping Ongar, Greensted & Marden Ash
Cherry McCredie	Epping Hemnall
Razia Sharif*	Epping Lindsey & Thornwood Common
Lisa Morgan*	Grange Hill
Richard Morgan	Hastingwood, Matching & Sheering Village
Craig McCann*	Lambourne

Richard Bassett	Lower Nazeing
Lesley Paine*	Lower Sheering
Jaymey Mclvor	North Weald Bassett
Chris Whitbread	Roydon
Nigel Bedford	Shelley
Sam Kane	Waltham Abbey Honey Lane
Jodie Lucas	Waltham Abbey North East
Maria Markham*	Waltham Abbey Paternoster
Joseph Parsons	Waltham Abbey South West
Tim Matthews	Waltham Abbey High Beach

3 CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL - YEAR OF OFFICE

M Sartin addressed the Council as the outgoing Chairman.

M Sartin advised the Council that she had served her year of office under two monarchs and three Prime Ministers, which was unlikely to be repeated. Whilst the death of Queen Elizabeth II had been a sad occasion, she had been honoured to read the proclamation of the new King, Charles III.

M Sartin had attended 70 events within the District and beyond, and had met some truly wonderful people who contributed enormously to the District. The other highlights of her year in office included:

- The Civic Carol Service being cancelled due to severe cold weather.
- The Citizen of The Year event having to change venue at short notice.
- Abseiling down the Water Tower in Harlow to raise monies for her chosen charities.
- Raising approximately £2,500 for her chosen charities – St Clare Hospice and the Herts-Essex Air Ambulance.

M Sartin thanked Councillors for appointing her as Chairman for a second time, and for their support throughout the municipal year. M Sartin also thanked the Officers for their support as well, and in particular the support of the Chairman's Secretary, P Seager. The Vice-Chairman of Council, Cllr D Sunger, was thanked for his support throughout the year, and finally M Sartin thanked her family for their support – particularly her husband John.

M Sartin concluded by stating that she had many fond memories from her year as Chairman, and that now was the right time to step down as a Councillor after serving Roydon for 20 years.

Cllr C Whitbread, Cllr J M Whitehouse, Councillor R Brookes, Councillor S Murray, and the Strategic Director, A Small on behalf of the staff, expressed their appreciation for her hard work and dedication throughout her term of office as Chairman and for her service to the Council.

M Sartin then presented Cllr R Morgan with a memento to celebrate his 40 years serving as a District Councillor, and P Seager with flowers.

4 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The nomination of Cllr D Sunger for the office of Chairman of the Council was proposed by Cllr C Whitbread and seconded by Cllr D Stocker.

Resolved:

- (1) That Cllr D Sunger be elected Chairman of the Council for the municipal year 2023/24.

Cllr D Sunger thereupon made a Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Chairman of the Council and presented M Sartin with her Past Chairman's badge.

Cllr D Sunger in the Chair

Cllr D Sunger thanked the Council for the honour, and made special mention of his wife Teri and mother Jaswant who had played such important roles in his life. He was also particularly looking forward to the 50th anniversary of the founding of Epping Forest District Council on 1 April next year.

5 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The nomination of Cllr L Burrows for the office of Vice-Chairman of the Council was proposed by Cllr H Whitbread and seconded by Cllr N Bedford.

Resolved:

- (1) That Cllr L Burrows be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Cllr L Burrows thereupon made a declaration of Acceptance of Office of Vice-Chairman of the Council and was presented with his Vice-Chairman's chain by the Chairman. Cllr L Burrows thanked the Council for his appointment.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

7 MINUTES

The Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager reported that the minutes of the last meeting were not ready but would be available for agreement at a future meeting of the Council.

8 ANNOUNCEMENTS**(a) Announcements by the Chairman of the Council**

Cllr D Sunger announced that his chosen charity for the year was Chigwell Riding Trust and asked Councillors to give generously throughout the year. In addition, if a Councillor's mobile phone went off during a Council meeting then that would incur a £10 fine to his charity.

(b) Members not seeking re-election or not re-elected

The Council noted that N Avey, S Rackham, P Stalker and M Sartin had not sought re-election on 4 May 2023, and J Leppert had not been re-elected.

(c) Long Service Awards

In recognition of their service to the Council, N Avey received a Bronze Long Service award and M Sartin received a Gold Long Service award. Former Cllr B Rolfe would have been entitled to a Silver Long Service award, and this would be presented by the Chairman to his family at a private ceremony on a future date.

9 ELECTION OF LEADER

The nomination of Cllr C Whitbread for the office of Leader of the Council for a four-year term was proposed by Cllr J Philip and seconded by Cllr N Bedford.

Resolved:

(1) That Cllr C Whitbread be elected Leader of the Council for a four-year term of office, as prescribed by Section 44E of the Local Government Act 2000, expiring on the day of the Annual Council meeting in 2027 or following the normal day of retirement of the Leader as a Councillor.

10 REPORT OF THE APPOINTMENT PANEL

The Leader of the Council, Cllr C Whitbread, reported on the appointments which he had made to the Cabinet and Outside Organisations carrying out Executive Functions for 2023/24. Furthermore, he also reported the recommendations of the Appointment Panel in relation to the membership, chairmanship and vice-chairmanship of Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels (non-executive bodies), along with the Outside Organisations carrying out Council, Regulatory or non-Cabinet Functions. The Council voted on any appointments where the number of nominations exceeded the number of places available.

Some of the outstanding nominations for committee places from the political groups were made at the meeting, and the Council noted that any outstanding nominations after tonight would be reported at the Council meeting in June. It was also noted that the Appointments Panel was making recommendations on the membership of the Scrutiny Committees for the first time.

The independent Member, S Murray, had requested a seat on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for 2023/24. The Loughton Residents Association was prepared to give up a seat on the Committee to Cllr S Murray if the membership of the Committee was extended to 17. This would represent a departure from the pro rata requirements and such a deviation would require that no Member of the Council voted against the proposal. This proposal was carried without dissent, and Cllr S Murray thanked the Council for allowing him to sit on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

Resolved:

(1) That, in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the constitution of the political groups be agreed as set out in Appendix 1;

(2) That details of appointments made by the Leader of the Council for Cabinet members carrying out Executive functions as set out in Appendix 2 to this report be received;

(3) That the Membership, Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship of Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels (non-Executive bodies) be approved as set out at Appendix 3 to this report with any outstanding nominations reported at the meeting;

(4) That the group representatives for the purposes of notifying substitute members for meetings be confirmed as follows:

- (a) Conservative Group:
 - Councillor C. Whitbread (Group Leader);
 - Councillor N. Bedford (Deputy Group Leader);
 - Councillor S. Kane; and
 - Councillor A. Patel;
- (b) Green Party Group:
 - Councillor S. Heap (Group Leader); and
 - Councillor E. Gabbett (Deputy Group Leader);
- (c) Liberal Democrat Group:
 - Councillor J. M. Whitehouse (Group Leader); and
 - Councillor J. H. Whitehouse (Deputy Group Leader);
- (d) Loughton Residents Association Group:
 - Councillor C. P. Pond (Group Leader); and
 - Councillor D. Wixley (Deputy Group Leader); and
- (e) Grange Hill Independent Community Group:
 - Councillor D Barlow (Group Leader); and
 - Councillor L Morgan (Deputy Leader);

(5) That appointments to outside organisations carrying out Council regulatory or non-Cabinet functions, as set out at Appendix 4 to this report be approved;

(6) That the appointments to be made by the Leader of the Council to outside organisations carrying out Executive functions, as set out at Appendix 5 be received; and

(7) That Mr Wyn Marshall be re-appointed as a non-voting, co-opted member of the Stronger Communities Select Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

11 SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

The Council's Constitution required that the scheme of delegations be agreed at the Annual meeting. The current scheme had received no further additions or revisions since the last Annual meeting, and therefore did not need to be agreed at this meeting.

12 COUNCIL MEETING DATES FOR 2023/24

On 4 April 2023, the Council had adopted the calendar of meetings for the municipal year May 2023 to May 2024. It was required within the Council's Constitution that the programme of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year were approved at the Annual meeting.

It was highlighted that the Council meeting scheduled for 3 October 2023 clashed with the Conservative Party Conference, and it was noted that this would be discussed with the Group Leaders.

The Leader of Council, Cllr C Whitbread, also took the opportunity to inform the Council of the successful appointment of J Gould as the new Chief Operating Officer.

Resolved:

(1) That ordinary meetings of the Council be held on the following dates during 2023/24:

- 25 July 2023;
- 3 October 2023;
- 19 December 2023;
- 20 February 2024;
- 9 April 2024; and
- 23 May 2024 (Annual meeting).

13 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Council noted that there were no items of business which necessitated the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting.

CHAIRMAN

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING – 25 MAY 2023

CONSTITUTION OF POLITICAL GROUPS AND GROUP LEADERS

Local Government and Housing Act 1989 – Notice of Constitution of Political Groups and Group Leaders

To note in accordance with regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the constitution of political groups as follows:

Conservative Group:

Group Leader – Councillor C Whitbread
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor N Bedford

Councillor A Green	Councillor P Keska	Councillor M Markham
Councillor R Balcombe	Councillor J Lea	Councillor K Rizvi
Councillor R Bassett	Councillor A Lion	Councillor C McCann
Councillor P Bhanot	Councillor J Lucas	Councillor J Parsons
Councillor P Bolton	Councillor T Matthews	Councillor D Stocker
Councillor H Brady	Councillor J McIvor	Councillor D Sunger
Councillor L Burrows	Councillor R Morgan	Councillor B Vaz
Councillor I Hadley	Councillor A Patel	Councillor H Whitbread
Councillor S Heather	Councillor S Patel	Councillor K Williamson
Councillor H Kane	Councillor J Philip	Councillor S Yerrell
Councillor S Kane	Councillor R Pugsley	

Members 34

Green Party Group:

Group Leader - Councillor S Heap
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor E Gabbett

Members 2

Liberal Democrats Group:

Group Leader – Councillor J M Whitehouse
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor J H Whitehouse

Councillor C Amos
Councillor C McCredie
Councillor L Paine
Councillor R Sharif

Members 6

Loughton Residents' Association Group:

Group Leader – Councillor C P Pond
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor D Wixley

Councillor I Allgood
Councillor R Baldwin
Councillor R Brookes
Councillor J Jennings

Councillor R Jennings
Councillor J Jogia
Councillor H Kauffman
Councillor L Mead

Councillor C Nweke
Councillor M Owen
Councillor C C Pond

Members 13

Grange Hill Independent Community Group:

Group Leader – Councillor D Barlow
Deputy Group Leader - Councillor L Morgan

Members 2

CABINET & CABINET COMMITTEES - LEADER APPOINTMENTS**(a) Deputy Leader**

Deputy Leader	N Bedford

(b) Other Cabinet Members/Allocation of Portfolios

Portfolio	Portfolio Holder
Leader	C Whitbread
Place	N Bedford
Finance & Economic Development	J Philip
Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships	H Whitbread
Community Health & Wellbeing	S Patel
Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement	R Balcombe
Regulatory Services	K Williamson
Customer & Corporate Support Services	S Kane

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COMMITTEE ETC. NOMINATIONS 2023/24

AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE EAST (19 MEMBERS) (NOT PRO RATA) *						
	Conservative Group (13)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (6)	Loughton Residents Association Group (0)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (0)
Chairman	I Hadley					
Vice-Chairman	H Brady					
	P Keska		C McCredie			
	B Vaz		J H Whitehouse			
	L Burrows		J M Whitehouse			
	H Whitbread		R Sharif			
	R Morgan		L Paine			
	R Balcombe		C Amos			
	C McCann					
	I Hadley					
	P Bolton					
	J Mclvor					
	H Brady					
	N Bedford					
	J Philip					

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*Membership of Area Plans Sub-Committee East comprises all members for the relevant wards.

AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE WEST (14 MEMBERS) (NOT PRO RATA) *							
		Conservative Group (14)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (0)	Loughton Residents Association Group (0)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (0)
Chairman	Chairman	S Heather					
	Vice-Chairman	D Stocker					
		A Green					
		R Bassett					
		R Pugsley					
		C Whitbread					
		T Matthews					
		S Heather					
		S Kane					
		D Stocker					
		J Lea					
		J Lucas					
		M Markham					
		S Yerrell					
		H Kane					
	J Parsons						

*Membership of Area Plans Sub-Committee West comprises all members for the relevant wards.

AREA PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE SOUTH (25 MEMBERS) (NOT PRO RATA) *							
		Conservative Group (7)	Green Party Group (2)	Liberal Democrat Group (0)	Loughton Residents Association Group (13)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (2)	Independent Members (1)
Page 28	Chairman	K Rizvi					
	Vice-Chairman				R Baldwin		
		A Patel	E Gabbett		I Allgood	D Barlow	S Murray
		S Patel	S Heap		C Nweke	L Morgan	
		K Williamson			M Owen		
		P Bhanot			C C Pond		
		K Rizvi			L Mead		
		D Sunger			D Wixley		
		A Lion			R Baldwin		
					J Jogia		
					R Brookes		
					B Jennings		
					C P Pond		
					J Jennings		
				H Kauffman			

*Membership of Area Plans Sub-Committee South comprises all members for the relevant wards.

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AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (5 MEMBERS PLUS 2 CO-OPTED PERSONS) *							
		Conservative Group (3)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (1)	Loughton Residents Association Group (1)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (0)
	Chairman	The Chairman of the Committee is appointed at first meeting in each municipal year.					
		P Bolton		J M Whitehouse	M Owen		
		T Matthews					
		B Vaz					

*The Vice-Chairmanship of the Audit and Governance Committee is assumed by a co-opted person if the Chairman is a Member, and vice versa.

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CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP (9 MEMBERS)							
		Conservative Group (5)	Green Party Group (1)	Liberal Democrat Group (1)	Loughton Residents Association Group (2)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (0)
	Chairman	A Lion					
	Vice-Chairman			J H Whitehouse			
		J Philip	S Heap	J H Whitehouse	C C Pond		
		R Bassett			H Kauffman		
		J Mclvor					
		P Bhanot					
		A Lion					

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (15 MEMBERS)							
		Conservative Group (9)	Green Party Group (1)	Liberal Democrat Group (2)	Loughton Residents Association Group (3)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (0)
Page 30	Chairman	P Keska					
	Vice-Chairman	T Matthews					
		R Morgan	S Heap	J M Whitehouse	R Baldwin		
		H Brady		C Amos	C C Pond		
		H Kane			H Kauffman		
		S Heather					
		K Rizvi					
		I Hadley					
		K Williamson					
		P Keska					
		T Matthews					

LICENSING COMMITTEE (& LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE) (15 MEMBERS*)

		Conservative Group (9)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (2)	Loughton Residents Association Group (3)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (1)	Independent Members (0)
	Chairman	R Morgan					
	Vice-Chairman				L Mead		
		T Matthews		J M Whitehouse	L Mead	L Morgan	
		D Sunger		R Sharif	C P Pond		
		P Keska			I Allgood		
		S Heather					
		D Stocker					
		A Lion					
		I Hadley					
		R Morgan					
		1 Nomination O/S					
Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen (6)	P Keska R Morgan 1 Nom O/S		J M Whitehouse	C P Pond L Mead			

*The Licensing Act 2003 requires that the Licensing Committee comprise no more than 15 members. Licensing Sub-Committees should comprise no more than 3 members.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (17 MEMBERS*)							
		Conservative Group (10)	Green Party Group (1)	Liberal Democrat Group (2)	Loughton Residents Association Group (3)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (1)
Page 32	Chairman				D Wixley		
	Vice-Chairman	J Mclvor					
		J Lucas	S Heap	J H Whitehouse	D Wixley		S Murray
		H Kane		C McCredie	R Baldwin		
		A Patel			C Nweke		
		J Parsons					
		R Bassett					
		C McCann					
		S Heather					
		R Pugsley					
		M Markham					
		J Mclvor					

*(*Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be extended to seventeen members for 2023/24, providing an additional seat on the Committee for the Conservative Group and the Loughton Residents Association Group. To accommodate a request for independent member representation on the Committee for the year, the Loughton Residents Association Group intends to relinquish its additional seat arising from the extension of membership, in order that this position may be filled by Councillor S. Murray. Membership of the Committee is required to be appointed on a pro rata basis and such deviation requires that no member of the Council voted against this arrangement.)*

COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (11 MEMBERS)							
		Conservative Group (6)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (1)	Loughton Residents Association Group (3)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members (1)
	Chairman	A Patel					
	Vice-Chairman	J Lucas					
		S Yerrell		R Sharif	R Brookes		S Murray
		C McCann			J Jogia		
		M Markham			C P Pond		
		J Lea					
		A Patel					
		J Lucas					

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (11 MEMBERS*)							
		Conservative Group (6)	Green Party Group (1)	Liberal Democrat Group (1)	Loughton Residents Association Group (2)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (1)	Independent Members (0)
Page 34	Chairman	H Kane					
	Vice-Chairman	J Parsons					
		R Pugsley	E Gabbett	L Paine	C Nweke	D Barlow	
		B Vaz			I Allgood		
		R Bassett					
		A Lion					
		H Kane					
		J Parsons					

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STANDARDS COMMITTEE (9 MEMBERS)							
		Conservative Group (5)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (1)	Loughton Residents Association Group (2)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (1)	Independent Members (0)
	Chairman				C P Pond		
	Vice-Chairman						
		R Morgan		C Amos	C P Pond	D Barlow	
		K Williamson			L Mead		
		H Whitbread					
		H Kane					
		J Philip					

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SENIOR MANAGEMENT SELECTION PANEL (7 MEMBERS)							
		Conservative Group (4)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (1)	Loughton Residents Association Group (2)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (0)	Independent Members
	Chairman	C Whitbread					
	Vice-Chairman	J Philip					
		N Bedford		J M Whitehouse	O/S Nomination		
		H Kane			O/S Nomination		
		C Whitbread					
		J Philip					

SENIOR MANAGEMENT APPEALS PANEL (7 MEMBERS)							
		Conservative Group (4)	Green Party Group (0)	Liberal Democrat Group (0)	Loughton Residents Association Group (2)	Grange Hill Independent Community Group (1)	Independent Members
	Chairman						
	Vice-Chairman						
		S Kane			O/S Nomination	D Barlow	
		P Bolton			O/S Nomination		
		H Whitbread					
		R Balcombe					

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REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS 2023/24

1. Council Appointments - Organisations Carrying Out Council Regulatory or Non-Cabinet Functions

Organisation and Allocation Category		Nominees
1.	Epping Forest Citizens' Advice Bureau (3 including 1 voting member)	R Bassett (Voting) S Heather L Mead
2.	Campaign to Protect Rural England (Essex Branch) (1 + deputy) Vote Required	T Matthews N Bedford (Deputy) L Paine
3.	Epping Forest Community Transport Board of Trustees (1)	S Kane
4.	Epping Forest Housing Aid Committee (1)	J Lea Disbanded as of Dec-20, therefore no need to appoint in the future.
5.	Epping Forest Local Highways Panel (4)	A Lion I Hadley H Kane J H Whitehouse D Wixley
6.	Epping Forest Local Liaison Group (specific ward representation only)	(BCEUN) (1) – A Green (BHW) (1) – K Williamson (ELTC) (1) – L Burrows (EH) (1) – J M Whitehouse (LSJ) (1) – C P Pond (LSM) (1) – J Jennings (LF) (1) - R Baldwin (TB) (1) – J Philip (WAHB) (1) – T Matthews
7.	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel (1) Vote Required	S Patel C McCann (Deputy) C McCredie
8.	Health Overview, Policy and Scrutiny Committee (1)	Not required for 2023/24. Local member to be appointed by Essex County Council.
9.	Grange Farm Managing Trustees (Term to 31.5.23)	R Morgan L Burrows M Sartin
10.	Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (2)	S Heather J Lea (Deputy)
11.	Leisure Centre Liaison Groups (Leisure Centre Customer Forums) The Leisure Contract Manager has advised that two members should be appointed to each Liaison Group/Customer Forum for 2023/24.	

Organisation and Allocation Category		Nominees
	(a) Epping Sports Centre (2)	L Burrows H Whitbread
	(b) Ongar Leisure Centre (2)	N Bedford R Balcombe
	(c) Loughton Leisure Centre (2)	S Patel R Brookes
	(d) Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool (2)	J Lea T Matthews
12.	Epping Forest Local Councils Liaison Committee (no restriction)	R Bassett H Kane J Lea R Morgan D Sunger J H Whitehouse
13.	Outer North-East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (1)	K Rizvi
14.	Princess Alexandra Hospital - Partnership Governor (1)	P Bolton There is no need to appoint as anybody can attend meeting.
15.	Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve:	
	(a) Management Committee (1)	S Murray
	(b) Working Group (1)	Not required - officer appointment
16.	Stansted Airport Consultative Committee (1 + deputy)	J McIvor R Bassett (Deputy)
17.	Stansted Airport Community Trust Fund (1)	R Morgan
18.	Town Centre Partnerships	
	The Service Director (Community & Partnerships) has advised as follows regarding the appointment of members to each Town Centre Partnership for 2021/22.	
	(a) Buckhurst Hill Village Forum (0)	No member appointment required. Representatives of the Council may attend any meeting in a non-voting capacity.
	(b) Epping Town Centre Partnership (2)	H Whitbread L Burrows

Organisation and Allocation Category		Nominees
	(c) Loughton Broadway Town Centre Partnership (0)	No member appointment required. Representatives of the Council may attend any meeting in a non-voting capacity.
	(d) Loughton High Road Town Centre Partnership (2)	No member appointment required. The Town Centre Partnership was not currently operating.
	(e) Ongar Town Forum Steering Group (0)	No member appointment required. Representatives of the Council may attend any meeting in a non-voting capacity.
	(f) Waltham Abbey Town Partnership (2)	H Kane J Lea
19.	Voluntary Action Epping Forest (1)	S Patel
20.	Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills Ltd (1)	H Kane
21.	Waltham Abbey Tourist Information Centre (Joint Management Committee) (3)	No longer required to appoint representatives.
22.	Leisure Management Contract Monitoring Board (6)	R Balcombe H Kane P Keska R Morgan P Bhanot J M Whitehouse R Brookes
23.	Epping Forest College (Board of Governors of New City College and local advisory body for the Epping Forest Campus College) (NEW)	R Bassett
24.	EFDC Armed Forces Champion	S Patel J Lea S Murray
25.	Whipps Cross Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (1)	A Patel

2. Appointments Held by Officers – Organisations Carrying Out Executive Functions (Appointments by the Leader)

	Organisation and Committee Responsible	Representative 2020/21
1.	Association of Retained Council Housing (ARCH)	Service Director (Housing & Property Services) (or representative)
2.	National Society for Clean Air (SE Division)	Service Director (Commercial & Regulatory Services) (or representative)

	Organisation and Committee Responsible	Representative 2020/21
3.	Standing Conference – Investigation of Air Pollution	Service Director (Commercial & Regulatory Services) (or representative)
4.	Roding Valley Meadow Local Nature Reserve Working Group	Service Director (Environmental & Technical Services) (or representative)

3. Appointments Held by Officers – Organisations Carrying Out Council Regulatory or Non-Executive Functions

This Appendix indicates those organisations where the Council determined on 25 April 1995 that the representatives should be officers.

	Organisation and Committee Responsible	Representative
1.	Essex Water Safety Liaison Committee	Service Director (Commercial & Regulatory Services) (or representative)
2.	Voluntary Action Epping Forest (see also member appointments schedule)	Service Director (Community & Partnership Services) (or representative)

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS 2022/23

1. Leader Appointments - Organisations Carrying Out Executive Functions

Organisation and Allocation Category		Appointee
1.	Association of Retained Council Housing - Executive Board (1 + Deputy)	Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder (Deputy TBC)
2.	Civil Enforcement of Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London - Adjudication Joint Committee (1)	Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder
3.	Epping Forest District Community Safety Partnership (1 + Deputy)	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder (Deputy TBC)
4.	East of England Local Government Association (1)	Leader of the Council
5.	Six Authorities Liaison Group (formerly Enfield, Essex and Hertfordshire Border Liaison Group) (3 + Deputies)	R Bassett J Lea S Heather (Deputy TBC)
6.	Epping Forest District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	
	The LSP Manager has advised as follows with regard to the appointment of members to each of the following LSP bodies for 2023/40.	
	(a) LSP Board ('One' Partnership) (1)	Leader of the Council
	(b) Health & Wellbeing Board (2)	A Patel Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder
	(c) Economic Board (1)	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	(d) Tourism Board (1)	TBC
7.	Essex Partnership for Flood Management (1)	Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder
8.	Essex Waste Partnership - Inter-Authority Member Working Group (1 + Deputy)	Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder (Deputy Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder)
9.	Harlow-Stansted Gateway Transportation Board (1 + Deputy)	Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder (Deputy Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder)
	No longer exists as HGGT has taken over.	

10.	Local Government Association - General Assembly (1 + Deputy)	Leader of the Council (Deputy - Deputy Leader of the Council)
11.	North Essex Parking Partnership (1 + Deputy)	Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder (Deputy Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder)
12.	Off-Street Car Parking Contract Monitoring Board (2)	Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder
13.	South East Local Enterprise Partnership (2)	Leader of the Council Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder
14.	Waste Management Partnership Board (2)	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder
15.	West Essex Alliance (1 + Deputy)	Leader of the Council (Deputy Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder)
16.	Co-operation for Sustainable Development Board (2 + 1 Deputy)	Leader of the Council Place Portfolio Holder (Deputy Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder)
17.	Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Board	Leader of the Council Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder Place Portfolio Holder (Deputies Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder & Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder)

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 25 July 2023, 7.00 pm - 7.50 pm

Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Members Present:	Councillors D Sunger (Chairman), L Burrows (Vice-Chairman), I Allgood, C Amos, R Balcombe, R Baldwin, P Bolton, R Brookes, A Green, S Heather, J Jogia, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Lea, A Lion, J Lucas, M Markham, T Matthews, C McCann, C McCredie, J Mclvor, L Mead, R Morgan, S Murray, C Nweke, M Owen, L Paine, J Parsons, A Patel, S Patel, J Philip, Caroline Pond, C C Pond, R Pugsley, K Rizvi, D Stocker, B Vaz, C Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, K Williamson, D Wixley and S Yerrell
Members Present (Virtually):	Councillors E Gabbett
Apologies:	Councillor(s) D Barlow, R Bassett, N Bedford, P Bhanot, H Brady, I Hadley, S Heap, R Jennings, J Jennings, H Kane, L Morgan, R Sharif and H Whitbread
Officers In Attendance:	Georgina Blakemore (Chief Executive), Andrew Small (Strategic Director, Corporate and Section 151 Officer), Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services), Natalie Cole (Corporate Communications Officer) and Rebecca Moreton (Corporate Communications Officer)
Officers In Attendance (Virtually):	Vivienne Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

[A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING](#)

19 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

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

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

21 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 June 2023 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

22 ANNOUNCEMENTS**(a) Announcements by the Chairman of the Council****(i) Ride London**

In May, the Ride London event travelled through the District, and crowds gathered along the route to support the 25,000 riders taking part. Since the event started in 2013 over £80 million has been raised for charities.

(ii) Charity Networking Event

At the end of June, the Chairman attended a Networking Event for Charities and Community Groups hosted by Grange Farm Trust and Voluntary Action Epping Forest. Twenty-eight local charities were represented and it was a wonderful opportunity for the charities and community groups to network and develop working relationships. Members were encouraged to connect with VAEF, to gain a better understanding of the support that is available through their work with the volunteering community and local charities.

(iii) Jack Petchey Awards

On the 10th of July, the Chairman presented the Jack Petchey Awards. On the evening over 70 young people and 5 Leader awards were presented to winners from schools and youth groups within our District, with every winner recognised for their outstanding individual achievement.

(iv) Darren Goodey and Mike Witham

The Chairman reported that the Chairman of the Lotus Drivers Club at North Weald Airfield, Ken Waylett, unfortunately suffered a cardiac arrest at the airfield in May. However, two members of the Council's staff on duty that day were Darren Goodey and Mike Witham, and they administered lifesaving first aid to Ken Waylett – who survived. The Chairman invited the Council to show their gratitude for Darren Goodey's and Mike Witham's calm professionalism and outstanding first aid skills.

(v) Chigwell Riding Trust

The Chairman reminded the Council that he had chosen to support Chigwell Riding Trust during his year in office. The Trust would celebrate its 60th anniversary in April 2024, and Members were invited to purchase Chigwell Riding Trust medal pin badges after the meeting.

23 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

The Council noted that no public questions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

24 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

The Council noted that there were no questions by members under notice that had been submitted for consideration at this meeting.

25 REPORTS FROM THE LEADER & MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received written reports from Portfolio Holders. The Chairman invited the Leader of Council to provide an oral report and the opportunity for other members of the Cabinet to give updates on matters concerning their relevant portfolios.

(a) Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council reported that this year saw the 15th anniversary of the inauguration of the Youth Council. The Youth Council was very well respected, both locally and nationally, and the Leader offered his thanks to the staff that supported the Youth Council.

The Leader also highlighted the work that the Council was involved in with other partners and stakeholders, both within and without the District, and including other Councils across North Essex. The Leader had been invited to chair the North Essex Councils Committee. Essex County Council and other authorities across Essex were working on proposals as part of the devolution initiative, and this Council was heavily involved in this work.

The Leader reported some outstanding nominations for his group from the Annual Council Meeting on 25 May 2023, and requested the Council's agreement.

The report of the Leader of the Council was noted.

Resolved:

- (1) That Cllr J Lucas be replaced by Cllr I Hadley on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) That Cllr K Rizvi be replaced by Cllr L Burrows on the District Development Management Committee; and
- (3) That Cllr T Matthews be appointed to the Chairman group for Licensing Sub-Committee meetings.

(b) Place Portfolio Holder

The report of the Place Portfolio Holder was noted.

(c) Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder

The report of the Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder was noted.

(d) Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder

The report of the Housing and Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder was noted.

(e) Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder

The report of the Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder was noted.

(f) Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder

The report of the Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder was noted.

(g) Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder

The report of the Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder was noted.

(h) Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder

The report of the Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder was noted.

26 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

The questions by Members without notice, and the answers given, can be viewed as part of the recording of the meeting available on the Council's YouTube channel; a link to which is available on page 1 of these minutes.

Question asked by:	Question asked to:	Subject of the question:
Cllr S Murray	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr J Philip	Former housing office in Loughton to become KFC venue.
Cllr A Green	Leader of the Council, Cllr C Whibread	Progress with Epping Sports Centre & funding in place to deliver it.
Cllr L Mead	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, Cllr S Patel	Support for parenting club for children with autism.
Cllr J H Whitehouse	Leader of the Council, Cllr C Whibread	Is a Café & the Library still coming to the Civic Offices.
Cllr M Markham	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, Cllr S Patel	Activities locally for young people after school.
Cllr M Owen	Place Portfolio Holder, Cllr N Bedford	Is the Council seeking contributions from developments that affect the SAC.
Cllr C Amos	Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder, Cllr R Balcombe	Setting up an ALMO for the Waste Management contract and the effect on the Council's Capital Programme.
Cllr C C Pond	Place Portfolio Holder, Cllr N Bedford	the failure of the DART87 bus service (written response to be given)
Cllr R Brookes	Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder, Cllr H Whitbread	Update on the local position regarding the number of households in temporary accommodation (written response to be given)
Cllr J M Whitehouse	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr J Philip	Progress on developing the four-year Qualis business plan.
Cllr D Wixley	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr J Philip	Progress in delivering a playground in Oakwood Hill, supported by the UK Rural prosperity fund.
Cllr I Allgood	Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder, Cllr H	Qualis response times to boiler breakdowns.

	Whitbread	
Cllr H Kauffman	Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder, Cllr R Balcombe	Increase penalties/fines for fly tipping, as incidents on the increase.
Cllr J H Whitehouse	Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder, Cllr H Whitbread	Older Peoples Strategy, and what areas it was covering. (Written response to be given)
Cllr J McIvor	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, Cllr S Patel	Celebration of the Youth Council and its 15 yrs.

27 MOTIONS

The Chairman reported that there were no motions to be considered at the meeting.

28 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(a) Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr D Wixley, presented the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for 2022/23 for the Council to approve.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report for 2022/23 be approved.

(b) Overview & Scrutiny Progress Report

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr D Wixley, presented the Overview & Scrutiny Progress report for July 2023.

Resolved:

- (2) That the Overview & Scrutiny Progress report for July 2023 be noted.

29 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS & EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

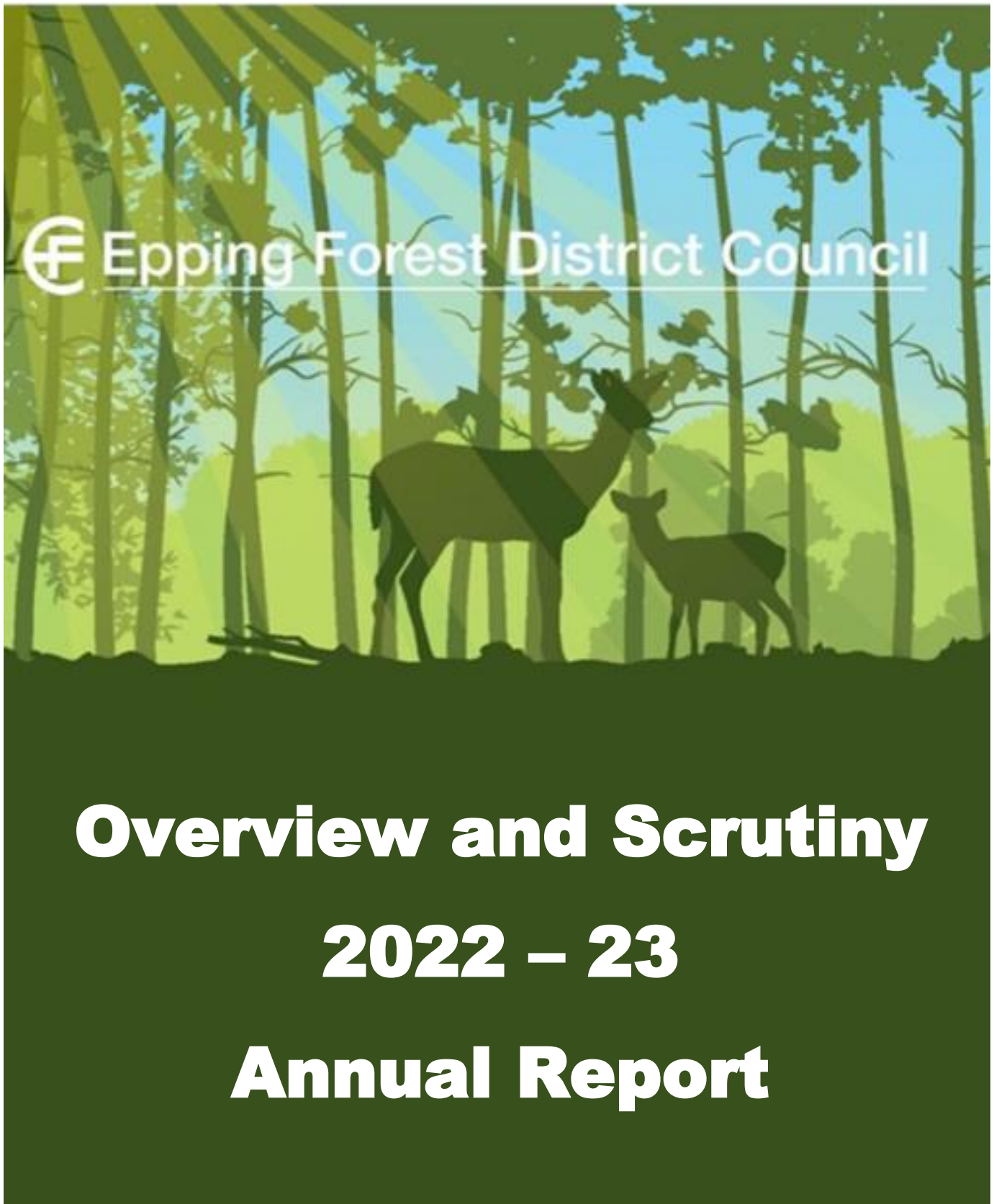
There were no reports from member representatives on outside bodies for the Council to consider.

30 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Council noted that there was no business which necessitated the exclusion of the public and press from the meeting.

CHAIRMAN

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 Epping Forest District Council

Overview and Scrutiny 2022 – 23 Annual Report

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Report by: V Messenger, EFDC Democratic Services Officer (July 2023)



Chairman's welcome and introduction

May I welcome members of Epping Forest District Council and introduce the 2022 – 23 annual report.

This annual report highlights the work undertaken by the Council's four scrutiny committees, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the three select committees – Stronger Communities, Stronger Council and Stronger Place that are aligned to the Council's key objectives and aims within its Corporate Plan.

This year, I supported a greater focus on scrutinising the Council's services and activities. Scrutiny of outside bodies where the Council was unable to affect or influence their activities was agreed to be held as all-member briefings.

May I take this opportunity to thank the chairmen and members of the select committees and especially my Vice-Chairman, Councillor David Wixley, for all his help and support throughout this challenging year.

And of course, I would like to thank all the officers who have worked so hard to keep the members of the scrutiny committees informed and their help in providing any background information that members needed to carry out their investigations.

Cllr Helen Kane

Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

What is scrutiny?

- ▶ Scrutiny in local government is the mechanism by which public accountability is exercised.
- ▶ In practice the purpose of scrutiny is to examine, question and evaluate in order to achieve improvement.
- ▶ Value of scrutiny is to use research and questioning techniques to make recommendations based on evidence.
- ▶ Scrutiny enables issues of public concerns to be examined.
- ▶ At the heart of all the work is consideration of what impact Cabinet's plans will have on the local community.
- ▶ Overview and scrutiny functions are not meant to be confrontational or seen as deliberately set up to form an opposition to the Cabinet. Rather the two aspects should be regarded as 'different sides of the same coin'. The two should complement each other and work in tandem to contribute to the development of the authority.

Alongside its role to challenge, the scrutiny function has continued to thrive. Scrutiny members have engaged positively with the Cabinet, which is why a Cabinet member cannot be a member of a scrutiny committee. This scrutiny has continued to provide valuable contributions to the Council and the Cabinet remained receptive to ideas put forward by the scrutiny committees throughout the year. The Constitution also allows members to call-in Executive decisions and for the public to ask questions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Scrutiny committees

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The main scrutiny committee has sole responsibility to discharge the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities under the Local Government Act 2000, as defined in the Constitution under [Article 6 – Overview and Scrutiny](#). All the scrutiny committees have a Terms of Reference. Their work programmes are continually updated throughout the year to reflect the progress of their ongoing scrutiny of Council business in relation to corporate performance reporting, service areas, strategies, policies and Qualis.

The committee regularly reviews the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Key Decisions to identify suitable matters for its work programme and for the overview of specific decisions being proposed. The Cabinet can equally ask Overview and Scrutiny to pre-scrutinise any of its business.

Select Committees

Restructured into three select committees at the start of the 2019/20 municipal year, they are mainly aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2023 and the three pillars of its corporate ambitions:

- **Stronger Communities**
- **Stronger Council**
- **Stronger Place**

Their Terms of Reference are agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its first meeting in the municipal year, which sets out a rolling programme of ongoing and cyclical issues specific to their corporate alignments. A lead officer of the Executive Leadership Team, appointed to each select committee, helps to facilitate this and co-ordinates member-led scrutiny throughout the year.

Task and Finish Panels

These panels can be set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deal with ad-hoc projects or reviews that are included in the annual work programme for overview and scrutiny. The Panels are restricted to those activities which are issue-based, time limited and non-cyclical in character and also have clearly defined objectives.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held seven meetings this municipal year. The committee membership was approved at Annual Council on 26 May 2022. The first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was held on 16 June 2022 when the 2022/23 membership appointments to the select committees and the chairmen and vice-chairmen positions were approved. Councillor C Whitbread, Leader of Council, also presented an overview of the Council's corporate priorities.

Members for 2022–23



CHAIRMAN:
Councillor Helen Kane

VICE-CHAIRMAN:
Councillor David Wixley

COUNCILLORS:

Raymond Balcombe, Roger Baldwin, Richard Bassett, Pranav Bhanot, Elizabeth Gabbett, Ian Hadley, Steven Heather, Bob Jennings, Jeane Lea, Jaymey McIvor, Stephen Murray, Smruti Patel Janet Whitehouse

Led by the new incoming Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny, a general set of principles was agreed with the newly appointed select committee chairmen and vice-chairmen at the first Joint Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen on 28 June 2022.

General principles

- Less scrutiny of outside bodies where the Council was unable to affect or influence their activities. Where members would like to understand the work of these bodies, this might take the form of an all-members briefing and not form part of the scrutiny function.
- A greater focus on the financial overview of the Council's activities.
- Cabinet members should be more accountable to scrutiny for their service responsibilities.
- The implementation of agreed actions should be tracked by each committee.
- Project closure reports be made generally available to all councillors and not just available upon request.
- The function of scrutiny should be to assist Cabinet through pre-scrutiny of decisions.
- Scrutiny committee chairmen would attend Cabinet to present their committee's discussion on items coming through scrutiny to Cabinet.

- Performance Reporting (KPIs) should focus on exceptions and better explanations would be provided for these. Accountable officers should be on hand (virtually) to provide further information, if required.
- Strategies and policies generally to go through the Select Committees unless central to the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.
- Key Qualis decisions to go through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

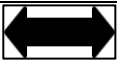


Pre-scrutiny highlights

Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028

The committee pre-scrutinised the Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 introduced by the Continuous Improvement Specialist (N Gambrell) on 27 September 2022. This key strategic plan detailed a new set of corporate aims including a new set of key results, developed to support the aims and key objectives. These corporate aims would be reviewed annually through objectives and key result measures, to deliver and work towards the achievement of each objective that year. The report included digital links to improve reader use. The committee made several suggestions during its scrutiny of the Corporate Plan. It was subsequently agreed by the Cabinet on 10 October and adopted by Council on 20 December 2022.

Corporate Plan Key Action Plan Year 5 2022/23

Detailed pre-scrutiny by the committee was undertaken on a quarterly basis with quarter 1 on 26 July 2022, quarter 2 on 17 November, quarter 3 on 31 January 2023 and quarter 4 on 20 April. These reports detailed the project status summaries, key milestones and RAG status for those projects identified as 'priority projects' within the portfolio aligned to the corporate objectives of the Council. All KPIs regardless of status were also included with comparisons to previous quarters, so progress could be tracked. The committee reviewed performance data in detail at their meetings.

Green	Project on track to achieve milestones
Amber	Project at risk of missing milestones
Red	Project has missed milestones/project has serious issues
Blue	Project complete/on-hold
	Project status is unchanged since previous report
	Project status has improved since previous report
	Project status has declined since previous report

Qualis 1-Year Business Plan

The Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer, A Small, introduced the 1-Year Qualis Business Plan at the 27 September meeting. Currently, in the rapidly changing economic climate, considerable economic pressures were not limited to the Council's finances and residents, but also to the Council's partners, e.g., in the construction industry. Although Qualis should produce a 4-Year business plan under the Shareholder Agreement, in this time of great uncertainty, the decision had been taken that a 4-Year Business Plan would be too challenging and be out of date sooner than forecast. The appendix to the report detailed the financial conditions and how Qualis would address them. Qualis had assessed its opportunities. It had reviewed the Council's commercial assets / portfolio with some success and therefore, the transfer of assets seemed the right time, as Qualis had more opportunities to maximise return. The Conder Building had been demolished. Development of the Epping Sports Centre site had started. The Council was confident good governance was robust at Qualis. S Jevans, Qualis Group Managing Director, continued that Qualis was building strong skills. There were challenges but the report set out the savings made, and had identified the key risks, strategic priorities and was optimistic on growth. The committee's many scrutiny questions were mainly answered by the Finance Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Philip. Minutes of the meeting can be viewed at [Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 September 2022](#)

Transfer of Grounds Maintenance Service to Qualis

An extra meeting of the committee was scheduled on 3 November 2022 to pre-scrutinise the business case for the transfer of this service ahead of the Cabinet decision on 7 November. The Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer introduced the report, which proposed to transfer the service in April 2023. Qualis had established a vision for itself as a property company promoting and undertaking property development, management and maintenance. The report provided a high-level summary of the current costs of delivering the existing in-house service, including an indicative Contract payment in the event of the transfer of the Grounds Maintenance service. The business case for the transfer represented an efficient way to deliver this service. It enabled the Council to reduce its back-office costs and offset these against the Qualis Management charge.

A lively debate followed as the committee's questions covered a wide range of concerns, which were mainly answered by the Finance Portfolio Holder along with the Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer.

However, the committee's recommendation to the Cabinet was that at this stage the committee felt unable to support the transfer of Grounds Maintenance to Qualis, as a proposed motion was carried. The Finance Portfolio Holder addressed the concerns raised by scrutiny members at the subsequent Cabinet meeting on 7 November. The Cabinet's decision approved the transfer of the Grounds Maintenance service to Qualis in April 2023, in accordance with the broad terms and approach proposed within the Cabinet report.

[The recording of 3 November meeting is available to view](#)

Qualis – Overview

As members felt that a lot of people did not understand what Qualis was all about and in light of the committee being unable to support the transfer of service above, the Qualis Management team was invited to attend the next meeting. At the 31 January 2023 meeting, the Chairman introduced Qualis Group Managing Director, S Jevans, and the Managing Director of Qualis Management, B Johnson, who gave a presentation. This encompassed an oversight of the property management and housing repairs service Qualis provided on behalf of the Council. It also covered Qualis' values, complaints and lessons learnt, performance in 2020 / 21 and how the Council monitored Qualis and its key objectives. This presentation was included in the minutes of the meeting for information. Qualis Management also replied to a variety of questions from the members present.

Annual review of work undertaken by the Epping Forest Youth Council

Our high-profile and national award-winning Youth Council comprised 23 young people, who represented 8 Epping Forest secondary schools, New City College (Epping Forest Campus) and one who was an independent and home schooled. These young people represented the views of their peers and wider school communities. The current cohort would stand down in May 2024. The committee was presented with an annual review of the work they had undertaken at the meeting on 20 April 2023. Paarth Patel and Olu Ayandare from Davenant Foundation, Sarah Chufoon from King Harold Business Academy and William Ayrton from Chigwell School highlighted the key areas of their work, which encompassed:

- ▶ **EFYC project 2022/23 'Repair My Pocket'** – focused on the cost-of-living crisis. Youth councillors had designed a 12-question survey and conducted street interviews at the Essex Police and EFDC community day of action. The survey was shared with all the District's secondary schools for students to complete. The aim was to assess how young people were being affected by financial pressures and to get a better understanding of how services could help them. The findings were presented at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- ▶ **Jack Petchey Foundation Funding** – £1,000 was received from the Jack Petchey Foundation to help educate young people about scammers. This was used to purchase 800 copies of the 'Little Book of Scams'. Youth councillors arranged a presentation to students in year 10 and above in their own schools during the spring term when these were

distributed. Produced by Thames Valley Police, the Little Book of Big Scams was a valuable resource to avoid being scammed and losing money.

- ▶ **Independent Advisory Group (IAG) Safety Survey** – three youth councillors attended the Brentwood and Epping Forest IAG. Youth councillors presented the results of a survey that had been conducted in all schools by the end of the spring term to identify how safe young people were feeling in their area and in their schools. It covered safety, including speeding, inappropriate parking, street lighting, scams and crime.
- ▶ **MiLife Blue (legacy project)** – the successful MiLife C19 mental health project for schools was designed by the 2021/22 youth councillors. The Council and the Red Balloon Foundation jointly worked on a new model to update the resources. The project remained available to local schools in the new format but was only available to schools outside the District at a cost. The project renamed MiLife Blue, supported a trauma informed response to young people dealing with mental health issues. This would sit alongside the inaugural award winning MiLife Green project, which related to more general mental health awareness.
- ▶ **EFYC Training** – youth councillors had completed their intensive induction training, covering professionalism, team building, leadership, presentation skills and public speaking. Their training would continue to address projects such as Dementia Friends, Hate Crime, Gaming and Gambling addiction, the environment, Ride London and positive mental health.

Routine scrutiny business

Scrutiny undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at every meeting included:

- ▶ **Key Decision List** – regularly reviewing the Cabinet’s Key Decisions enabled the committee to identify appropriate matters for the overview and scrutiny work programme and the overview of specific decisions proposed in the Forward Plan.
- ▶ **Work programme** – the committee regularly reviewed its progress on business transacted and also to identify additional items for its current work programme. Scrutiny of the Epping Forest District Museum’s operating model was added to the work programme for 2023/24. It was envisaged the timeframe would extend to a 2-year period.
- ▶ **Select committees’ business** – the Chairmen of the select committees had the opportunity to report back on their progress against the achievement of their respective work programmes and make any recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Public questions

Public scrutiny in action at the 17 November 2022 meeting saw a resident submit a question on safeguarding at the meeting. Responding to a question on whether any reports had been made in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 8.2 of the Shareholders Agreement with Qualis Group Ltd since it was signed in February 2020, the Chief Executive, G Blakemore, replied on behalf of the Chairman, “yes” and also replied to the follow-up question.

Call-in of Executive decisions

When an executive decision is made by the Cabinet, a Portfolio Holder or a Cabinet committee, or a key decision is made by an officer with delegated authority, such a decision is published in a notice specifying when the decision will come into force and be implemented, unless it is called-in. Further information in the Constitution under Article 6 (Overview and Scrutiny) provides details of the call-in arrangements and protocol for councillors. This year there were no decisions called-in.

Agendas and minutes

Please view at this link [Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#)

Joint Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

The joint meeting is held twice a year, usually every six months. It provides the scrutiny chairmen and vice-chairmen with an opportunity to discuss any issues raised with the Executive Leadership Team and the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager. The following items were discussed at the joint meetings held on 28 June and 6 December 2022.

Overview and Scrutiny procedures – review

The agreement of a set of general principles that all scrutiny committees would follow was led by the Chairman, Councillor H Kane, at the June joint meeting, as detailed above. This included the specific allocation of scrutiny review tasks between the work programmes of the four scrutiny committees.

External scrutiny

Reviewing external scrutiny at the June joint meeting, it was noted there was a distinction between partner and external organisations. In previous years, external scrutiny had taken up a large part of those meetings, but the reality was that members could not influence an outside organisation to make any changes. Although the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was responsible for discharging the functions under the Local Government Act 2000, the legislation did not compel external organisations to attend a Council scrutiny meeting. It was one of the functions that the Council could choose to do, so a principle was agreed not to preclude external scrutiny but just do it in a different way as all-member briefings in future. At the joint meeting in December, it was also agreed that the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager would organise three all-member briefings throughout the municipal year, which should suffice, but this could be flexible.

Minute actions

Since the Chairman was keen to track actions from previous meetings these were to be detailed in the minutes, so every scrutiny committee could review any actions identified to ensure replies had been provided and none were outstanding.

Scrutiny training

A well-attended member training session with an external scrutiny trainer was held in the autumn at the Civic Offices. As the feedback from those present had been very positive, the Democratic and Electoral Services Team Manager, G Woodhall, advised members at the joint meeting on 6 December that further scrutiny training would be organised for the next municipal year. This should take the form of the external trainer presenting two courses – essential scrutiny questions in June 2023 and learning key questioning skills around September 2023.

The Local Government Association and East of England LGA did offer various courses to councillors one of which was on chairmanship skills that members were recommended to do. There was a range of information on the LGA website all aimed at councillors. LGA had also produced a scrutiny handbook for members.

Agendas and minutes

Joint meeting agendas and minutes can only be accessed on the Intranet / Extranet (via the Members portal).

Waste Management Task and Finish Panel

The Task and Finish Panel concluded most of its work at the last meeting in early March 2020 before the first Covid lockdown. At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2020, a recommendation was made to reconvene the panel when there was any new information arising from the Environment Bill, which was re-introduced to Parliament on 30 January 2020 following the general election in December 2019, and /or any new legislation introduced by the Government.

Stronger Communities Select Committee

The Stronger Communities Select Committee held five meetings this municipal year. The membership was approved at the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 June 2022. The first select committee meeting was held on 12 July 2022.

Members for 2022–23



CHAIRMAN:
Councillor Jeane Lea

VICE-CHAIRMAN:
Councillor Jodie Lucas

COUNCILLORS:

Clive Amos, Raymond Balcombe, Ian Hadley, Stephen Murray, Chidi Nweke, Ronda Pugsley, David Stocker, David Wixley and Shane Yerrell

NON-VOTING MEMBER:

Mr Wyn Marshall – Chairman of the Tenants and Leaseholders Forum
Representing the views of the tenants' associations and acting as a consultative body for the Council on a range of housing issues, Mr Marshall was co-opted as a non-voting member of this select committee on 12 July 2022.

The select committee encompassed the corporate aims and objectives for stronger communities – people live longer, healthier and independent lives; adults and children are supported in times of need; and people and communities achieve their potential. Most of the work programmes were not cyclical apart from quarterly Customer Services updates, and the six-monthly update of the Council-funded Police officers' work.

Pre-scrutiny highlights

Review of Housing Strategy 2022 – 2027

At the first meeting on 12 July 2022, the committee was informed that although the Housing Strategy was not a statutory requirement, it provided a cohesive direction of travel for cross-cutting housing related services. Introduced by the Interim Team Manager for Housing Strategy, the aim of the strategy was to reflect and facilitate the co-ordination of activities for those services that directly impacted on the current and projected need for and supply of affordable housing in the District. A review of the Housing Strategy commenced in May 2021 which was underpinned by reviews of the Allocations Scheme, the Tenancy Policy and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. Approved by the Cabinet on 1 March 2022, these would take effect in September 2022 for the period 2022-2027. Questions answered covered – retaining green spaces in schemes for recreational use that was a key feature of the Council's 'It's more than bricks and mortar' project; working on proposals and funding with E-ON for a pilot scheme to retrofit older Council properties

to become more energy efficient; and in relation to costs involved that the Housing Strategy planned a number of existing services and partnerships that would be delivered through greater collaboration between these services and partnerships.

Sheltered Housing Refurbishment Programme

The Housing and Property Director reported on the successful pilot refurbishment of the sheltered housing scheme at Frank Bretton House, which was completed within six months. The Council wished to continue the refurbishment program at other sheltered schemes within the District to make the communal areas feel modern, welcoming, and desirable. Residents' feedback from 75% of tenants on this pilot refurbishment would assist with the order of works and help improve the customer experience going forward. In July, the select committee recommended to the Cabinet that approval be given to continue the sheltered housing refurbishment programme.

Transfer of services from the Broadway Housing Office

Also, in July 2022, the Housing and Property Director advised the committee that following a review of the number of tenants visiting the Broadway office for housing purposes, it was felt that there was a better, more efficient way to provide the services for those people and for staff to spend more time in the housing estates. The proposal was to close the Broadway office creating a saving for the Council. Meanwhile, St John the Baptist Church in Loughton had contacted the Council to join up with partnerships and other professionals to provide a hub service for tenants and residents, thus enabling the Housing officers to provide a flexible service. The committee had supported this proposal. Furthermore, to assist cash paying customers using the Broadway office, Allpay cards would be issued for council tax and non-domestic rates. Following the initial rollout of the Allpay scheme, an opt-in service would be provided to other customers paying council tax and non-domestic rates.

Refresh of the Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022 – 2026

The strategy set out the aims and aspirations of the multi-agency Epping Forest Health and Wellbeing Board to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone living within the District. The partnership Board was made up of representatives from Epping Forest District Council, Essex County Council, the West Essex Health and Care Partnership and the NHS including a wide range of local health and voluntary sector organisations. The Board had published its original ten-year strategy back in 2018, but as a direct result of the Covid pandemic, the decision was taken to review and refresh the strategy early to ensure the District had a robust and meaningful roadmap to maximise resources and expertise to support the best possible outcomes for residents. Following a range of questions at the meeting on 15 November 2022, the select committee asked to receive an annual update.

Domestic Abuse and Domestic Abuse Workplace Policies

On 2 March 2023, the Directorate Specialist (Technical Services), C Wiggins, introduced these policies to the select committee. Members were informed the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) was launched in 2014 and was managed by Standing Together. The Council had aspired to achieve a DAHA Accreditation to support residents and staff by providing a positive, safe environment and encouraging them to have the confidence to approach the Council at a time of need. The policies set out the Council's commitment to take efficient and effective action to deal with all reports of incidents and explained how the Council would provide support tailored to the needs of the individual, working in partnership with specialist services to provide a coordinated response. The Directorate Specialist (Technical Services) advised that Qualis would have their own policies, although the policies would be shared as they formalised the services already being delivered by the Council.

Essex Police presentation

The select committee received a presentation at the meeting on 2 March from the Essex Police District Commander for Brentwood and Epping Forest, Chief Inspector Tina Cooper, who provided information on the following areas:

- Policing structure in the District

- The Force Plan 2022/25
- What community priorities were being delivered?
- Events held such as 'Walk with Us'
- ASB issues, actions, and outcome in Ongar
- Community Engagement events attended
- Performance of the last 12-month period to January 2023
- Public perception survey results

[The recording of the meeting on 2 March is available to view](#)

Epping Forest Community Safety Partnership Annual Strategic Assessment, Annual Report and Plan on a page

The Directorate Specialist (Technical Services), C Wiggins, reported on 2 March 2023 that the Community Safety Partnership was required to complete an annual Strategic Assessment that was used to direct and guide their activities, under the requirements as responsible authorities of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The policing structure referred to in the annual report related to the Epping Forest District only and the officers were based at Loughton Police Station. The Crucial Crew event organised for the District's state primary schools would be relaunched and was to be held at the Civic Offices.

Discussion Paper – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Structure 2023/24

The Democratic and Electoral Services Team Manager, G Woodhall, advised that the Constitution Working Group had considered a report on 16 March 2023 about the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee Structure for 2023/24 but had requested that a scrutiny committee also discuss the report – hence its discussion on 21 March 2023 by the select committee. The select committee supported the Working Group's recommendation of option 1, which would go to Council on 4 April 2023 for adoption.

Routine scrutiny business

Council-funded Police officers 6-month report

The Council continued to fund the employment of an additional police sergeant and two police constables to supplement existing local policing resources. A third police constable funded by Essex Police joined the team in April 2022. The Police team, which started in July 2018 with an initial 3-year contract, had been extended. At the meeting on 20 September 2022, the Directorate Specialist (Technical Services) reported to the select committee that the police were tasked in-line with District Community Safety Partnership (CSP) priorities identified through the annual Strategic Assessment and aligned with the priorities set by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 and Essex Police Crime Prevention Strategy 2021-2025. In response to a question, the Brentwood and Epping Forest District Commander provided a detailed reply after the meeting on whether the police could take enforcement action against drivers who obstructed pavements.

The next six-month report on the work and range of operations of the Council's funded Police team was presented on 2 March 2023 by the Directorate Specialist (Technical Services). The funded police team continued with the following primary functions of supporting functionality of Epping Forest District Council departments/teams; providing 'added value' to the District in supporting the Community Policing function; and targeting action against criminality in the District. By the end of 2022, the police team had accepted and completed thirty-nine tasking requests during that year.

Museum collection rationalisation programme

The Epping Forest District Museum was currently undertaking a review of its collections to ensure material held remained relevant, accessible, and safe for public and staff. This was a procedure recommended to be undertaken by all museums, and followed guidelines and ethics laid out by the Museums Association. The Heritage and Venues Team Manager, F Pellegrino, presented an update on the progress of the project over the last year, which the select committee noted at its meeting on 15 November 2022.

Annual Lettings report

The select committee reviewed the allocations and lettings performance between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. Presented by the Interim Housing Strategy Manager, the report outlined the demand for social housing on 31 March 2022 from qualifying applicants in accordance with the Council's Allocations Scheme for 2018-2022. It covered typical waiting times and profiling information on age, mobility needs and ethnicity of the applicants that had been rehoused. Details were also provided on the number of mutual exchanges and management transfers that took place outside of the allocations scheme during the same period, and the number of properties that former tenants purchased from the Council under the Right to Buy. The select committee queried the appeals process, armed forces applicants and the statistics of applicants in different bands.

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update

The Interim Housing & Property Director, P Wharfe presented an interim update on the HRA Business Plan on 21 March 2023. It was noted that the stock condition survey was underway, and an Asset Management Strategy would be produced alongside the HRA Business Plan. It would be presented to the Committee in October 2023 and annually onwards. Members asked a number of questions on the report and answers were provided by the officer in attendance.

What are our customers telling us?

At the meeting on 20 September, the Service Manager (Customer Services), S Lewis, updated the committee progress over the last six months and answered several questions. These included – the wait time for customers phoning the Contact Centre, which was currently 5.5 minutes; Biffa was providing daily updates on waste collections which Customer Services passed on to residents; officers were working towards an automated response for all contact forms that would be part of the back office customer journey mapping; users of the Epping community hub were asked to complete a survey, so information could be compiled on where they had travelled from etc; and the Housing and Community Portfolio Holder, Councillor H Whitbread, advised that the idea was to recreate the community hub in other areas in the District in a similar form or as pop ups across the District. The Customer Service Manager would also raise any problems that members were experiencing with their Council devices or their own as not all devices were compatible with the Council's systems. A Members Portal had been created on the Council's website, which provided members with useful information plus access to committee agendas and minutes all in one place.

The Service Manager (Customer Services) presented a further Customer Services Strategy update report and what residents had been telling the Council on 21 March 2023. Members asked several questions on the report and answers were provided by the Officers and Portfolio Holder in attendance.

Other work programme highlights

- ▶ **New support model for sheltered housing** (20 September 2022)
- ▶ **Review of proposal on caretaking in blocks** where residents rate the cleaning (21 March 2023)
- ▶ **Annual Housing performance report** (21 March 2023)
- ▶ **Estate improvements at Harveyfields, Waltham Abbey** creating great places where people want to live (20 September 2022)
- ▶ **Changing Landscape of Housing Paper 1** Building Safety and Health and Safety analysis (12 July 2022)

Agendas and minutes

Please view at this link [Stronger Communities Select Committee](#)

Stronger Council Select Committee

The Stronger Council Select Committee held five meetings this municipal year. The membership was approved at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its first meeting on 16 June 2022. The first select committee meeting was held on 21 July 2022.

Members for 2022–23



CHAIRMAN:
Councillor Jaymey McIvor

VICE-CHAIRMAN:
Councillor Smruti Patel

COUNCILLORS:

Richard Bassett, Rose Brookes, Elizabeth Gabbett, Ian Hadley, Steven Heather, Jayna Jogia, Richard Morgan, Sheree Rackham and Jon M Whitehouse.

The select committee had an overview of the Corporate aims and objectives for a stronger Council – democratic engagement; the People Strategy and a culture of innovation through improved workforce skills and performance through innovation and technology; and financial independence with low council tax. Therefore, much of the scrutiny work was of a cyclical nature, as the select committee regularly reviewed the following.

- ▶ Budget monitoring reports
- ▶ Qualis monitoring reports
- ▶ Financial planning
- ▶ Digital enablement
- ▶ People Strategy

Pre-scrutiny highlights

Azure – move to the cloud

The select committee reviewed the business case for the move to Azure on 21 July 2022. For more than 12 months the Council had worked closely on this project with Microsoft and Agilisys to complete a detailed costing analysis and to spec out the Azure option. The Council's digitisation strategic plan included standardising its infrastructure and services to a cloud first strategy and this project would create a cloud platform that supported the longer-term digital ambitions of the Council. If our existing data centre was destroyed by fire, the Council would be completely without any IT structure. Also, the Government's advice was to move to the Cloud and not have a single point of failure. With the majority of staff working from home, we were almost in a cloud environment already. Members were assured there would not be a major issue on performance for the end user as many of the applications that we were moving to were designed to be used in the

cloud. What was changing was where the data was stored and how it was delivered but not the end use. The select committee commented on the business case. The decision taken to award a contract to Agilisys for the procurement of Azure – move to the cloud, which was made under delegated arrangement by the Internal Resource Portfolio Holder, Councillor S Kane, in July 2022 (IRS-001-2022/23).

Outsourcing of the Concierge Service

On 24 November, members looked at the Concierge service provided at the Civic Offices. The service included numerous responsibilities – to open and close the building, manage and maintain our bookable spaces, monitor the employee car park, issue security cards, monitor CCTV and much more. The existing service covered 06.30-22.00 Monday to Friday, with out of hours, on site security being provided by a contractor between 22.00-06.30 on weekdays and across the whole weekend. Due to various operational and resource challenges, the Senior Leadership Team had agreed to explore the outsourcing of the Concierge Service by formally going out to tender, review the bids and then make a decision on whether the Council proceeded to the formal stages of outsourcing. Only one contractor, PCS Group, out of four had shown an interest and submitted a bid. It was noted that the current out of hours contractor had not made a bid. Members asked a range of questions. But in their comments passed to the Cabinet they wanted the current staff to be kept up to date on this proposal and that the new contracted workforce coming in, was trained properly on the ways of the Council and that there would be a continuity of those staff.

Draft Budget 2023/24

The Finance Portfolio Holder, Councillor J Philip introduced the draft budget report for 2023/24 on 24 January 2023. This had gone to the Cabinet in December 2022, with a final report still to come. The full report included revenue and capital proposals for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as well as a schedule of suggested Fees and Charges for the forthcoming financial year. An updated Medium-Term Financial Plan covering the financial years 2023/24 through to 2027/28 was also included, which reflected both the impact of the draft Budget proposals as well as the latest available intelligence at the time. As required by law a balanced position (eliminating a previously identified projected deficit of £4.126 million) had provisionally been reached for 2023/24, and the medium-term financial position, although having a similar profile, had some differences compared to the position presented to the Cabinet on 10 October (and subsequently to this select committee on 24 November). There was a particular challenge still anticipated in 2024/25 and 2025/26 because of the forthcoming new Waste Management Contract. However, some significant uncertainties remained. The provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2023/24 released in December 2022 had provided further assurance as to the underlying financial sustainability of the draft Budget proposals as currently presented. The Council would be looking for voluntary redundancies but that might not be the case. Currently there were 18 roles involved in the overall budget package, with up to 48 staff involved in the consultation exercise. It was anticipated the loss of staff would be much smaller than that and mostly through voluntary redundancies.

Onboarding / induction

On 24 January 2023 the select committee was updated by J Budden, Service Manager People, Culture and Wellbeing, on developments made to the onboarding/induction process. In addition, a live demonstration of the system by A Cartwright, HR Corporate Business Partner, showed the various elements that went into the onboarding process. Candidates would form an impression of an organisation throughout the recruitment process. However, what was often overlooked was the period between a successful candidate accepting a job offer when they were working their notice and their start date, which could be a number of weeks or months. Pre-start date onboarding helped to settle a new employee into the Council and ensured they had everything they needed before their start date. It also supported the new employee in understanding more about the Council's culture and values, as well as some of the more practical aspects that might otherwise be overlooked. New employees would do their induction and job specific training with their line manager and there was the opportunity to attend a welcoming introduction when they would meet one of the Senior Leadership Team. The Service Manager advised there were plans for member induction via the system as it could be useful to new councillors.

Launch of the new employee Wellbeing Hub

The select committee learned about the launch of the new employee Wellbeing Hub at the January meeting, which included a short presentation. J Budden and S Kits, Business Partner (Corporate Communications), outlined the excellent wellbeing resources and support available to employees. In addition to the Employee Assistance Programme (Perkbox) that offered counselling sessions and support for all employees and their close family members, EFDC had focussed on developing a solid network of individuals within the organisation to help support colleagues. This included the Perkbox Wellness Hub for free content on wellness resources, and over 90 employees had trained to become Mental Health First Aiders. Members were impressed with the Wellbeing Hub, which set a high standard for other local authorities to follow. When querying the engagement of staff working from home, the select committee was advised that virtual coffee mornings for employees were organised and managers had been upskilled to educate them in mental health issues. In relation to staff retention, it did lead to a better understanding of what staff wanted.

Routine scrutiny business

Budget Monitoring Reports

The General Fund revenue and capital positions as well as the HRA revenue and capital positions were reviewed at the meetings on 21 July 2022 (quarter 4 (outturn)) for FY2021/22 and for FY2022/23 on 26 September (quarter 1), 24 November (quarter 2), 24 January 2023 (quarter 3) and quarter 4 (18 April 2023). The Strategic Director Corporate and Section 151 Officer, A Small, and Interim Chief Finance Officer, C Hartgrove, highlighted the current global, national and local economic malaise and the uncertainty this created for the Council. The financial pressures were detailed in the monitoring reports and outlined the current positions, which were dominated by a range of substantial spending pressures. The Council's budget for 2022/23 (both General Fund and HRA) had been approved by full Council on 24 February 2022. These reports updated members on how the Council's services had performed against their budgets each quarter and projected forward to the anticipated outturn for the end of the financial year. When the select committee acknowledged the general fund reserve of £4 million now stood at £3 million at quarter 3, the Finance Portfolio Holder advised there was a desire to get back to our minimum balance, but without impacting on our services.

Financial Planning Framework 2023/24 to 2027/28

Like virtually all local authorities, the Council was facing major financial pressure following a series of significant external World events – including Brexit, a pandemic, and the invasion of Ukraine – which had combined to create a worldwide economic crisis that was worsening almost daily. On 26 September the select committee reviewed the proposed approach to financial planning until 2027/28, which included the reporting and governance timetable. The select committee was advised that the Local Government Settlement was expected to be announced by mid to late December 2022, but it was unlikely there would be a two-year settlement. The Finance Portfolio Holder advised that the Cabinet was working with lead officers, initially over a gap of £4 million.

Updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Although the Cabinet considered the updated MTFP on 10 October, as agreed in the governance timetable, it should be scrutinised by the select committee and was reviewed on 24 November. As a forward-looking document, it provided a tentative look at the Council's financial picture over the next five years (2023/24 through to 2027/28) and set the scene by providing a framework for developing both the General Fund and HRA budgets for 2023/24. The General Fund forecast within the MTFP revealed a projected deficit of £4.126 million for 2023/24. This reflected major spending pressures driven by inflation. Looking further ahead – assuming a balanced budget was achieved for 2023/24 without recourse to the use of reserves – a budget gap was expected to open-up again on the General Fund from 2024/25, with annual budget pressures in the region of £1.4 million anticipated for two consecutive financial years. It was noted that the biggest expenditure currently was staff and not accommodation. A substantial amount of savings would therefore have to come from staff. The select committee was informed that salary costs had always been high, exceeding any other expenditure that the Council had. The comparatively high vacancy

rate captured some of the potential savings to be had without impacting on staff directly. Options had been presented to the Cabinet and they were working through them.

Qualis Monitoring Reports

Also in September, the select committee reviewed quarter 3 from 1 April to 30 June 2022 for the Qualis trading year 2021/22. Presented by the Strategic Director Corporate and Section 151 Officer, the Board report highlighted performance against the business plan targets using the recognised Red, Amber, Green (RAG) reporting system. This showed a continuing loss, which was primarily associated with delays in achieving planning consent at Roundhills, and challenges with finding suitable regeneration property to acquire. It was acknowledged that Qualis faced similar financial challenges to the Council. When the select committee queried if there were any economies that could be achieved by Qualis working with other third parties, the Finance Portfolio Holder emphasised that Qualis must remain a separate entity from the Council and detailed that Qualis had driven value from contracts. When asked if there would be any impact from changes in stamp duty, members were advised this would be difficult to predict owing to the position in the development sequence, but Qualis did ensure that external factors were regularly reviewed.

People Strategy 2020 – 2022

In July the Corporate Services Director, P Maginnis, presented a detailed report for 2022. Also, a draft version of the new strategy that would run until March 2023, was being reviewed. The Service Director answered members and advised that: the Council was not experiencing a higher turnover of staff; the HR Business Partners led power hour sessions on various issues for managers/staff; the review on 'creating our tomorrow' focussed on how officers wanted to work in hybrid and agile ways; and a glossary of terms used in the report was provided for the minutes.

In November the select committee received a presentation from the Corporate Services Director on 'Creating our tomorrow – our ways of working for the future 2022 and beyond'. This outlined the results of the One Poll employee survey from 1 June to 12 July 2022. The 77% response rate amounted to 410 employees taking part. The Council had a performance management programme, with managers holding regular one to ones with staff, and also set targets and measurements for individual staff and parts of the organisation. Also, line managers controlled the allocation of work and monitored it. Many teams had regular meetings on 'Teams' and there were benefits and gains from staff working from home. Also, working from home was easier for some roles than others – it was a balance. The select committee commended the officers for organising the recent member / officer meetings. It was noted that officers were looking at customers and their needs in what we did as that was key to what we would do. They were also looking at better ways in how we communicated and how we could improve our systems to make them more effective.

Agendas and minutes

Please view at this link [Stronger Council Select Committee](#)

Stronger Place Select Committee

The Stronger Place Select Committee held four meetings this municipal year. The September meeting was cancelled owing to the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, as it would have taken place during the period of national mourning. The membership was approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 July 2022. The first meeting was held on 5 July 2022.

Members for 2022–23



CHAIRMAN:

Councillor Raymond Balcombe

VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Councillor Ronda Pugsley

COUNCILLORS:

Ian Allgood, Richard Bassett, Peter Bolton, Heather Brady, Simon Heap, Steven Heather, Judy Jennings, Cherry McCredie and Richard Morgan

The select committee covered the Corporate aims and objectives for a stronger place – delivering effective core services that people want; a District with planned development; and an environment where new and existing businesses thrive. Its definition encompassed Epping Forest District as a physical Place and to scrutinise the direction, policies and projects of the executive that affect the spatial and infrastructure requirements of the District. Scrutiny of the work programme included:

- ▶ Local Plan updates
- ▶ Council housebuilding
- ▶ Economic growth, skills and employment
- ▶ District-wide Waste Management provision
- ▶ Leisure Management Contract updates

Pre-scrutiny highlights

Litter Strategy

The strategy would help to deliver the commitment to the Government's Litter Strategy for England along with the Environmental Protection Act (1990) and the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (2019). Officers would work with Keep Britain Tidy to ensure this strategy and any associated actions were in keeping with the aspirations of the Government's Litter Strategy. The strategy for a Cleaner Epping Forest District laid out the Council's plans to continue its work in the transformation of our open spaces and streets to ensure that it met the Government's expectations. It also reflected residents' desire to have a clean and healthy local environment free of litter, fly-tipping and dog waste. Street sweeping was one of the most important services any council operated to

improve the appearance of a street or area. With less litter, fly-tipping and dog fouling, the Council could reduce its spending on collecting and disposing of it. Having a litter strategy would contribute positively towards the Council's environmental policies to reduce carbon in response to the climate emergency. In addition to statutory performance indicators, success would be measured in the Council's reduced carbon footprint with less waste going to landfill. The strategy would provide a platform to engage with partners to enhance the local environment, by securing behaviour change. At the meeting on 5 July 2022, J Warwick (Acting Service Director (Contracts)) advised that five litter picks had been completed and 72 bags of litter collected during the Great British Spring Clean. There had also been sixteen applications for support for equipment for litter picks, with fifteen completed. The select committee challenged the strategy on a number of points and it was agreed that the strategy would be reviewed, strengthened and refined. On 8 November, the committee reviewed the Litter Strategy as approved by Cabinet in October and commended the revisions made to the draft version that had been scrutinised by the select committee in July. The select committee proposed that an update on the Litter Strategy should be included in the 2023/4 Stronger Place work programme.

Leisure Services Contract update

The Council appointed Places for People Leisure as its partner for the development and management of its four leisure facilities when the agreement commenced in April 2017. It was a 20-year design, build, operate and maintain (DBOM) contract. On 8 November, the Acting Service Director (Contracts) stated that the contract was managed through monthly leisure contract managers meetings, where performance of the delivery of services in accordance with the agreed contract was reviewed. The Leisure Management Contract Partnership Board provided strategic oversight and robust challenges over the contract, providing effective dialogue and resolution of issues at senior officer and member level. The Council monitored the services to ensure performance against set requirements and Key Performance Indicators in the contract. During the Covid-19 pandemic, EFDC provided financial support to Places Leisure in order to maintain the operations of the leisure centres in the District. The recovery rates in leisure centre usage had enabled Places Leisure to resume the payment of management fees. Rising energy costs were posing a significant challenge but mitigating the rising energy costs was being achieved by implementing measures across the centres to reduce the levels of consumption. In January 2021, Cabinet agreed that the new leisure centre in Epping was to be delivered by Places Leisure under the DBOM contract, as had the Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre. A formal Deed of Variation was issued, and an external legal adviser was appointed to prepare and negotiate the DBOM contract variation. The new Epping Leisure Centre project was currently in the second stage of the procurement phase, with the contract award anticipated early 2023. The construction phase for the new leisure centre was expected to start in summer 2023, with a two-year construction period.

Waste Management Contract update

On 8 November, the Interim Acting Service Director (Contracts) advised the Council was in contract with Biffa Municipal Ltd. for the delivery of waste, processing of dry recycling services and street cleansing. The Cabinet had agreed to undertake a full procurement process for this contract that would expire in November 2024. Officers had started the procurement process and market engagement events had been held with potential waste contractors. A Portfolio Holders Advisory Group would be established to consider the current challenges and support the procurement of a new waste and recycling contract. The Waste Management Partnership Board provided a strategic oversight of the contract at senior officer and member level. It was supported by monthly managers meetings and daily monitoring and inspections by the Waste and Recycling Team Manager and area waste officers. It was acknowledged that there had been unprecedented levels of missed collections over the course of this year. This was due to multiple factors including a national shortage of staff, in particular drivers and loaders, and vehicle breakdowns compounded by a lack of hire vehicles. Biffa had implemented a variety of investments and initiatives to improve their performance. The select committee asked for a list of missed collections to be highly visible on the Council's website when this involved whole streets or known areas; sought clarity on the wheelie bin trial in Theydon Bois; suggested narrow access vehicles could be used when there were cars parked on both sides of a road and in rural areas with restricted access; raised concerns that bins were not being repaired but replaced; and discussed the potential charging to collect garden

waste. A visit to the recycling centre at Edmonton for members of the select committee would also be arranged.

Parking update

At the meeting on 16 January 2023, the Interim Acting Service Director (Contracts) presented the update report highlighting that the tariff changes agreed by Cabinet in November 2021 had been successfully implemented on 4 April 2022. An annual increase of approximately £150,000 in parking fees and charges was projected, compared to the previous year (post-pandemic). The select committee was advised that although pre-pandemic parking income levels had not been reached, car park income and occupancy rates were continually reviewed by EFDC officers. Other parking updates comprised news of: further electric vehicle (EV) charging points; a school-led initiative (3PR) offered across the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) to help prevent inconsiderate and dangerous parking around schools; and a new online process for Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) applications. Also, as pavement parking was not prohibited in Essex, the NEPP could not enforce against obstructive parking, which could only be carried out by the Police.

Off Street Civil Parking Enforcement Policy

In January, the Leisure and Parking Team Manager, A Hoke, advised the Committee that the Civil Parking Enforcement policy had been reviewed and amended. The updated policy provided a simplified document with updated terminology. The policy reflected the legal process, covered EV bays, virtual payments and the introduction of a £50 administration fee, which had been added to suspension requests in addition to standard suspension charges per bay fee. The select committee was informed the policy stipulated that motorists could challenge penalty charge notices for exceptional circumstances including breakdown and each representation was considered on its own merits and assessed in line with best practice; the observation period for offences was set by legislation with the grace period set locally at 10 mins; and blue badge holders parked for free if they correctly displayed a valid blue badge. However, officers would look to develop publicity around the misuse and confiscation of blue badges.

Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP)

The Technical Services Manager, M Thompson, reported that the process to develop the AQAP was prescribed in law and required a public consultation exercise before submission to Defra for approval and the subsequent adoption by Council. The proposed draft AQAP sought to improve air quality in the District. It supported the aims of the Climate Change Action Plan and work around improving air quality for the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Technical Services Portfolio Holder, Councillor K Williamson, commended the plan to the select committee on 16 January. Councillor N Bedford, Place Portfolio Holder, also advised that the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group for Air Quality had held discussions on air quality in Epping Forest and as part of the mitigation strategy associated with the SAC. Monitoring sites near the Wake Arms roundabout had been agreed with the City of London (CoL) which was considering the installation of temporary signs to advise motorists to turn off their vehicle engines, rather than leave them idling. In addition, road improvements had also been agreed on the A1403 between the Wake Arms and Woodford. Members raised a number of points with the Air Quality Environmental Officer, A Ventura, and the Environmental Health Team Manager, B Stalabrass. Although the select committee endorsed the draft AQAP and approved the four-week public consultation between the months of January and February 2023, it suggested that transport was critical to the delivery of the AQAP and the impact on non-human sensitive receptors, e.g. bees, should be considered.

Sustainable transport update

S Lloyd Jones, Sustainable Transport Officer, presented highlights of this report to the select committee on 7 March 2023, which included:

- The national and local pressure on bus services and the extension of the national £2 flat fare for buses until the end of June 2023.
- The introduction of a Flexi-route app to support the EFDC funded DaRT86 Service, the promotional material available and the social value of this service, which was run in

conjunction with Epping Forest Community Transport and needed to be booked at least 24 hours in advance.

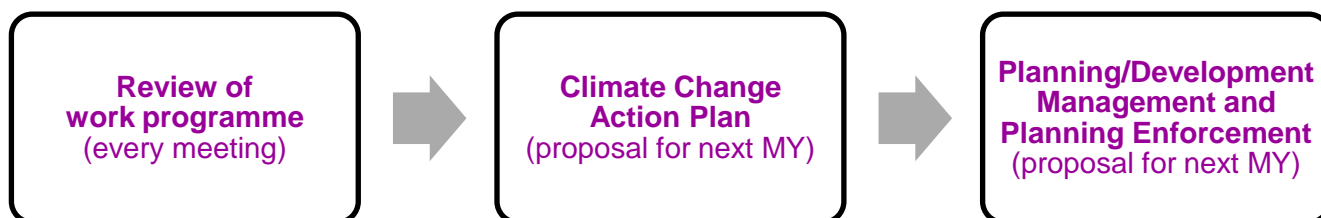
- The Electric Vehicle (EV) market share was increasing. EFDC had the highest number of Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) on the road in Essex but the level of public EV charging points was an issue.
- Work with Instavolt would expand rapid chargers, these would be available in six Council car parks. The facilitation of planning requests for public or semi-public charges should increase the number of EV chargers to match the England ratio by the end of 2023.
- EFDC had very low utility and commuting cycling compared to the neighbouring boroughs. A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Waltham Abbey should be carried out in 2023/24.
- The Local Plan could provide funding for active travel.

The select committee recognised the value of the DaRT86 and requested promotional material for distribution and to publicise the bus service to the local councils. It was agreed there was a need for more infrastructure to encourage the shift to, and use of, public transport but acknowledged that this would need to be addressed on a subregional or national basis. Members recognised that the infrastructure for on street EV charging could be restrictive and additional pressures and requirements could be required for rural areas. It was suggested that a relaxation on the rules for personal driveways and integration with mobility grants could increase the number of EV charging points. The select committee acknowledged the lack of cycle infrastructure and that safe cycling was an issue across the District.

North Weald Airfield development

The Commercial Service Manager, D Goodey, outlined the North Weald Airfield Master Plan and the proposed development of the eastern side of the aerodrome at the meeting on 7 March 2023. This would dictate a change to how aviation operations were performed due to the requirement to relocate the control tower building function, the potential need for a new entrance and alternative locations for operational buildings. Following a two-phase review that had been carried out by Osprey Consulting, the recommendation was that North Weald Airfield remained an unlicensed aerodrome but with improved facilities, security, and safety. Members had agreed with this recommendation and welcomed the aviation business and training opportunity this would provide. As the control tower building was listed it would remain in situ, but its function would be relocated. Details of the shared road and taxi runway space were provided at the meeting, in addition to the mitigation measures that were in place to minimise any risk of accident. Confirmation was received that the development for commercial use for freight was not a consideration of the report and that the London Metropolitan Police Helicopter base had moved back to Lippitts Hill, High Beach.

Other work programme highlights



Agendas and minutes

Please view at this link [Stronger Place Select Committee](#)

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday 5 October 2023, 7.00 pm - 8.05 pm

Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Members Present:	Councillors D Sunger (Chairman), L Burrows (Vice-Chairman), I Allgood, C Amos, R Balcombe, D Barlow, R Bassett, N Bedford, P Bolton, H Brady, R Brookes, E Gabbett, R Jennings, J Jennings, H Kane, S Kane, H Kauffman, P Keska, J Lea, A Lion, J Lucas, T Matthews, C McCann, C McCredie, J McIvor, L Mead, L Morgan, S Murray, C Nweke, M Owen, L Paine, J Parsons, A Patel, S Patel, J Philip, Caroline Pond, C C Pond, R Pugsley, K Rizvi, R Sharif, D Stocker, B Vaz, C Whitbread, H Whitbread, J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, K Williamson and D Wixley
Members Present (Virtually):	Councillors S Heap
Apologies:	Councillor(s) R Baldwin, P Bhanot, A Green, I Hadley, S Heather, J Jogia, M Markham, R Morgan and S Yerrell
Officers In Attendance:	Georgina Blakemore (Chief Executive), Andrew Small (Strategic Director, Corporate and Section 151 Officer), Nathalie Boateng (Service Manager (Legal) & Monitoring Officer), Gary Woodhall (Team Manager - Democratic & Electoral Services), Tom Carne (Corporate Communications Team Manager) and Steven Mitchell (PR Website Editor)
Officers In Attendance (Virtually):	Vivienne Messenger (Democratic Services Officer)

[A RECORDING OF THIS MEETING IS AVAILABLE FOR REPEATED VIEWING](#)

31 WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

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

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

33 MINUTES

The Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager reported that the minutes of the last meeting were not ready but would be available for agreement at the next meeting of the Council.

34 ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) **Former Councillor Ann Miller**

The Chairman informed members of the death of former Councillor A Miller. Members stood for a minute's silence, and then paid tribute to the memory of former Councillor A Miller, who had served as Chairman of the Council in 1988/89.

(b) 'Greater in Spirit, Larger in Outlook'

The Chairman reported that the 'Greater in Spirit, Larger in Outlook' event was running at the District Museum until 22 December 2023, and encouraged Members to visit the exhibition.

(c) Civic Awards 2024

The Chairman had attended a seminar that highlighted the 'unsung heroes' who got no recognition, and reminded Members that nominations were now open for the Civic Awards event in 2024; Members were encouraged to submit their nomination for their local 'unsung heroes'.

(d) Diwali

The Chairman invited Members to attend his reception to celebrate the festival of Diwali on Saturday 11 November 2023 between 4.00pm and 6.00pm.

35 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

The Council noted that no public questions had been received for consideration at the meeting.

36 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

The Council noted that there were no questions by members under notice that had been submitted for consideration at this meeting.

37 REPORTS FROM THE LEADER & MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received written reports from Portfolio Holders. The Chairman invited the Leader of Council to provide an oral report and the opportunity for other members of the Cabinet to give updates on matters concerning their relevant portfolios.

(a) Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council reported that there had been very few meetings or events during the summer, but there were now numerous meetings taking place with the Cabinet and other Councillors on various projects that were being progressed. The Leader had met with the new Chairman of Qualis and discussed various issues with him, and the Cabinet was due to meet tomorrow on North Weald Airfield to discuss the Masterplan.

The report of the Leader of the Council was noted.

(b) Place Portfolio Holder

The report of the Place Portfolio Holder was noted.

(c) Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that Qualis wished to make some minor alterations to their structure to reflect the tax advice that had been received; a new subsidiary company, Qualis

Land, would be created.

The report of the Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder was noted.

(d) Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder

The report of the Housing and Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder was noted.

(e) Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder was pleased to report that the Council had successfully bid for £10,000 worth of funding to support Essex County Council with the Multiply Programme in the District.

The report of the Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder was noted.

(f) Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder

The report of the Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder was noted.

(g) Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder

The report of the Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder was noted.

(h) Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder

The report of the Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder was noted.

38 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE

The questions by Members without notice, and the answers given, can be viewed in full as part of the recording of the meeting available on the Council's YouTube channel; a link to which is available on page 1 of these minutes.

<u>Question asked by:</u>	<u>Question asked to:</u>	<u>Subject of the Question:</u>
Cllr R Brookes	Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder Cllr K Williamson	Operation Dial in Loughton Broadway, lunchtime patrols requested.
Cllr T Matthews	Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder Cllr K Williamson	Resources to help communities who suffer frequent fly tipping.
Cllr J M Whitehouse	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder Cllr J Philip	Re-organisation of Qualis & any change of strategy for Qualis.
Cllr J Lea	Customer & Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder Cllr S Kane	Enforcement of parking restrictions.
Cllr S Murray	Leader of the Council Cllr C Whitbread	Completion of multi storey car park in Epping, exponential increase in use of food banks, or 4 local schools had to close because of concrete issues in September. Which is more worrying for

		residents?
Cllr M Owen	Housing & Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio Holder Cllr H Whitbread	Contributions from the leaseholders in Loughton Broadway, when will they be notified?
Cllr S Heap	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder Cllr J Philip	Reassure residents that a stringent policy is in place before we class any resident as vexatious.
Cllr J Lucas	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder Cllr S Patel	Support for vulnerable & elderly residents during the winter? Any 'Stay Safe & Well' events planned for WA?
Cllr C Nweke	Leader of the Council Cllr C Whitbread	Can we do more to celebrate Black History month and other similar events?
Cllr J H Whitehouse	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder Cllr J Philip	Update on the leasing of the space in the Civic Offices for a café & the Library?
Cllr H Kane	Community Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder Cllr S Patel	Preparations to safeguard residents from Halloween & fireworks night anti-social behaviour?
Cllr A Patel	Contracts, Service Delivery & Improvement Portfolio Holder Cllr R Balcombe	Update on progress with missed collections and construction of the Waste Management Hub?
Cllr D Wixley	Place Portfolio Holder Cllr N Bedford	Biodiversity net gain, does this applies to rivers and waterways?
Cllr C Amos	Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder Cllr J Philip	EFDC loan to Thurrock Council?
Cllr R Sharif	Leader of the Council Cllr C Whitbread	ECC Locality grants, criteria for determining.
Cllr C McCredie	Regulatory Services Portfolio Holder Cllr K Williamson	Disruption of building developments to local communities?

39 MOTIONS

The Chairman reported that there were no motions to be considered at the meeting.

40 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee, Cllr P Bolton, presented the Audit & Governance Committee Annual Report for 2022/23.

The Finance & Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Cllr J Philip, thanked the Audit & Governance Committee for their work throughout the 2022/23 municipal year.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Annual Report of the Audit & Governance Committee for 2022/23 be noted.

41 PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chairman of the Constitution Working Group, Cllr A Lion, presented a report recommending changes to Terms of reference for the Audit & Governance Committee. The Terms of Reference had been updated to reflect the latest advice from the Chartered Institute for Public Finance & Accountancy.

Resolved:

- (1) That the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the Audit & Governance Committee be approved.

42 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS & EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- (a) Royal Gunpowder Mills

Cllr H Kane outlined the staffing changes for the benefit of Members, and the agreed schedule of repairs to the buildings. There were also Halloween events taking place at the Royal Gunpowder Mills on 28 and 29 October 2023.

CHAIRMAN

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Agenda Item 8

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 19 December 2023

Subject: Place Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nigel Bedford

Recommending:

That the report of the Place Portfolio Holder be noted.

1. Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT)

EFDC officers continue to liaise with key stakeholders across the five Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) authorities and relevant site promoters. This is undertaken in the context of wider Garden Town activities. Key updates in terms of the Garden Town are:

- Inter Authority Agreement for a Joint Committee is due to be taken to a full Council meeting for consideration.
- HGGT Draft Stewardship Charter has been developed and was subject to public consultation between 7th August 2023 and 1st October 2023.
- Updated HGGT Infrastructure Delivery Plan was approved by HGGT Board in September and has been subject of a EFDC portfolio holder report for noting as technical evidence.
- HGGT Strategic Economic Framework was approved by HGGT Board in September and has been subject of a EFDC portfolio holder report for noting as technical evidence.
- The Laton Priory Design Code has been subject to a public consultation and will be reviewed following the feedback with the intention of seeking endorsement for the final version in early 2023.
- Officers are currently engaged with the promoters of the Water Lane masterplan and it is anticipated that the masterplan will be developed further throughout 2024.
- The East of Harlow masterplanning guidance Supplementary Planning Document consultation has concluded and officers are working with Harlow Council officers on the review and updating of the document. It is anticipated that this will be finalised for endorsement in early 2024.

2. Other Strategic Masterplans

The public consultation on the draft North Weald Bassett Strategic Masterplanning Framework has commenced and will run through to 16th January 2024. Thereafter feedback will be reviewed and amendments to the masterplan made as is appropriate.

The site promoters of the South Epping masterplan are engaged with Council officers on the development of a Strategic Masterplan for the site. A fixed programme has not yet been agreed but public consultation on a draft masterplan is anticipated to take place in 2024.

The developers of the Waltham Abbey North masterplan are engaged with officers and receipt of a draft Strategic Masterplan Framework document is currently awaited.

3. Climate Change

Climate Change Steering Group

Two meetings of the Climate Change Steering Group have now taken place with the terms of reference and objectives of the group agreed. The objectives of the group have an internal focus and include the sharing of information on climate related projects and best practice, facilitating the progress of actions, and the monitoring and reporting of progress.

As a first step the group are collating information on climate related projects organisation wide, with a focus on how these meet actions in the climate change action plan and the carbon impact these projects will have once complete.

Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2

The Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 scheme from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, provides energy efficiency funding for private tenure, off-grid, low income and hard to heat households. The scheme is open for applications from residents of Epping Forest District Council and will run until March 2025.

For this round of the scheme the financial criteria has changed, residents are eligible if they live in Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Income Deciles 1-3. Our Managing Agents will be contacting residents who are likely to be eligible for the scheme and the Council will also be conducting a wider marketing campaign.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 19 December 2023
Subject: Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Philip

Recommending:

That the report of the Finance, Qualis and Economic Development Portfolio Holder be noted.

Finance

Budget for 2023/24 and 2024/25

In respect of Finance, the work of the Council has been dominated by the development of a draft budget for Cabinet to agree. As has been said on numerous occasions, this budget has been exceptionally challenging due to the impact of higher prices and borrowing costs on the Council. The Council's ability to increase its main sources of income, (Council Tax, Business Rates and Government Grants) does not keep pace with rising costs and so to balance the budget, ultimately it will have to reduce net spending.

On top of £4 million of savings taken from the budget for 2023/24, the need to identify a further £3.7 million for 2024/25 creates an unprecedented challenge that will mean real and impactful reductions in budgets.

It is important that the entire Council understands this and, for the benefit of residents, is engaged in identifying the difficult choices that should form part of the draft package of budget proposals.

Cabinet have worked jointly with Overview and Scrutiny in a meeting, to which all members of the Council were invited, so that the initial Draft Budget proposals presented to Cabinet on 18 December 2023 could be as inclusive as possible.

Scrutiny will now be invited to review the proposals as an entire budget package during January. At the same time, work will continue to refine assumptions and to capture and reflect the latest information so that the Final Budget Proposals presented in February can be as accurate as possible.

Audit

As I reported last time, we continue to meet our deadlines for publication of the Council's financial position but remain in the hands of the Council's Auditors in terms of getting these signed off as correct. Without this Auditor's reassurance, there remains residual uncertainty over the exact position of the Council's balances, and this is deeply frustrating from my perspective, and from the members of the Audit and Governance

Committee. As I have previously reported, this is replicated across the Country with hundreds of councils in the same position.

Whilst we continue to inch towards 'sign-off' on the Accounts for 2020/21 the Government has now published its plan for getting Local Government up to date with their Accounts and this involves setting statutory deadlines that Auditors must meet or publish the Accounts with qualifications and explanations as to why they couldn't gain assurance within the new timeframe.

Unfortunately, the delays allow for emerging issues to be drawn into the process, such as the recent issue with RAAC (reinforced concrete) where the Auditors want to retrospectively understand the impact of the issue on all unsigned Accounts, even though the issue only arose during August 2023.

We continue to work with our Auditors to reach conclusions well ahead of these statutory deadlines, but the imposition of fixed dates at least provides reassurance that we might finally move beyond this issue.

Qualis

The financial performance of Qualis continues to be regularly reported to the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The final quarter's results from their fourth year of trading were reported to Cabinet on 18th December using the new Board report format. This is designed to show a clearer consolidated position and has been welcomed and well received.

Whilst this showed a continuation of the recent trend, both the Board Report and the new 4 year Business Plan (presented to the same meeting), herald an important point in the development of Qualis Commercial. From early 2024, the homes built on the former Condor Office site will become available for sale and this is expected to signal a peak in Qualis borrowing and then subsequently begin to gradually reduce. It also moves Qualis Commercial from annual losses, as expected whilst their developments were built out, into annual surpluses.

In the meantime, Qualis continues to make an important contribution to the Council's finances, significantly mitigating the scale of savings which are currently needing to be found.

Economic Development Programme:

- A new rural fund for town and parish councils has now been launched. This is utilising £110,000 worth of Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) to improve community locations. The deadline for applications is set for the 4th of December 2023.
- At the time of writing, a tender is being prepared to commission rural regeneration reports on six rural areas in the district. These will seek to enable the Council to better understand economic opportunities and challenges for the district's rural communities.
- A tender is being distributed on behalf of Epping Forest District Council, Harlow Council and Uttlesford District Council (West Essex) to procure a business navigator to provide more face-to-face interaction for local businesses. This

support will include advice around accessing business grants, loans and support with accessing local skills opportunities.

- West Essex councils are jointly commissioning projects involving third sector training, HGV driver training and the Prince 2 qualification amongst other workstreams.
- Positive feedback was received by local residents linked to the Ninefields playground project. This project has been partially funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Work is now underway to get quotes for a recreational area to be developed in Marlscroft Way in Loughton. This will include picnic benches and play area apparatus.
- Epping Forest District Council has now officially joined the NEEB (North Essex Economic Board). This will allow for strategic collaboration with other Essex local authorities to address significant economic growth plans. To find out more about the NEEB, please visit <https://neeb.org.uk/>
- Epping Forest District Council is a member of the Innovation Core, for more details please visit <https://www.theinnovationcore.com/>. The Innovation Core is set to launch a new website and market the following areas for inward investment, Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford, East Hertfordshire and Broxbourne.
- Issues with Government reporting systems have meant that Epping Forest District Council, like many local authorities around the country, have been unable to report back on UK Shared Prosperity Fund delivery.

FSB Subsidised Membership Scheme:

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) subsidised membership scheme is being funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Following on from the successful free membership scheme offered to local SMEs during the pandemic, this similar scheme offers subsidised membership. Launched at the beginning of October, 13 businesses have taken advantage of the offer so far. 8 have been sole owners, 1 with up to 4 employees, 2 with up to 10 employees and 2 with 10+ employees. Already these new members have taken advantage of 26 different FSB products included with their memberships, from cyber protection to insurance. The scheme has been supported by two business breakfast events, one face-to-face and one online.

Businesses have been very impressed when they have appreciated the range of valuable benefits that the FSB membership gives them access to:

Matt Miller - Eco-Enabler Alliance CIC said: "I am really impressed with the cohesiveness of FSB in the Essex region so far, in enabling me to establish contacts with the right people, including Local Authorities. I came along to the FSB breakfast in Epping and was pleasantly surprised at how I not only got the assistance I required, (through the advice of Regional Chair, David Bell), but also the services on offer through membership. Essex seems to be the most progressive of any regions of FSB in the UK – working to improve not small businesses, but that of people aspiring to develop micro businesses too".

Scott Hegley - OccHealth Direct Ltd said: "I may use the legal service at some stage, find the meetings incredibly useful and everyone has been very welcoming".

Meet the Buyer Event:

The conference space within the Civic Offices in Epping will be the venue for the district's first 'Meet the Buyer and Job Fair' event on the 14th of February 2024. This will be an opportunity for developers to showcase the range of construction projects coming to the district and meet potential local businesses, training providers, educational establishments and residents that could benefit from the range of career, employment and business opportunities on offer. The event is currently being planned but it is hoped to launch as soon as possible.

Monthly Business E-Newsletter:

The Economic Development Team has released the November edition of the 'Business Matters' e-newsletter to over 2,000 local businesses with topics focusing on the Help To Grow management course for business owners, alcohol duty reforms for restaurants and cafes, a free business competition to help start-ups and an update on the progress of EV charging in the district. If you would like to receive a copy of the monthly e-newsletter, please contact Matteo Pesci at mpesci@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

General Economic Briefing:

Unemployment to the end of September 2023 stands at 2,140 out of the total working population. This is a slight decrease in unemployment and marks its lowest level since June 2023.

Visitor Economy:

The Economic Impact of Tourism Report for Epping Forest District 2022 has been received. Top-line results show that the value of tourism to our district was £252,561,640. This was an increase of 44% on 2021 and takes the value to 4% above that of 2019. This result is in line with other areas that have seen full recovery from the pandemic and tourism performance matching or overtaking that of the last year pre-pandemic. Local jobs in tourism have also risen by 33% over 2021 and are 4% higher than 2019. There are 4,477 tourism jobs locally and they represent 10% of local employment.

The Epping Forest District tourism website, visiteppingforest.org, continues to be the mainstay for promoting local visitor information and event listings. The visitor numbers held up remarkably during the pandemic and are now growing in line with the return of tourism. The site continues to play a key role in communicating hospitality, attractions and events as a primary source of public information. As an example, the latest analytics show that in the week preceding November 5th there were over 6,000 additional visitors searching for local firework displays, for which the site listed twelve public fireworks events in or bordering our district. The Ongar Round Table fireworks display at North Weald Airfield received over 4,000 views alone in the twenty days preceding the event. Currently the district's Christmas attractions and events are being listed.

The Visit Essex Members Conference took place on the 8th of November. Visit Essex was proud to announce that they have been awarded local visitor economy partnership (LVEP) status. This is government-level recognition and gives Essex a voice in determining the future of UK tourism alongside Visit England and other regions that have achieved this benchmark. The following new trends are being seen in people's tourism choices. There is a switch from destination-based visits to passion-based visits as people look for things to do rather than just places to go. They are looking for new experiences and wish to be active rather than passive. This is good news for our district

which offers so much in the way of activity and unique opportunities and has underdeveloped potential in this area that can grow our visitor numbers. Staycations continue to remain popular with the pandemic being replaced by the cost-of-living crisis driving holidays nearer to home.

People continue to see vacations as important but are more likely to be looking for days or weekends away and seek free events and value-for-money offers – or ‘Luxe for Less’ as Visit Essex have termed it. Promoting and building tourism continues to be a key strand in both the Extraordinary Essex and NEEB agendas.

Economic Digest:

- Work on the Economic Digest began in February 2023 following the release of the 2021 census results.
- The digest aims to gather data to inform the operations and decision-making of the Economic Development team and to create a database for measuring and reporting project performance to portfolio holders and wider leadership.
- Preliminary findings were presented internally in the Summer of 2023. Content and format amendments have since been suggested and will be incorporated into the updated Economic Digest.
- More granular data is being released from the Office of National Statistics, necessitating minor updates to the Economic Digest before presenting it to service directors.
- The updated Economic Digest is expected to be ready early in the New Year.

Essex + Herts Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ):

The DIZ has recently undertaken a strategic review of its priority areas of focus. Over the next 6-18 months the strategic priorities will include data for place; the sustainability of digital; digital inclusion; connectivity; and digital skills. Additionally, this will look to raise awareness, exposure and to demonstrate the impact of the work programme. Alongside these priorities, the DIZ will continue its programme of knowledge uplift through events and its monthly DIZ Advisory Board meetings.

The Advisory Board meetings are open to any members who wish to come along and explore current and emerging digital opportunities, issues and initiatives. The latest meeting had 39 attendees and welcomed AtkinsRealis and the Geospatial Commission (part of the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology) to present on the National Underground Asset Register (NUAR) that is being developed across the UK and which aims to bring awareness of such buried assets, leading to safer excavations in our places and reduced disruption of services through utility strikes. Upcoming sessions will be looking at digital twins for planning and the monitoring of air quality. Any member who wishes to attend the Board can contact Mike Warr, DIZ Programme Manager & Acting Director at mwarr@eppingforestdc.gov.uk.

The DIZ also issues a weekly newsletter of digital-themed web links. The newsletter covers topics such as connectivity, digital inclusion, future tech and AI, digital sustainability, digital skills, cyber-security and online safety, data, digital for business and digital healthcare, as well as highlighting upcoming digital webinars and events. Any

members wishing to subscribe to this newsletter can do so by contacting the DIZ Programme Manager as above.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet
Date: November 2023
Subject: Housing and Strategic Health Partnerships Portfolio
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Holly Whitbread

Recommending:

That the report of the Housing and Communities Portfolio Holder be noted.

1. Housing & Property – cross cutting themes

a) Civica Cx – Housing and Asset Management System – Phase 1 - Go-Live

The Housing and Property Teams went 'live' with Phase 1 of the new system on 25th October 2023. This is a key milestone and great achievement for a project that initially started some years ago. The Civica Cx system replaces the NEC OHMs system that teams had used for many years.

Civica Cx is a more modern alternative to OHMs, it is a cloud-based solution that users will access via a web browser. It provides functionality to manage all aspects of housing and asset functions, as well as the ability to log and track customer cases and enhanced reporting capabilities, all of which allow colleagues to be more self-sufficient in getting data out of the system.

Phase 1 includes

- Properties, People and Tenancies
- Income Management
- Allocations / Re-housing
- Tenancy Case Management
- Right to Buy
- Repairs – non-Qualis (Qualis will retain their current processes but, with greater integration moving forward)
- Must Have Reports for team

Moving forward to the autumn/winter of 2024 will be Phase 2 of the Civica Cx system. This will bring on board a range of modules including:

- Compliance
- Service Charges
- Repairs full implementation, including Qualis repair processes
- Asset Management / Planned Maintenance
- Finance Integration
- Improvements we were unable to implement in Phase 1
- Customer Portal

b) Housemark

EFDC has commenced an annual membership with Housemark. Housemark is the leading data and insight company for the UK housing sector, jointly owned by the National Housing Federation and the Chartered Institute of Housing. Its members include over 350 social housing providers from across the UK - representing 3.8million homes.

Housemark provides insight, analysis and services that will help us to benchmark and compare how we are performing and, help us to shape and improve our services. This approach will also inform our decision-making giving, us greater confidence to make decisions that make a difference for our customers, our people and our Council.

As a member of Housemark, we will benefit from a range of products and services including sector analysis, tailored comparisons, and forecasting.

We will use this membership and approach for both EFDC and Qualis to strengthen service alignment, improve data integrity and offer internal challenge.

c) Government Consultations responded to, and in consideration

Responses issued:

- Consultation on the consumer standards
 - We're now working on the potential implications of the new consumer standards in terms of data and other evidence
- Consultation on fees from RSH
 - The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) is considering implementation of new charges/fees which if implemented as proposed, could result in an annual fee of c£50k. The RSH already charges housing associations but is now considering charges to local authorities too.
- Complaint Handling Code
 - The Code is to be statutory from April 2024 and is now shared with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Significant implications and the Corporate policy will need to be reviewed and training rolled out.
- Homes England; Partner Perception

In-consideration:

- Regulator of Social Housing: tenant rights and complaints
- Statutory guidance under s215 of the HRA 2008 – sets out how the Regulator will use their powers.
- Modern leasehold: restricting ground rent for existing leases
- HMG consultation on a cap on entrants using Safe and Legal routes to the UK

2. Housing

a) Tenant and Leaseholder Panel

The Tenant & Leaseholder Panel continue to work closely with our teams to inform services and offer critical challenge. Key areas of activity include:

- They are working towards a small focus group to enable feedback and input relating to block/street representatives and what their remit will be
- The panel are providing feedback on the Older Persons Strategy and, the Home Ownership Strategy. The panel meeting on 5th of December 2023 has a key focus on these items

- Wyn (Chair of Panel) has been working with Keith Bowman, Strategy Manager to provide feedback and input into the government consultation on the consumer standards
- Wyn has also been cited on the new complaints handling code from the ombudsman and provided comments/feedback

3. Housing Development

a) Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill - 7 units; 6 x 1B2P Flats, 1 x 2B4P flat

The roof at Pentlow has made a great deal of progress, although still slower than expected. The building is not yet watertight; however, we expect this be watertight ahead of the Christmas break. This will make way for the internals to start taking shape ahead of our revised handover of March 2024. We will begin making a start on planning the scheme opening in the new year.

Key progress includes:

- Roof carpentry ongoing
- Front dormer complete ready for soakers/ zinc and tiling
- Rear gable end barge, soffit and fascia completed
- Rear valleys completed
- Zinc work to soffit and fascia's ongoing
- Handrails installed to stair well area
- Brickwork progressing across development
- Roof covering – felt and battening ongoing
- Gas membrane preparation ongoing – floors cleaned and scraped
- 1st fix plumbing ongoing





b) Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey - 8 units; 7 x 1B2P & 1 x 2B4P

The internal works continue to make progress at a reasonable pace, we expect to receive handover of the scheme in February 2024.

Key Progress includes;

- First fix M & E to ground floor and first floor complete
- Ductwork to G/F & F/F complete
- Fire stopping protection to services to G/F & F/F complete
- Windowsills installed
- Glass balcony balustrading complete
- Pipe lagging complete
- M & E 1st fix inspected
- Ground floor walls and ceilings closed up





c) Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) Project

We are soon to complete on our first LAHF project home, originally expected to complete in September. Challenges with the gas mains connection and delays with our window and door supplier had impacted completion timescales. We expect to complete our first unit before Christmas. We are also steadily making progress with the other properties in this programme with completions expected in the new year.

d) Planning

Our key focus here is to work to get the Ladyfields development proposal and, Chequers B substation works through planning and then, get these into contract and on site. We are working with our planning team to progress this.

e) Strategic partnership

B3 Living recently completed their development scheme and we attended an opening event to celebrate the collaboration between Epping and B3 living. It is a fantastic development, and we look forward to working with B3 Living on further projects.

Sovereign Network Homes (Previously known as Network Homes) will deliver from two Sites – A & B (below) a total of 107 affordable housing units from November 2023 up to April 2026. It is possible that completion may be achieved before 2026.

Site A at Boarder Lane, Loughton, now known as Treeside will deliver 22 units (8 A/R and 14 S/O) and handover is anticipated to be at the end of November 2023. An official opening event is being arranged for January 2024.

Significant progress has been made on the sale of the shared-ownership units; to date 9 units have been reserved for applicants in the District and the intention is that all units will be sold in the District.

Further, Sovereign Network homes is currently working with our housing team to ensure allocation of the affordable rented units.

Site B, again at Boarder Lane, Loughton will deliver 85 units (57AR and 28S/O) and it is anticipated that handover may begin in April 2024 to April 2026, although firm dates are to be confirmed.

These two sites are at the edge of an ancient woodland in Epping Forest, provide easy access to London and continue to provide much needed housing. We are confident that they will make an immensely positive contribution to community.

f) Partnerships

Our partners continue to engage actively with developers and, there are positive signs that new contracts for delivery will present in the coming years. The adoption of the local plan was critically important for our partnership; we therefore expect more affordable housing delivery from our partnerships.

We are also seeking to extend the number of partners from 7 to 9; English Rural, a provider with extensive experience and skill in delivering rural affordable housing and Clarion Housing Group, one of the largest housing association in the UK. This increases the ability to have more affordable housing and also the flexibility to have different sized organisations thus enhancing the delivery of more homes. Both of which approached EFDC with a view to working with us.

4. Assets

a) RAAC latest / position for EFDC

We have assessed Council buildings for risks associated with RAAC considering the date of build and information we hold on its construction. Where we identified a building that we cannot eliminate the use of RAAC through desktop study, we have commissioned a site investigation.

We have eliminated all buildings in our operational and residential portfolio except two, almost identical, residential buildings. The likelihood of RAAC in these two buildings is low. We will carry out intrusive tests that will involve drilling into the roof slab to check the material used in its construction. We have put a flag on our system to notify us of any top floor flat that becomes void. When an empty flat becomes available, we will carry out the test. The risk from RAAC in housing is very low because it was not widely used in housing construction and, the spans of beams are much shorter than in schools and many public buildings. This means such concrete beams are under less stress.

b) Damp & Mould Policy

We have drafted a condensation, damp and mould policy. We plan to present this to the Tenants' and Lessees' Panel and the Scrutiny Committee in due course. We aim to take the policy to Cabinet in March for approval to adopt the policy.

The policy will demonstrate our commitment to be proactive in seeking all instances of condensation, damp and mould that could have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of our tenants. This will include running campaigns encouraging tenants to report problems and advice on controlling condensation. We will carry out works to deal with the cause of the problem and monitor its effectiveness until we are confident the problem is resolved.

c) Asset Management Strategy - update

Following a procurement process, we have appointed Ark Consultancy to help us develop our Housing Asset Management Strategy. Work has started in gathering the information needed to establish the current position.

We have given Ark a tour of our stock so they can better understand type of accommodation we provide, its condition and the asset management issues we face.

Ark will be facilitating workshops with the Asset Management team, Qualis and our internal customers on the 4th and 5th December.

During December, we will be running a survey of our tenants and leaseholders to help us understand their priorities. This will be important for setting the direction of the strategy.

We expect the first draft of the Asset Management Strategy around February 24 and aim to present the Strategy to Cabinet in March 24.

Surjit Balu
Interim Director of Housing and Property

Report to the Council

Committee: Full Council
Date: 19 December 2023
Subject: Community & Wellbeing
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Smruti Patel

Recommending:

That the report of the Community, Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Holder be noted.

Warm Places Epping Forest

Epping Forest Social Spaces transformed back into Warm Places on Monday 6 November. The Warm Places initiative started in 2022 to provide a free, safe, warm and comfortable space for those who need it throughout winter. Several venues continued to offer a welcoming space through the Spring and Summer months for residents to meet old friends and make new ones, play games and get access to different services.

Many new Warm Places have opened up across the district, with venues offering refreshments (some providing hot food), activities such as board games and free Wi-Fi. This valued initiative not only provides a physical place for residents who are feeling extra pressure to heat their homes but also offers a friendly space to help reduce social isolation. Full information can be found via the following link: <https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/cost-of-living/warm-places/>

Stay Safe & Well This Winter community events.

Stay Safe & Well community events are a key part of the Council's contribution towards the delivery of the Epping Forest Health & Wellbeing Strategy. Events in Loughton and Buckhurst Hill during October proved popular with local residents. Around 100 people attended the events, which were aimed mainly at older residents, and featured information stands, informative talks and health checks, all designed to help residents stay safe and healthy during the winter months. Covid and flu vaccinations were administered, and health checks were undertaken. There were seated exercise sessions and Arc Theatre Company presented an interactive performance themed around scamming.

Partners offering advice and support on the day included Essex Police, East of England Ambulance Service, Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, NHS Pharmacists, St Clare Hospice, Epping Forest Foodbank, the Alzheimer's Society, Epping Forest Dementia Friendly Communities, Crimestoppers, VAEF, Carers First, Essex Wellbeing Service, Age Well East, Safer Essex Road Partnership, Neighbourhood Watch, U3A and Social Prescribers. Feedback from both events showed that over 91% of attendees were encouraged to become more active, 94% felt more confident about keeping safe in their home and community, 94% thought the theatre production would help them to avoid being scammed and 100% found the information stalls useful and relevant.

A further two events are scheduled for Spring 2024 in Sheering and Ongar.

Longfield Community Allotment, Waltham Abbey

£1,900 of Home Office Safer Streets funding has been secured to facilitate the clearance of an allotment plot in Waltham Abbey in readiness for the community to take over. Clearance work was completed in September and staff are working with interested local residents and groups on the project. Engaging with nature, learning new skills, sharing horticultural knowledge with others, and forging meaningful friendships are just a few of the benefits of this work.

Cost of Living Youth Conference

The Epping Forest Youth Conference is a biannual event which is organised and hosted in the Council Chamber by Epping Forest Youth Councillors as part of their second year in office. Supported by the Community Development & Wellbeing Team, Friday 17 November saw the district's nine secondary schools send delegates from all year groups to the event. Over 100 teenagers attended on the day.

This year the theme was 'Let's Talk About Money,' which linked to the Youth Councillor's project about the cost-of-living. Guest speakers included experts from the financial world and educational services talking about the impact of the cost of living on teenagers and their families, money management and the importance of budgeting, debt guidance and young people's financial wellbeing. There was a lively debate, Youth Councillors updated schools about their work and encouraged pupils to stand in the forthcoming Youth Elections.

Broadcast Junior

The junior school version of Broadcast, which is an interactive, educational theatre production, will be delivered to pupils in Years 5 and 6 across eleven schools in and around Loughton and Ongar. Broadcast Junior covers social media safety, TikTok dares and meeting people alone. Arc Theatre has also been funded by the CSP to deliver the 'Unlimited' counter-hate performance programme, with teacher training for three schools in the district: St Andrews in North Weald and Moreton Primary schools, and the Year 7 pupils at The Ongar Academy. Through creative workshop activities and discussions, young people look at how to celebrate unity in diversity while sensitively exploring and challenging a range of extremist narratives.

Nazeing Outreach Youth Work

The Team has secured £1,380 from the Community Safety Partnership to commission the delivery of 12 weeks youth outreach work in Nazeing. This was in response to Community Champions reporting anti-social behaviour concerns in the area. The Red Balloon Foundation completed the work on behalf of the Council and are due to launch a permanent youth club at St Giles Church Hall.

Limes Farm Colts

The Limes Farm Colts football project in Chigwell is running successfully and continues to grow through partnership working with the Limes Farm Community Group, Colebrook Royals FC, and the Council. Over 40 children are benefitting from the sessions on a Tuesday afternoon and evening. Funding totally £3,332 has been received from Active Essex, and new funding to ensure sustainability will be sought for April 2024 onwards.

Dementia Friendly Communities

A Dementia Information Webpage was launched on the Council's website in October.

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/community/dementia/>

Due to the Alzheimer's Society stepping back from the dementia friendly recognition scheme, the Dementia Friendly Communities Group (DFC) decided to create their own logo. Coopersale

& Theydon Garnon Primary School pupils took part in a competition to design this. In October, group members and people with lived experience chose the winning design. Adaptions are being made by the successful pupil to create the final version.

Christmas Memory Train

On 6 December a pre-Christmas trip on the Memory Train between Ongar and North Weald was enjoyed by 80 Epping Forest residents living with dementia and mild cognitive impairment. Santa met travellers at Ongar station to distribute gifts and joined the passengers for a jolly trip to North Weald. This is the fourth event of its kind that's run and it was made possible by a collaboration between Epping Open Gardens, Epping Ongar Railway, and the Council.

Multiply Funding

The Community & Wellbeing Directorate received £10,000 of funding to support Essex County Council with the delivery of the Multiply Programme in the Epping Forest district over a seven-month time frame (August 2023 to March 2024).

The Council's role in this government funded project is to act as an advocate and coordinator to ensure local partners are working together and that residents' groups have access to the delivery partners, ensuring those in need have the opportunity to engage in the project. The project includes basic numeracy courses, understanding finance courses, cookery and maths, gardening by numbers, and maths for parents to support with their children's homework. The Council has been recognised for best practice with this pilot.

Let's Cook

Partnering with a local Primary Care Network (PCN) dietician, officers will be delivering cookery programmes to families on a low income. Participants will receive a free slow cooker to use at home. After the pilot in January 2024, the programme will be rolled out to residents with different health diagnoses, for example, those with type 2 Diabetes, and tailored to individual conditions.

Epping Forest Community Champions

The volunteer Community Champion team has increased to 23. Four new Community Champions have come on board to help represent Ongar, Abridge, Epping and Waltham Abbey. The Community Champions have recently volunteered at the following events: the launch of the "Greater in Spirit, Larger in Outlook" Museum exhibition, Stay Safe & Well this Winter events in Loughton and Buckhurst Hill, the Ninefields Training, Recruitment and Skills Fair and an Emergency Planning Recruitment event. Upcoming events include the Waltham Abbey Leisure Centre 5-year anniversary celebration and the Museum's Cavalcade of Light activities.

On 26 September the Community Champions attended the Communities Scrutiny Committee with a presentation on their Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) work.

Officers have been supporting Sheering's Community Champion with funding applications to establish a youth club and Epping's new Community Champion is working with officers to establish an intergenerational gardening project with Ivy Chimneys Primary School.

Ninefields - Robert Wood Johnson Place-Based Project

As part of the continuing Ninefields Place-Based Project, a survey has been undertaken with residents to gather information themed around employment, skills and training aspirations. Over 400 responses were received and analysed.

The information gathered will inform the development and roll out of a range of training opportunities in the area to address the skills shortages identified. To begin this approach and

promote existing opportunities a multi-agency Recruitment, Skills & Training fair was delivered at Waltham Abbey Sports Centre on the 30th October.

Social, Active, Strong

The Social, Active, Strong Service continues to support older residents to improve their strength and mobility and live independent lives. The service is so successful that additional classes have been added in Loughton and Buckhurst Hill to meet the increase in referrals.

West Essex Disability Inclusion Project

The West Essex Disability Inclusion Project will be delivering a Christmas Party for all the children and families involved in the project on the 14th December at the Civic Offices. This year has been the most successful yet with the Project running more activities and supporting more children with disabilities and their families than any of its previous years.

Primary Care Network Health Inequalities Projects

Staff supported the Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell (LBC) Primary Care Network to deliver a Health MOT event at New City Collage on the 28th November. The event involved local residents aged 50+, who had not had a health check in the past five years, attending the College to have blood pressure and health checks, and to also access a range of support services.

Staff are also working with the Epping North Primary Care Network by supporting them to help residents with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. Specifically identified residents will be supported to access winter warmth support via the Community Hubs in Epping and Waltham Abbey. Both of these initiatives are part of a joint approach on the part of the Council and the NHS, to reduce health inequalities.

Epping Forest District Museum

September saw the opening of the “Greater in Spirit, Larger in Outlook” exhibition at the Museum. The exhibition has seen over 1000 visitors to date. The exhibition was externally funded by Arts Council England and has enabled Epping Forest District Museum and Saffron Walden Museum to review objects in their collections relating to different cultures of the world. Local schools continue to visit the Museum, with 1400 pupils accessing the formal education service from September until mid-November.

On Friday 24 November, the Museum took part in the Cavalcade of Light event. This annual event takes place in Waltham Abbey and celebrates the turning on of the Christmas lights in the Town.

Recently the Museum had a mystery-shop visit by a Visit England assessor. The Museum scored an overall 89% with 100% for cleanliness and customer care. The Museum was described as “a high-quality facility as experienced by two different assessors on previous visits. It is a small district museum, and everything is very well presented and interpreted, cleanliness throughout is excellent.”

Report to the Council

Committee: Full Council
Date: 19 December 2023
Subject: Contracts, Service Delivery, and Improvements
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ray Balcombe

Recommending:

The report of the Contracts, Service Delivery, and Improvements.

Leisure Management:

Free Swimming

Places Leisure are offering a 'Free December Swimming Pass' for children receiving free school meals. In addition to the free swimming, each child who receives a free-swimming pass will also receive a free pair of Zoggs goggles (subject to availability).

Epping Leisure Centre

Work on Epping's new leisure centre and swimming pool is about to start. The new Epping Leisure Centre will be the newest and most energy efficient in the district. As well as air-sourced heat pumps and digital technology, the centre will incorporate the highest levels of insulation into construction, keeping future energy bills and carbon emissions as low as possible.

Facilities in the new Epping Leisure Centre include:

- A main swimming pool
- A learner pool
- Sports hall
- Health and fitness gym
- Studios
- Squash Courts

Bakers Lane car park closed at midnight on Tuesday 14 November 2023. The site has been secured and banners advertising the new leisure centre are in place. A dedicated webpage has been developed on the EFDC's website, which will be regularly updated with progress of the construction. The web page can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/leisure/sports-and-leisure-centres/new-leisure-centre-development/>

Contractors have started on site survey works in preparation for construction to start next year. The new Epping Leisure Centre is estimated to open in 2025.

Waste Management:

Future Delivery of Waste Services

Good progress is being made with the three workstreams of the future delivery of waste services.

In terms of the workstreams, the set-up of the new EFDC owned waste company:

Detailed project documentation is all in place and updated regularly. Scoping work is being carried out with each of the support service leads offering support to the Waste Team. Various thematic working groups are in place and making good progress to ensure everything required for

the company to function and operate is in place. Legal and Governance work is all on track for the set-up of the company.

Regarding the Environmental Operations Hub at North Weald Airfield, full planning application has been submitted and invitation to tender documents have been issued to market for a contractor to construct the environmental operations hub. Construction to commence in early 2024.

Regarding the procurement of waste fleet vehicles, this is also underway, and documents issued to market for the supply and maintenance of the waste fleet. Evaluation of the bids will take place in December and contract awarded in January.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 19 December 2023
Subject: Technical Services Portfolio Holder
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ken Williamson

Recommending:

That the report of the Portfolio Holder be noted.

1. Regulatory & Technical Services:

Environmental Health

The team continue to complete food hygiene inspections in accordance with Food Standards Agency requirements alongside monthly surveillance sampling programmes and continue to monitor Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) across the district in 41 locations. The team are supporting the UKHSA with a national surveillance programme for Cryptosporidium, which has shown an increase over this year. The support requires following up cases within EFDC area and completion of a questionnaire back to UKHSA for analysis and trends.

Licensing

Bliss Heights, 140 London Road, Abridge RM4 1XX

In July 2023 the owner of the property applied for a premises licence to permit regulated entertainment only including Live Music, Recorded Music, performance of dance and anything of a similar description. During the consultation period the Council received 75 objections from the Councils Community Resilience team, Environmental Health, Lambourne Parish Council, Abridge Park Residents Association and local residents.

At a hearing of the Councils Licensing Sub-Committee on 1st August, the decision was made to refuse the application. An appeal has since been lodged with the Magistrates Court against the Councils decision and the matter is to be heard at Romford Magistrates Court on 5th & 6th March 2024.

XL Bully Ban

On 14th November 2023, Government has brought into force further legislation to implement the ban on XL Bully dogs and start the transition period for existing owners which ends on 31st January 2024. During the transition period, owners who wish to keep their dogs must apply for a Certificate of exemption, alternatively, owners who choose to have their dog put to sleep can apply to central Government for compensation. On 31st December 2023 it will become a criminal offence to sell, transfer, exchange, gift or advertise XL Bully dogs.

Any licensees who are currently licensed to breed these types of dogs must cease breeding from this date and it will be illegal to breed from a XL Bully, and also for a XL Bully to be bred from any combination of other dogs.

Local authorities are not expected to provide advice on whether a particular dog falls within scope of the ban, this for the owner to determine. To assist owners, Government has provided guidance on the official definition of a XL Bully Dog along with photographic examples which can be found on the gov.uk website.

The Police are the lead enforcement agency and will investigate for offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and this will include formally identifying suspected XL Bully breed types once the legislation comes into force.

Environmental Enforcement

The proposed Public Spaces Protection Order for Dog Control consultation ended on 20th November, we will be analysing the responses over the next few weeks.

The volume of fly-tipping has continued to increase year on year with an average of 800 open cases per officer as of November. The team is reviewing and prioritising work and complex cases as much as possible.

Cartersfield Prosecution heard at Colchester Magistrates on 16th November regarding the extensive fly-tipping last year on a Council commercial premises costing £93,000 in clean up. As a custodial sentence of 18 months is to be considered, this has now been passed to Crown Ct with a new date of 14th December.

Investigations are progressing around the Brooker Road Fly tip; this investigation has opened up 8 different lines of enquires relation to both commercial and domestic properties. 3 fly tipping hotspots have been identified in Waltham Abbey and work is progressing to tackle these areas, including wanted posters and formal notices being issued.

Waste carrier stop checks carried out in partnership with our EFDC funded Police team on 14th November. 100 stops by Police and 60 stops by the Enviro team including pickup trucks and flat beds. A number of follow ups (15) are required for waste carrier licences and advice.

Antisocial Behaviour Team

Operation Stronghold completed on 26th October with CST, visits were carried out to local parks and hotspot areas giving advice on the new nitrous oxide legislation. (Possession of nitrous oxide, also known as 'laughing gas', became illegal from 8 November 2023. Repeat serious users of nitrous oxide could face up to 2 years in prison and dealers up to 14 years) The proposed Public Spaces Protection Order for consultation for the Broadway PSPO, ended on 20th November, we will be analysing the responses over the next few weeks.

Operation Henderson, the team engaged with a total of 75 people, including taxi drivers, bus driver and commuters. Posters with reporting details put in local businesses. The team engaged with many groups of young people who advised they don't always feel safe travelling on trains, and they were given the BTP text number. A QR code was given to members of public where they could find out further information and how to report.

The Crimestoppers Initiative continues to be a success with more people reporting crimes since its introduction in 2022.

EFDC Policing Team

Sgt Rob Fitt has now joined the EFDC team, replacing Sgt Neil Ross. Sgt Fitt joined Essex Police in 2010, during his career he has led multiple teams in response policing and community policing, He is passionate about uniformed policing, especially community policing and a huge supporter of community engagement events and visible policing

presence. He believes that these interactions are the best way in which we can improve our relationship with the local community.

The team will be carrying out tasking which will be under the general header of “festive events”, there will likely be several Christmas markets etc that will require the team to be assist with and current planned attendance Friday 24th November, Waltham Abbey Cavalcade of Light and Wednesday 29th November Debden Xmas Market.

During Halloween the team spent the afternoon conducting stash site searches, in previous years it was identified that those engaging in Halloween ASB would stash fireworks in locations in the afternoon when police stop checks aren't being conducted and then pick them up later in the evening. There was a pre-authorized dispersal zone in place for Theydon from Monday 30th October 1500hrs to Wednesday 1st November 1500hrs due to previous issues.

CCTV

2 men responsible for prolific racial Graffitiing across Epping have been captured on CCTV after additional resources were applied which has led to the arrest of two men. The team provided out of hours support to the Met Police for a recent gang murder funeral in Epping, the event passed peacefully without incident.

Highway Rangers

Since April this year, the team have received over 200 external enquiries for work to be carried out. The team have been busy removing flyposting, businesses advertising on roundabouts or lamp columns by attaching signage to them without permission, including signage for raves and other events, cars and gold buying schemes. These are illegal and add clutter and reduce sight lines to these areas, once removed they are passed to the Environmental Enforcement team for follow up.

Graffiti has been occurring in some areas of the district on street furniture, including a recent spate of offensive graffiti that the Rangers have removed.

The team have also worked on re-setting concrete bollards hit by vehicles in Loughton and Debden. These concrete bollards get hit by vehicles and knocked over or crack over time. The team have worked with the tree team to maintain highway trees with root pruning to relay slabs and remove trip hazards eg outside Civic Office Epping. They have cut back or cleared overgrown areas including along Nazeing Road, Lenthal Path at Debden and Parklands.

Some recent projects have included renovating an old concrete fingerpost at Willingale that has been restored from a dilapidated and damaged concrete post with rotten wooden fingers to a bright and attractive signpost. 15 wooden and metal fingerposts across the district have been renewed, repaired, or replaced since the Ranger service returned to EFDC. The team can provide a full renovation and installation of finger posts that are not planned for imminent replacement or renewal. This adds capacity back to the service, raises revenue and allows parishes to fund extra posts for their area where they have a specific interest. The cost for undertaking this work is circa £1400 + VAT per post.

Grounds Maintenance

It is now 6 months since the transfer of the Grounds Service from EFDC to Qualis Property Solutions. In terms of service delivery, the focus from the outset was to ensure a seamless transfer was achieved and that frontline operations remain at the highest standard for our customers. EFDC and Qualis management worked closely throughout the transfer process and ongoing months to ensure this goal was achieved. This partnership is further reinforced through joint Performance Monitoring inspections and monthly Contract Liaison meetings.

The Qualis Grounds Service were pleased to receive a note of thanks from Loughton Town Council for its contribution in helping them to achieve a gold certificate in the 2023 'Essex Playing Fields Association's Best Kept Playing Field Competition' for the Roding Valley Recreation Ground. This award is testament to the hard work and commitment of the various Council staff, contractors and volunteers involved in managing and maintaining the site to such a high standard. The bar is now set for next year's competition!

As we approach the end of the mowing season, preparations are now being made to overhaul the various items of grass cutting machinery. This operation takes place during the quieter winter months and is important to ensure the equipment is serviced and fully operational when the mowing cycle begins again next spring.

The Grounds Service is relied upon to provide the saluting dais and floral displays for the annual Remembrance Day parades that take place in both Epping and Loughton. The Nursery Team are responsible for preparing the planted troughs and ensuring the wooden staging is correctly placed for each ceremony and the team are proud to be involved in the event.

Tree Team

With The leaves finally beginning to fall, the team are beginning to shift their focus from tree watering, to planting and stump grinding. We are also working with the Woodland Officers of Essex County Council, under a joint venture to plant more street trees on the district, this will increase tree cover and combat pollution and fix Carbon in the atmosphere.

As well as tree planting we are also focusing on updating the EFDC tree Policy as well as piloting a tree asset and management survey for Housing trees, in preparation for a major project to inspect all trees within Housing Tenure, and assist in producing a tree management policy moving forward, so that all our tree assets can be managed more proactively.

2. Planning Services:

Building Control

Applications and inspections

The volume of new applications across private sector and public sector building control submitted within the district remain to be tracking lower than the previous financial year. Applications to Approved Inspectors are down by 37%, and applications to the Local Authority are down by 25% comparing a seven-month period. This is a position widely shared across the region and is reflective of the current economic position. A small positive factor in these figures is that market share of applications received by the Local Authority have therefore increased comparatively. The volume of requests to inspect building work however has remained consistent with the previous year as already commenced projects continue to be built. An increase in unauthorised work requiring enforcement intervention has also been noted.

Legislative Change

The Building Safety Regulator became the building control authority for higher risk buildings on the 1st October as the provisions of the Building Safety Act 2022 continue to be implemented in stages. The Government expects Local Authorities to support the regulator by providing inspectors to perform the Building Control function as part of multi-disciplinary teams set up by the Regulator.

The register for individual Building Inspectors to register with the Regulator opened on the 1st October and it is a requirement that all inspectors, working on any type of building, be registered by the 6th April 24. Registration involves an assessment of competency by examination on a repeating 4-year cycle. Obtaining examination places through an accredited scheme is proving extremely challenging for all authorities and the sector is witnessing a loss of staff to other surveying disciplines, or from those taking retirement as an alternative to undertaking the assessment and registration. The 6th April date set by the government is looking unfeasible to many in the industry. Providing support and enhanced training to those working in Building Control is key to a successful outcome.

The third implication for the service of the Building Safety Act is the oversight and scrutiny of Building Control by the regulator. The authority can expect regular audits by the Building Safety Regulator who will publish their findings, require improvements or issue sanctions. As part of this oversight, the authority is required to substantially modify their data collection and reporting practices and submit quarterly returns to the regulator showing how they are performing against a new set of Operational Standards Rules.

A new duty-holder regime, broadly aligned to the Construction, Design and Management Regulations came into effect on the 1st October and applications now require enhanced information concerning duty-holders from the client, the designer and the contractor and places clear responsibility for Building Regulations compliance upon those roles.

Staffing Update

A Senior Building Control Surveyor left the authority in October and the service are currently operating with reduced capacity while a replacement is recruited to. Meeting the requirements of the new regulatory regime are of paramount importance for the operation of the service and staff resources to provide the service alongside delivering these changes is critical.

Development Management

Planning Appeals

Members are reminded that Planning Appeal details are published in the weekly Bulletin, and links to the appeal documents are now provided to enable members to view a relevant appeal by clicking the link.

Planning Fee increase

Following debates in Parliament, the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2023 have been approved and made on 8th November. The regulations do the following:

- Increase planning application fees by 35% for applications for major development and 25% for all other applications.
- Introduce an annual indexation of planning applications fees, capped at 10%, from 1 April 2025.
- Remove the fee exemption for repeat applications (the 'free-go'). An applicant will still be able to benefit from a free-go if their application was withdrawn or refused in the preceding 12 months, subject to all other conditions for the free-go being met.
- Reduce the Planning Guarantee for non-major planning applications from 26 to 16 weeks.
- Introduce a new prior approval fee of £120 for applications for prior approval for development by the Crown on closed defence sites.

The new fees will come into force from 6 December 2023.

Successful Injunction: Planning Enforcement

On 16 October 2023 at The High Court of Justice EFDC obtained an injunction against a resident in Russell Road, Buckhurst Hill, which followed the issuing of an enforcement notice on a property for an unlawful extension. The defendant was given until Monday 22 April 2024 to undertake all the corrective work in strict accordance with the planning permission that was granted in October 2021. It was also ruled that he must not undertake any further development at the property unless he has further planning permission to do so. The defendant was also ordered to pay costs of £8,000 for the preliminary application and further costs of £23,969 for the main Order.

Enforcement Appeals

Land at Rose Farm, Hamlet Hill, Roydon, Essex, CM19 5JU: an appeal against an enforcement notice issued by the Council on 01 March 2021, which related to changes to the use of land and buildings from agricultural to residential without permission, including using the land as a residential caravan site, was dismissed and the enforcement notice upheld. A partial award of costs was also granted in favour of the Council. The inspector upheld the Council's requirement for the following actions:

- Cease residential occupation of the land and buildings;
- Remove all caravans and other domestic items; and
- Demolish a building and remove hard surfaces.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 19 December 2023
Subject: Portfolio – Corporate Support Services
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Sam Kane

Recommending:

That the report of the Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder be noted.

Corporate Services

Corporate Communications

Following its transfer from Customer Services to Corporate Services Directorate on 13 November, the Corporate Communications team continued to provide a full programme of media liaison, social media, website, webcasting and marketing services on behalf of the Council.

The team continued to provide a range of survey and engagement services with practical support on behalf of Planning and Regulatory Services. It also provided support to colleagues working on planning for the elections 2024, the new waste and recycling contract, shared services, and Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.

The team provided specific support for the Latton Priory Design Code consultation in association with Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. It also supported the publication of the North Weald Bassett Masterplan and advice on the forthcoming South of Epping Masterplan public engagement.

Corporate Communications continued to support a range of external partners on joint communications projects ranging from Essex County Council to NHS health initiatives. It is working with colleagues within the Essex Communications Group to provide a consistent message to vulnerable adults and small businesses in the runup to the 'Big Switch-off' when telephone providers retire analogue services.

Communications planning has begun with London Marathon Events and Essex County Council for RideLondon 2024.

Cottis Yard carpark in Epping opened without incident following high volumes of social media comment. Working with Qualis and Places Leisure, the focus of further communications is expected to move towards the start of the new Epping Leisure Centre in Bakers Lane.

Despite the decline of local newspapers, Corporate Communications continues to receive a variety of local, social and national (often tabloid) media enquiries.

Members of the Corporate Communications team received funding to provide communications support on behalf of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Operation Dial, tackling anti-social behaviour in Debden. The team also supported environmental and public health responses in conjunction with planning and regulatory service colleagues.

The team organised or supported a number of civic events including prayers for the victims following the terrorist attacks by Hamas in October, the celebrations for Diwali in November along with the Youth Conference which was held at our Civic Office.

Webcasts September and October 2023

- 9 live meetings totalling 16 hours 33 minutes
- 5 recorded meetings totalling 10 hours 50 minutes

Top 3 viewed:

1. Council 5 October 229 views (220 Public-i + 9 YouTube)
2. Cabinet 18 September (212 Public-i + 14 YouTube)
3. Area Planning Sub-Committee South 11 October (147 Public-i + 7 YouTube)

Social Media

Social media engagement remained steady, with numbers changing only marginally since the last portfolio report.

Social Media Engagement Table

Platform subscribers	August 2023	October 2023
Facebook	4,745	4,793
Instagram	2,524	2,559
Linked In	3,241	3,235
X (Twitter)	9,966	9,968
Mailchimp	1,500	1,542

Social media channels are monitored out of hours on a rota by members of the Corporate Communications team, up to 10pm weekdays and 9pm at weekends. The team also provides monitoring and customer response services on bank holidays including Christmas and the New Year.

People

- **Disability Confident** – We have now been awarded disability confident status level 2 and are working towards a draft self-assessment towards a status level 3 award. We plan on submitting our assessment to Department of Work & Pensions in QTR 1 2024. This work will complement our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion ambition in becoming a fully inclusive employer.
- **iTrent Multifactor Authentication** - All employees (with exception of Casual Workers) have now been moved to MFA method of signing in, and this is being used successfully with minimal issues.
- **2023/24 NJC Pay Award** - Unions have now reached an agreement on the final pay settlement, which has been implemented and applied for our employees. The agreement included a cash award of £1925 on spinal column points up to and including SCP43 and a 3.88% uplift above this. Through our Local Pay

arrangements, we already awarded an uplift of £1200 on each pay point and therefore the difference between the Local Pay award and the NJC award was applied to salary rates and backdated to the 1st April 2023.

- **Standby/Call out payments** - A new proposal has been prepared and recommendations have been given to the Executive and Senior Leadership team to review.

Once reviewed, formal consultation will commence with Unions and effected employees on any changes. This is scheduled to commence in January 2024.

- **Apprenticeships** - Five new Corporate Apprentices are currently being recruited across the Council - Democratic Services/ Elections, (apprentice has been appointed and started employment), Highway Rangers/ Countrycare, Health & Safety (appointment made), Internal Communications (apprentice has been appointed and started employment) and a Paralegal role. The Apprenticeship Levy will be used to train the new Apprentices in specific skills for these areas, thus supporting succession planning.

Business Support

Local Land Charges (LLC), HMLR Project

- Turnaround time approximately 9 working days (target is 10 working days).
- Processes and systems have been reviewed and a business case submitted recommending the introduction of Arcus Land Charges.
- HMLR continue to provide glowing feedback on our performance.

Finance Team

- Testing of Advance Financials commenced.
- Accountspayable have moved into Finance (one Team Manager and five team members).

Business Support Restructure

- Team Manager headcount reduced from 3.6 FTE (April 23) to 2 FTE (November 23). Now there are just two teams in Business Support, supporting the organisation.

Conference Suite

- We have hosted our first three day commercial booking made by Regus.

Business Continuity

- A Wider Leadership Team Business Continuity (BC) tabletop exercise took place 6 December. The aim of the exercise was to promote teams to use their BC plans, learn the importance of communications and recognise areas for improvement. Also, to review their Plans, amending, or identifying where a gap may need to be filled.
- The exercise was led by our Safety, Contingency planning & Business Continuity Officer, supported by two colleagues from another council who have remits for BC who wish to collaborate going forward on how plans and knowledge can be aligned.
- A report on the exercise outcomes will be produced for Senior Leadership Team and a program of ongoing small team and wider team exercises will be discussed

and scheduled over the coming months to ensure compliance and familiarity of individual service BC plans and the overarching Corporate BC plan.

Elections

- The Roydon Parish Council by-election was originally scheduled for 14 December 2023, but no nominations had been received by the closing date. We are now looking to re-schedule this for 1 February 2024.
- The Annual Canvass is almost complete, and the revised register will be published in early December.
- Planning continues for the all-out elections in May 2024. The Count Venue has been confirmed as Chigwell Marquees.

Democratic Services

- Our first Democracy & Elections Apprentice has been appointed to the Team and welcomed by all. This is a positive step and will assist in our succession planning.
- The Member Remuneration Panel met in November and their report is on the agenda for this meeting.
- We held a meeting with Essex County Council to discuss how they operate their Scrutiny function, to see if there are any lessons that we can apply to the District Council

Parking:

Two rapid Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points are now live at Traps Hill car park in Loughton. Epping Forest District Council has partnered again with leading EV charge point supplier, InstaVolt, to install 2 new rapid charging stations in its car park. 1 charging point is an accessible EV bay. It is designed to accommodate Blue Badge holders, larger vehicles and smaller commercial vehicles. The EV charging points will be available 24/7. Existing car park restrictions during operational hours will apply – users should refer to car park tariff boards.

New Telephony System

The new corporate telephony system has been extremely well received with improved call monitoring tools enabling the Contact Centre to make positive changes to call routing, resulting in reduced waiting times for callers.

Community Hub at Civic Offices

Usage of the Community Hub at the Civic Offices continues to increase with October being the busiest month since the Hub opened, with 539 people attending. The Warm Places initiative is a very popular service along with the sessions provided by Barclays Bank, Epping Forest Foodbank, Epping Forest Citizens Advice and digital coaching support.

Out of Hours Provider

As from 1st October the Council has a new call centre provider for “out of hours” emergency calls. The contract was awarded to SPS Doorguard Ltd and Customer Services staff have been extremely impressed with the service received from SPS to date.

Waste Collections

Members will be aware of the situation with the current Waste and Recycling contract and the missed collections experienced by residents in recent months. Call volumes to the Contact Centre are sporadic based on current contractor performance, with 38% of formal complaints relating to waste missed collections. Full KPI information will be reported to the Stronger Council Scrutiny Committee.

Members Induction & Training Relaunch

Staff are in the process of digitalising the forms which Members are required to complete into a single 'Tell Us Once' digital format with the aim of saving valuable time for both Members and officers. It's anticipated that the new form will be ready for testing with Members in early 2024.

Additionally, the creation of interactive e-learning courses via the Council's online training platform, Litmos, is going smoothly. Each course will consist of a knowledge test, a declaration of understanding, and helpful resources including LGA Councillor Guidance Workbooks. Furthermore, any face-to-face training sessions will be recorded and uploaded to Litmos to provide a comprehensive learning pathway for Members.

The timescales for the completion of both strands of this work is March 2024 in readiness for implementation after the May 2024 elections.

Digital Inclusion

The Council has a partnership with Essex County Council and West Essex Community Action Network to bring Wi-Fi connectivity to the communal area of Hyde Mead House, an Independent Living Scheme in Nazeing.

This initiative aims to provide residents with access to digital skills coaching sessions, supporting residents to enhance their knowledge and utilisation of technology and online services. Essex County Council is funding the installation of connectivity and covering the Wi-Fi costs for a 12-month period. It is anticipated that connectivity will be established in early 2024 pending the installation of Fibre by BT. This will serve as a starting point for partners to offer a longer-term tailored range of digital workshops.

Customer Service

With effect from 13th November, the Council's Payment Solutions function has moved into the Finance Directorate and the Corporate Communications Team has moved into the Corporate Support Directorate.

ICT

Matthew White joined the Council on 20 November, as an Interim Head of ICT for Epping Forest District Council and Colchester City Council. Matthew has an in-depth knowledge of all aspects of ICT with many years' experience in local government.

Matthew will be leading with the ICT Strategy, corporate projects, digital services and will be working on the delivery of ICT shared services.

Strategy

EFDC and Colchester City Council continue to explore ways of working together under the shared services umbrella. The Director of Transformation, Melissa Kemp-Salt, continues conversations with Braintree District Council on further opportunities.

Regular meetings are held, to instigate the sharing information and mutual support.

ICT Projects

The following projects have been delivered by ICT:

- Omnichannel Customer Contact Capability (Gamma) as referred to above
- Replacement Housing Asset Management cloud solution (Civica CX)

Priorities for ICT to deliver in the next few months continues:

- Moving to a Software-as-a-Service, for our payments application (Pay360)
- The Corporate Document Management Solution major upgrade
- Museum migration to Trust
- Lone working application replacement
- Freedom of Information application replacement (working with Colchester City Council)
- Requirement gathering for internal room booking application replacement (working with Colchester City Council)
- Delivery a new website platform which can be utilised by Epping and Colchester City Council.

Omnichannel Customer Contact Capability – Gamma / Cirrus Telephony Replacement Project

The project provides a fully managed and hosted contact centre solution with was successfully implemented on 19 October 2023. Over 700 (Direct Dial) numbers were successfully ported to Gamma and assigned.

The solution was considered unfit for purpose when compared to solutions used in other UK Local Authorities and Public Sector organisations. It could not provide informative data analytics or insightful reporting functionality relating to customer engagements.

To support a council fit for the future and enable continuous improvement and development, we have migrated from the legacy Mitel to a cloud-hosted, MS Teams integrated omnichannel customer contact solution provided by Gamma and Cirrus Response.

The new solution provides:

- Supports future collaboration efforts (if chosen) between EFDC and other local authority partners. It's interesting to note Colchester City Council (who we are starting to work closer with) are using the same platform which will opens opportunities to collaborate and on supply management.
- Unifies communications services, which allows customer service agent to manage their telephony directly through MS Teams.

- MS Teams integration supports an increase in operational efficiency and removes the 'additional system log-in requirement' barrier.
- Ability to leverage existing Microsoft Teams licensing to make and receive external calls without requiring additional Microsoft Calling Plan licenses.
- Ability to allow colleagues to remote work and remove the requirement to have handsets on desks/tied to a location.
- 24/7 Microsoft Teams Telephony support through our new partner Gamma.
- A public sector inclusive call package.

New Housing Management Application – Civica CX

- Application is now cloud based and phase 1 successfully went live to 150 internal users on 26 October replacing the Northgate OHM's Application. It was great to see Project Team and users all linking together on first week of the new application.
- Application is operating as expected, with new repairs being raised, tenancies started and ended, arrears actions progressed, and home ownership transactions carried out.
- Phase 2 requirements are being gathered for a business case to be presented to Project Governance for sign off.

PMO Corporate Update

The Project Management Office (PMO) provides governance and project management resources. The PMO has worked with service areas and the Senior Management Team (SMT) to review, align and agree key projects to EFDC's corporate objectives so that time, effort, and money can be directed and supported on the right projects.

Through the collaborative work that has been completed, 11 current projects are agreed as EFDC's 'Corporate Priority Projects' which are strategically aligned to EFDC's Corporate Objectives. Corporate Priority Projects will be reported on a quarterly basis through Overview and Scrutiny as well as being governed through our internal project framework.

The Corporate Priority Projects are:

- Shared Services Programme
- Housing and Asset Management Project (HAM's)
- M3 Replacement Project (Complaints Management, Regulatory Systems & Enforcement)
- Epping Leisure Centre Project
- Future Waste Services Programme
 - o Workstream 1: Future Waste Services Delivery
 - o Workstream 2: Environment Operations Hub
 - o Workstream 3: Procurement of Waste Fleet Vehicles
- Information @ Work Upgrade (Corporate Document Management)
- File Server Data Cleanse (Migration to Cloud based storage and improved data Governance and Compliance)
- Financial Systems Replacement Project
- Improve Security Compliance and Audit (systems logins)
- Infrastructure Architecture (Review of the Council's ICT platforms)
- Automation of manual processes for Revenues & Benefits

The programme management office continues to work to align resources with all Projects to ensure correct prioritisation and the appropriate allocation of resources. This work will help inform the critical path with a view to complete a forward plan.

The PMO is considering new tools, that would provide EFDC with a platform where all our processes, tools, and teams work together to boost teams' alignment, efficiency, and productivity.

Report to the Council

Date: 19 December 2023

Report of: The independent Member Remuneration Panel

Subject: Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/25

RECOMMENDING:

Members' Allowances Scheme

Basic Allowance

(1) That, for the 2024/25 municipal year, the Basic Allowance be increased from £4,300 per member per annum to £4,600 per member per annum, currently included in the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme;

(2) That for 2025/26 and future municipal years, the Council be encouraged to increase the Basic Allowance to maintain the Council above the level of the Basic Allowance paid by the lowest of comparator Councils;

Special Responsibility Allowance

(3) That for the 2024/25 municipal year, no changes be made to the level of the Special Responsibility Allowances currently included in the Members' Allowances Scheme;

(4) That for the 2024/25 municipal year, the implementation level of Special Responsibility Allowance applied to the responsibilities identified in the Members' Allowances Scheme be retained at their current level;

Revised Scheme and Guidance

(5) That, subject to the above recommendations and other matters set out in this report, the Members' Allowances Scheme and Guidance for 2024/25, attached at Appendix 2 to this report, be adopted and implemented with effect from 23 May 2024; and

(6) That the Panel continue to be kept apprised of the Council's intentions regarding any future restructure or governance review proposals that directly affect the application of Special Responsibility Allowance for the specific member roles and responsibilities currently reflected in the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Report:

1. The Remuneration Panel (the Panel) undertakes a review of Epping Forest District Council's Members' Allowances Scheme each year in order that any recommendations for revision to elements of the Scheme can be considered alongside the preparation of the Council's budget for the next financial year. This annual report of the Panel sets out the findings of our recent review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and our conclusions and recommendations regarding the application of members' allowances for the 2024/25 municipal year.

2. The Remuneration Panel was established in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. These regulations, which arose from the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, require all local authorities to set up and maintain an advisory independent Remuneration Panel to review and provide advice on members' allowances. All Councils are required to convene their Panel and seek its advice before making any changes or amendments to allowances schemes and must 'pay regard' to the Panel's recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme.

3. The Panel is required to gather information, to hear and consider evidence and to make recommendations to the Council on:

- the amount of Basic Allowance to be paid to members;
- those positions that should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance and the level of such allowance; and
- travel, subsistence and certain other allowances.

4. This report will be presented to the Council by Stephen Lye on behalf of the Panel, with Mrs T Finn in attendance as well.

Members' Allowances Scheme

5. The last review of the Members' Allowances Scheme was undertaken by the Panel on 3 November 2022 and our recommendations regarding members' allowances for the 2023/24 municipal year were considered by the Council at its meeting on 20 December 2022. We have recently undertaken the annual review of the Scheme for 2024/25, in order that any proposals for changes to members' allowances can be considered by the Council as part of the budget-setting process for the next financial year.

6. As in previous years, we have been keen to understand the views of Councillors in connection with the operation of the scheme in practice and specific matters that Members would like the Panel to consider. As part of our current review, we requested the Team Manager for Democratic & Electoral Services to invite Councillors to raise issues or concerns about the current scheme that they wished us to consider. One representation was received, which stated that there should be no increases in the allowances currently paid to Members.

Basic Allowance

7. All local authorities must make provision for a flat-rate allowance to be payable to all Members. This 'Basic Allowance' is payable equally to all Councillors and is designed to cover activities such as constituency casework, preparation for and attendance at meetings of the Council's committees and service as a representative of the authority on outside bodies for which no separate remuneration is made.

8. In considering the recommendations of the Panel in December 2022, the Council agreed that no change be made to the payment of the full amount of Basic Allowance of £4,300 per member per annum to be included in the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24. An increase in the implementation rate of the Basic Allowance was introduced from 2016/17 in line with the recommendations of the Panel over several years, that the authority should implement 100% of the amount of Basic Allowance for each member, rather than the level of 80% previously applied.

9. The Panel has undertaken a further comprehensive benchmarking exercise amongst twenty-five comparable and neighbouring local authorities as part of its review of the Members' Allowances Scheme, to assess whether an increase in the level of Basic Allowance should be considered. Included at Appendix 1 of the report is the comparator tables that we used to assess recent increases in inflation and earnings since the current level of Basic Allowance was set in 2016.

10. The Panel noted that the Council is currently the lowest of the comparator authorities and the second lowest in Essex in terms of the Basic Allowance paid to Members. The Panel felt that the original aim of the legislation in 2003 was to encourage people to put themselves forward as candidates for election by providing a suitable remuneration to Councillors for their efforts. We are also aware that the electoral review undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has resulted in four less Councillors from May 2024.

11. Consequently, the Panel are recommending that the Council should use this saving from having four less Councillors in the sum of £17,200 to increase the current level of Basic Allowance to £4,600 per member per annum from May 2024. The Panel is of the opinion that the overall basic responsibility / workload of Members collectively has not changed, it is just being divided between fewer Members. This increase would cost £16,200 in total, which would be covered by the saving from the reduction in Councillors and would not increase the overall cost of the Member Allowance Scheme to the Council. This approach also enables the Basic Allowance to be brought just above the lowest of the comparator authorities.

12. We have been concerned for several years now that the work undertaken by members of this Council could be perceived as being of lower value than the work undertaken by members of other Councils. We consider that inappropriate and that the Panel should continue to revisit the application of Basic Allowance as part of its annual review of the Members' Allowances Scheme on an ongoing basis. Although we recognise that implementation of any increase would be a matter for the Council to determine and that there remains a continued need for restraint in the setting of the authority's annual budget.

Special Responsibility Allowance

13. Each local authority may make provision in its Members' Allowances Scheme for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA), for those Councillors who have been allocated significant responsibilities. The current Scheme provides that Members may receive more than one SRA if they hold more than one relevant position. It should be noted that each Special Responsibility Allowance is currently calculated as a multiplier of the Basic Allowance, therefore if the Basic Allowance is not increased then neither will be the Special Responsibility Allowances. However, as previously with the Basic Allowance, the Council has traditionally decided not to implement payment of full SRA amounts for a number of positions and to restrict these to a percentage of the amount set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme.

14. This percentage application of certain SRA is reflected in a Statement of Implementation that forms part of the Members' Allowances Scheme. The Statement of

Implementation illustrates the operation of the Scheme in terms of the application of SRA as proportions of the amounts provided in the Scheme. However, we feel that this approach is not always fully understood and that members may not appreciate that the Council has decided not to implement payment of full SRA amounts recommended by the Panel, for certain positions.

15. It should be noted that the Panel has encouraged the Council to increase the implementation level of the relevant SRA identified in the Members' Allowances Scheme, to achieve the full amount of each allowance as soon as possible for a few years now. Previously, we decided that as the majority of the SRA's had not been implemented at 100%, the recommendation of the Panel would be to increase the implementation levels of all the SRA's to 100% in 2022/23. However, this was not agreed by the Council and the implementation levels have remained at their current level.

16. For 2024/25, we acknowledged that there were a considerable number of local businesses and residents who were suffering in the current economic climate engendered by the rise in living costs, and that this was not the time to recommend increases in the special responsibility allowances. In addition, we also noted that there was no request for an increase from Councillors.

17. Again, we recognise that the implementation of any future increases would be a matter for the Council to determine and that there remains a continued need for restraint in the setting of the authority's annual budget, but we will continue to revisit the application of SRA's as part of our annual review of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council

18. The Council agreed in December 2015 that, from the 2016/17 municipal year, consideration of the amount of SRA applied to the positions of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council be added to the responsibilities of the Panel. We undertook a thorough review of the application of such SRA in 2018 and therefore make no recommendations in this regard for consideration as part of the Panel's review of the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25. However, the Panel reserve the right to review this SRA in the future as we noted that the allowance paid by this Council is higher than that paid by other comparable Councils.

Recommendations

19. The draft revised Members' Allowances Scheme for the 2024/25 municipal year, incorporating the recommendations contained within this report is attached at Appendix 2. The Scheme has been subject to minor drafting amendments, to reflect the Council's current management structure arrangements.

20. The Panel has also prepared a Statement of Implementation (based on the assumption that the Council will not increase the level of implementation of Special Responsibility Allowances) for publication on the Council's website. The format of the statement illustrates the operation of the Members' Allowances Scheme, in terms of the implementation of Special Responsibility Allowances as proportions of the amounts provided in the Scheme. The Statement of Implementation of the Special Responsibility Allowances set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme, is attached at Appendix 3 to this report.

21. We have not considered changes to any other elements of the Members' Allowances Scheme, such as travel and subsistence allowances etc. These are generally remunerated at levels that also apply to officers of the Council and are subject to national application.

22. The Panel would like to acknowledge the support and assistance that we received from Officers in undertaking our annual review of the Members' Allowances Scheme. We would also like to acknowledge the contribution that Mr D Jackman has made to the Panel over many years now that he has decided to retire from the Panel.

23. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

FAMILY GROUP AUTHORITIES

ALLOWANCE	BROXBORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL	BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL	EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	EAST HERTS DISTRICT COUNCIL	EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL	GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL	HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL	HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL
Basic Allowance	£5,585.00	£6,000.00	£5,200.00	5678.79 (only change from last year)	£4,300.00	£7,405.00	£6,601.00	£5,738.55
Special Responsibility Allowances								
Chairman of Council	£7,357 (Mayor)	£4,500.00 (Mayor)	£3,000.00	£6,500.00	£8,600 (80% of total allowance)	£5,924.00 (Mayor)	Not identifiable from Scheme	£5,570.20
Vice-Chairman of Council	£1,472 (Deputy Mayor)	£1500.00 (Deputy Mayor)	Not identifiable from Scheme	£1,450.00	£2,150 (20% of total allowance)	£3,703.00 (Deputy Mayor)	Not identifiable from Scheme	£1,867.20
Leader	£20,599.00	£13,200.00	£18,000.00	£19,767.00	£7,875.00 (73% of £10,750)	£14,810.00	£27,418.00	£16,350.80
Cabinet Members (Portfolio Holders)	£8,240.00	No equivalent in Scheme	£6,000.00	£9,780.96	£6,300.00 (98% of £6,450)	£5,924.00	£14,601.00	£7,642.00
Chairman of District Development Management Committee (or equivalent)	£7,357.00	£3,550.00	£6,000.00	£7,336.00	£2,362.00 (73% of £3,225)	£5,924.00	£6,044.00	No equivalent in Scheme
Chairmen of Area Plans Sub-Committees (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£2,362.00 (73% of £3,225)	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£4,196.00
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or equivalent)	£7,357.00	£3,550.00	£2,000.00	£6,464.04	£3,150.00 (73% of £4,300)	£5,924.00	£5,091.00	£5,570.20
Chairmen of Licensing Committee (or equivalent)	Combined with Planning Committee	Combined with Planning Committee	£2,000.00	£6,051.00	£500.00	£3,703.00	£1,930.00	£2,659.20
Chairmen of Licensing Sub-Committee (or equivalent)	£54 per member	Not identifiable from Scheme	£250 per member	No equivalent in Scheme	£1,862.00 (divided by number of meetings) (73% of £2,725)	£280.00 per meeting	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme
Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee (or equivalent)	£4,119.00	Combined with Scrutiny Committee	£2,000.00	£6,464.04	£2,150.00	£3,703.00	£1,930.00	£2,659.20
Chairmen of Select Committees (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£2,150.00	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme
Chairman of Standards Committee	Combined with Audit Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	£2,000.00	£2,421.00	£110 per meeting	Combined with Corporate Governance Committee (Audit)	£1,638.00	£2,659.20
Chairman of Constitution Working Group	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£500.00	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme
Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00	£370.00	£300.00	£1,436.00
Independent Members of the Remuneration and Parish Remuneration Panels	Not identifiable from Scheme	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£250.00	£370.00	£300.00	Not identifiable from Scheme
Co-opted Members of the Audit & Governance Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00	£370.00	£300.00	Not identifiable from Scheme
Co-opted Members of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00	£370.00	£300.00	Not identifiable from Scheme
Group Leaders	£4,119 (Leader of the Opposition)	£5,350 (Main Opposition)	£3,000.00 (Minority Group Leader)	0.1 of BA multiplied by each group member	£0.00	£74 per Group Member	£3,859 (Main Opposition), £1,304 (Minority Opposition)	£4,045.50 (Minority Group Leader)

FAMILY GROUP AUTHORITIES (CONT)

ALLOWANCE	MID-SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL	REIGATE & BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL	SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL	SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL	ST. ALBANS CITY & DISTRICT COUNCIL	TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL	THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL	WAVERLY BOROUGH COUNCIL
Basic Allowance	£5,700.00	£5,956 (only change from last year)	£6,044.00	£6,531 (only change from last year)	£6,236.00	£4,317.00	£4,627.00	£5,609.00
Special Responsibility Allowances								
Chairman of Council	£7,410.00	£5,700 (Mayor)	£11,588.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£3,062.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£664.83
Vice-Chairman of Council	£2,470.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£5,033.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£1,021.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Leader	£22,800.00	£14,151.00	£22,114.00	£11,000.00	£11,737.00	£6,123.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£16,475.80
Cabinet Members (Portfolio Holders)	£9,120.00	£9,434.00	£7,741.00	£7,700.00	£7,452.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£7,603.91
Chairman of District Development Management Committee (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	£5,442.00	£5,529.00	£6,600.00	£3,468.00	£3,062.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£3,801.57
Chairmen of Area Plans Sub-Committees (or equivalent)	£7,125.00	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or equivalent)	£4,560.00	£3,162.00	£2,765.00	£2,200.00	No equivalent in Scheme	£3,062.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Chairmen of Licensing Committee (or equivalent)	£1,140.00	£441.00	£2,765.00	£5,500.00	£2,934.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£3,801.57
Chairmen of Licensing Sub-Committee (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	£308.00	£149 per member	No equivalent in Scheme	£126.00 per meeting	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee (or equivalent)	£3,420.00	£3,162.00	£2,765.00	£4,400.00	No equivalent in Scheme	£3,062.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£3,801.57
Chairmen of Select Committees (or equivalent)	£4,560.00	£441.00	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£3,062.00	No equivalent in Scheme	£3,801.57
Chairman of Standards Committee	£1,140.00	No equivalent in Scheme	£1,769.00	£1,500.00	No equivalent in Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£3,801.57
Chairman of Constitution Working Group	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme
Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	£750.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£531.00	£750.00	£0.00	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Independent Members of the Remuneration and Parish Remuneration Panels	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£0.00	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Co-opted Members of the Audit & Governance Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00	£0.00	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Co-opted Members of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£0.00	Reimbursed for reasonable expenses	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme
Group Leaders	£250.00 per Group Member	£147 & £58 per Group Member	£298 per Group Member	Not identifiable from Scheme	£112 per member of group	£3,062.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£3,801.57 (main opposition leader)

ESSEX AUTHORITIES

ALLOWANCE	BASILDON DISTRICT COUNCIL	BRAINTREE DISTRICT COUNCIL	CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL	CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCIL	COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL	HARLOW DISTRICT COUNCIL	MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL	ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Basic Allowance	£6,781.70	£5,154.00	£3,550.00	£6,645.00	£7,293.55	£4,575.00	£5,425.23 (includes £220 pa Broadband allowance)	£5,000.00
Special Responsibility Allowances								
Chairman of Council	£10,172.55 (Mayor)	£5,154.00	£6,154.00 (Mayor)	£14,061.00 (Mayor)	Not identifiable from Scheme	£2,601.00	£5,425.23	£5,000.00
Vice-Chairman of Council	£1,695.43 (Deputy Mayor)	£2,577.00	£2,896 (Deputy Mayor)	£4,686.00 (Deputy Mayor)	Not identifiable from Scheme	£520	£542.52	£2,500.00
Leader	£20,345.10	£15,462.00	£14,200.00	£26,076.00	£21,880.46	£7,117.00	£13,563.08	£10,000.00
Cabinet Members (Portfolio Holders)	£11,867.98	£10,308.00	£7,100.00	£13,035.00	£13,128.43	£2,965.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	£5,000.00
Chairman of District Development Management Committee (or equivalent)	£11,867.98	£9,021.00	£3,550.00	£8,604.00	£7,658.24	£1,561.00	No equivalent in Scheme	£2,500.00
Chairmen of Area Plans Sub-Committees (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£2,034.46	£500.00
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or equivalent)	£8,477.13	£7,731.00	£1,775.00	£6,519.00	£7,658.24	£1,561.00	£4,068.92	£3,500.00
Chairmen of Licensing Committee (or equivalent)	£10,172.55	£5,154.00	£1,775.00	£6,519.00	£6,564.31	£1,561.00	£5,425.23	£2,500.00
Chairman of Constitution Working Group	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£500.00
Chairmen of Licensing Sub-Committee (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£500.00
Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee (or equivalent)	£6,781.70	£5,154.00	£1,775.00	£1,308.00	£4,376.14	£1,561.00	£5,425.23	£2,500.00
Chairmen of Select Committees (or equivalent)	£5,086.28	£5,154.00	£1,775.00	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme	£500.00
Chairman of Standards Committee	£2,712.68	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£1,308.00	£4,376.14	£1,561.00	£5,425.23	£500.00
Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	£1,356.34	Not identifiable from Scheme	£355.00	£664.50	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00
Independent Members of the Remuneration and Parish Remuneration Panels	£1,356.34	Not identifiable from Scheme	£355.00	£664.50	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00
Co-opted Members of the Audit & Governance Committee	£1,356.34	Not identifiable from Scheme	£355.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00
Co-opted Members of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£355.00	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme	£500.00
Group Leaders	£10,172.55 - split per number of members per group	£5,154.00 (Main Opposition Group) £1,290.00 (other Groups > 5 mbrs)	£3,550 (Leader of the Minority Group)	£8,604.00 (Main Opposition Group) £1,308.00 (Other Opposition Groups)	£2,186.47 plus £240.47 per member	£208 per group member (max £2,080)	£5,425.23 (Leader of Opposition)	£2,500.00

ESSEX AUTHORITIES (CONT)

ALLOWANCE	TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL	UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL						
Basic Allowance	£6,532.00	£5,506.88						
Special Responsibility Allowances								
Chairman of Council	£7,447.00	£4,405.51 + civic expenses						
Vice-Chairman of Council	£1,959.00	£2,202.76						
Leader	£22,209.00	£13,491.88						
Cabinet Members (Portfolio Holders)	£10,647.00	£6,608.27						
Chairman of District Development Management Committee (or equivalent)	£7,500.00	£4,130.18						
Chairmen of Area Plans Sub-Committees (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	No equivalent in Scheme						
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or equivalent)	No equivalent in Scheme	£3,854.83						
Chairmen of Licensing Committee (or equivalent)	£1,500.00	£4,130.18						
Chairmen of Licensing Sub-Committee (or equivalent)	£750.00	No equivalent in Scheme						
Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee (or equivalent)	£4,572.00	£3,854.83						
Chairmen of Select Committees(or equivalent)	£4,572.00	No equivalent in Scheme						
Chairman of Standards Committee	No equivalent in Scheme	£3,854.83						
Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	£550.68						
Independent Members of the Remuneration and Parish Remuneration Panels	Not identifiable from Scheme	£550.68						
Co-opted Members of the Audit & Governance Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	£550.68						
Co-opted Members of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Not identifiable from Scheme	Not identifiable from Scheme						
Group Leaders	£1017 & £105 per group member	£3,854.83 (main opposition leader), £2,202.76 (others)						

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL - REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES SCHEME

The Epping Forest District Council, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 1991 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following scheme:

1. Scheme

- 1.1 This scheme may be cited as the Epping Forest District Council Members' Allowance Scheme and shall have effect for the period from 23 May 2024 to 22 May 2025.

2. Definition

- 2.1 In this scheme:

"business mileage" means mileage incurred for journeys by Councillors between their homes and business venues or between the Civic Offices, Epping and business venues;

"Councillor" means a member of the Epping Forest District Council who is a Councillor;

"home to office mileage" means mileage incurred for journey by Councillors between their homes and the Civic Offices in Epping;

"independent person" means: (a) a member of the Standards Committee or the Remuneration Panel who is not an elected councillor; or (b) a co-opted member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Audit and Governance Committee who is not an elected councillor; and

"year" means the period ending with 22 May 2025.

3. Basic Allowance

- 3.1 Subject to Paragraph 7, £4,600 shall be paid to each Councillor. Payments are subject to deductions for tax and national insurance dependant on the circumstances of individual councillors.

4. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 4.1 For each year a special responsibility allowance shall be paid to those councillors who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the allowances specified in Schedule 1 to this scheme. There is no restriction on the number of separate SRA's which are payable to an individual member.
- 4.2 Subject to Paragraph 7, the amount of each allowance shall be the amount specified against that special responsibility in Schedule 1 for the year.
- 4.3 The Council has decided not to implement payment of the full Special Responsibility Allowance amounts and to restrict these to a percentage of each allowance as set out in an annual statement of implementation.

5. Travelling and Subsistence (including Cycle Allowance)

- 5.1 These expenses may be claimed by members of the Council in connection with the carrying out of approved duties specified in Schedules 2, 3 and 4 of this scheme.
- 5.2 Payments may be claimed up to the maximum casual user rate set for officers of the Council as adjusted annually by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (travel expenses) and the East of England Regional Assembly (subsistence expenses).
- 5.3 Payment of home to office car mileage will be subject to deduction of tax and national insurance contributions, dependant on the circumstances of individual councillors. Business mileage incurred by councillors will not be subject to such deductions if the mileage rate claimed does not exceed 45 pence per mile.
- 5.4 Claims for the payment of business and/or home to office mileage may be made by members that have been driven to the approved duty giving rise to the claim, other than by way of taxi or other form of public transport, subject to the Council's usual checks and controls and the provision of appropriate VAT receipts.

6. Child Care and Dependant Carers' Allowances

- 6.1 The maximum rate for this allowance shall be set at a rate equivalent to the current National Living Wage.
- 6.2 A member of the Council or an independent person shall be eligible to claim up to four hours of the allowance for the performance of approved duties under this scheme and for the purpose of contributing to the cost of providing personal care to immediate dependants who are in need of care and supervision.
- 6.3 The rate applicable shall be subject to automatic increases on an annual basis in line with uprating of the National Living Wage.
- 6.4 The allowance is not payable in respect of carers who are members of the member's immediate and close family i.e. parents, children, spouses, co-habitees or members of the same household as the member.
- 6.5 All claims shall be subject to Audit checks and no claim in excess of the maximum level will be payable, whatever the circumstances.

7. Renunciation

- 7.1 A councillor or independent person may by notice in writing given to the Team Manager for Democratic & Electoral Services elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

8. Part-year Entitlements

- 8.1 The provisions of this paragraph shall have the effect of regulating the entitlements of a councillor to basic and special responsibility allowances where, in the course of a year, this scheme is amended or that councillor becomes, or ceases to be, a councillor, or accepts or relinquishes a special responsibility in respect of which a special responsibility allowance is payable.

- 8.2 If an amendment to this scheme changes and the amount to which a councillor is entitled by way of a basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance, then in relation to each of the periods:
- (a) beginning with the year and ending with the day before that on which the first amendment in that year takes effect; or
 - (b) beginning with the day on which an amendment takes effect and ending with the day before that on which the next amendment takes effect, or (if none) with the end of the year; and
 - (c) the entitlement to such an allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the amount of the allowance under this scheme as it has effect during the relevant period as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of the days in the period bears to the number of days in the year.
- 8.3 Where the term of office of a councillor begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year, the entitlement of that councillor to a basic allowance shall be to the payment to such part of the basic allowance as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office subsists bears to the number of days in that year.
- 8.4 Where this scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2), and the term of office of a councillor does not subsist throughout the period mentioned in such-paragraph (2)(a), the entitlement of any such councillor to a basic allowance shall be to the payment of such part of the basic allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to the whole of the same proportion as the number of days during which his term of office as a councillor subsists bears to the number of days in that period.
- 8.5 Where a councillor has during part of, but not throughout a year such special responsibilities as entitle him or her to a special responsibility allowance, that councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of that allowance as bears to the whole of the same proportion as the number of days during which he/she has such special responsibilities, bears to the number of days in that year.
- 8.6 Where this scheme is amended as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2), and a councillor has during part, but does not have throughout the whole, of any period mentioned in sub-paragraph (2)(a) of that paragraph any such special responsibilities as entitle him or her to a special responsibility allowance, that councillor's entitlement shall be to payment of such part of the allowance referable to each such period (ascertained in accordance with that sub-paragraph) as bears to the whole the same proportion as the number of days in that period during which he or she has such special responsibilities bears to the number of days in that period.

9. Claims and Payments

- 9.1 Payments shall be made in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances, subject to sub-paragraph (2), in instalments of one quarter of the amount specified in this scheme.
- 9.2 Where a payment of one-quarter of the amount specified in this scheme in respect of a basic allowance or a special responsibility allowance would result in the councillor receiving more than the amount to which by virtue of paragraph 8(1), he or she is

entitled, the payment shall be restricted to such amount as will ensure that no more is paid than the amount to which he or she is entitled.

- 9.3 Claims must be made within a period of one year of the duty being carried out. Payments after that period will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

10. Uprating for Inflation

- 10.1 There will be no inflationary adjustment to the allowances set out in this scheme, except those relating to travel and subsistence.

11. Co-optees' Allowance

- 11.1 Co-optees' allowance will be payable to independent persons as set out in Schedule 5 to this scheme.

12. Withholding/Recovery of Payments

- 12.1 Where any councillor or independent member has already received a payment in respect of any period during which they have been:

- (a) ceased to be a member of the Authority; or
- (b) not entitled in any other way to receive the allowance in respect of that period,

the Council may require that such part of the allowance as relates to the period in question shall be repaid to the Authority.

13. Pensionable Status

- 13.1 Remuneration payable to councillors of Epping Forest District Council under this scheme shall only be entitled to pensionable status in accordance with a scheme made under Section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972, if the member opted into the Essex Superannuation Scheme before 1 April 2014.
- 13.2 For the purposes of a Paragraph 13.1 above basic allowance and special responsibility allowance will be treated as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable in accordance with a scheme under that Act.
- 13.3 The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 removed access to the LGPS for Councillors from 1 April 2014, with the exception of those who were members of the Scheme on 31 March 2014, who retain access to the LGPS up to the end of their current term of office only (or to age 75 if earlier).

14. Further Guidance

- 14.1 Further guidance on this scheme can be found in Appendix 1.

SCHEDULE 1

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

1. The following are specified as the special responsibilities in respect of which special responsibility allowances are payable and the amounts of those allowances.

DUTY	ANNUAL TOTAL AMOUNT OF SRA
Chairman of the Council	£10,750.00
Vice-Chairman of the Council	
Leader of the Council	£10,750.00
Cabinet Members	£6,450.00 (each)
Chairman of the District Development Management Committee	£3,225.00
Chairmen of the Area Plans Sub-Committees	£3,225.00 (each)
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£4,300.00
Chairman of the Licensing Committee	£500.00
Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committees	£2,225.00 (allocated according to the number of meetings chaired each year)
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee	£2,150.00
Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees	£2,150.00 (each)
Chairman of the Standards Committee	£110.00 per meeting held each year
Chairman of the Constitution Working Group	£500.00

SCHEDULE 2

APPROVED DUTIES

1. The following are specified as an approved duty for the purpose of the payment of travelling and subsistence expenses, attendance at any of the following:
 - (a) a meeting of the authority, the Cabinet, a Cabinet Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Panels, the Standards Committee and its Sub-Committees, or as a member of any other Committee or sub-committee, panel, working group, special committee or board of the authority;
 - (b) any other meeting held by the authority provided that:
 - where the authority is divided into two or more political groups, it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited; or
 - if the authority is not so divided, it is a meeting to which at least two members of the authority have been invited;
 - (c) duties relating to the supervision of tender opening as required by the Council's Procurement Rules;
 - (d) attendance as representative of the Council at any approved conference or meeting of the outside organisations set out in Schedules 3 and 4;
 - (e) attendance at any meeting or other official function at the request of the Chief Executive, the Strategic Directors or a Service Director, including meetings between group representatives for a particular Committee and officers;
 - (f) any other duty approved by the Council or the Cabinet or any other committee, sub-committee, special committee or Board or Panel or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of functions or the body, or of any of its committees or sub-committees;
 - (g) attendance by a councillor at a meeting of which he or she is not a member for the purpose of explaining a motion referred from the Council;
 - (h) attendance as a councillor at the invitation of the Local Government Ombudsman for the purpose of investigating a complaint against this Council of maladministration;
 - (i) attendance as an appointed representative of Epping Forest District Council at any meeting of Essex County Council or any of its committees or sub-committees for the purpose of formal consultations on any matter affecting the powers or duties of this Council or the district or any part thereof;
 - (j) attendance on behalf of the Council or the Cabinet or as a Chairman on behalf of a Committee at an official function;
 - (k) attendance at seminars and training courses arranged by the authority;
 - (l) consultation meetings arranged by the authority where the member's attendance is required or where the business directly affects the member's ward;

- (m) site visits arranged by Area Plans Sub-Committees or the District Development Management Committee;
 - (n) informal site visits by individual councillors in respect of their duties as members of an Area Plans Sub-Committee;
 - (o) attendance at a meeting concerning joint working or partnership arrangements to represent the Council's interests; and
 - (p) attendance at any civic event to which the Chairman or Vice-Chairman is attending in that capacity (or representative) for which Council funded transport is not provided.
2. There is specified as an approved duty for the purpose of paying travelling and subsistence expenses attendance at any of the outside organisations shown in Schedule 4.
 3. Attendance by members of the Council at meetings of outside organisations not shown in Schedule 4 shall NOT qualify for payment of travelling and subsistence expenses.

SCHEDULE 3

CONFERENCE AND MEETINGS

<p>Conference and meetings organised by any person or body who is not doing so by way of trade nor whose objects are wholly or partly political, attendance at which is authorised by or on behalf of the authority and which does not involve an absence overnight from the councillor's normal place of residence.</p>	<p>Appropriate subsistence and travelling expenses (second class return rail fare or car mileage at the appropriate rates whichever is the less if travel outside the Epping Forest District is required).</p>
<p>Conferences and meetings organised by any person or body who is not doing so by way of trade, nor whose objects are wholly or partly political, attendance at which is authorised by or on behalf of the authority and which involves an absence from the councillor's normal place of residence of one or more nights.</p>	<p>Appropriate subsistence and travelling expenses (second class return rail fare or car mileage at the appropriate rate whichever is the less if travelling outside the Epping Forest District is required).</p>

SCHEDULE 4

OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Attendance as appointed representative of the Council on any outside organisations, such attendances being deemed approved duty for the purpose of paying subsistence and travelling expenses.

SCHEDULE 5

CO-OPTEE'S ALLOWANCE

Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	£500.00 per annum
Independent Members of the Remuneration Panel and Parish Remuneration Panel	£250.00 per annum
Co-opted members of the Audit and Governance Committee	£500.00 per annum
Co-opted independent members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£500.00 per annum

MEMBER REMUNERATION SCHEME

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
GUIDANCE NOTE ON ALLOWANCES AND EXPENSES FOR MEMBERS**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Councillor is eligible for the payment of attendance allowances and for reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses in respect of approved duties carried out on behalf of the Council. An approved duty is one which has been authorised by or on behalf of the Council in advance.
- 1.2 The Council has a formal scheme for allowances which is updated from time to time. A copy of the scheme is set out in the Constitution. This note is of a more informal nature and is designed to assist members in dealing with their claims and explaining the arrangements to the public.

2. BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 2.1 This is a flat rate allowance payable to all members of the Council. This annual amount is paid in quarterly instalments. Members do not have to claim this amount. The full amount of the Basic Allowance is £4,600.00 per member, per annum.
- 2.2 The Council requires each of its elected councillors to be registered as a data controller in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018. Although members are responsible for their individual compliance with the data protection principles of the General Data Protection Regulation, the Council coordinates the registration (and annual renewal) process on behalf of members and an amount of £40.00 is therefore withheld from the Basic Allowance each year to meet the registration fee imposed by the Information Commissioner.

3. SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE

- 3.1 This is a special allowance payable to the Leader, Cabinet members and certain Chairmen. It is designed to reflect the additional responsibilities of these office holders. This amount is paid in quarterly instalments during the year and does not have to be claimed.
- 3.2 The Special Responsibility Allowance applicable to the chairmen of the Standards Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committees is applied on a 'per-meeting' basis and is paid in a single instalment at year-end.
- 3.3 The Council has decided not to implement payment of the full Special Responsibility Allowance amounts and to restrict these to a percentage of each allowance set out in the Scheme.

4. TRAVEL EXPENSES

- 4.1 Members may re-claim reasonable travel expenses (including public transport tickets, taxi fares, parking costs where appropriate subject to submission of evidence of expenditure) in respect of approved duties as defined in the scheme (Schedule 2).

Car Travel

- 4.2 The normal rates for car travel are the same as the higher rates paid to officers classed as casual users. Claims must be fixed on the rates applicable at the time of the journey. These rates are set out on the claim form and are reviewed annually.

Shortest Distance

- 4.3 Claims for car travel should be by reference to the shortest distance from home to the Council offices or other venue for the approved duty concerned. No claim for additional expenses will be entertained unless there is a valid reason for incurring the additional mileage.

Travel Direct from Place of Employment etc

- 4.4 For claims involving direct travel from a Councillor's place of employment (or other departure point) for an approved duty, the distance claims shall be limited to the home to meeting venue element of the journey. All such claims must be endorsed "CLAIM LIMITED" on the form.

Travel outside the District – Limit on Amount Claimable

- 4.5 For journeys to approved meetings outside the District or by members resident outside the district, claims irrespective of mode of travel must not exceed the lower of:
- (a) second class return rail fare plus underground and other fares from station to destination at each end of the journey; or
 - (b) the appropriate car mileage.
- 4.6 This is subject to consideration of any special circumstances as set out in 4.7 below.

Travel over Long Distances – Special Circumstances

- 4.7 If, for any reason, a councillor undertakes travel over long distances or from outside the District, members are advised to contact the Service Manager (Governance) in advance for advice on what would constitute a reasonable claim in the circumstances.

Use of Public Transport within Epping Forest District

- 4.8 The rate for travel by public transport must not exceed the ordinary fare (or any available cheap fare). A member may not claim travelling expenses in respect of a single duty from more than one body. In all such claims evidence of expenditure (i.e. tickets or other receipts) MUST be provided. No claim will be allowed without such evidence.

Cycle Allowance

- 4.9 This allowance is payable at the highest of the higher casual rates paid to officers classed as casual users.

Child and Dependant Carer's Allowance

- 4.10 This allowance may be claimed at a rate equivalent to the current rate for the National Living Wage. Certain conditions are set out in the Scheme.

5. SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

- 5.1 Subsistence expenses (covering refreshments and meals etc paid for by a member) are claimable by councillor in respect of making attendances connected with approved duties on behalf of the Council. The rates for such expenses are set out (by reference to meal time and periods of absence) on the reverse of the form which is supplied to members on a quarterly basis. These rates may not be exceeded. Periods of absence will be calculated on the basis of departure from home or place of work if it is not possible to return home in the time available.
- 5.2 All claims for subsistence must be accompanied by receipts in respect of meals etc as evidence of expenditure actually having been incurred. No claims will be allowed in the absence of such evidence.
- 5.3 Special arrangements exist in respect of subsistence expenses in respect of duties involving an absence overnight from a councillor's normal place of residence. These are outlined under Section 7 relating to conferences.
- 5.4 A councillor may not claim subsistence expenses in respect of a single duty from more than one body.

6. CONFERENCES

- 6.1 Attendance at conferences and the payment of allowances and expenses are subject to prior approval by the Council, Cabinet, appropriate committee, Leader or Deputy Leader in all cases. **Attendance at conferences and the payment of allowances and expenses may also be subject to prior approval by the chairman of the appropriate committee.**
- 6.2 All conferences deemed to be approved duties shall, in accordance with statutory requirements, be relevant to the District and not wholly or partly commercial or political in their objectives.

Allowances for Attendance at Conferences (Involving an Absence from Home)

(a) Subsistence - Nights Away from Home

- 6.3 For conferences involving one or more night's absence, claims can be made for reasonable day or overnight expenses that are necessarily and exclusively incurred in the attendance as an authorised representative of the Council at a meeting, conference or seminar that it held outside of the Epping Forest District.

(b) Claims for Subsistence

- 6.4 These claims should cover such items as hotel bills, refreshments, meals (other than free meals which should be discounted) and similar items. No claims will be allowed unless evidence is provided of all expenditure being claimed. All relevant bills and receipts should be forwarded to the Service Manager (Governance) with claims.

Travel Claims

- 6.5 The guidance outlined under paragraph 4.5 will apply to all conferences.

7. TAXATION AND NATIONAL INSURANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Details of the tax and national insurance implications of allowance payments and expenses claimed are available through Democratic Services. In such matters, members are advised to seek advice from their tax office in the event of any concerns.
- 7.2 Supplementary Note Regarding Treatment of Claims for Travel Expenses by Car for Tax and National Insurance Purposes.

(a) Travel by Car – Councillors’ Homes to Civic Offices Expenses (“Home to Office Mileage”)

- 7.3 Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) deems a councillor’s workplace for the purposes of their role as an elected representative to be the Civic Offices, Epping. From April 2016, ‘Home to Office Mileage’ is no longer subject to tax and national insurance deductions, provided that the distance between a councillor’s home and the Civic Offices is no more than 20 miles.
- 7.4 If the upper rate of mileage is also claimed (any amount above 45p per mile) this part of the payment will be treated as a taxable benefit and national insurance will be deducted. A petrol/diesel VAT receipt will be required to be submitted with all claims before payment can be made, which must predate the first date of mileage on the submitted claim. The receipt must also be dated within a reasonable timeframe of the first journey for which a claim is made.

(b) Travel by Car – Councillors’ Homes to Other Venues or Civic Offices to Other Venues for the Purposes of Council Business (“Business Mileage”)

- 7.5 HMRC has determined that such travel shall not be subject to tax or national insurance deductions except where the rate of reimbursement exceeds 45 pence per mile. Travel to any meetings of the Council or its subordinate bodies which are held at a location other than the Civic Offices is deemed to be business mileage.

(c) Second Journeys

- 7.6 Second journeys will be subject to taxation and National Insurance deductions depending on whether the journey constitutes home to office or business mileage.

8. ALTERATION OF CLAIMS

- 8.1 All claim forms submitted by members are checked for accuracy. The Team Manager for Democratic & Electoral Services is authorised to reduce incorrect claims in the following circumstances:

- (a) where a member does not attend at a claimed meeting;
- (b) where a claimed meeting is not approved;
- (c) where an incorrect amount of allowance is claimed; and
- (d) where a correct date has not been claimed.

- 8.2 Any changes under paragraph 8.1 will be notified to members after the claim form has been processed. Any other problems with members’ claims will be referred back for the claimant and processing of the claim will not take place until the query has been clarified.

9. INTERPRETATION

- 9.1 These guidelines are subject to the overall interpretation of the Chief Executive as to what constitutes a reasonable claim in any individual circumstances.

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Prepared/Revised	Written by	Agreed/Authorised	Details of Change(s)
November 2015	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (17/11/15) Council (15/12/15)	Review of Scheme for 2016/17 municipal year
October 2016	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (28/9/16) Council (20/12/16)	Review of Scheme for 2017/18 municipal year
November 2017	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (30/10/17) Council (21/12/17)	Review of Scheme for 2018/19 municipal year
November 2018	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (29/11/18) Council (20/12/18)	Review of Scheme for 2019/20 municipal year
November 2019	S. Tautz (Democratic Services Manager)	Remuneration Panel (31/10/19) Council (17/12/19)	Review of Scheme for 2020/21 municipal year
January 2021	G. Woodhall (Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager)	Remuneration Panel (27-Jan-21) Council (25-Feb-21)	Review of Scheme for 2021/22 municipal year
February 2022	G. Woodhall (Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager)	Remuneration Panel (2-Feb-22) Council (24-Feb-22)	Review of Scheme for 2022/23 municipal year
November 2022	G Woodhall (Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager)	Remuneration Panel (3-Nov-22) Council (20-Dec-22)	Review of Scheme for 2023/24 municipal year
November 2023	G Woodhall (Democratic & Electoral Services Team Manager)	Remuneration Panel (2-Nov-23) Council (19-Dec-23)	Review of Scheme for 2024/25 municipal year

SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES - STATEMENT CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION 2024/25

**The following scheme has been agreed for the period from
23 May 2024 to 22 May 2025**

The Council decided at its meeting on 20 December 2023 to implement the amount of Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees Allowances provided in the scheme as set out below:

BASIC ALLOWANCE	ANNUAL BASIC ALLOWANCE	IMPLEMENTATION OF BASIC ALLOWANCE
All Councillors	£4,600	£4,600 (100%)

The amounts set out below show the amounts of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payable during the year:

DUTY	ANNUAL SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE	IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE
Chairman of the Council	£10,750 (total)	£8,600 (80%)
Vice-Chairman of the Council		£2,150 (20%)
Leader of the Council	£10,750	£7,875 (73%)
Cabinet members	£6,450 (each)	£6,300 (98%)
Chairman of the District Development Management Committee	£3,225	£2,362 (73%)
Chairmen of the Area Plans Sub-Committees	£3,225	£2,362 (73%)
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£4,300	£3,150 (73%)

Chairman of the Licensing Committee	£500	£500
Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committees	£2,725 (allocated according to the number of meetings each year)	£1,862 (allocated according to the number of meetings each year) (73%)
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee	£2,150	£2,150
Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees	£2,150	£2,150 (each)
Chairman of the Standards Committee	£110 (per meeting)	£110 (per meeting)
Chairman of the Constitution Working Group	£500	£500

The amounts payable during the year for independent and co-opted members are:

Independent Persons affiliated to the Standards Committee	£500
Independent Members of the Remuneration Panel and Parish Remuneration Panel	£250
Co-opted members of the Audit and Governance Committee	£500
Co-opted independent members of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£500

A copy of the full scheme is available on request from Democratic Services, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, CM16 4BZ.

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 19 December 2023

Subject: Approval of the Inter-Authority Agreement for the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee

Portfolio Holder: Cllr N Bedford

Recommending:

(1) That the Inter-Authority Agreement for the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee be approved.

1. The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town aims to coordinate and enable delivery of 16,000 homes by 2033, with another 7,000 planned beyond this. To bring these homes forward the Garden Town will require over £1.7billion of infrastructure investment into transport, education, healthcare, emergency services, community facilities, open space, sports and leisure, utilities and flood defences. 3,900 of these homes are allocated within Epping Forest District, making up over a third of the District's allocated housing to be built to the TCPA's Garden City Principles.

2. The growth will cross the boundaries of the five council Partners (which comprise East Hertfordshire, Epping Forest and Harlow District Councils, and Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils) and the Garden Town initiative was originally established under the 'Duty to Cooperate' arrangements to reach common agreement between those partners.

3. At the Harlow & Gilston Garden Town Board meeting on 17 July 2023, a report was considered that set out the future governance and partnership framework for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT). This report recommended that a Joint Committee (JC) be established to deliver locally led leadership, provide programme oversight and to formalise audit functions and risk-sharing equally between all partners, whilst ensuring all decisions are democratically accountable and transparent.

4. This follows agreement by Leaders & Lead Members at the HGGT Board meeting in June 2021 that the current board model of informal, duty to cooperate led collective decision-making in cross boundary HGGT matters, needed to evolve as the HGGT project moved from policy and plan making to project delivery. At the meeting on 17 July 2023, Board members endorsed the proposal to establish a Joint Committee, and the matter has now been referred to the governing bodies of the respective five partner authorities for ratification.

5. At its meeting on 13 November 2023, the Cabinet considered a report regarding the establishment of a constituted Joint Committee for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town. The Cabinet agreed to the establishment of the Joint Committee for the HGGT and endorsed the Inter-Authority Agreement. However, due to the £2million capital expenditure threshold within the Agreement, the Cabinet felt

that final approval of the Agreement should be undertaken by the Council. The Inter-Authority Agreement is attached at Appendix 1 of this report, and the Council is requested to give final approval for the Agreement.

6. Please note that this would not include any planning or highways decision making powers, which will remain with the relevant local authority.

7. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

Agenda Item 7 Appendix C

Dated

2023

East Hertfordshire District Council

Epping Forest District Council

Harlow District Council

Essex County Council

Hertfordshire County Council

Inter-Authority Agreement

for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee



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THIS DEED is made on

2023

BETWEEN:

- 1 East Hertfordshire District Council of Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ (“**EHDC**”)
- 2 Epping Forest District Council of Civic Offices, 323 High Street, Epping CM16 4BZ (“**EFDC**”)
- 3 Harlow District Council of Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, College Square, Harlow CM20 1WG (“**HDC**”)
- 4 Essex County Council of County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH (“**ECC**”); and
- 5 Hertfordshire County Council of County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DQ (“**HCC**”),

each a “**Partner Authority**” and together the “Partner Authorities”.

BACKGROUND

- A. The Partner Authorities are local authorities for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 and best value authorities for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999.
- B. Under sections 101(5) and 102(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Regulations 10 and 11 of The Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) England Regulations 2012, local authorities may arrange for the discharge of their functions by a Joint Committee comprising members of their authorities.
- C. All of the Partner Authorities have introduced Executive Arrangements under section 9EA of the Local Government Act 2000.
- D. Each of the Partner Authorities has agreed to establish a Joint Committee for the purposes of section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to be known as the Joint Committee for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (the “**Joint Committee**”) to co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of 16,000 homes in the HGGT by 2033, and 7,000 homes in the years after that along with associated infrastructure.
- E. Epping Forest District Council will act as the Accountable Body.
- F. The Accountable Body will provide the Services and employ the HGGT Delivery Team on the terms set out in this Agreement and in accordance with Part VII of the Local Government Act 1972.
- G. This Agreement sets out the services that the Accountable Body will deliver to the Joint Committee and the respective roles, responsibilities and behaviours of the Partner Authorities in respect of associated matters related to the Joint Committee and the delivery of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town.
- H. The Parties have also agreed the Joint Committee Terms of Reference which is incorporated into this Agreement.

1 AGREED TERMS

- 1.1 In this Agreement, the definitions set out in Schedule 1 (Definitions) shall apply.
- 1.2 Clauses, schedule and paragraph headings shall not affect the interpretation of this Agreement.
- 1.3 A **person** includes a natural person, corporate or unincorporated body (whether or not having separate legal personality).
- 1.4 The schedules form part of this Agreement and shall have effect as if set out in full in the body of this Agreement and any reference to this Agreement includes the schedules.
- 1.5 A reference to a **company** shall include any company, corporation or other body corporate, wherever and however incorporated or established.
- 1.6 A reference to a statute or a provision of a statute is a reference to it as it is in force for the time being, taking account of any amendment, extension, or re-enactment and includes any subordinate legislation for the time being in force made under it.
- 1.7 Words in their singular shall include the plural and vice versa (unless the context otherwise requires).
- 1.8 A reference to **writing** or **written** excludes a reference to electronic communications, facsimile transmissions or comparable means of communication.
- 1.9 Any obligation in this Agreement on a person not to do something includes an obligation not to agree or allow that thing to be done.
- 1.10 References to clauses and schedules are to the clauses and schedules of this Agreement; references to paragraphs are to paragraphs of the relevant schedule.
- 1.11 Where there is any conflict or inconsistency between the provision of the agreement, such conflict or inconsistency shall be resolved according to the following order of priority:
- 1.11.1 the clauses of the Agreement;
- 1.11.2 Schedule 1 to this Agreement;
- 1.11.3 the remaining schedules to this Agreement.

2 Governance

- 2.1 The Partner Authorities agree to adhere to the overarching governance structure set out in the Joint Committee Terms of Reference.
- 2.2 The Partner Authorities will work together acting in their capacities as Accountable Body and Partner Authorities.
- 2.3 The Partner Authorities agree that the following principles underpin their collaborative working: mutual co-operation; accountability; transparency and mutual benefits.

- 2.4 The Partner Authorities agree that they will work together with mutual trust, good faith and in an open, co-operative and collaborative manner and will respond in a timely manner
- 2.5 A structure chart depicting the governance arrangements applicable to the Joint Committee as at the date of this Agreement is included at Schedule 11. The parties acknowledge that the chart is included for information only. In the event of any conflict between the chart and any other provision of this Agreement, the other provision shall prevail.

3 Roles and Responsibilities of the Accountable Body

- 3.1 The Accountable Body shall operate administrative functions to ensure the partnership operates legally and has the back office support services required. In this context it is not a political function. The political leadership comes from the five partners in the joint committee.
- 3.2 Subject to clause 3.3, in accordance with the terms of this Agreement the Accountable Body shall:
- 3.2.1 be the employing authority of the HGGT Director and HGGT Delivery Team on behalf of the Partner Authorities, who will be employed on the Accountable Body's terms and conditions of employment and subject to the employment policies of the Accountable Body;
 - 3.2.2 ensure that line management is provided to the HGGT Director and the HGGT Delivery Team in consultation with the Chair, where necessary, in order to ensure that the HGGT Director and Delivery Team are effectively performing their roles;
 - 3.2.3 establish and maintain a financial system to hold and account for all Project Funding and Recoverable Cost Funding received and disbursed on behalf of the Joint Committee;
 - 3.2.4 receive the Project Funding and Recoverable Cost Funding on behalf of the Joint Committee and be responsible for its proper administration;
 - 3.2.5 comply with all instructions of the Joint Committee and any sub-committee except where the instruction is:
 - (i) inconsistent with the principles of probity or sound financial practice;
 - (ii) in breach of applicable funding terms
 - (iii) inconsistent with public law principles;
 - (iv) against the public interest
 - (v) likely to bring the Accountable Body or the Joint Committee into disrepute; or
 - (vi) illegal;

- 3.2.6 ensure, through the S151 Officer, that Project Funding and Recoverable Cost Funding is used appropriately in accordance with the law, good financial management and any applicable grant conditions;
 - 3.2.7 ensure the decisions and activities of the Joint Committee conform with legal requirements;
 - 3.2.8 ensure that the Accountable Body's decisions conform with legal requirements;
 - 3.2.9 issue offer letters and enter into agreements for Recoverable Cost Funding with the Partner Authorities as authorised by the Joint Committee;
 - 3.2.10 provide the Services;
 - 3.2.11 provide the necessary data and other information in timely manner to enable the HGGT Director to monitor the progress of scheme delivery and spend of Project Funding;
 - 3.2.12 ensure all required information on expenditure, activities, outputs and outcomes are properly recorded and provided in due time for reporting to the Joint Committee upon the Joint Committee's request;
 - 3.2.13 only spend the Project Funding and Recoverable Cost Funding on the Services, the Recoverable Costs, and any other costs or expenditure agreed by the Joint Committee;
 - 3.2.14 obtain and keep in place sufficient insurance cover in respect of its liabilities under this Agreement and supply to the Joint Committee, on request, evidence that insurance cover or self-insuring arrangements are in place;
 - 3.2.15 unless directed otherwise by the Joint Committee, maintain ownership of the Assets and use them only for the purposes of the Joint Committee and any sub-committee; and
 - 3.2.16 unless directed otherwise by the Joint Committee, administer the Contracts and manage them only for the purposes of the Joint Committee.
- 3.3 The Accountable Body shall not have responsibility for the RIF pursuant to this Agreement. The parties acknowledge that the accountable body for the RIF shall be decided by the Partner Authorities pursuant to clause 4.6.5.
- 3.4 In addition to acting as Accountable Body, EFDC (or any successor Partner Authority) shall ensure that where it has a role as recipient of Project Sponsor Funding, there is a clear separation of such functions from its role as Accountable Body and all decisions to release Project Funding shall remain subject to the Joint Committee's approval.
- 3.5 The Accountable Body shall provide the Services or procure that they are provided:
- 3.5.1 with all reasonable skill, care and attention in accordance with the best industry practice within the timescales appropriate to the service in question;
 - 3.5.2 in accordance with the Assurance Framework and the terms of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference;

- 3.5.3 in accordance with relevant accounting standards including but not limited to guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and GAAP (generally accepted accounting principles);
 - 3.5.4 in all respects in accordance with the Accountable Body and Joint Committee's policies; and
 - 3.5.5 in accordance with all applicable Law.
- 3.6 In the event that the Accountable Body is unable or unwilling to deliver the Services, the Accountable Body must provide the other Partner Authorities with at least twelve (12) months' notice (or such shorter period as the parties may agree) of its intention to cease to act as Accountable Body. The Accountable Body reserves the right to transfer the Accountable Body role and responsibilities under this Agreement to a different Partner Authority as agreed with the other Partner Authorities by providing the other Partner Authorities with written notice of such change. The new Accountable Body shall assume all responsibilities and obligations relating to this Agreement from the effective date of transfer and the Partner Authorities shall co-operate fully with the new Accountable Body to ensure a seamless transition. The retiring Accountable Body shall take all steps necessary to transfer to the new Accountable Body any Assets and Staff, and to novate any Contracts.

4 Roles and Responsibilities of the Partner Authorities

- 4.1 Each Partner Authority shall comply with the terms and conditions set out in this Agreement, including this clause 4, and the Joint Committee Terms of Reference.
- 4.2 The Partner Authorities shall co-operate to achieve the Garden Town Purpose.
- 4.3 The Partner Authorities shall ensure that an executive officer is appointed to and participates as a member of the Executive Officer Group in accordance with paragraph 7 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference.
- 4.4 The Partner Authorities shall provide a Lead Officer(s).
- 4.5 The CEOs of the Partner Authorities, or the CEOs nominated deputies, will meet at least quarterly and in advance of the formal joint committee meetings to consider the papers and provide strategic advice.
- 4.6 The Partner Authorities shall work to achieve the RIF Purpose, including:
 - 4.6.1 co-operating to enable HCC to draw down the HIG Funding in accordance with the terms of the Grant Determination Agreement;
 - 4.6.2 committing to maximising recovery of the HIG Funding for inclusion in the RIF;
 - 4.6.3 maximising the contributions from the strategic sites to put into the RIF;
 - 4.6.4 using reasonable endeavours to secure additional grant or revenue funding for the delivery of the STC Network and, where appropriate, to allocate such funding to the RIF, subject always to any terms and conditions attaching to such funding;

- 4.6.5 cooperating to develop, agree, and implement the RIF strategy described in paragraph 6.4 of the Memorandum of Understanding at which point the parties agree that the Memorandum of Understanding shall terminate;
 - 4.6.6 paying the Accountable Body the Partner Authority Contribution;
 - 4.6.7 making appropriate in-kind resources available as required and agreed by the Joint Committee.
- 4.7 The Partner Authorities shall (so far as the law permits) comply with the terms of the Exit Schedule.
- 4.8 For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Agreement shall fetter the statutory rights, powers, duties and obligations of the Partner Authorities in the exercise of their role as a local authority.

5 HGGT Delivery Team

- 5.1 The Accountable Body shall employ the HGGT Delivery Team and the HGGT Director and they will be subject to the employment policies of the Accountable Body.
- 5.2 The Accountable Body will ensure that line management is provided to the HGGT Delivery Team and the HGGT Director in consultation with the Chair of the Joint Committee, where necessary, in order to ensure that the HGGT Delivery Team is effectively performing its role.
- 5.3 The HGGT Delivery Team shall have its primary place of work at HDC. HDC shall provide office space, access, and employee welfare facilities to the HGGT Delivery Team which is sufficient to allow the HGGT Delivery Team to support the delivery of the Garden Town Purpose and the RIF Purpose.
- 5.4 The role of the HGGT Delivery Team is to:
- 5.4.1 support the Joint Committee to carry out the programme of coordinating and enabling work required for the delivery of the Joint Committee's primary aims as detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference;
 - 5.4.2 support the allocation of Project Funding;
 - 5.4.3 manage the expenditure and recovery of Project Funding;
 - 5.4.4 monitor and report on delivery against the HGGT Budget;
 - 5.4.5 report to the Joint Committee about issues affecting the development of the HGGT.
- 5.5 The role of the HGGT Director shall be to:
- 5.5.1 lead the HGGT Partnership and deliver the objectives of the HGGT Joint Committee including leadership and management of the HGGT Delivery Team;
 - 5.5.2 be the budget holder of the Recoverable Cost Funding and Project Funding in accordance with the Accountable Body's constitution and financial regulations;

- 5.5.3 prepare and maintain a three (3) year Business Plan to the Joint Committee (a Proposed Budget) setting out:
- (i) the proposed level of Partner Authority Contributions;
 - (ii) the Recoverable Cost Funding required and how the Recoverable Cost Funding is to be allocated with respect to those three (3) Financial Years;
 - (iii) the allocation of project funding; and
 - (iv) The annual programme of enabling work to be carried out by the HGGT Delivery Team with objective for years 2 & 3.
- 5.5.4 prepare the Proposed Budget; and
- 5.5.5 chair meetings of the HGGT Delivery Team and the Executive Officer Group.

6 Not Used

7 Charges and Payment

- 7.1 The Partner Authorities agree that the Partner Authority Contribution shall be set at a level sufficient to cover the Recoverable Costs.
- 7.2 The Charges for the Services provided by the Accountable Body shall be funded by the Recoverable Cost Funding and shall be calculated in accordance with Schedule 4 (Charges).
- 7.3 Before the start of each Financial Year, the HGGT Director in consultation with the Partner Authorities will bring a report to the Joint Committee with proposals for the three (3) year business plan (a "**Proposed Budget**") as set out in clause 5.5.3.
- 7.4 Subject to approval by Joint Committee, the Accountable Body shall be entitled as part of the annual budget setting process by written notice, to vary Charges upwards or downwards, to reflect any change in its underlying cost base in the provision of the Services (or changes in the underlying cost base and margin of the Accountable Body). In making any such changes, Accountable Body shall act reasonably at all times.
- 7.5 The Accountable Body shall pay any Recoverable Costs from the cost centre held for such purpose within the Accountable Body's accounting records.

8 Change Request

- 8.1 If the outcome of a review pursuant to clause 6 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference results in a change to the nature, volume or execution of all or any of the Services, the Partner Authorities shall submit details of the requested change in writing to the Accountable Body. Following the submission or receipt of a change request, the Accountable Body shall, within a reasonable time, provide a written estimate to the Partner Authorities of:
- 8.1.1 the time required to implement the change;
 - 8.1.2 any proposed variations to the Charges arising from the requested change;

- 8.1.3 any other impact of the requested change on the Services or the terms of this Agreement.
- 8.2 The Accountable Body shall consider the request in good faith in accordance with its responsibilities under clause 3 but the Accountable Body shall (acting reasonably) be under no obligation to accept any requested change to the Services. The Accountable Body shall give its formal response within two (2) weeks of receipt of the change request. If the Partner Authorities cannot agree on the appropriate variation to the fees within four (4) weeks of agreeing the requested change, the matter shall be referred to the Chair of the Joint Committee and a nominated officer of the Accountable Body who shall attempt in good faith to resolve it.
- 8.3 The Accountable Body may, from time to time and without prior notice, change the Services in order to comply with any applicable regulatory or statutory requirements. Where practicable, it will give not less than three (3) months' written notice of any change (including any required variation to the Charges), but in any event, it will give notice of any such change within one (1) month of it taking effect.

9 Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

- 9.1 The Partner Authorities recognise that they are subject to legal duties which may require the release of information under the FOIA or any other applicable legislation governing access to information, and that they may be under an obligation to provide information to third parties on request. Such information may include matters relating to or arising out of this Agreement.
- 9.2 Each Partner Authority will assist the other to enable it to comply with its obligations and will ensure that any third parties acting on its behalf will also comply with the requirements of this clause 9. In the event that any Partner Authority receives a request for information under the FOIA or any other applicable legislation governing access to information and subject of such request or otherwise, the relevant Partner Authority will respond to any such request for assistance at its own cost and promptly, and in any event within five (5) days.
- 9.3 The Accountable Body, when in receipt of an FOIA addressed to or concerning the Joint Committee or Accountable Body, will consider the representations made by the relevant Partner Authorities. The Partner Authorities understand and acknowledge that, in such a case and as the recipient of the FOIA, the Accountable Body shall have the final determination of the response and disclosure required and the Partner Authorities agree to abide by that determination.

10 Intellectual Property

- 10.1 All Intellectual Property created by the Joint Committee, or by any of the Partner Authorities for the purposes of the Joint Committee or this Agreement, shall vest in the Accountable Body on creation. The Accountable Body shall grant to the Partner Authorities a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive licence to use the Joint Committee Intellectual Property.
- 10.2 The Accountable Body shall grant, subject to the remainder of this clause 10 and for so long as the Accountable Body remains the Accountable Body, a non-exclusive licence to use such Accountable Body Intellectual Property as is necessary to allow the Joint Committee to enjoy the benefit of the Services provided by the Accountable Body. The Joint Committee and the Partner Authorities shall at all times maintain standards of quality equivalent to those used by the Accountable Body in relation to its

Intellectual Property and shall comply with such reasonable instructions as may be notified to it by the Accountable Body in connection with the use of such Intellectual Property from time to time.

- 10.3 The Partner Authorities acknowledge that where the Accountable Body does not own the Intellectual Property, use by the Partner Authorities of rights in the Accountable Body's Intellectual Property is conditional on the Accountable Body obtaining a written licence (or sub-licence) from the relevant licensor or licensors on such terms as will entitle the Accountable Body to license such rights to the Partner Authorities.
- 10.4 Where the circumstances set out in clause 10.3 arise, the Accountable Body agrees to use its reasonable endeavours to enable the Partner Authorities to use the Intellectual Property required to enable them to enjoy the benefit of the Services.

11 Termination

- 11.1 This Agreement shall terminate on the date that the Joint Committee Terms of Reference terminate or expire.
- 11.2 This Agreement shall terminate on the date that the Partner Authority that is acting as Accountable Body ceases to be the Accountable Body pursuant to clause 3.5 for any reason, unless another Partner Authority is appointed to undertake the responsibilities of the Accountable Body.
- 11.3 In the event that a Partner Authority leaves the Joint Committee pursuant to paragraph 5.3 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference, that Partner Authority shall be deemed also to withdraw simultaneously from this Agreement. In such circumstances the withdrawing Partner Authority shall (to the extent that the law permits) comply with the Exit Provisions.

12 Consequences of Termination

- 12.1 Upon the termination of this Agreement or part thereof for any reason, the provisions of Schedule 6 (Consequences of Termination) shall apply.

13 Force Majeure

- 13.1 In the event that any Partner Authority is affected by any circumstances beyond its reasonable control ("an event of Force Majeure") the affected Partner Authority shall promptly notify the other Partner Authorities of the nature and extent of the circumstances in question.
- 13.2 Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, no Partner Authority shall be deemed to be in breach of this Agreement or otherwise liable to the other for any delay in performance or the non-performance of any of its obligations under this Agreement to the extent that the delay or non-performance is due to the occurrence of an event of Force Majeure of which it has notified the other Partner Authorities, and the time for performance of that obligation shall be extended accordingly.

14 Entire Agreement, Inter-Authority Agreement Review and Variations

- 14.1 This Agreement (including the documents and Schedules referred to in this Agreement) represents the entire agreement between the Partner Authorities in relation to the subject matter hereof and supersedes and replaces all prior agreements,

communications, representations, warranties and undertakings between the Parties, whether oral or written.

- 14.2 The Partner Authorities agree that they shall together review this Agreement from time to time and shall agree such amendments to this Agreement as are necessary to reflect any changes in the circumstances of the Partner Authorities or any changes in the levels of benefit derived from this Agreement by the Partner Authorities. This review shall take place:
- 14.2.1 at least every five (5) years;
 - 14.2.2 whenever a Party Authority gives notice of withdrawal under Schedule 5; or
 - 14.2.3 at such times as a Partner Authority may request on reasonable notice.
- 14.3 Subject to clause 14.4, amendments or variations to this Agreement shall only be effective if, and to the extent that, they are endorsed by the Joint Committee and approved by all Partner Authorities. Any amendments or variations shall be recorded in writing and signed by authorised representatives of each Partner Authority.
- 14.4 Variations in respect of Charges, including but not limited to the annual budget setting process, shall be recorded in writing and signed by authorised representatives of each Partner Authority.

15 Assignment

- 15.1 None of the Accountable Body or the Partner Authorities shall be entitled to assign or transfer any of its rights or obligations arising under this Agreement without the prior written consent of all other Partner Authorities.

16 Notices

- 16.1 A notice given to a party under or in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing and:
- 16.1.1 shall be delivered by hand, pre-paid first-class post, recorded delivery or special delivery in each case sent for the attention of the person, and to the postal address given in clause 16.2 (or such other address or person as the relevant party may notify to the other party); or
 - 16.1.2 shall be sent by electronic mail to the email address given in clause 16.2 (or such other address or person as the relevant party may notify to the other party).
- 16.2 The addresses for service of notices are:

Accountable Body

Address: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex CM16 4BZ

Email: asmall@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

For the attention of: Andrew Small



Partner Authorities

(1) Address: East Hertfordshire District Council of Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8EQ

Email: sara.saunders@eastherts.gov.uk

For the attention of: Sara Saunders - Head of Planning

(2) Address: Harlow District Council of Civic Centre, The Water Gardens, College Square, Harlow CM20 1WG

Email: simon.hill@harlow.gov.uk

For the attention of: Simon Hill

(3) Address: Essex County Council of County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford CM1 1QH

Email: mark.doran@essex.gov.uk

For the attention of: Mark Doran, Director – Sustainable Growth

(4) Address: Hertfordshire County Council of County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford SG13 8DQ

Email: quentin.baker@hertfordshire.gov.uk

For the attention of: Quentin Baker, Monitoring Officer

16.3 Delivery of a notice is deemed to have taken place:

16.3.1 if delivered by hand, at the time the notice is left at the address or if sent by post on the second Business Day after posting, unless such deemed receipt would occur outside business hours, in which case deemed receipt will occur at 9.00 am on the next working day;

16.3.2 if sent by electronic mail, at the time actually received provided that any notice sent by electronic mail outside business hours shall be deemed to have been given at 9:00 am on the next working day.

For the purposes of this clause 16.3, business hours means 9.00 am to 5.30 pm Monday to Friday on each day that is not a public holiday.

16.4 This clause 16 does not apply to the service of any proceedings or other documents in any legal action.

17 Data Protection

17.1 The Parties shall comply with their obligations under the Data Protection Legislation and the Data Sharing Schedule in the performance of their obligations under this Agreement.

18 Disputes

- 18.1 If a dispute arises out of or in connection with this Agreement or the performance validity or enforcement of it (a "Dispute") then the Partner Authorities shall follow the procedure set out in this clause:
- 18.1.1 either Partner Authority shall give to the other written notice of the Dispute, setting out its nature and full particulars (Dispute Notice), together with relevant supporting documents. On service of the Dispute Notice, the Heads of Finance of the Partner Authorities shall attempt in good faith to resolve the Dispute;
 - 18.1.2 if the Heads of Finance of the Partner Authorities are for any reason unable to resolve the Dispute within fourteen (14) days of service of the Dispute Notice, the Dispute shall be referred to the Directors of Finance of the Partner Authorities who shall attempt in good faith to resolve it; and
 - 18.1.3 if the Directors of Finance of the Partner Authorities are for any reason unable to resolve the Dispute within fourteen (14) days of it being referred to them, the Dispute shall be referred to the Chief Executives of the Partner Authorities; and
 - 18.1.4 if the Chief Executives of the Partner Authorities are for any reason unable to resolve the Dispute within fourteen (14) days of it being referred to them, the parties will attempt to settle it by mediation in accordance with the CEDR Model Mediation Procedure. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, the mediator shall be nominated by CEDR Solve. To initiate the mediation, a party must serve notice in writing (ADR notice) to the other party to the Dispute, requesting a mediation. A copy of the ADR notice should be sent to CEDR Solve. The mediation will start not later than twenty eight (28) days after the date of the ADR notice.
- 18.2 The commencement of mediation shall not prevent the parties commencing or continuing court proceedings in relation to the Dispute under clause 20.2 which shall apply at all times.
- 18.3 If the Dispute is not resolved within fourteen (14) days after service of the ADR notice, or either party fails to participate or to continue to participate in the mediation before the expiration of the said period of fourteen (14) days, or the mediation terminates before the expiration of the said period of fourteen (14) days, the Dispute shall be finally resolved by the courts of England and Wales in accordance with clause 20.2.

19 General

- 19.1 A waiver of any right or remedy by a Partner Authority under this Agreement shall only be effective if given in writing and shall not be considered to be a waiver of any subsequent breach of the same or any other provision.
- 19.2 In the event that any provision of this Agreement is held by a competent authority to be invalid or unenforceable in whole or in part, the validity of the remainder of the provision in question and the remaining provisions shall not be affected.
- 19.3 Third parties shall not have any rights whatsoever to take any action under or in relation to this Agreement and, accordingly, all rights that are or may be conferred on such third

parties pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 are hereby expressly excluded.

20 Governing law and Jurisdiction

- 20.1 This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law.
- 20.2 Each party irrevocably agrees to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales over any claim or matter arising under or in connection with this Agreement (including any non-contractual dispute or claim).

21 Counterparts

- 21.1 This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts and by the several parties to it on separate counterparts, each of which when so executed shall constitute an original of this Agreement, but all counterparts together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

This agreement has been entered into as a deed on the date stated at the beginning of it.

The common seal of
EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Was affixed in the presence of:

Authorised signatory

The common seal of
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
was affixed in the presence of:

Attesting Officer



The common seal of
HARLOW DISTRICT COUNCIL
was affixed in the presence of:

Duly Authorised Officer

The common seal of
ESSEX COUNTY AUTHORITY
was affixed in the presence of:

Attesting Officer
Date

The common seal of
HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
was affixed in the presence of:

Authorised Signatory



SCHEDULE 1

DEFINITIONS

In this Agreement the words and expressions set out below shall have the meanings set out below (unless the context requires otherwise):

Accountable Body means EFDC, or such other Partner Authority as may be appointed pursuant to this Agreement, which has responsibility under this Agreement for holding the Project Funding and the Recoverable Cost Funding and providing the Services including ensuring that expenditure is spent in accordance with all legal requirements.

Agreement means this agreement that sets out the services to be delivered by the Accountable Body and the respective roles, responsibilities and behaviours of the Partner Authorities.

Assets means any assets held by the Accountable Body on behalf of the Joint Committee from time to time, being at the date of this Agreement four (4) cargo bikes.

Assurance Framework means the Financial Regulations of the Accountable Body, which shall be applied to manage the Project Funding until such time as alternative arrangements shall be adopted and incorporated into this Agreement.

Charges means the charges (including Recoverable Costs) which become due and payable by the Partner Authorities to the Accountable Body in respect of the Services provided under this Agreement, as such charges are set out in Schedule 4 (Charges).

Contracts means any contracts entered into by the Accountable Body on behalf of the Joint Committee from time to time.

Data Sharing Schedule means the obligations of the Parties as set out in Schedule 8 (Data Sharing Schedule).

Data Protection Legislation means: (a) the GDPR, the LED and any applicable national implementing Laws as amended from time to time; (b) the DPA to the extent that it relates to processing of personal data and privacy; and (c) all applicable Law about the processing of personal data and privacy.

DPA means the Data Protection Act 2018;

Executive Officer Group means an officer group established by the Partner Authorities made up of one (1) senior officer from each Partner Authority and which is chaired by the HGGT Director.

Exit Provisions means the exit plan and provisions set out at Schedule 5 (Exit Provisions) which shall be used in the event of termination of this Agreement for any reason in whole or in part.

Financial Year means during the continuance of the Agreement any period commencing on 1 April and ending on the following 31 March.

FOIA means the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and any subordinate legislation made under the Act from time to time, together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant government department in relation to such legislation.

Garden Town Purpose means providing the leadership required to deliver the spatial growth and infrastructure proposals set out in the Local Plans of HDC, EHDC and EFDC, supported by ECC and HCC to align and maximise the opportunities for new residents and the existing residents and communities in Harlow, Epping Forest and East Hertfordshire.

GDPR means the General Data Protection Regulations 2016, Regulation (EU) 2016/679 as implemented in UK law under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and any United Kingdom Act or European Union Regulation recognised in UK law substantially replacing the same.

HGGT means the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town located to the north of London in the district council areas of Harlow, East Hertfordshire and Epping Forest and in the counties of Hertfordshire and Essex which will co-ordinate and enable new homes, modal shift and associated infrastructure in and around Harlow with four new strategic sites being Gilston, East Harlow, Latton Priory and Water Lane which shall be connected via the STC Network.

HGGT Area means the area of the HGGT as delineated in red on the map at Schedule 2 (HGGT Area).

HGGT Budget means the agreed budget for the Recoverable Cost Funding and the Project Funding once agreed by the Joint Committee.

HGGT Delivery Team means the employees employed by the Accountable Body on behalf of the Partner Authorities for the purposes of supporting the Joint Committee and carrying out the programme of enabling work required for the delivery of the objectives set out in this Agreement and which shall include the Independent Facilitator and the HGGT Director.

HGGT Director means an officer employed by the Accountable Body on behalf of the Partner Authorities for the purposes of leading the HGGT Partnership of 5 partner authorities and delivering the objectives of the HGGT Joint Committee including leadership and management of the HGGT Delivery Team and chairing the Executive Officer Group

HIG Funding means the funding made available or to be made available by Homes England to HCC under the terms of a Grant Determination Agreement dated 31 March 2021 for the purposes of application towards the expenditure of delivering or procuring the delivery of infrastructure works and dwellings in the HGGT.

Independent Facilitator means a person appointed by the Joint Committee in accordance with paragraph 10.4 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference.

Intellectual Property means all patents, rights to inventions, copyright and related rights, database rights, rights in designs, trademarks, know-how, trade secrets and other similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection (whether registered or unregistered) and all applications (or rights to apply) for, and for renewals and extensions of such rights as may now or in the future exist anywhere in the world.

Joint Committee means the joint committee constituted through the Joint Committee Terms of Reference between the Partner Authorities.

Joint Committee Intellectual Property means any and all Intellectual Property created through the work of, or as directed by, the Joint Committee.

Joint Committee Terms of Reference means the terms of reference in relation to the HGGT agreed between the Partner Authorities and Joint Committee and set out in Schedule 10, which sets out the duties and obligations, roles and responsibilities of the Partner Authorities in relation to delivery of Joint Committee's objectives.

Law means any law, statute, subordinate legislation within the meaning of section 21(1) of the Interpretation Act 1978, bye-law, enforceable right within the meaning of section 2 of the European Communities Act 1972, regulation, order, mandatory guidance or code of practice, judgment of a relevant court of law, or directives or requirements of any regulatory body with which Accountable Body is bound to comply.

LED means Law Enforcement Directive (Directive (EU) 2016/680).

Lead Officer means an officer employed by each Partner Authority to work to progress the work of the HGGT.

Memorandum of Understanding means the memorandum of understanding between the Partner Authorities set out in Schedule 9 to this Agreement, signed by each of the Partner Authorities on different dates in February and March 2022. In interpreting the Memorandum of Understanding, the definitions set out in that Schedule shall apply.

Partner Authority Contribution in each Financial Year means a financial contribution which a Partner Authority has agreed to make to the Recoverable Cost Funding.

Partner Authority means each party or the parties (as the case may be) to this Agreement.

Project Funding means Developer Contributions and any other funding contributions which are to be used for the delivery of the HGGT schemes and work programme as agreed by the Joint Committee.

Project Sponsor Funding means a payment of Project Funding to a Partner Authority for the purposes of delivering an element of the HGGT.

Proposed Budget has the meaning given to it in clause 7.3.

Recoverable Costs means costs incurred by the Accountable Body in the provision of the Services which shall include:

- a) the cost of the Services, the cost of insurance, the cost of the HGGT Delivery Team, the cost of the HGGT Director, and such other funding as is required to cover the agreed programme of work; and
- b) third party costs incurred by the Accountable Body to which no value is added by the Accountable Body, including, but not limited to, any costs, fees, or charges paid pursuant to the Contracts.

Recoverable Cost Funding means the funding needed to cover the Recoverable Costs.

RIF means the rolling infrastructure fund which shall comprise, as a minimum, the HIG Repayment Funding and the Developer Contributions, principally for the purposes of forward funding and completing the STC Network, which shall be held on behalf of the Joint Committee by the accountable body appointed by the Partner Authorities pursuant to clause 3.3 and clause 4.6.5.

RIF Purpose means work to further develop the principles and processes set out in the Memorandum of Understanding at:

- a) Clause 2 (Establishment of the Rolling Infrastructure Fund)
- b) Clause 3 (Rolling Infrastructure Fund Governance)
- c) Clause 4 (Initial Projects – Forward Funding)
- d) Clause 5 (Initial Projects – Recovery of Contributions)
- e) Clause 6 (Subsequent Projects)
- f) Clause 7 (Fund Holders’ Obligations)
- g) Clause 9 (Review and Development of the RIF).

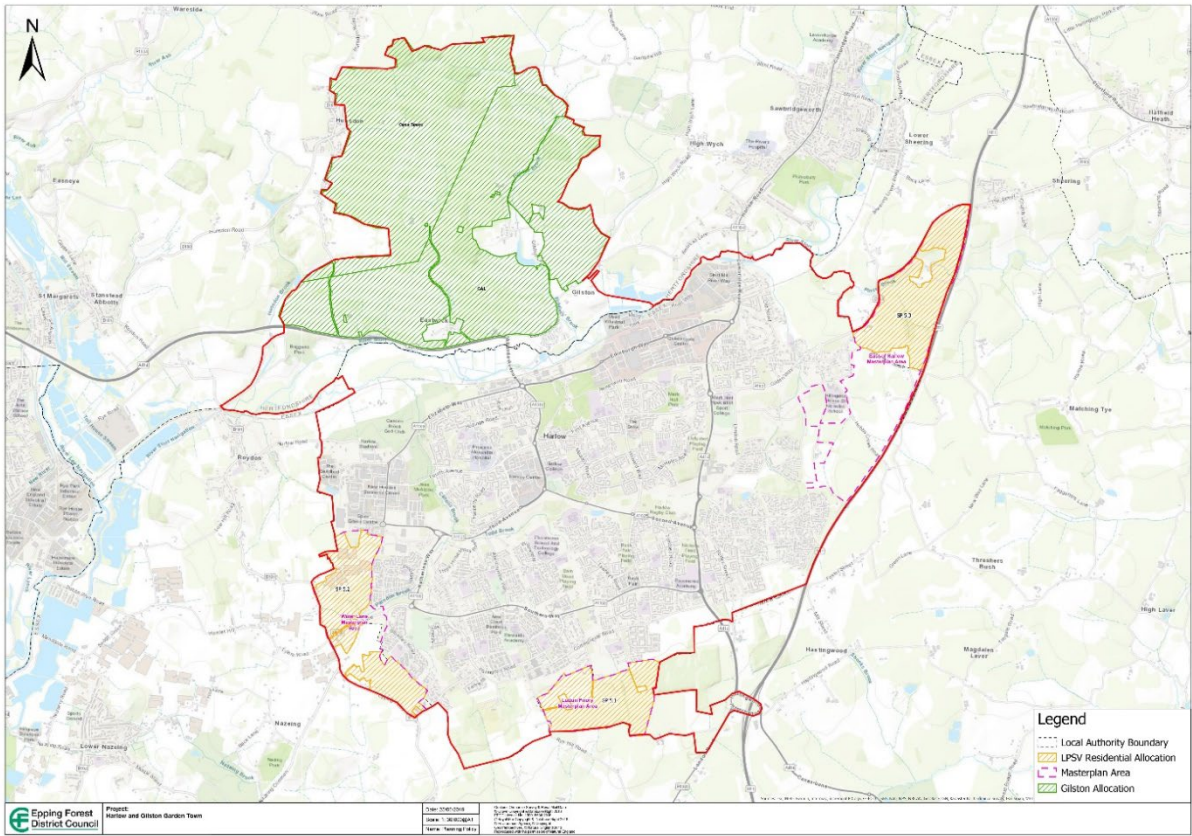
S151 Officer means the officer appointed by the Accountable Body for the proper administration of its financial affairs under s151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Services means the services to be provided by the Accountable Body as set out in Schedule 3 (Services).

STC Network means the sustainable transport corridors and other specific highway improvements which will connect the four strategic sites forming the HGGT and support the delivery of sustainable residential development as detailed in the Adopted Local Plans of EHDC and HDC and the draft local plan of EFDC.

SCHEDULE 2

HGGT Area



SCHEDULE 3

SERVICES

Core on-going Services required to ensure that the Accountable Body can provide the required due diligence in providing financial and legal oversight to the Partnership

Democratic Services

Publishing Agendas and minutes

Legal Services

Support on all matters relating to contracting, report comment and supporting meetings of the Joint Committee as required including Joint Committee specific advice to the Accountable Body

People Services

Support on all HR matter relating to recruitment and management of the HGGT Delivery Team and the HGGT Director

Support for Learning & Development and retention of the HGGT Delivery Team and the HGGT Director

Technology Services

Core Service including annual licences for Microsoft, Oracle plus a data consumption allowance

Provision of Laptop, mobile phone (if required as agreed by HGGT Director) licences and set up of new users

Service support as part of Core Service

Finance Services

Budget Holder Support, including support for in-year forecasting and budget preparation
Preparation of budget and forecast summaries to support reporting to the Board on a quarterly basis

Preparation of the annual accounts of the partnership and support the Audit of the Accounts

Financial advice to the Partnership; Review and comment on the Board papers; provide briefings for the Section 151 officer and the Accountable Body representative

Treasury Management

Internal Audit

Annual Audit of Governance and Funding arrangements of the Partnership

External Audit

Audit of the Partnership Accounts if required

Insurance

No specific insurance required but HGGT employees covered under Accountable Body arrangements

SCHEDULE 4

ANNUAL CHARGES

Costs based on typical on-going service requirements set out above

Service	Primary Role	Cost	Comments
Democratic Services	Democratic Services Manager	£652	Support for publishing Agendas & minutes and attending four (4) meetings in person per year
Legal Services	Supervising Associate	£1 538	Support for four meetings per annum
People Services	People Business Partner	£954	Support for quarterly meetings per annum
Technology Services	Technology Services	£1 361	Excludes costs of licences
Finance Services	Finance Business Partner with oversight from Senior Finance Business Partner as required	£7 224	Support for monthly meetings with HGGT Director and adhoc advice
Internal Audit Services	Senior Auditor	£ 560	
External Audit Services	External procurement	tba	To be agreed when/if required for capital fund monitoring
Insurance	Accountable Body existing arrangements will cover	Nil	
TOTAL		£12,289	

SCHEDULE 5

EXIT PROVISIONS

1. In the event of any one or more Partner Authority giving notice to withdraw from the Joint Committee pursuant to paragraph 5.3 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference then:
 - a. the Joint Committee shall (unless an earlier date is agreed) meet within one month of the service of any such notice of withdrawal for the purpose of preparing an implementation plan for the withdrawal;
 - b. the Partner Authorities shall each act reasonably in co-operating with each other and facilitate the disaggregation of the Joint Committee in such a manner (including entering into any transitional arrangements) so as to:
 - i. cause the least disruption;
 - ii. agree arrangements for the transfer of staff and avoid redundancies wherever possible;
 - iii. facilitate the transfer of data and records; and
 - iv. mitigate costs so far as practicable.
2. Save as mentioned in paragraph 3:
 - a. the Partner Authority giving notice of withdrawal from the Joint Committee (or if there is more than one such Partner Authority then each of them in equal shares) shall bear all costs arising out of or in connection with such withdrawal and shall indemnify the remaining Partner Authorities against all costs and expenses incurred or to be incurred by them arising out of or in connection with that withdrawal including (without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing):
 - i. costs of redundancy or re-deployment of any staff;
 - ii. termination of any lease or licence for the occupation of any premises or use of any equipment including ICT hardware or software agreements (all such matters to be at the discretion of the Partner Authorities other than those that have given notice to withdraw from the Joint Committee);
 - iii. procurement of any alternative accommodation or relocation of any services or staff; procurement implementation or reconfiguration of any equipment, ICT hardware or software reasonably required for the provision of the on-going shared service by the remaining Partner Authorities;
 - iv. preparation, disaggregation and transfer of any data and records;
 - v. staff costs and administrative overheads in connection with any of the above.

- b. The Partner Authority giving notice of withdrawal (or if there is more than one such Partner Authority then each of them) shall be liable for the costs set out in paragraph 2(a) as if they had not given notice of termination until the later of three years after the date of its withdrawal from the Joint Committee.
 - c. If the Accountable Body ceases to be Accountable Body but remains a Partner Authority, then the provisions paragraphs 2(a) and 2(b) shall not apply unless and until that party withdraws as a Partner Authority.
3. In the event that:
- a. all the Partner Authorities agree to discontinue the Joint Committee; or
 - b. one or more Partner Authorities have given notice of withdrawal pursuant to paragraph 5.3 of the Joint Committee Terms of Reference and there are not at least two Partner Authorities wishing to continue with the provision of the Joint Committee,
- then the Partner Authorities shall cooperate to close the Joint Committee and:
- c. all costs as mentioned in paragraph 2 above shall be deemed to be costs of the Joint Committee and apportioned equally amongst all the Partner Authorities; and
 - d. the Partner Authorities shall seek to agree how any Assets held by the Accountable Body at the date of termination of this Agreement should be distributed between them.

SCHEDULE 6

CONSEQUENCES OF TERMINATION

Upon termination of this Agreement howsoever caused and for whatever reason:

1. All amounts due under this Agreement to the Accountable Body (in its role as Accountable Body) including amounts which have accrued but have not yet been invoiced by the Accountable Body shall become immediately due and payable by the relevant Partner Authorities.
2. The Accountable Body shall repay to the relevant Partner Authorities any Charges paid by such Partner Authorities in respect of Services not received at the date of termination.
3. The Partner Authorities shall have no claim against Accountable Body for compensation for loss of profit, loss of goodwill or any similar loss.
4. Any access to a Partner Authority's IT systems by any other Partner Authority shall cease immediately and each Partner Authority shall return any equipment, materials or property belonging to any other Partner Authority as soon as practically possible and in any event within one month from the date of termination unless the parties agree otherwise.
5. Any right or licence by the Accountable Body to the Joint Committee or the Partner Authorities to use the Accountable Body's Intellectual Property shall cease to have effect unless the parties agree otherwise.
6. Each Partner Authority shall return any Accountable Body equipment within a reasonable time, and in any event within one month from the date of termination, unless the parties agree otherwise.
7. Subject as otherwise provided in this Agreement and to any rights or obligations which have accrued prior to termination, no Partner Authority shall have any further obligation to the other Partner Authorities under this Agreement.

SCHEDULE 7

NOT USED



SCHEDULE 8

DATA SHARING SCHEDULE

(1) Background

The Partner Authorities have determined that they are Joint Controllers in relation to the Shared Personal Data and accordingly this Data Sharing Schedule sets out the arrangements between them for the purposes of the Data Protection Legislation. The parties agree to share and use Personal Data with each other within the UK for the Agreed Purposes on the terms set out in the Agreement and this Data Sharing Schedule.

(2) Agreed terms

1 INTERPRETATION

The following definitions and rules of interpretation apply in this Data Sharing Schedule.

“Agreed Purposes”	has the meaning given to it in paragraph 2 of this Data Sharing Schedule.
"Business Day"	a day other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday in England when banks are open for business.
"Commencement Date"	has the meaning given at the beginning of the Agreement.
"Criminal Offence Data"	means Personal Data relating to criminal convictions and offences or related security measures to be read in accordance with section 11(2) of the DPA 2018.
"Data Protection Legislation"	all applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in the UK including the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and any successor legislation.
“EIR”	the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, as amended from time to time.
“GDPR/UK GDPR”	has the meaning given to it in section 3(10) (as supplemented by section 205(4)) of the Data Protection Act.

2018.

“FOIA”	the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as amended from time to time.
“ICO”	means the Information Commissioner’s Office or any replacement or successor supervisory body within the United Kingdom.
“Personal Data Breach”	a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to the Shared Personal Data.
“Public Authority”	shall have the meaning as set out in section 7 of the Data Protection Act 2018.
“Shared Personal Data”	the Personal Data to be shared between the parties under paragraph 3 of this Data Sharing Schedule.
“Special Category Personal Data”	the categories of Personal Data set out in Article 9(1) of the UK GDPR.
“Subject Access Request”	the exercise by a data subject of his or her rights under Article 15 of the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018.
“Term”	the timeframe from the Commencement Date up until the Agreed Purposes have been fulfilled.

- 1.1 Controller, Joint Controllers, Processor, Data Subject, Personal Data, Processing, and appropriate technical and organisational measures shall have the meanings given to them in the Data Protection Legislation.
- 1.2 Paragraph headings shall not affect the interpretation of this Data Sharing Schedule.
- 1.3 Unless the context otherwise requires, words in the singular shall include the plural and in the plural shall include the singular and a reference to one gender shall include a reference to the other genders. A reference to a company shall include any company, corporation or other body corporate, wherever and however incorporated or established.
- 1.4 A reference to a statute or statutory provision shall include all subordinate legislation made from time to time under that statute or statutory provision.

1.5 A reference to writing or written includes email but not fax.

2 PURPOSE

2.1 This Data Sharing Schedule sets out the framework for the sharing of Personal Data when a Partner Authority (the “**Data Discloser**”) discloses Personal Data to the other Joint Controllers (the “**Data Receiver(s)**”). It defines the principles and procedures that the parties shall adhere to and the responsibilities the parties owe to each other.

2.2 Each Partner Authority is a Public Authority and considers this data sharing initiative necessary to progress the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Project which will benefit the local population of East Hertfordshire through the creation of new accommodation, schools, employment as well as improved infrastructure and town centre enhancement and regeneration.

2.3 The Partner Authorities agree to only process Shared Personal Data, for the following purposes and by the following means:

2.3.1 To facilitate public and organisational consultations and newsletters / updates / HGGT Communications. To allow FOI requests relevant to HGGT to be enacted. To allow data collected on behalf of HGGT to be enacted. To facilitate public and organisational consultations and newsletters / updates / HGGT Communications. To allow FOI requests relevant to HGGT to be enacted. To allow data collected on behalf of HGGT to be accessed and used by all Partner Authorities. To allow Health and Safety obligations to staff working on the HGGT project to be met.

2.3.2 Sharing data would be electronic, via emails with spreadsheets, Word documents and databases via phone calls or in person / via hard copy. Shared electronic filing systems may also be developed.

The Partner Authorities shall not process Shared Personal Data in a way that is incompatible with the purposes described in this paragraph.

2.4 Notwithstanding paragraph 2.3, if and to the extent that the Partner Authorities determine in respect of any Processing of Personal Data that the relationship between them is not one of Joint Controllers because it is between Controllers, or between Controllers and Processors, then they will cooperate in agreeing and documenting appropriate arrangements for that other relationship or those other relationships

3 SHARED PERSONAL DATA

3.1 The following types of Personal Data will be shared between the Partner Authorities during the Term of the Agreement:

3.1.1 employee contact details from each of the parties;

3.1.2 complainants and other individuals in relation to a complaint or query;

- 3.1.3 job applicants and their current and former staff and volunteers; and referee contact details
- 3.1.4 contractors and other professionals appointed to assist with the Agreed Purposes; and
- 3.1.5 visitors to their websites.
- 3.1.6 Consultation responses with the public carried out by or relating to the HGGT project including surveys of individuals or businesses or monitoring of services
- 3.2 Special Category Personal Data and Criminal Offence Data will not be shared between the Partner Authorities for the Agreed Purposes.
- 3.3 The Shared Personal Data must not be irrelevant or excessive with regard to the Agreed Purposes.

4 LAWFUL, FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSING; JOINT CONTROLLER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Each Partner Authority shall ensure that it processes the Shared Personal Data fairly and lawfully in accordance with paragraph 4.3 during the Term of the Agreement.
- 4.2 Each Partner Authority shall comply with all the obligations imposed on a controller under the Data Protection Legislation, and any material breach of the Data Protection Legislation by one Partner Authority shall, if not remedied within 30 days of written notice from one or more Partner Authorities, give grounds to that Partner Authority to terminate its participation in this Data Sharing Schedule with immediate effect.
- 4.3 Each Partner Authority shall ensure that it has legitimate grounds under the Data Protection Legislation for the processing of Shared Personal Data.
- 4.4 The Data Discloser shall, in respect of Shared Personal Data, ensure that it provides clear and sufficient information to the Data Subjects, in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation, of the purposes for which it will process their Personal Data, the legal basis for such purposes and such other information as is required by Article 13 of the GDPR including if Shared Personal Data will be transferred to a third party, that fact and sufficient information about such transfer and the purpose of such transfer to enable the data subject to understand the purpose and risks of such transfer
- 4.5 The Data Receivers undertake to inform the Data Subjects, in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation, of the purposes for which it will process their Personal Data, the legal basis for such purposes and such other information as is required by Article 14 of the GDPR including if Shared Personal Data will be transferred to a third party, that fact and sufficient information about such transfer and the purpose of such transfer to enable the Data Subject to understand the purpose and risks of such transfer.
- 4.6 Each Partner Authority shall comply with its obligations under Article 26 of the GDPR and shall make available to Data Subjects the essence of the arrangements

contemplated by this Data Sharing Schedule, acknowledge that Data Subjects may exercise their rights under the GDPR in respect of and against each and agree to provide to each other party such cooperation as may reasonably be required to assist that other party in compliance with its obligations under Article 26 of the GDPR.

5 DATA SUBJECTS' RIGHTS

- 5.1 The Partner Authorities each agree to provide such assistance as is reasonably required to enable the other parties to comply with requests from Data Subjects to exercise their rights under the Data Protection Legislation within the time limits imposed by the Data Protection Legislation.
- 5.2 Each Partner Authority is responsible for maintaining a record of individual requests for information, the decisions made and any information that was exchanged. Records must include copies of the request for information, details of the data accessed and shared and where relevant, notes of any meeting, correspondence or phone calls relating to the request.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding the foregoing, each Partner Authority acknowledges and accepts that each other party is subject to the requirements of the FOIA and EIR and shall assist and cooperate with the other Partner Authorities to facilitate any required disclosure under the FOIA and EIR and UK GDPR.

6 DATA RETENTION AND DELETION

- 6.1 The Data Receivers shall not retain or process Shared Personal Data for longer than is necessary to carry out the Agreed Purposes.
- 6.2 Notwithstanding paragraph 6.1, the Partner Authorities shall continue to retain Shared Personal Data in accordance with any statutory or professional retention periods applicable to local authorities.
- 6.3 The Data Receiver shall ensure that any Shared Personal Data are returned to the Data Discloser or destroyed on termination or expiry of the Agreement, termination of the Data Discloser's participation in the provision of this Data Sharing Schedule, or once processing of the Shared Personal Data is no longer necessary for the Agreed Purposes.
- 6.4 Following the deletion of Shared Personal Data in accordance with paragraph 6.3, the Data Receivers shall notify the Data Discloser that the Shared Personal Data in question has been deleted.

7 INTERNATIONAL DATA TRANSFERS

The Partner Authorities shall not make a transfer of Personal Data outside the EEA.

8 SECURITY AND TRAINING

- 8.1 The Partner Authorities shall only provide the Shared Personal Data to the other Partner Authorities by methods that afford the proper protection and privacy to the Shared Personal Data.
- 8.2 The Partner Authorities each undertake to have in place (and to regularly review and update) throughout the Term appropriate technical and organisational security measures, taking into account the cost of implementation and the state of the technological development, to:
- 8.2.1 prevent unauthorised or unlawful processing of the Shared Personal Data and the accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, the Shared Personal Data; and
- 8.2.2 ensure a level of security appropriate to the harm that might result from such unauthorised or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage; and the nature of the Shared Personal Data to be protected.
- 8.3 Each Partner Authority shall ensure that its staff members are appropriately trained to handle and process the Shared Personal Data in accordance with this paragraph and any other applicable data protection laws.

9 PERSONAL DATA BREACHES AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 9.1 Each Partner Authority shall comply with its obligation to report a Personal Data Breach to the ICO and (where applicable) data subjects under Article 33 of the GDPR and shall each inform the other parties of any Personal Data Breach irrespective of whether there is a requirement to notify the ICO or data subject(s).
- 9.2 The Partner Authorities each agree to provide reasonable assistance as is necessary to each other to facilitate the handling of any Personal Data Breach in an expeditious and compliant manner.

10 REVIEW AND TERMINATION OF DATA SHARING SCHEDULE

- 10.1 The Partner Authorities shall review the effectiveness of this Data Sharing Schedule regularly and on the addition and removal of a party, having consideration to the aims and purposes set out in paragraph 2. The Partner Authorities shall continue, amend or terminate the Data Sharing Schedule depending on the outcome of this review.
- 10.2 Each Partner Authority reserves its rights to inspect any other Partner Authority's arrangements for the processing of Shared Personal Data and to terminate the Partner Authority's participation in the Data Sharing Schedule where it considers that another Partner Authority is not processing the Shared Personal Data in accordance with this Data Sharing Schedule.
- 10.3 In the event that any Partner Authority terminates its participation, or has its participation terminated, in this Data Sharing Schedule, its obligations under the Agreement (with the exception of this Schedule 8) shall continue unaffected.

11 RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES WITH DATA SUBJECTS OR THE ICO

- 11.1 In the event of a dispute or claim brought by a data subject or the ICO concerning the processing of Shared Personal Data against any or all of the Partner Authorities, the Partner Authorities will inform each other about any such disputes or claims, and will cooperate with a view to settling them amicably in a timely fashion.
- 11.2 The Partner Authorities agree to respond to any generally available non-binding mediation procedure initiated by a data subject or by the ICO. If they do participate in the proceedings, the Partner Authorities may elect to do so remotely (such as by telephone or other electronic means). The Partner Authorities also agree to consider participating in any other arbitration, mediation or other dispute resolution proceedings developed for data protection disputes.
- 11.3 Each Partner Authority shall abide by a decision of a competent court of the Data Discloser's country of establishment or of the ICO.

12 WARRANTIES

- 12.1 Each Partner Authority warrants and undertakes that it will:
- 12.1.1 Process the Shared Personal Data in compliance with all applicable laws, enactments, regulations, orders, standards and other similar instruments that apply to its personal data processing operations;
 - 12.1.2 make available on request to the Data Subjects who are third party beneficiaries a copy of this Data Sharing Schedule, unless the Data Sharing Schedule contains confidential information;
 - 12.1.3 respond within five (5) working days and as far as reasonably possible to enquiries from the ICO in relation to the Shared Personal Data;
 - 12.1.4 respond to Subject Access Requests in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation;
 - 12.1.5 where applicable, maintain registration and/or pay the appropriate fees with all ICO to process all Shared Personal Data for and by the Agreed Purpose; and
 - 12.1.6 take all appropriate steps to ensure compliance with the security measures set out in paragraph 8 above.
- 12.2 The Partner Authorities warrant and undertake that it (when acting as a Data Discloser) is entitled to provide the Shared Personal Data to the Data Receivers and it will ensure that the Shared Personal Data is accurate and will continually monitor and update the Shared Personal Data where necessary.
- 12.3 Except as expressly stated in this Data Sharing Schedule, all warranties, conditions and terms, whether express or implied by statute, common law or otherwise are hereby excluded to the extent permitted by law.

13 INDEMNITY

Each Partner Authority shall indemnify the others (to the extent and proportion that each indemnified party is not at fault) against all liabilities, costs, expenses, damages and losses (including but not limited to any direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect or consequential losses, and all interest, penalties and legal costs and all other reasonable and properly professional costs and expenses) suffered or incurred by the indemnified party arising out of the breach of the Data Protection Legislation or this Data Sharing Schedule by the indemnifying party, its employees or agents, provided that the indemnified party gives to the indemnifier prompt notice of such claim, full information about the circumstances giving rise to it, reasonable assistance in dealing with the claim and sole authority to manage, defend and/or settle it.

SCHEDULE 9

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

relating to

THE HARLOW & GILSTON GARDEN TOWN ROLLING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

PARTIES

- (1) EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
- (2) EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
- (3) ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
- (4) HARLOW DISTRICT COUNCIL
- (5) HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

each a “**Council**”, and together “**the Councils**”.

INTRODUCTION

- A The Councils are collaborating to facilitate the delivery of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (“**Garden Town**”).
- B HCC, on behalf of all the Councils, successfully submitted a bid to the Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government (acting through Homes England) for approximately £171 million funding of the Housing Investment Grant to forward fund infrastructure in the Garden Town area. HCC subsequently entered into the Grant Determination Agreement in respect of the funding.
- C In the Grant Determination Agreement, HCC committed to the establishment of a Rolling Infrastructure Fund (“**RIF**”), through which the HIG Funding would be recovered from developers and made available for forward funding of and completing the wider Garden Town sustainable transport corridor network and

other infrastructure in the Garden Town area; where possible that funding would also be recycled, creating a rolling basis for infrastructure investment.

- D The Councils are entering into this Memorandum of Understanding (“**Memorandum**”) to record and set out the basis on which they will collaborate with each other to establish and operate the RIF.
- E The Councils acknowledge that the arrangements described in this Memorandum will require development over time, to reflect both changing circumstances and the further detail the parties will need to agree in due course in respect of operation and governance of the RIF. Any such development will be subject to agreement of all the Councils.

1. DEFINITIONS

In this Memorandum, the following terms shall have the meanings given below:

“Agreed Proportions”	has the meaning given in paragraph 5.2
“CIL”	means a community infrastructure levy or similar
“District Councils”	means, together, East Hertfordshire District Council, Epping Forest District Council and Harlow District Council (and “District Council” means each of them)
“Garden Town Board”	means the board established by the Councils, and including a representative from each Council, to promote and facilitate cooperative working to oversee delivery of the Garden Town
“Garden Town Development”	means a development or proposed development within the area of the Garden Town for which a planning application is (or has been) submitted
“Grant Determination Agreement”	means the agreement dated 31 March 2021 and entered into between HCC and Homes England relating to provision of the HIG Funding
“HCC”	means Hertfordshire County Council
“HIG Bid”	means the bid for the HIG Funding, as referred to in paragraph B of the Introduction to this Memorandum
“HIG Funding”	means the funding made available or to be made available to HCC by Homes England under the Grant Determination Agreement secured by the Councils from the Housing Investment Grant towards the Initial Projects, which as at the date of this Memorandum is expected to be in the region of £171 million

“Infrastructure Delivery Plan”	means the infrastructure delivery plan developed jointly by the Councils in relation to Garden Town infrastructure, as updated from time to time
“Initial Projects”	has the meaning given in paragraph 4.1
“Section 106 Obligations”	means planning obligations imposed by a Council under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
“STC”	means the Sustainable Transport Corridor network intended to be created at the Garden Town

2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROLLING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

- 2.1 Each Council agrees to the establishment of the RIF.
- 2.2 Each Council agrees that the RIF will be built from payments secured by the Councils from developers of Garden Town Developments in contribution to the cost of the STC and other Garden Town infrastructure, in accordance with this Memorandum. The first such payments will arise in respect of the Initial Projects, which will be unlocked by the HIG Funding.
- 2.3 For practical reasons, the RIF will not initially be held by a single entity. Each Council that receives relevant payments from developers will hold those sums as a separately-identifiable interest-bearing fund. The aggregate of all such funds will constitute the RIF.
- 2.4 The Councils acknowledge that they will seek, over time, to put governance arrangements in place that will allow these disparate funds to be brought together and held and managed by a single entity for the benefit of and on behalf of the Councils. Development of such arrangements will form part of the ongoing review of the RIF to which paragraph 9 refers. This Memorandum does not commit any Council to this arrangement which shall be subject to a separate decision.

3. ROLLING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND GOVERNANCE

- 3.1 If any decision is required in relation to the RIF (in particular in relation to expenditure from the RIF) which impacts a Council, such Council shall follow its own decision making process to determine the decision to be taken. The Garden Town Board may make a non-binding recommendation to such Council(s). Such Council(s) shall consult with the remaining parties to this Memorandum prior to taking such decision to the extent that such decision impacts on the recovery of the HIG Funding.
- 3.2 Any amendment to the terms of this Memorandum will require the unanimous approval of all five Councils.
- 3.3 Any decisions taken in respect of the RIF shall take due account of any relevant provisions of the Grant Determination Agreement and the Delivery Agreements.

4. INITIAL PROJECTS – FORWARD FUNDING

4.1 In accordance with the Grant Determination Agreement and subsequent discussions, the HIG Funding will be used to fund delivery of the following projects:

4.1.1 the expansion of Central Crossing (5th Avenue) to extend the STC between the Gilston Area and Harlow Town Railway Station and Burnt Mill Roundabout;

4.1.2 the Eastern Stort River Crossing, comprising:

(a) realignment of the Eastwick Road and new junction allowing access to Terlings Park and Pye Corner;

(b) Pye Corner bypass including junction between north-south section and east-west section;

(c) remainder of Eastern Crossing including River Way Bridge;

(Note: It is proposed that funding is provided for the Eastern Stort Crossing both directly and indirectly, through being made available to the relevant developer to fund on-site works within the Gilston Area thereby allowing the developer to prioritise development cash flow for the completion of delivery of the Crossing works. This has been agreed due to the time constraints of the HIG funding availability)

4.1.3 the extension of the STC from Burnt Mill Roundabout through to the Town Centre; and

4.1.4 the new Cambridge Road/River Way junction,

(together, the “**Initial Projects**”).

4.2 The Councils acknowledge that HCC has entered into the Grant Determination Agreement with Homes England and that HCC is the contracting body in respect of the HIG Funding.

4.3 The Councils further acknowledge that, in order to secure delivery of the Initial Projects, HCC has entered into delivery agreements with:

4.3.1 Places for People, pursuant to which Places for People will be obliged to deliver the projects referred to in paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2; and

4.3.2 Essex County Council, pursuant to which Essex County Council will be obliged to deliver the projects referred to in paragraphs 4.1.3 and 4.1.4,

(each a “**Delivery Agreement**”).

4.4 HCC hereby confirms its intention to draw down the HIG Funding in accordance with the Grant Determination Agreement, to pay such funding to the relevant counterparty in accordance with each Delivery Agreement, and to enforce its

rights under each Delivery Agreement to secure delivery of the relevant infrastructure.

- 4.5 In the event of any conflict between this Memorandum and either the Grant Determination Agreement or any of the Delivery Agreements, the Grant Determination Agreement or Delivery Agreement (as relevant) shall take precedence.

5. INITIAL PROJECTS – RECOVERY OF CONTRIBUTIONS

- 5.1 The Councils acknowledge that it is their collective intention:

- 5.1.1 to seek to recover 100% of the HIG Funding, for inclusion in the RIF;
- 5.1.2 that such amounts will be recovered from developers promoting relevant Garden Town Developments, pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; and
- 5.1.3 that such amounts will be recovered from developers in the Agreed Proportions.

- 5.2 The “**Agreed Proportions**” are (as applicable):

- 5.2.1 those set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan or other associated evidence (as updated from time to time);
- 5.2.2 those set out in any “Developer Contribution Guidance” or related policy applicable to the Garden Town that is developed and agreed by the Councils; or
- 5.2.3 (if relevant) the proportions required by the relevant District Council’s planning policy.

- 5.3 In respect of Section 106 Obligations (whether by way of bilateral agreement or unilateral undertaking) relating to a planning application for a relevant Garden Town Development, each District Council will:

- 5.3.1 use its reasonable endeavours to ensure that the Section 106 Obligations require the relevant developer to make financial contributions towards the cost of the Initial Projects in the Agreed Proportions (either directly or by reference to a separate agreement under which the developer is obliged to repay the applicable portion of the Initial HIG Funding over time);
- 5.3.2 use its reasonable endeavours to enforce the terms of such Section 106 Obligations in order to recover monies due from the developer in respect of the Initial Projects; and
- 5.3.3 retain the contributions received from developers pursuant to Section 106 Obligations (or related agreements) which form part of the RIF as separately-identifiable funds.

- 5.4 Each District Council agrees to work with the other Councils and the Garden Town legal advisers to develop standard clauses for use within section 106 agreements and undertakings in respect of the payment of contributions. To the extent such clauses are developed and agreed, each District Council agrees to use reasonable endeavours to ensure the clauses are included in relevant section 106 agreements /undertakings.
- 5.5 If a District Council, in negotiating Section 106 Obligations, considers that it would be appropriate to agree with a developer an amount lower than the Agreed Proportions (such that there would be a shortfall in payments back to the RIF), that Council shall consult with the other partner Councils and have due regard to their representations before coming to a decision. The Councils acknowledge that this should be avoided wherever possible and that the recovery of contributions for the RIF should be treated in accordance with the importance set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 5.6 The Councils recognise that adoption by a District Council of a CIL could affect the value of contributions sought from development and the process for agreeing how collected CIL monies are allocated and spent for the funding of infrastructure and other projects. Any Council that considers the adoption of a CIL will consult with the other partner Councils and have due regard to their representations before coming to a decision regarding the adoption of a CIL charging schedule and how collected CIL monies are allocated to the Initial Projects and subsequent projects.
- 5.7 If the existing Planning Bill introduces new Infrastructure Levy arrangements, the District Councils will work cooperatively with the other Councils to put measures in place which ensure that contributions continue to be made to the RIF in line with the principles set out in this Memorandum.
- 5.8 Without prejudice to the preceding provisions of this paragraph 5, in the event of any conflict between this Memorandum and any agreement entered into by a Council pursuant to section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the section 106 agreement shall take precedence.

6. SUBSEQUENT PROJECTS

- 6.1 The Councils acknowledge that, at the present time, the following projects (listed in no particular order of timing or priority) have been identified in the HIG Bid as priorities for future RIF funding as set out in Schedule 1:
- 6.1.1 replacement of Central Crossing Rail Bridge (excluding such works included within the widening and subject to outcome of structural assessment indicating it as necessary and according to the timescale of that necessity);
- 6.1.2 Eastern STC between Town Centre, Enterprise Zone and East Harlow Garden Community;
- 6.1.3 Western STC between Town Centre, National Institute for Health Protection/Pinnacles and Water Lane Garden Community;

- 6.1.4 Southern STC between Town Centre and Latton Priory Garden Community; and
- 6.1.5 to the extent not covered by paragraphs 6.1.2 to 6.1.4, the Town Centre STC and any associated interchange and hub.
- 6.2 The Councils acknowledge that the STC network, where located outside of the allocated new garden community sites, is treated in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan as a single item of infrastructure (as represented by the schemes referred to in paragraph 4.1.3 and parts of those referred to in paragraphs 6.1.2 – 6.1.5). The total cost of this off-site STC infrastructure will exceed the total of the contribution provided by HIG for the STC and the amount recovered into the RIF. The Councils each agree to cooperate in an effort to close this funding gap including using reasonable endeavours to secure developer contributions for this purpose (including by way of section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy contribution from Garden Town Developments both referred to and those not referred to in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan). The Councils agree that such Developer Contributions will be allocated to the RIF and will seek to act in accordance with paragraphs 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 in respect of the same.
- 6.3 The Councils agree to use reasonable endeavours to secure additional grant or revenue funding for the delivery of the STC network and, where appropriate, to allocate such funding to the RIF, subject always to any terms and conditions attaching to such funding.
- 6.4 The Councils commit to work together to develop an investment strategy to guide future decisions about which projects should benefit from RIF funding beyond the Initial Projects including but not necessarily exclusive to those set out in paragraphs 6.1.1 to 6.1.5. The Councils acknowledge that the projects funded by the RIF may vary from those listed in paragraphs 6.1.1 to 6.1.5.
- 6.5 The Garden Town Board will be responsible for recommending to the Councils infrastructure schemes for funding from the RIF in future. In making any recommendation the Garden Town Board will principally seek to use the RIF for measures to achieve the active and sustainable mode share targets of the Garden Town and to unlock the provision of further new homes, and will have regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (as updated from time to time) and other associated evidence, the investment strategy agreed by the Councils and the amounts available in the RIF.
- 6.6 Unless otherwise agreed by all the partner Councils in any particular case, RIF funding will only be allocated to projects if arrangements are put in place for the recovery of the funding from developer contributions (or other sources) over time, in line with the principles in paragraph 5, with the aim of ensuring that the RIF is continually replenished.
- 6.7 Any proposal for expenditure from the RIF beyond the Initial Projects will require the unanimous approval of all partner Councils (unless otherwise agreed by the Councils).

7. FUND HOLDERS' OBLIGATIONS

- 7.1 As noted in paragraph 2.3, initially the RIF will not be held by a single entity. Each Council that receives relevant payments from developers will hold those sums as a separately-identifiable fund. The aggregate of all such funds will constitute the RIF.
- 7.2 Specifically:
- 7.2.1 in respect of the infrastructure referred to in paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, HCC will receive and hold the payments made by the Gilston Area Villages 1-6 landowners (Places for People and/or any successors) pursuant to HIG recovery payments secured through s.106 obligations assumed by those parties associated with relevant planning consents;
 - 7.2.2 each of the District Councils and/or County Councils may receive and hold payments made in respect of section 106 obligations (or, if relevant, the Community Infrastructure Levy) in relation to the infrastructure referred to in paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 and the STC network, which includes the infrastructure referred to in paragraphs 4.1.3 and 4.1.4, and that referred to in paragraphs 6.1.2 to 6.1.5; and
 - 7.2.3 any of the Councils may receive and hold payments made in respect of section 106 obligations (or, if relevant, the Community Infrastructure Levy) in relation to subsequent infrastructure projects funded by the RIF.
- 7.3 Each Council that receives payments from developers in relation to the Initial Projects or any subsequent projects funded by the RIF will:
- 7.3.1 retain such payments as a separately-identifiable interest-bearing fund, acknowledging that relevant funds form part of the RIF and can be used only in accordance with this Memorandum and the purpose for which they were provided;
 - 7.3.2 provide to the other Councils full transparency of all such amounts received, and all amounts held as part of the RIF at any particular time; and
 - 7.3.3 not permit any RIF monies to be expended other than in accordance with this Memorandum and the purpose for which they were provided (and if money is paid out in breach of this commitment, the relevant Council shall replenish the RIF as soon as practicable upon becoming aware of the same).
- 7.4 Any interest earned in relation to RIF monies held by any Council shall itself be considered part of the RIF and each Council shall add any such interest to the RIF monies it is holding from time to time.
- 7.5 As Contracting Authority, HCC will seek to ensure that all costs to administer the HIG programme will be met within the £171m funding envelope. In the event that HCC incurs reasonable and evidenced costs and expenses in respect of its

role as contracting body to the HIG Funding beyond the contracted completion date of 31 March 2025, HCC will in the first instance seek additional funding for administrative costs required to maintain a scaled down functional service until the Infrastructure Works as set out in Part 1 Schedule 1 of the Grant Determination Agreement have been completed. If such costs and expenses cannot be recovered via the Grant Determination Agreement (and/or the connected back-to-back agreements) HCC shall be entitled to retain an appropriate portion of any monies it receives from developers in accordance with this paragraph 7 as reimbursement for the costs and expenses it incurs as contracting body to the HIG Funding. Following an assessment of the current administrative requirements, it is anticipated that as the Works referred to above relate specifically to activities after the funded programme which ceases on 31 March 2025, they will be evaluated over a financial year and be no greater than £80,000 per annum. All requests will be fair and reasonable and supported with appropriate evidence.

- 7.6 HCC shall produce all evidence as is reasonably required by the other Councils to demonstrate the quantum and appropriateness of such retention as detailed in clause 7.5. HCC shall provide the evidence at the request of the other Councils but provided that HCC shall not be obliged to provide such evidence more than twice in any calendar year. Any evidence supplied by HCC shall be presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards and practice
- 7.7 Notwithstanding any other provision of this Memorandum, HCC will not be entitled to recover costs or make a claim to recover its costs from the RIF to the extent that it has already recovered them pursuant to any other sources, agreements (including but not limited to Homes England and/or the GDA) or has received or is able to apply for funding in relation to them. HCC will recover its costs from Homes England or alternative sources before seeking to recover them from the RIF; it is acknowledged and agreed that alternative sources do not include HCC's own funding.
- 7.8 In the event that any of the Councils objects to the quantum of the retention made pursuant to paragraph 7.5, such dispute shall be resolved in accordance with paragraph 12.

8. DURATION

- 8.1 This Memorandum shall remain in place until such time as:
- 8.1.1 the Councils agree that it should be superseded by an alternative agreement or arrangement which sets out the manner in which the RIF will be operated by the Councils; or
- 8.1.2 this Memorandum is terminated pursuant to paragraph 8.2.
- 8.2 This Memorandum may be terminated only by unanimous agreement of all five Councils. Any such agreement must specify how funds remaining in the RIF at the relevant time are to be allocated between the Councils. Such funds must be spent in accordance with the Grant Determination Agreement and section

106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on infrastructure to unlock housing developments.

9. REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIF

- 9.1 The Councils will request the Garden Town Board to review the terms of this Memorandum and the operation of the RIF on a six-monthly basis (or at such other frequency as the Councils may agree), and to report its findings and any recommendations to the Councils.
- 9.2 The Councils acknowledge that there is potential to develop the manner in which the RIF is governed and operated in order to improve its effectiveness as a vehicle to enable the forward funding of infrastructure delivery in the Garden Town. The Councils will work together in good faith to explore ways in which this might be achieved, including consideration of the ability to forward fund infrastructure in reliance on future developer contributions.

10. NO FETTER

Nothing in this Memorandum shall fetter the discretion of any Council in the exercise of any of its statutory rights, powers, duties, discretions or functions, including in particular its role as local planning, highway or education authority.

11. STATUS

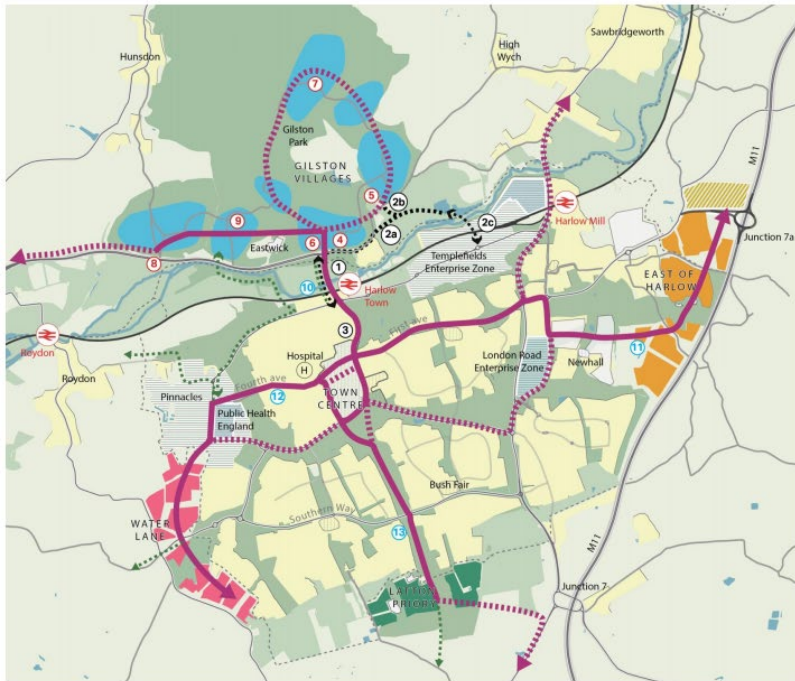
- 11.1 This Memorandum is not intended to be legally binding and no legal obligations or legal rights shall arise between the Councils as a result of this Memorandum. Each Council enters into this Memorandum intending to honour all of its commitments but shall not be bound by them.
- 11.2 No legal partnership is created or intended to be created by the terms of this Memorandum.

12. DISPUTE RESOLUTION




- 12.1 Any dispute arising in relation to the quantum of the retention made pursuant to clause 7.5 ("Dispute") shall be resolved in accordance with this paragraph 12.
- 12.2 If a Dispute cannot be resolved by the Councils within 10 working days of the dispute arising, any Council can, by written notice to the other Councils, require the Dispute to be escalated. In such circumstances the Dispute will be referred to the respective Chief Executives of the Councils who shall consult in good faith in an attempt to come to an agreement in relation to the disputed matter.
- 12.3 If the Dispute is not resolved by consultation under paragraph 12.2 within 10 working days of the Dispute being escalated, any Council may invite the others to attempt to resolve the dispute through mediation. The other Councils shall act reasonably in deciding whether or not to accept such invitation. A mediator will be selected by agreement of the Councils.
- 12.4 If:

- 12.4.1 the consultation required by paragraph 12.2 has taken place and the dispute remains unresolved;
- 12.4.2 the Councils are unable to reach agreement to proceed with mediation;
or
- 12.4.3 following such mediation the dispute remains unresolved,
any Council may refer the matter for expert determination.
- 12.5 An expert (“Expert”) is a person appointed in accordance with paragraph 12.6 to resolve a dispute arising in relation to the quantum of the retention made pursuant to paragraph 7.5.
- 12.6 The Councils shall agree on the appointment of an independent Expert and shall agree with the Expert the terms of their appointment.
- 12.7 If the Councils are unable to agree on the identity of the Expert or the terms of their appointment within seven days of a Council serving details of a suggested expert on the others, any Council shall be entitled to request the President of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators to appoint an Expert with experience in determining the quantum of costs.
- 12.8 The Councils are entitled to make submissions to the Expert and will provide (or procure that the other Councils provide) the Expert with such assistance and documents as the Expert reasonably requires for the purpose of reaching a decision.
- 12.9 The Expert shall act as an expert and not as an arbitrator. The Expert shall provide to all the Councils his written decision on the dispute, within 28 days of appointment (or such other period as the Councils may agree). The Expert’s written decision on the matters referred to them shall be final and binding on the Councils in the absence of manifest error or fraud
- 12.10 Each Council shall bear its own costs relating to the reference of the Dispute to the Expert. The Expert’s fees and any costs properly incurred by them in arriving at their determination (including any fees and costs of any advisers appointed by the Expert) shall be borne by the Councils equally or in such other proportions as the Expert shall direct.
- 12.11 The Councils shall continue to comply with, observe and perform all their obligations hereunder regardless of the nature of the Dispute and notwithstanding the referral of the Dispute under this paragraph 12 and shall give effect forthwith to every decision of the Expert.

SCHEDULE 1 – Extract from HIG Bid - Plan indicating the infrastructure to be funded by the HIG, Developer and the RIF



1. Expansion of Central Crossing to extend Sustainable Transport Corridor (STC) between Gilston Area and Railway Station and Burnt Mill Roundabout.
2. Eastern Stort River Crossing (comprising Items 2a, 2b and 2c below)
 - 2a. Realignment of the Eastwick Road and new junction allowing access to Terlings Park and Pye Corner.
 - 2b. Pye Corner bypass including junction between north-south section and east-west section
 - 2c. Remainder of Eastern Crossing including River Way Bridge
3. Extension of STC from Burnt Mill Roundabout through the Town Centre.
4. Enhanced sustainable transport hub in Village 1.
5. Access to Gilston Area Village 2.
6. Access to Gilston Area Village 1 (north of Eastwick junction) and creation of STC link within Village 1.
7. Gilston Area STC "inner loop" connection to Villages 3, 4, 5
8. Access to Village 7.
9. Gilston Area STC "inner connection" opening up sustainable access and highway between Village 7 and Village 1.
10. Replacement of Central Crossing Rail Bridge.
11. Eastern STC between Town Centre, Enterprise Zones and Harlow East Garden Community.
12. Western STC between Town Centre, PHE/Pinnacles and Water Lane Garden Community.
13. Southern STC between Town Centre and Lutton Priory Garden Community.

-  Funded by the HIF
-  Funded by the Developers
-  Funded by rolling infrastructure fund

SCHEDULE 10

JOINT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The Partner Authorities:

- (1) East Hertfordshire District Council (“EHDC”)
- (2) Epping Forest District Council (“EFDC”)
- (3) Harlow District Council (“HDC”)
- (4) Essex County Council (“ECC”)
- (5) Hertfordshire County Council (“HCC”)

2. Status:

- 2.1. The Partner Authorities are local authorities for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 and best value authorities for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1999.
- 2.2. Under section 102 (1) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Regulations 10 and 11 of The Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) England Regulations 2012, local authorities may arrange for the discharge of their functions by a Joint Committee comprising members of their authorities.
- 2.3. All of the Partner Authorities have introduced Executive Arrangements under section 9EA of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.4. The Executives of each of the Partner Authorities have agreed to establish a Joint Committee for the purposes of section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to be known as the Joint Committee for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (the “Joint Committee”).
- 2.5. The Partner Authorities have agreed to form a Joint Committee to co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of 16,000 homes in the HGGT by 2033, and 7,000 homes in the years after that along with associated infrastructure.
- 2.6. The Joint Committee and its proceedings are bound by the provisions of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 but shall be expected to operate in accordance with the local arrangements set out in these Terms of Reference.
- 2.7. The only functions exercisable by the Joint Committee are those set out in Appendix 3 to these Terms of Reference.
- 2.8. The Accountable Body will act as the ‘accountable body’ for the Joint Committee and any sub-committee. The Accountable Body will provide secretariat support and accountable body services to the Joint Committee and any sub-committee as set out in an Inter-Authority Agreement dated on or about the date of this Agreement.

3. Definitions

Functions means the functions exercised by the Joint Committee as set out in Appendix 3 to these Terms of Reference.

Independent Facilitator means a member of the HGGT Delivery team employed or contracted for the purposes of supporting the Chair and facilitating meetings of the Joint Committee.

Inter-Authority Agreement means this Agreement to which these Terms of Reference are a schedule to that sets out the services which the Accountable Body will deliver to the Joint Committee and the respective role and responsibilities of the Partner Authorities in respect of associated matters related to the application and allocation of the Project Funding and Recoverable Cost Funding.

Local Plans means the adopted local plans prepared by a local planning authority in consultation with its community and which form part of the statutory development plan.

Reserved Decisions has the meaning given to it in paragraph 4.6.

4. Joint Committee

4.1. This Agreement sets out how the Joint Committee shall operate in seeking to deliver the overarching purpose, the functions it holds, and how decisions are made and procedures are followed to ensure that the Joint Committee operates efficiently, effectively and is both transparent and accountable.

4.2. The remit of the Joint Committee is to jointly discharge the functions (“Functions”) set out in Appendix 3 to these Terms of Reference in relation to the HGGT, the exercise of which have been delegated to the Joint Committee by the Partner Authorities subject to the limitation set out in paragraph 4.6.

4.3. The purpose of the Joint Committee is to provide the unified leadership required to deliver the ambitious spatial growth proposals set out in the Local Plans of HDC, EHDC and EFDC, supported by ECC and HCC to align and maximise the opportunities for new residents and the existing residents and communities in Harlow, Epping Forest and East Hertfordshire.

4.4. The Joint Committee will oversee the vision for the HGGT in order to maximise the opportunities for new residents in the HGGT and existing residents in the surrounding area recognising that, through a collaborative approach, the Partner Authorities will be best placed to deliver their vision for the HGGT promoting healthy and sustainable growth with ambitious net zero targets.

4.5. The primary aims of the Joint Committee will be to:

- 4.5.1. develop, approve and maintain a vision for the HGGT;
- 4.5.2. develop and maintain an overview of the delivery of the vision for the HGGT;
- 4.5.3. monitor and report to the Partner Authorities on progress against the master programme of delivery;

- 4.5.4. receive information on a quarterly basis regarding programme delivery;
 - 4.5.5. have an overall view on milestones and dependencies;
 - 4.5.6. maintain oversight of the strategic risks of delivery and develop mitigations as necessary;
 - 4.5.7. develop a strategy for the RIF including monitoring the spend of payments from the RIF; and
 - 4.5.8. receive updates and reports from the Partner Authorities in respect of (but not exclusively) the areas below which are deemed critical to the success of the HGGT:
 - Modal Shift, Transport Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport Corridors
 - RIF
 - Planning Policy, Infrastructure & Developer Contributions
 - Economy & Jobs
 - Town Centre Regeneration
 - Housing
 - Communication and Community Engagement
 - Green and Blue Infrastructure
 - Stewardship
 - Programme Management.
- 4.6. Decisions which a Partner Authority is required to make in accordance with its own constitution are “Reserved Decisions” and must be referred back to the Partner Authorities for decision within such timescales as the Joint Committee may by written resolution determine or, in the absence of the same, within twelve (12) weeks. The Partner Authorities acknowledge that:
- 4.6.1. any decisions which are inconsistent with any Partner Authority’s budget and/or policy frameworks (without limitation) are Reserved Decisions;
 - 4.6.2. any decisions that result in the delegation of the transport and highways powers vested in ECC and HCC as highways authorities are Reserved Decisions;
 - 4.6.3. agreement to the strategy for the RIF is a Reserved Decision; and
 - 4.6.4. agreement by a Partner Authority to the Partner Authority Contribution is a Reserved Decision.
- 4.7. Any decision of the Joint Committee in relation to a Reserved Decision will not take effect or be deemed to take effect at any time unless and until it has been approved and ratified by all the Partner Authorities.

5. Term

- 5.1. The Joint Committee shall come into effect from the date upon which the Inter-Authority Agreement is signed on behalf of all Partner Authorities.
- 5.2. The Partner Authorities intend for the Joint Committee to be in place until at least 2033.
- 5.3. Subject to paragraph 5.4 an individual Partner Authority must give notice of at least twelve (12) months (or such shorter period as the parties may agree) of its intention to leave the Joint Committee and exit the terms of the Inter-Authority Agreement.

5.4. In the event that the Chair exercises his or her casting vote in a way that an individual Partner Authority disagrees with then such Partner Authority shall have the right to leave the Joint Committee and exit the terms of the Inter-Authority Agreement within three (3) months of providing notice of the same to the Chair.

6. Review of these Terms of Reference

6.1. The Joint Committee is required to undertake a review of these Terms of Reference:

6.1.1. at least every five (5) years;

6.1.2. whenever a Partner Authority gives notice of withdrawal under paragraph 5.3 or paragraph 5.4; or

6.1.3. at such times as a Partner Authority may request on reasonable notice.

7. Executive Officer Group

7.1. The Executive Officer Group will be chaired by the HGGT Director (or, in exceptional circumstances, the HGGT Director's deputy).

7.2. The Executive Officer Group will consist of a senior officer representative from each Partner Authority (or, in exceptional circumstances, such senior officer's deputy).

7.3. The Executive Officer Group will prepare all papers going before the Joint Committee.

7.4. The Executive Officer Group will be delivery focussed providing coordination and enabling services to the Joint Committee.

7.5. The Executive Officer Group will provide annual reports on activity to the Joint Committee.

8. Membership

8.1. The Joint Committee shall consist of one elected councillor appointed by each Partner Authority in accordance with that Partner Authority's constitution. To be eligible for membership of the Joint Committee, a councillor must either be: (i) a member of the Cabinet of his/her appointing authority; or (ii) a relevant Portfolio Holder within his/her appointing authority; or (iii) an appointed deputy to either the Leader or a member of the Cabinet with relevant portfolio of his/her appointing authority.

8.2. Each Partner Authority may appoint a substitute. The substitute may attend any meeting of the Joint Committee or any of its sub-committees and may vote in place of that Partner Authority's principal member if notice that the substitute will attend and vote is given to the Secretary of the Joint Committee by the Partner Authority concerned in advance of such meeting.

- 8.3. Where a substitution notice is in effect with respect to a particular member at a particular meeting, the substitute shall be a full member of the Joint Committee for the duration of the meeting in place of the principal member.
- 8.4. Each Partner Authority may remove its appointed member and appoint a different member by giving written notice to the Secretary to the Joint Committee.
- 8.5. Each appointed member shall be entitled to remain on the Joint Committee for so long as the appointing Partner Authority so wishes.
- 8.6. Any casual vacancies will be filled as soon as reasonably practicable by the Partner Authority from which such vacancy arises giving written notice to the Secretary to the Joint Committee.

9. Co-Opted Members

- 9.1. The Joint Committee may co-opt any other person whom it thinks fit to be a non-voting member of the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee may from time to time make rules as to:
 - 9.1.1. registration and declaration of interests by co-opted members; and
 - 9.1.2. standards of behaviour required to be observed by co-opted members when acting as such.

10. Chair, Vice-Chair and Independent Facilitator

- 10.1. The Chair of the Joint Committee will be appointed by the members of the Joint Committee at its first meeting. The Chair of the Joint Committee shall hold that office until another member is appointed. The appointment of the Chair shall take place annually by the Joint Committee, beginning with the first annual meeting with subsequent appointments falling not later than twelve (12) months after the first annual meeting of the Joint Committee in the relevant years.
- 10.2. The Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee will be appointed from time to time by the members of the Joint Committee. The Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee shall hold that office until another member is appointed. The appointment of the Vice-Chair shall take place annually, beginning with the first annual meeting.
- 10.3. The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair. If there is a quorum of members present but neither the Chair nor the Vice-Chair is present at a meeting of the Joint Committee, the other members of the Joint Committee shall choose one of the members of the Joint Committee to preside at the meeting.
- 10.4. An independent facilitator may be appointed by the Joint Committee and co-opted to the Board on a three (3) year term. The Independent Facilitator will not have voting rights. The Independent Facilitator will assist in the facilitation of meetings by reviewing the draft agenda, facilitating the meetings, monitoring progress of the outcomes of the Joint Committee and working closely with the members of the Joint Committee to ensure the outcomes of the Joint Committee are met.

11. Secretarial

11.1. The Accountable Body shall nominate a person to undertake the role of the Secretary of the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee shall be provided with the following secretariat support:

11.1.1. putting together of the agendas for meetings;

11.1.2. gathering of reports from the report writers;

11.1.3. publishing of the agenda(s) with the reports through the ModGov portal of the Accountable Body;

11.1.4. notifying the Democratic Services Manager of the other Partner Authorities of the link to the Joint Committee papers;

11.1.5. attendance at four (4) Joint Committee board meetings per year in person;

11.1.6. providing constitutional advice and guidance to the Joint Committee at those meetings;

11.1.7. production of actions, decisions and minutes from the Joint Committee; and

11.1.8. publication of actions, decisions and minutes from the Joint Committee on the ModGov portal of the Accountable Body.

12. Sub-Committees and Working Groups

12.1. The Joint Committee may appoint such sub-committees from among its membership as it thinks will help it to enable it to fulfil its remit. The Joint Committee may delegate its responsibilities to such sub-committees. Sub-Committees may co-opt non-voting members.

12.2. The Joint Committee may set up working groups to advise it on matters within its remit. Such working groups may be formed of members or officers of the constituent Partner Authority or any other third party as the Joint Committee sees fit. Such working groups are advisory only and the Joint Committee may not delegate its responsibilities to such working groups.

13. Code of Conduct

13.1. Each member of the Joint Committee and any Sub-Committee shall comply with any relevant code of conduct of their Partner Authority when acting as a member of the Joint Committee.

14. Notice of Business

14.1. The Chair may direct the Secretary to the Joint Committee to call a meeting and may require any item of business to be included in the summons.

14.2. Any four (4) members of the Joint Committee may by notice in writing require the Chair to call a meeting to consider a particular item of business and if the Chair fails to do so within 20 working days of receipt of the notice then those four (4) members

may direct the Secretary to the Joint Committee to call a meeting to consider that business.

15. Time and Place of Meetings

- 15.1. All meetings of the Joint Committee will take place on a date and time that the Joint Committee shall determine. It is the expectation of the Partner Authorities that most meetings will be held in the evenings.
- 15.2. All meetings of the Joint Committee will take place at the offices of Harlow District Council unless otherwise agreed by the Joint Committee.
- 15.3. The Joint Committee may, if the law permits, arrange for attendance at meetings via video conferencing. Any such attendance shall be in accordance with the law and any other requirements imposed by the Joint Committee from time to time.
- 15.4. Any Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer is entitled to attend all parts of all meetings of the Joint Committee or of any sub-committee appointed by the Joint Committee.

16. Frequency of Meetings

- 16.1. The Joint Committee will meet at least four (4) times per year including the annual meeting.

17. Notice of and Summons to Meetings

- 17.1. The Secretary to the Joint Committee will give notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting in accordance with Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972. At least five (5) clear days before a meeting, the Secretary to the Joint Committee will send a summons by email and, if a member of the Joint Committee so requests, by post to every member at their last known address. The summons will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such reports as are available.

18. Quorum

- 18.1. The quorum of a meeting will be the 5 members who are entitled to attend and vote.
- 18.2. If there is no quorum present at the start of the meeting, the meeting may not commence. If after one (1) hour from the time specified for the start of the meeting no quorum is present, then the meeting shall stand adjourned to another time and date determined by the Secretary to the Joint Committee.

19. Voting

- 19.1. Each elected member shall have one vote.
- 19.2. Co-opted members and the Independent Facilitator will not have a vote.

- 19.3. Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those members of the Partner Authorities represented in the room at the time the question is put. In the event of equality of votes the person presiding at the meeting will be entitled to a casting vote under sections 39(1) and 44 of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 19.4. The members will agree a way of working protocol with the aim of ensuring that decisions should only be put to the vote if such decision is likely to result in at least four votes in favour. In the event of any conflict between this paragraph and paragraph 19.3 above, paragraph 19.3 will take precedence.
- 19.5. The member appointed as a substitute shall have the same voting rights as the member for whom he or she is substituting. Where notice of substitution has been given for a particular meeting, the principal member may not vote unless the notice of substitution is withdrawn before the start of the meeting.
- 19.6. The Chair will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.
- 19.7. The minutes of the meeting shall record how a member of the Committee voted on a particular question if, at the time that the vote is taken or immediately thereafter, that member asks the Secretary to the Joint Committee or his or her representative at the meeting to record his vote.

20. Minutes

- 20.1. The Secretary to the Joint Committee shall arrange for written minutes to be taken at each meeting of the Joint Committee and shall present them to the Joint Committee at its next meeting for approval as a correct record. At the next meeting of the Joint Committee, the Chair shall move that the minutes of the previous meeting be signed as a correct record. If this is agreed, the Chair of the Joint Committee shall sign the minutes.
- 20.2. Draft minutes or a summary of the decisions taken at the meeting and a note of the actions arising shall be circulated to the Joint Committee and to each Partner Authority by email no later than seven (7) working days after the date of the meeting.
- 20.3. Minutes of the meeting shall be published by the Accountable Body to the extent required by Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972.

21. Access for Elected Members of the Partner Authorities

- 21.1. Any elected member of the Partner Authorities who is not a member of the Joint Committee may speak at a meeting of the Joint Committee if the Chair of the Joint Committee invites him or her to do so but an elected member of the Partner Authorities who is not a member of the Joint Committee shall not be entitled to vote at a meeting of the Joint Committee.

22. Public Access



- 22.1. Meetings of the Joint Committee shall be open for members of the public to attend unless the Joint Committee determines that it is necessary to exclude members of the public in accordance with Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 or the Joint Committee determines that it is necessary to close the meeting to the public because of a disturbance.
- 22.2. Copies of the agenda for meetings of the Joint Committee and any reports for its meetings shall be open to inspection by members of the public at the offices of the Partner Authorities with the exception of any report which the Secretary to the Joint Committee determines relates to items which in his or her opinion are likely to be considered at a time when the meeting is not to be open to the public.
- 22.3. If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chair will warn the person concerned. If that person continues to interrupt, the Chair will arrange for that person to be removed from the meeting room and will suspend the meeting until the member of the public has left or been removed.
- 22.4. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chair may call for that part to be cleared.

23. Communications

The Joint Committee may agree a protocol for communications.

24. Overview and Scrutiny

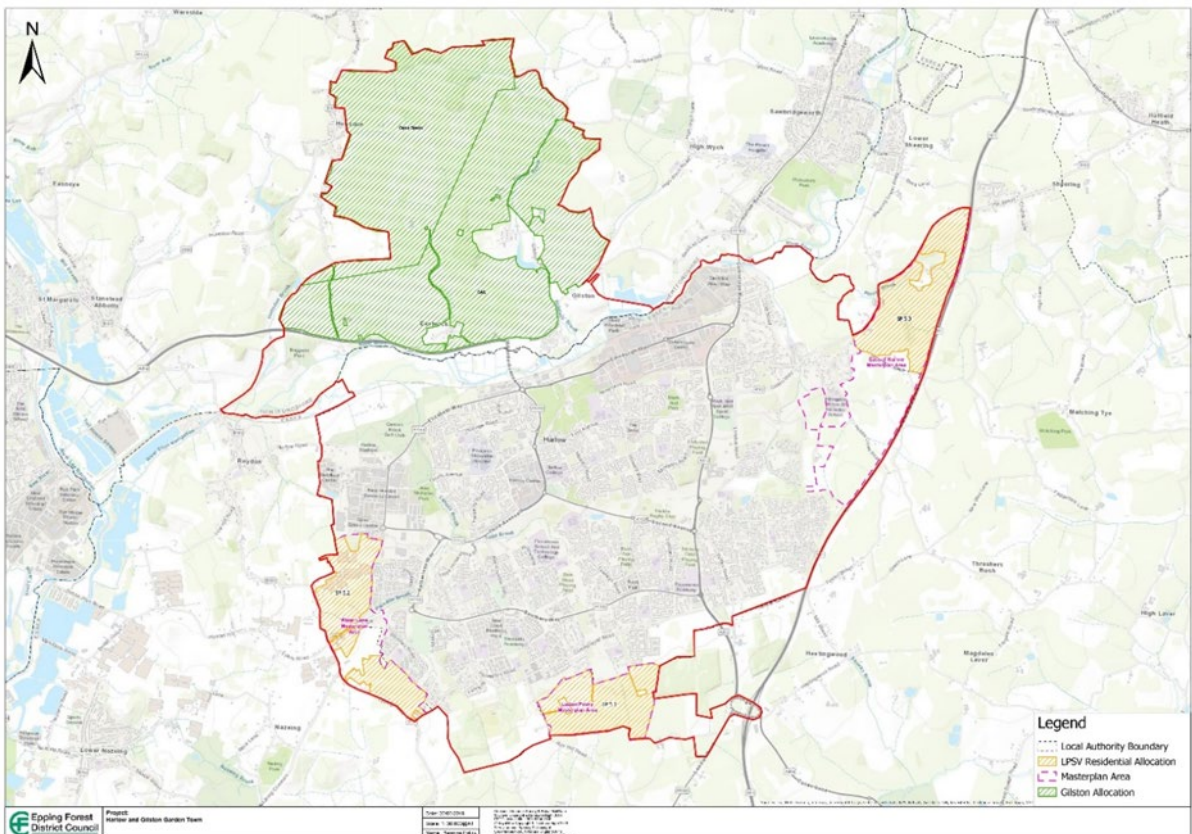
- 24.1. Each Partner Authority has overview and scrutiny committees which have the right to scrutinise the operation of the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee and the Accountable Body will co-operate with reasonable requests for information from any of the Partner Authorities' overview and scrutiny committees.
- 24.2. The Partner Authorities acknowledge that decisions of the Joint Committee shall be subject to call-in to comply with the Partner Authorities' legal duty to enable scrutiny of decisions.
- 24.3. The Partner Authorities agree that if an overview and scrutiny committee of any Partner Authority wishes to call-in a decision of the Joint Committee, it can do so subject to the normal procedures of that Partner Authority.
- 24.4. If any decision of the Joint Committee is subject to call-in by any Partner Authority:
- 24.4.1. the relevant Partner Authority shall notify the Secretary of the call-in as soon as reasonably possible;
 - 24.4.2. the Secretary shall notify all other Partner Authorities of the call-in as soon as reasonably possible; and
 - 24.4.3. the relevant Partner Authority shall notify the Secretary and each of the other Partner Authorities of the outcome of the call-in (and shall provide a copy of any report produced by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee to the Secretary and the other Partner Authorities) as soon as reasonably possible.

- 24.5. At the request of the HGGT Director, each Partner Authority and the Accountable Body shall ensure that appropriate officers attend any meeting of an overview and scrutiny committee which is considering matters falling within the remit of these Terms of Reference, regardless of which Partner Authority's overview and scrutiny committee has called-in the decision.
- 24.6. The Joint Committee will receive and consider any report or recommendations of any overview and scrutiny committee at a special meeting to be called as soon as reasonably possible after receipt of the same.
- 24.7. If the Joint Committee considers that a decision it has taken should be deemed urgent and in need of immediate implementation, the Joint Committee may recommend that each Partner Authority waive application of its call-in procedure in relation to that decision. Whether or not such a waiver is granted by a Partner Authority will be determined by the applicable rules of that Partner Authority.
- 24.8. The Joint Committee acknowledges that the Partner Authorities' audit teams and external auditors shall be entitled to access all relevant documents and records for conducting audits related to the operation of the Joint Committee.

25. Regulation of Business

- 25.1. Any ruling given by the Chair as to the interpretation of these Terms of Reference with respect to the regulation of proceedings at a meeting shall be final.
- 25.2. Subject to the law, the provisions of these Terms of Reference and the Inter-Authority Agreement and the terms of any contract, the Joint Committee may decide how it discharges its business.

Appendix 1 HGGT Area



Appendix 2

Except to the extent that such adoption is a Reserved Decision, the Joint Committee will on behalf of all Partner Authorities adopt key strategies and policies relating to the Garden Town including but not exclusively:

1. HGGT Vision
2. Economic Growth Strategy
3. Transport Strategy
4. Housing Strategy
5. Stewardship Strategy
6. Parking Strategy
7. Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
8. Rolling Infrastructure Fund
9. Design Guide
10. Sustainability
11. IDP refresh (bi-annual)
12. Land Assembly Strategy
13. Master plans (input and or design) for endorsement

Appendix 3 Functions of the Joint Committee

General Principles

Each Partner Authority will transfer the functions listed below, whether they are currently exercised by the executive or cabinet, individual members of the executive or officers within the Partner Authorities. This will include the authority to make key decisions in respect of these functions.

The functions of the Board are set out below and fall into the following categories:

“Approve / Approval” meaning that the Joint Committee has delegated authority from the Partner Authorities to make a decision on the matter before the Joint Committee, such decision to bind the Partner Authorities without further recourse to the Partner Authorities individually except where such matter is a Reserved Decision.

“Recommend / Recommendation” meaning that the Joint Committee has the remit to scrutinise, comment and make representations in relation to the matter before the Joint Committee, such as recommendations to be made to any or all of the Partner Authorities. Each Partner Authority will make its own decision as to whether to adopt such recommendation.

“Overview and Awareness” meaning the Joint Committee has the remit to review and consider matters, and for relevant information to be supplied in order for the Joint Committee to inform an overall Master Programme for the HGGT, identify interdependencies and risks, and make recommendations to any or all of the Partner Authorities.

“Consultation” meaning the Partner Authorities are added to consultation lists where other proposals, policies or plans affect the HGGT Area and that the Joint Committee consults with other Partner Authorities on HGGT matters that may affect them. Where the Joint Committee is able to be consulted and submit representations to local strategies, it might be necessary for the Partner Authorities that has prepared that document to remove their name from the response.

In accordance with the above, the Joint Committee has delegated authority to exercise the following functions:

HGGT Vision and Area

1. To approve the HGGT Vision and any changes to the HGGT Vision.
2. To make recommendations to the Partner Authorities to amend the HGGT Area, being the red line boundary as set out in Appendix 1 to these Terms of Reference and to have the ability to revise it as necessary as the HGGT project progresses.

Funding

3. To recommend the level of Partner Authority Contribution requested from each Partner Authority as a member of the Joint Committee to support its work.

Programme Management

4. To approve, develop and maintain the Master Programme for delivery of the HGGT which sets out the overarching programme plan of key activities required to deliver the HGGT Vision, in particular housing and infrastructure.
5. To identify interdependencies and risks to the Master Programme along with mitigating actions to make recommendations to Partner Authorities as appropriate.
6. To make recommendations to Partner Authorities to maintain progress against the Master Programme.
7. To approve, develop and maintain a Forward Plan for all key decisions. Key decisions are any decisions of the Joint Committee which;
 - a. result in total expenditure or savings of £200,000 revenue funding or £2,000,000 capital funding;
 - b. significantly affect residents of more than 1 ward of the partner authorities.
8. No key decision will be made unless 28 days' notice of the making of the decision has been published in the forward plan unless:
 - a. the proper officer considers that giving 28 days' notice is not possible, has given notification to the chairs of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee of each of the Partner Authorities and published a notice of the intention to make the decision 5 days prior to the decision being made; or
 - b. if it is impracticable to comply with (a) above the proper officer has obtained the agreement of all five (5) Chairs of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees or, in their absence the Mayor or Chairmen of the five Partner Authorities.

In either case the proper officer must publish a notice of the reasons for the decision being made without giving 28 days' notice in the forward plan

Rolling Infrastructure Fund (RIF)

9. Not used.
10. To develop and approve a strategy for the establishment and management of the RIF (the "RIF Strategy") including identification of the accountable body, monitoring receipts, agreeing spend, exploring commercial and investment options, and a process to forward fund infrastructure through borrowing in advance of contributions.
11. To manage and oversee the expenditure and activity from the RIF.
12. Not used
13. To allocate RIF funding to the Partner Authorities and approve the terms of such funding.
14. To implement the RIF Strategy providing leadership across the HGGT Area.
15. To ensure appropriate public expenditure controls and governance is in place to manage and control the RIF.

Modal Shift, Transport Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport Corridors

16. To develop, approve and update the transport strategy relating exclusively to the HGGT Area (the “Transport Strategy”).
17. To oversee the implementation of the Transport Strategy providing leadership across the HGGT Area.
18. To be consulted on relevant strategies and policies and initiatives of the Partner Authorities in relation to transport where it affects the HGGT Area.
19. To develop and recommend an operating model for public transport that can work across Partner Authorities administrative boundaries to provide a coherent system for customers and residents.
20. To make recommendations to any or all Partner Authorities concerning any transport matters exclusively or significantly impacting the HGGT including but not limited to strategies, plans, programmes, policies or projects.
21. To develop and maintain an overarching programme plan of key activities required to deliver modal shift, including the transport infrastructure identified for the HGGT Area such as the Sustainable Transport Corridors, and making recommendations to any or all of the Partner Authorities on strategic alignment and delivery progress.
22. For clarification, nothing in the Joint Committee’s remit is intended to nor will be interpreted as overriding or amounting to a delegation of the transport, highways or flood risk powers vested in ECC and HCC as local transport authorities, highway authorities or lead local flood authorities.

External Funding Applications

23. To identify and recommend to any or all of the Partner Authorities that an application be made for external funding (including grant funding) where such funding could, in the opinion of the Joint Committee, be used to support the HGGT noting that such Partner Authorities will be obliged to comply with the terms associated with such funding and take its own decision as to whether to apply for and accept such funding.

Planning Policy, Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

24. To develop, approve and maintain:
 - planning strategies, plans and programmes exclusively impacting the HGGT as set out in Appendix 2 (excluding masterplans which shall be endorsed by the Joint Committee)
 - design guides
 - sustainability guidance
 - infrastructure development plans including refresh
 - S106 planning obligations guidance
 - economic growth strategies
 - housing strategies
 - excluding:
 - development plan documents
 - Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Plans

- Housing Strategies adopted by Local Housing Authorities

provided that the documents, guides, strategies and guidance listed in this paragraph 22 shall not override any other documents, guides, strategies and guidance issued by any of the Partner Authorities which shall remain material considerations for each Partner Authority when exercising its planning functions.

25. To make recommendations in respect of any spatial development plan being prepared by any Partner Authorities individually.

Economy and Jobs

26. To develop and approve an economic growth strategy for the HGGT Area to create inclusive and sustainable economic growth for the HGGT that focuses on economic regeneration, renewal and growth and skills in Harlow and its hinterland (the “Economic Growth Strategy”).
27. To oversee the implementation the Economic Growth Strategy providing leadership across the HGGT Area, working in partnership with the wider functional economic area as necessary to achieve the aims.
28. To be consulted on relevant strategies and policies and initiatives of the Partner Authorities in relations to economic development where it affects the HGGT Area.

Harlow Town Centre Regeneration

29. To be consulted on masterplans, design briefs, development briefs, funding bids and planning applications relating to major developments in Harlow Town Centre.
30. To make recommendations to HDC in relation to the above in connection with interdependencies with the HGGT Programme.
31. To receive regular reports and not less than twice a year on the progress of the regeneration of Harlow Town Centre and provide comment on this to HDC.

Housing

32. To consider and make recommendations to the Local Housing Authorities on their respective Housing Strategies.
33. To identify ways in which the development of the HGGT strategic sites can contribute to the renewal of existing neighbourhoods in Harlow and satisfy the housing need of the whole HGGT Area.

Green & Blue Infrastructure

34. To develop and approve a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the HGGT Area.
35. To implement the Green and Blue Strategy providing leadership across the HGGT Area.

36. To be consulted on relevant strategies and policies and initiatives of the Partner Authorities in relations to Green and Blue Infrastructure where it affects the HGGT Area.

Stewardship

37. To develop and approve a stewardship strategy for the HGGT Area to create legacy arrangements for the management of infrastructure for those communities within the HGGT (the “Stewardship Strategy”).
38. To implement the Stewardship Strategy providing leadership across the HGGT Area.
39. To be consulted on relevant strategies and policies and initiatives of the Partner Authorities in relations to stewardship where it affects the HGGT Area.

Community Engagement & Communications

40. To develop, approve and maintain a Communication and Engagement Strategy for the HGGT initiative.
41. To implement the communication and engagement strategy providing leadership across the HGGT Area.
42. To receive reports on Quality of Life indicators in Harlow and the new neighbourhoods on a regular basis.

HGGT Vision Assurance and Role of Independent Quality Review Panel

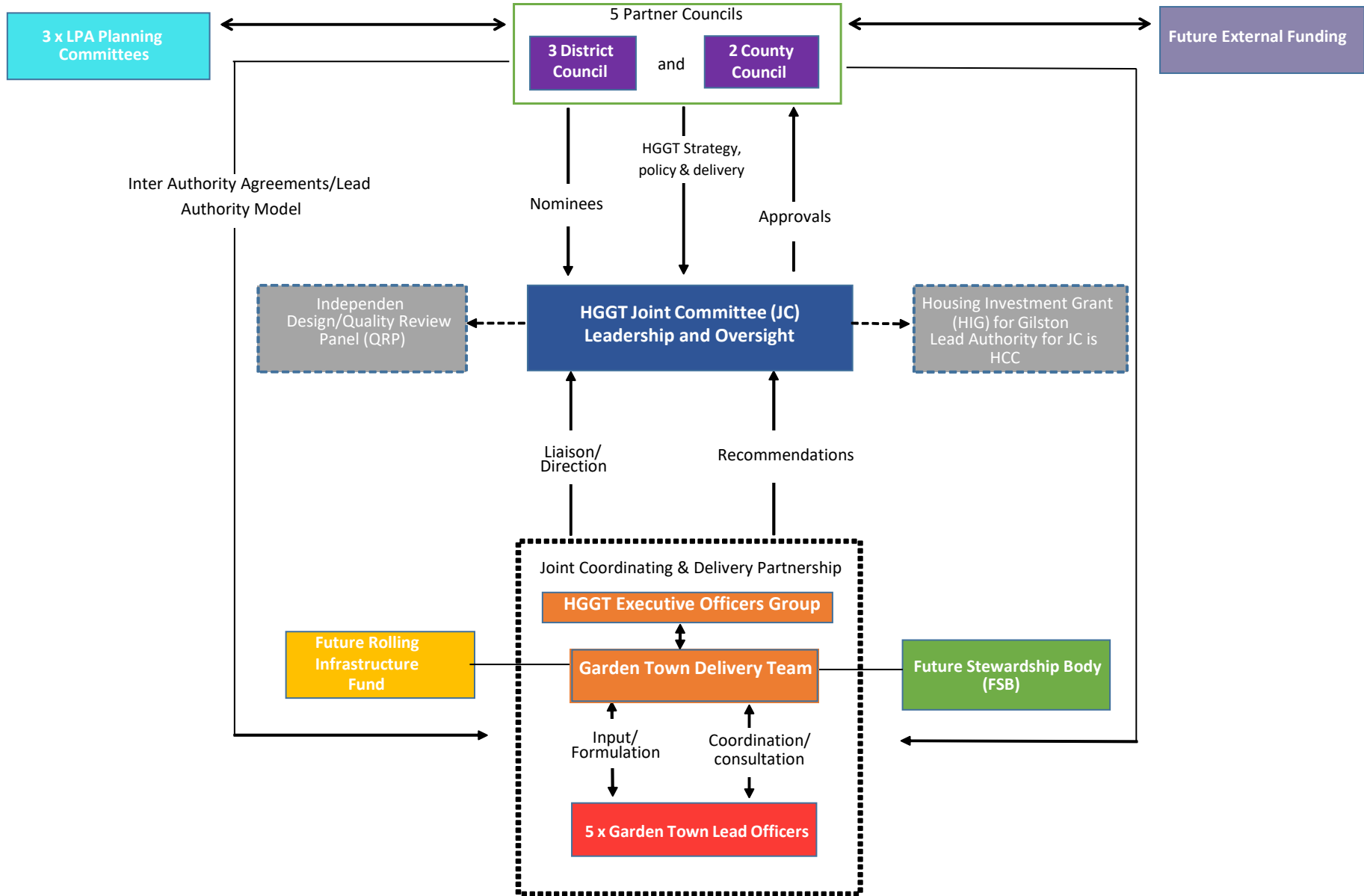
43. To establish and approve a Quality Review Panel (“QRP”) to provide independent, objective, expert advice on master planning and planning applications for development proposals across the HGGT on the agreed terms of reference which can be found via the following link: [2022 Frame Harlow-and-Gilston-QRP ToR.pdf \(hggc.co.uk\)](#).
44. To oversee the effectiveness of the QRP.
45. To receive regular updates reports on the commissioning, remit, performance and outputs of the QRP.

Oversight Process for Strategic Masterplans and Planning Applications in the HGGT

46. To make recommendations to provide effective vision assurance and ensure the consistent application of the HGGT Vision, Garden Town Principles, and oversight of emerging masterplans for sites forming part of the HGGT during early formative stages.
47. The Joint Committee will:
 - a. receive and consider regular update reports as to progress and / or completion of current strategic master-planning work;

- b. receive briefings on any masterplan for the HGGT prior to any decision by the relevant Local Planning Authority that the strategic master plan can be endorsed for consultation or approved;
- c. comment and make representations to the relevant Local Planning Authority in relation to any master plans;
- d. make recommendations in respect of planning applications for strategic sites within the HGGT. The Joint Committee will be consulted by the Local Planning Authority and will provide a response to ensure that the relevant Garden Town Principles, the HGGT Vision, and any other relevant guidance are considered by the Local Planning Authority.

SCHEDULE 11
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



Agenda Item 13

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Subject: Calendar of Meetings 2024/25

Date: 19 December 2023.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Kane

Recommending:

1. That, as attached at Appendix 1, the draft Calendar of Council Meetings for 2024/25 be adopted.

1. Democratic Services submit a draft Calendar of Council meetings each year to the Cabinet for consideration prior to its approval by the Council.

2. The focus has been to ensure that the correct report lines are created to allow the relevant committees to be informed, to scrutinise and make valuable contribution to the decisions of Council. Emphasis for 2024/25 has been on the financial framework, the scrutiny of the Medium-Term Financial Plan which includes the Budget Strategy and Capital programmes, and the scrutiny of the quarterly performance Management reports. Democratic Services held a workshop with various departments on 23 October 2023 to ensure that their requirements for reporting have been considered.

3. Friday evenings have continued to be kept free of meetings, and any encroachment into August has been kept to a bare minimum due to holidays. However, the Regulatory Committees have always continued to meet throughout August in the past and this practice has been continued.

The Executive

4. The Cabinet is scheduled to meet 9 times throughout 2024/25. The Council is scheduled to meet 6 times throughout the year, starting with the Annual Council meeting on 23 May 2024. The Council meeting originally scheduled for the first week in October has been moved back this year to 15 October 2024 to avoid clashes with the national party conferences.

Overview & Scrutiny

5. The structure of the Council's Overview & Scrutiny function was reviewed last year, which resulted in amalgamation of the Stronger Council Select Committee with the main Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This has appeared to work well this year and no further changes to the structure are planned for 2024/25.

6. At the workshop, Finance and Programme Management Officers highlighted the difficulty of preparing their quarterly monitoring reports in time for the agenda for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the end of each quarter. Therefore, the meetings of the

Overview & Scrutiny Committee in July, October and January have all been pushed back a week to facilitate this. It is also proposed that the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that would normally happen in April also be pushed back to the first week of June, to allow the Quarter 4 monitoring reports to be considered. This meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 4 June 2024.

7. The Communities and Place Scrutiny Committees have again been scheduled to meet 4 times during the year. The meeting of the Place Scrutiny Committee originally scheduled for 17 September 2024 has been pushed back to 1 October 2024 to avoid a clash with the national Party Conferences. An additional meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee will be scheduled for the Spring of 2025 and will be entirely dedicated to the District Police Commander and related Community Safety reports.

8. The proposed Scrutiny schedule does leave a gap between Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings after January. However, if there are any items from the Communities or Place Scrutiny Committees that need to be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee during their spring cycle of meetings then an extra meeting could be scheduled for April 2025.

Planning

9. The Area Plans Sub-Committees East and South continue to meet on a four-weekly cycle, with the District Development Management Committee and Area Plans Sub-Committee West meeting on a 6-weekly cycle. This was agreed by the Council as part of this process last year. The period between the local elections and the Annual Council meeting has again been kept free of Planning meetings. The first scheduled planning meeting in May is on Wednesday 29 May 2024.

10. A review of how the Council undertakes its Planning responsibilities is currently being undertaken and this might necessitate a change to the structure of the Council's Planning Committees, and/or the frequency of Planning Committee meetings. Any recommendations arising from the review will be reported to the Cabinet and then Council for approval and consequently, the proposed schedule could change before the end of the current municipal year.

Licensing

11. Licensing Sub-Committee meetings have remained on the first Tuesday morning of each month and additional meetings have been provisionally set aside on the third Tuesday of every month. This allows the Council to meet its statutory deadlines when considering Premises Licence applications. It is expected that some of these meetings will be cancelled due to a lack of business.

12. There have been no evening meetings scheduled for Licensing Sub-Committees in 2024/25, although a Premises Review could be held in the evening if the Chairman of the Licensing Committee felt that it would be in the public interest to do so. All members of the Licensing Committee continue to meet twice a year to consider policy and procedural matters.

Miscellaneous Committees

13. For the Audit & Governance Committee, two small changes have been proposed by Finance Officers, although the number of meetings throughout the year will remain as five. The first change is to move the meeting currently scheduled for July to September as this would ensure that the Treasury Management Monitoring Report would be available to be

reviewed. The second change is to bring the February meeting forward by one week to allow the Treasury Management Policy, the Treasury Management and Investment Management Strategies and the Capital Strategy to be approved by the Committee in advance of the Council's budget meeting on 20 February.

14. Both the Youth Council and the Local Highways Panel have not been included in this schedule as it is felt that they are meetings which sit outside the Council Calendar. The Youth Council have their own programme, and although the Local Highways Panel involves both the County and District Councillors, they are not organised by the District Council.

15. Meetings of the Appointments Panel have been scheduled for Thursday 8 May and Thursday 15 May in the period between the Local Elections on 1 May 2025 and the Annual Council on 22 May 2025. The Local Councils Liaison Committee will again meet twice in the year in September and March. The Constitution Working Group has had an additional meeting scheduled as the Council's Constitution is undergoing a thorough review. In addition, there may be various Portfolio Holder Advisory Group and Scrutiny Task & Finish Panel meetings which will be organised outside of the formal calendar process as well.

Religious Festivals

16. The meeting of Area Plans Sub-Committee South (West) has been re-scheduled from 2 October 2024 to 9 October 2024 to avoid the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah. This has also necessitated the re-scheduling of Area Plans Sub-Committee West from 9 October to 16 October 2024, and Area Plans Sub-Committee East from 16 October to 23 October. This will affect the gaps between meetings for the three Sub-Committees for this cycle, but their normal frequency of meetings resumes from November 2024. The Jewish festivals of Yom Kippur and Pesach do not clash with any meetings.

17. The Hindu festival of Diwali is on Friday 1 November in 2024 and does not clash with any of the Council's meetings. Ramadan is the period between Friday 28 February 2025 and Sunday 30 March 2025, and if any meetings are required to be re-scheduled during this period, perhaps with a slightly later start time, then this can be considered by the relevant Chairman at the time of the request.

Party Conferences

18. The dates of next year's Party Conferences have been determined (or the date of this year's conference used if the date for next year is not known), and there have been no Council, Cabinet or Scrutiny meetings organised during these dates. For the regulatory and miscellaneous committees, substitutes can be organised by the Groups if a meeting falls during this period and a particular member is not available.

Conclusion

19. The Cabinet is requested to consider the draft Calendar of Council meetings for 2024/25, as attached at Appendix 1, and advise whether any further changes are required. However, it should be noted that the current Calendar is extremely congested, and the organisation of any additional meetings should be given very careful consideration.

20. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25
Council	23		23			15		17		20		9	22
Cabinet	28		8		2	7	11	9	13	5	18		
O&S		4	30			29			28				
Communities		25			24				14		5		
Place			2			8			7	27			
Audit & Govn		27			19		28			9	28		
Appts Panel	9,16												8, 15
Constitution Working Group			11				15				14		
Local Councils					26						27		
Licensing Committee						10						3	
Licensing Sub-Committee (Day Time)	14	4,18	2,16	6, 20	3,17	1,15	5,19	3,17	7,21	4,18	4,18	1,15	
DDMC			3	14	25		6	18	29		12	23	
Area Planning Sub-Committee South		12	10	7	4	9, 30	27		8	5	5	2	28
Area Planning Sub-Committee East	29	26	24	21	18	23	13	11	22	19	19	16	
Area Planning Sub-Committee West		5	17	28		16	20		15	26		9	

Religious Festivals

Yom Kippur 11-Oct-24 → 12-Oct-24 (Friday/Saturday)
Rosh Hashanah 2-Oct-24 → 4-Oct-24 (Wednesday/Friday)
Pesach 12/13 April 2025 (Saturday/Sunday)

Diwali 1-Nov-24 (Friday)

Christian festivals are already bank holidays.

Ramadan 28-Feb-25 → 30-Mar-25

Party Conferences

Lib Dems 14-Sep-24 → 17-Sep-24 (Saturday/Tuesday)

Labour ? (6-Oct-24 → 9-Oct-24 (Sunday/Wednesday))

Conservatives 29-Sep-24 → 2-Oct-24 (Sunday/Wednesday).