
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON THURSDAY, 3RD SEPTEMBER, 2020 AT 7.30 PM**

Present:	Councillors M Stephenson (Chairman), Scott (Vice-Chairman), Allen, Barry, Bray, Codling, Griffiths and Harris
Also Present:	Councillors Placey and Wiggins
In Attendance:	Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections) and Keith Durran (Democratic Services Officer)

76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Morrison (with no substitute).

77. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Thursday 13 August 2020 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman (Councillor M E Stephenson) declared an interest for the public record in regards to owning two businesses in Tendring which might be impacted by the Council's "Back to Business" strategy.

Councillor Allen declared an interest for the public record in regards to owning a business in Tendring which might be impacted by the Council's "Back to Business" strategy.

79. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

On this occasion no Councillor had submitted notice of a question.

80. A.1 - TENDRING BACK TO BUSINESS PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS 2020/21

A report of the Head of Democratic Services and Elections was submitted to the Committee for its consideration. The report reflected on the discussion at the Committee's last meeting on 13 August around 'Back to Business' and the outputs from that meeting, as recorded in the Minutes of that meeting, were set out at Appendix A to the aforementioned report.

The Committee was also reminded that, in relation to its consideration of the Outturn 2020/21 item at its meeting on 13 August, there was a desire to hone further the Council's delivery of projects to ensure that every penny of public

funds was effectively used in order to deliver against the Council's Corporate Plan if the ambitions of that Plan were to be realised to their maximum. The relevant Minute recorded the Committee's recommendations to Cabinet on this matter as follows:

- (a) *Implement the invitation from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance to convene a meeting with the Chairman of this Committee, and other interested Councillors, to examine in detail the financial reserves and provisions to look at progressing further and speedier with those schemes or releasing the funds with a view to the outcome of that meeting being reported to the meeting of this Committee to be held on 21 September 2020;*
- (b) *Note this Committee endorses the decision to allocate £862k from the 2019/20 General Fund Outturn variance to 'Back to Business' Initiatives and associated activities; and*
- (c) *Consider establishing a corporate dedicated project completion resource, with project management skills, with a direction to progress projects and priorities of corporate significance to the Council, support delivery milestones for those projects and unlock capacity and other issues that could frustrate delivery of those projects and priorities.*

Through the combination of a review of the Council's reserves and provisions and the establishment of a dedicated project completion resource it was envisaged that the Council could build further confidence that progress with achieving the approved Corporate Plan (as approved by full Council) would not falter for any of a range of reasons.

The above decisions concerning the Outturn 2020/21 and the discussion around 'Back to Business' suggested that a clear and deliverable action plan should be developed by the Cabinet taking in the range of proposals. Those proposals now needed to be assessed and the component parts examined in order to identify the various steps that were necessary to achieve them. The timing and financing of those proposals needed to be thoroughly worked through in order to avoid wasted energy and wasted public funds. Initially, schemes and services that were already in place or were anyway going to be implemented in this timeframe could be better started or refocussed with minimal delay. This would ensure that the Council did not defer intervention while the range of proposals were worked on.

As 'back to business' steps were developed they could themselves suggest that related or associated steps be also taken. Such associated and related steps could help deliver enhanced benefits and maximise the deliverables that could

be achieved through the 'back to business' agenda. To help encourage this approach it would assist to theme the proposals. Through an agreed themed plan a more coherent approach could be encouraged. A suggested theme for the 'back to business' plan was set out at Appendix B to the report now before the Committee. This in itself identified that in many areas proposals would fit into more than one theme and thereby could achieve advantage across those themes.

The Committee was made aware that the 'back to business' agenda was not intended to replace the Corporate Plan and so there would be activities on-going to achieve that Plan and it was vital that this activity continued. Indeed, some of the more long term proposals arising from the 'Back to Business' discussion would fit well with delivery of the Corporate Plan goals.

Having deliberated on the report submitted to the Committee, it was **RESOLVED:**

- (a) To confirm the Committee's decisions of 13 August 2020 in respect of the outputs from its discussion of 'Back to Business' (and the Outturn 2020/21, Minutes 73 and 74 refer);
- (b) To recommend that the Cabinet approves the necessary work to assess the various 'Back to Business' proposals, proceeds to implement those schemes and services that can be speedily focussed on 'Back to Business', develops an Action Plan of assessed and costed proposals (based on short, medium and long-term measures) and sets about the delivery of that Action Plan;
- (c) To further recommend to Cabinet that the themed approach to 'Back to Business' at Appendix B to the report be adopted; and
- (d) To record the Committee's intention to monitor the development of the Action Plan referred to in (b) above and its delivery. This will include project management and performance (which itself will include success measures and milestones towards delivery) and to approve that the work programme for this Committee shall be prepared to provide for this.

The meeting was declared closed at 7.59 p.m.

Chairman

APPENDIX A

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SERVICES COMMITTEE OF 13 AUGUST 2020

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (GOVERNANCE) - A.2 - TENDRING BACK TO BUSINESS PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS 2020/21

The Committee had before it a report of the Assistant Director of Governance regarding the development of 'Priorities and Projects' that was incorporated as part of the Council's Back to Business and Recovery Plan, and Performance Management framework for the Council for 2020/21 in advance of any decisions by Cabinet/Council on those matters. The report included an Appendix prepared by the Assistant Director of Finance which drew together the numerous proposals and concepts arising from a survey of businesses locally, from individual Councillors and from Officers to help the District to build back better following the economic and social impact locally of the lockdown associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chairman of the Committee expressed his appreciation for the work of the Deputy Leader in launching the initiative to gather ideas to address locally the challenges arising from the lockdown.

The Committee was invited to identify its collective view on the themes and activities that should be key strands of work to focus on helping the district recover and included restarting the local economy, keeping residents and visitors safe and harnessing the power of the voluntary sector to deliver much needed services and improve the quality of life locally.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet considers the following as it formulates its back to business strategy and the content of that strategy:

- In considering business development and encouragement, there should be an element that recognises the enduring and ongoing need for a range of service trades (such as plumbing, engineering, building and carpentry) – support for those business should not be overlooked and there should be engagement with other agencies to support training opportunities locally in the skills and competencies to work in those service trades.
- Similar to the above, there was an opportunity to look at opportunities to support skills development and business location associated with the off shore wind farm industry and green initiatives to lower energy usage and costs associated with that energy use (around heating, insulation and cooling) and providing services to other businesses to harness the same energy reduction measures.
- The District had tremendous potential for tourism. But this needed to harness the separate and distinct elements across the District. Branding around the opportunities and attractions of the Tendring Peninsula were critical to this to

avoid visitors just visiting one town or village and not benefitting from the richness that the wider District has to offer. Part of this would be about developing and maintaining up to date directories of places to go and enjoy, to look early at promoting events to be held in 2021, to harness and reflect national and international interest such as in the years of the Olympic Games to promote related activities locally, but also to look at events and activities to try to appeal to potential visits throughout each month of the year. Increasing access to information about points and walks of interest, including facilitating elements of sampling digitally those walks, would increase interest in the Tendring peninsula going forward. This would also positively contribute to encouraging local people to take more walks and thereby improving the health of the population.

- There was a need to address the needs of our communities and provide, perhaps limited at first, but opportunities for the public that are in Clacton-on-Sea to safely come into the Town Hall so that they can be sign-posted to services that they require. In addition, the Council should review its spending power to ensure that it was as sustainable in energy terms, it supported training opportunities for local people (including apprentices) and that local businesses had every opportunities to secure work from the Council and therefore recirculate public money locally where this represented good value for money.
- The Council was in a powerful position, subject to the review of its own spending referenced earlier, to deliver a consistent message around the benefits to the community of buying locally to boost the local economy, to encourage local businesses to succeed and through success to employ more locally and develop that virtuous circle of spending.
- To provide tangible support for business a dedicated Covid-19 resource would be beneficial to help businesses access the latest advice speedily and to assist those businesses to identify practical measures to deliver services safely. The capacity of local businesses and the opportunity for new start-up businesses could be assisted by providing pop-up style facilities and market stall facilities. And engagement with businesses and providing them with an opportunity to build local supply chains and attract new entrants/apprentices was vital and could be facilitated through existing and new business to business clubs and a jobs fair.
- There was an urgent imperative to support super-fast broadband provision locally and end the blight for communities, individuals and businesses that prevented them from making the most of the digital environment. As part of the dedicated Covid-19 resource referenced above, there should be an element that encourages and enthuses businesses locally to embrace fully the opportunities of expanding their customer base globally through using digital commerce tools effectively.
- There was an opportunity to support a shift to assist individuals to make healthier life choices, to look at expanding the outdoor gym class provision, to implement

early the learning from the pilot project around transitioning inactive people to some form of activity and encouraging the slightly and moderately active to increase their activity levels. To look at embracing the opportunities for the District to be a cycling attraction and thereby encourage local individuals to enjoy this leisure activity; perhaps through the London style free bike pick up and drop off scheme along stretches of the coast, by providing outdoor community gym style sites at intervals along the coast and elsewhere and sign posting people to multi-use games areas (MUGAs). These measures would also help to expand the attraction of the area to a wider range of visitors and tourists. Measure to encourage healthier eating habits and opportunities to 'grow your own'.

- [Note: The Committee agreed that its proposed response to the Cabinet on this matter would be circulated to the Committee Members for confirmation. In the event that there was a need, the Committee would reconvene to formally endorse that response.]

Back to Business

Sound Financial
Management
supporting delivery

