



RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE:	Monday, 14 April 2025
TIME:	7.30 pm
VENUE:	Committee Room, Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1SE

MEMBERSHIP:

Councillor P Honeywood (Chairman)	Councillor Harris
Councillor M Cossens (Vice-Chairman)	Councillor S Honeywood
Councillor Bensilum	Councillor Newton
Councillor Bush	Councillor Steady
Councillor Goldman	

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DATE OF PUBLICATION: Friday, 4 April 2025

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

The Committee is asked to note any apologies for absence and substitutions received from Members.

2 Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 5 - 14)

To confirm and sign as a correct record, the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 13 January 2025.

3 Declarations of Interest

Councillors are invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests of Non-Registerable Interests, and the nature of it, in relation to any item on the agenda.

4 Questions on Notice pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 38

Subject to providing two working days' notice, a Member of the Committee may ask the Chairman of the Committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties which affect the Tendring District and which falls within the terms of reference of the Committee.

5 Report of the Chief Executive - A.1 - Outcome from the Spendells House Capital Scheme Review (Pages 15 - 26)

The report provides the Committee with the review document arising from the review of the Spendells House Capital Scheme. That review document is set out at Appendix A to this report. This report also reminds the Committee that the Council's Audit Committee also has a role in reviewing the subject of Appendix A and provides details of guidance in respect of the roles of Audit and Overview & Scrutiny in relation to such matters.

6 Report of the Leader of the Council - A.2 - Portfolio Holder Projects - Update (Pages 27 - 46)

This report implements the commitment given at the 17 December 2024 meeting of the Committee by the Leader (Minute 64 refers) to "pull together a comprehensive list of all of TDC's current projects" and to submit these at a meeting of the Committee.

7 Report of Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support) - A.3 - Work Programme 2024/25 - Including the Monitoring of Previous Recommendations and Summary of Forthcoming Decisions (Pages 47 - 70)

The report provides the Committee with an update on its approved Work Programme for 2024/25 (including progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme), feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which notice has been given since publication of the agenda for the Committee's last meeting.

The report also provides an opportunity for updates on the work of the Committee's Task and Finish Groups.

Date of the Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to be held in the Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1SE at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 1 July 2025.

Information for Visitors

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

There is no alarm test scheduled for this meeting. In the event of an alarm sounding, please calmly make your way out of any of the fire exits in the hall and follow the exit signs out of the building.

Please heed the instructions given by any member of staff and they will assist you in leaving the building and direct you to the assembly point.

Please do not re-enter the building until you are advised it is safe to do so by the relevant member of staff.

Your calmness and assistance is greatly appreciated.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON MONDAY, 13TH JANUARY, 2025 AT 7.00 PM
IN THE TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

Present:	Councillors P Honeywood (Chairman), M Cossens (Vice-Chairman), Bensilum, Doyle, Goldman, Harris, S Honeywood, Newton and Steady
Also Present:	Councillor Andy Baker (Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning; Deputy Leader of the Tendring Independents Group), Councillor Gina Placey (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships) and Councillor Mark Stephenson (Leader of the Council; Portfolio Holder for Finance & Governance; Leader of the Tendring Independents Group) (except items 72 (part) and 73 (part))
In Attendance:	Richard Barrett (Director (Finance and IT) & Section 151 Officer), Gary Guiver (Director (Planning & Communities)), Tim Clarke (Assistant Director (Housing and Environment)), Andy White (Assistant Director (Building and Public Realm)), Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections & Deputy Monitoring Officer), Katie Wilkins (Head of People), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager) and Bethany Jones (Committee Services Officer)

68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

In relation to members of the Committee, there were no apologies for absence submitted nor substitutions made on this occasion.

The Committee was informed that the Portfolio Holder for the Environment (Councillor Smith) who had been due to attend the meeting was unable to do so due to illness.

69. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was moved by Councillor M Cossens, seconded by Councillor Goldman and:-

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 17 December 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In relation to any possible discussions of the Careline service at this meeting, Councillors P B Honeywood and S A Honeywood both declared an Other Registrable Interest insofar as a member of their family was a customer of Careline.

The Monitoring Officer (Lisa Hastings) had decided, prior to the commencement of the meeting, that as Councillors P B Honeywood and S A Honeywood were not Decision Makers on the future of the Careline service, she had consented to grant them both a Dispensation in order to allow them to remain in the meeting.

71. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

No Questions on Notice pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 38 had been submitted for this meeting.

72. **REFERENCE FROM THE CABINET - A.1 - EXECUTIVE'S INITIAL BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2025/26 (GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT)**

The Committee scrutinised the Executive's initial budget proposals for 2025/26 in respect of both the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for in accordance with the provisions of Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rule 3 of the Council's Constitution.

Members were aware that reports relating to the Executive's initial GF and HRA Budget proposals for 2025/26 had been considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2024, with the comments of the Committee now requested as part of developing the Executive's final budget proposals for presenting to Full Council in February 2025.

The following sets out each report in turn:

1) Appendix A - Updated General Fund Financial Forecast / Budget 2025/26

At its meeting on 20 December 2024 (Minute 98 referred), Cabinet had:-

“RESOLVED that –

- a) *the updated Financial Forecast and proposed budget position for 2025/26, as set out in item A.5 of the Report of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder and its appendices, be approved; and*
- b) *the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments be requested on this latest financial forecast and proposed position for 2025/26.”*

2) Appendix B - Updated Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2025/26

At its meeting on 20 December 2024 (Minute 104 referred), Cabinet had:-

“RESOLVED that -

- a) *the updated HRA 30-year Business Plan, which includes the proposed revised position for 2024/25 along with budget proposals for 2025/26, be approved; and*
- b) *the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments be requested on this latest HRA financial forecast.”*

The Committee recalled that, at its meeting held on 17 December 2024 (Minute 67 referred), Members had considered, inter alia, the Committee's approach to budget scrutiny at this meeting and it had been resolved:-

-
- (c) *“agrees that its approach to budget scrutiny to be undertaken at its meetings on Monday, 6 January (informal) and Monday, 13 January 2025 in respect of the draft General Fund and draft Housing Revenue Account budgets for 2025/26 and beyond will be as follows:-*
- (1) at its informal meeting on 6 January, the Committee will receive a presentation from the Director (Finance and IT) on the latest budget position and will then look to decide which Portfolio Holders will be required to appear before the Committee on 13 January;*
 - (2) on 13 January, the Committee will consider the highlights and general overview of the budget but will particularly focus on how costs are built from the ground upwards with an eye to the implications of LGR;*
 - (3) that the meetings on 6 January and 13 January will both commence at 7.00 p.m.; and*
 - (4) that the members of the Cabinet be requested to hold the evening of Monday 13 January 2025 in their diaries in case they are required to appear before the Committee.”*

At the informal meeting of the Committee held on 6 January 2025 Members had decided that the following members of the Executive would be required to appear before the Committee:-

Councillor Mark Stephenson (Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance & Governance);

Councillor Andy Baker (Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning);

Councillor Gina Placey (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships); and

Councillor Adrian Smith (Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT).

At that informal meeting, the Committee had also agreed a set of questions that would be put to the aforementioned Portfolio Holders. Those questions had been duly circulated to those Portfolio Holders and formal answers obtained. Those questions and answers were as set out in the Appendix to these Minutes. At the meeting Committee members asked supplementary questions. Those supplementary questions and the responses thereto were indicated in red in the Appendix.

Following the question-and-answer session the Portfolio Holders were thanked for their attendance.

The Committee then proceeded to determine whether it had any comments or recommendations it wished to make or put forward to the Cabinet.

Councillor M A Cossens moved and Councillor S A Honeywood seconded that:-

- (a) the Committee has recorded that it felt that it was not in a position to comment on the robustness of the budget plans for 2025/26 and beyond and, in this regard, it noted that:*

- (i) in respect of the General Fund, the Forecast Risk Fund (used to smooth deficits in particular years) would be exhausted within 2028/29 and (as at the day of the meeting) there were no specific plans to address the full savings/income generation necessary up to that point to support a balanced budget from that point;*
- (ii) in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, there were not the written plans to move it to a sustainable position; and*

(b) Cabinet be informed of the above and requested to address the issues raised.

Councillor Bensilum then moved and Councillor Steady seconded that Councillor Cossens' motion be amended by the addition of a sub-section (iii) to paragraph (a) to read as follows:-

- (iii) through the papers submitted and statements made to the Committee, it was understood that plans to address (i) and (ii) were being worked upon;*

In accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 16.6, Councillor Cossens, with the consent of Councillor S A Honeywood, altered his motion to incorporate the text of Councillor Bensilum's amendment.

Councillor Cossens' motion, as altered, was put to the vote and it was unanimously:-

RESOLVED that -

- (a) the Committee has recorded that it felt that it was not in a position to comment on the robustness of the budget plans for 2025/26 and beyond and, in this regard, it noted that:-
 - (i) in respect of the General Fund, the Forecast Risk Fund (used to smooth deficits in particular years) would be exhausted within 2028/29 and (as at the day of the meeting) there were no specific plans to address the full savings/income generation necessary up to that point to support a balanced budget from that point;
 - (ii) in respect of the Housing Revenue Account, there were not the written plans to move it to a sustainable position;
 - (iii) through the papers submitted and statements made to the Committee, it was understood that plans to address (i) and (ii) were being worked upon; and
- (b) Cabinet be informed of the above and requested to address the issues raised.

73. REFERENCE FROM THE CABINET - A.2 - EXECUTIVE'S INITIAL HIGHLIGHTS PRIORITIES PROPOSALS

Earlier on in the meeting as detailed under Minute 70 above and in relation to any possible discussions of the Careline service at this meeting, Councillors P B Honeywood and S A Honeywood had both declared an Other Registrable Interest insofar as a member of their family was a customer of Careline.

The Monitoring Officer (Lisa Hastings) had decided, prior to the commencement of the meeting, that as Councillors P B Honeywood and S A Honeywood were not Decision Makers on the future of the Careline service, she had consented to grant them both a Dispensation in order to allow them to remain in the meeting.

The Committee scrutinised the Executive’s initial proposals for highlight priorities in 2025/26.

Members were aware that a report relating to the Executive’s initial proposals for highlight priorities for 2025/26 had been considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2024, with the comments of the Committee now requested as part of developing the Executive’s final proposals.

Appendix A – Delivering against the Council’s Corporate Plan 2024-28 – Initial Proposals for Highlight Priorities for 2025/26

At its meeting on 20 December 2024 (Minute 96 referred), Cabinet had:-

“RESOLVED that -

- (a) *the initial highlight priorities for 2025/26, as set out at Appendix B to the report (A.3), be approved for consultation;*
- (b) *all Councillors, other partners and the public be invited to consider the initial priorities referred to in (a) above; and*
- (c) *the outcome of the consultation referred to in (b) above be reported to Cabinet on 21 February 2025 in order that Cabinet can formally adopt its finalised highlight priority actions for 2025/26 with relevant milestones during that year.”*

At the meeting of the Committee the following questions were asked to which the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and others, when appropriate, responded.

Committee Member asking the Question	Question (summary form)	Individual giving the response (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, unless otherwise indicated)	Response (Summary form)
Paul Honeywood	In relation to Careline and the former contract with ‘YourStride’, has there been a financial re-evaluation of the viability of Careline in the light of the ending of this contract i.e. what		Officers are working on this and a report will be submitted to Cabinet in February which will set out that impact.

	has been the financial impact?		
Peter Harris	In relation to Careline, is the Council considering the social impact of any cessation of the service as well as the financial aspects?		Yes, it is alongside other matters such as recruitment problems, value for money and quality of service and whether TDC is still the best service provider given the increase in alternative providers in the marketplace.
Graham Steady	In relation to Careline, was all of that service's debt caused by the Your Stride contract?	Gary Guiver (Director for Planning & Communities)	That's one of the things that Officers are looking at and it will be covered in the report to Cabinet in February. The intention of the report to Cabinet in February is to revisit the five options previously reported to Cabinet and the financial assumptions around those. That will provide a projection of the expected financial performance resulting, in part, from the termination of the 'Your Stride' contract and the removal of its 9,500 external customers.
Peter Harris	In relation to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, and the		It was recognised in around 2019 that something extra was needed at Harwich as their

	<p>cost to TDC of £25,000 for a PCSO at Harwich, why is TDC paying for this when there is not one in other areas such as Clacton and the Council is looking to cut costs?</p>		<p>crime figures were second to Clacton and Harwich did not have the bespoke crime prevention campaigns that existed in Clacton. So hence the decision to joint fund with Harwich Town Council the PCSO which was renewed last year. Going forward this will be part of the grant funding review so it is not guaranteed to be renewed. It was felt prudent to carry on for the time being with this funding last year.</p>
<p>Mark Cossens</p>	<p>Is there a possibility of the Harwich PCSO becoming a Special Expense given that it is being done in parts of the District and not in others for example Frinton & Walton Town Council funds three PCSOs?</p>	<p>Richard Barrett (Director (Finance & IT) and Section 151 Officer)</p>	<p>I do not believe so but I will investigate that further.</p>
<p>Peter Harris</p>	<p>In the event that the Cabinet continues to fund the PCSO in Harwich would it look at similar requests from other parts of the District to part fund their PCSOs?</p>		<p>Cabinet has previously decided that any consideration whether to continue to part fund the Harwich PCSO post 31 March 2025 will be undertaken following the Council's new</p>

		<p>Mark Stephenson (Leader of the Council)</p>	<p>arrangements for the consideration of any external funding requests. So anybody can apply for anything but there is no guarantee that it would be granted when matched against the grant funding criteria.</p> <p>This was originally a response by the previous administration to very high crime figures in Harwich. This was done in consultation with Essex Police who have significant crime initiatives in place in Clacton (the highest crime area). We are not offering this out to other areas. It was felt to be a good proposal at the time to joint fund with Harwich Town Council an extra Officer in Harwich. Other parish/town councils in the District solely fund their own PCSOs. This matter along with all other external grants are now under review.</p>
<p>Paul Honeywood</p>	<p>In relation to the CCTV Project, what permissions do we need from ECC Highways and do we have them?</p>	<p>Andy White (Assistant Director (Building and Public Realm))</p>	<p>A small number of the camera locations require Highways Act Section 50 Agreements for cabling et cetera. Those applications</p>

			have been submitted and whilst consents have not yet been granted discussions are ongoing.
Paul Honeywood	What is the projected timeframe to complete this project given the end date for the funding of 31 March 2025?	Andy White (Assistant Director Building and Public Realm))	Construction phase begins on 17 February and the bulk will be installed within March. There will be a phase of testing, commissioning and troubleshooting going on until 10 April 2025. We understand that the Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner for Essex does not intend to withdraw funding but we will be seeking to confirm that.
Paul Honeywood	Will the planning applications for the CCTV project need to go before the Planning Committee and will this be in February?	Gary Guiver (Director for Planning and Communities)	Yes, that is the plan.

Following that question-and-answer session the Portfolio Holders were thanked for their attendance.

The Committee then determined whether it had any comments or recommendations it wished to make or put forward to the relevant Portfolio Holder or the Cabinet.

After a discussion, it was moved by Councillor M A Cossens, seconded by Councillor S A Honeywood and unanimously:-

RESOLVED that -

- (a) Cabinet be recommended to urgently address: (1) the projected General Fund savings/income generation requirements to 2028/29 to support a balanced budget

from that point; and (2) to move the Housing Revenue Account to a sustainable position; and

- (b) further to (a), Cabinet engage swiftly with the Committee with sufficient details in respect of the necessary plans concerned to enable the Committee to perform its overview and scrutiny role as a critical friend to the Cabinet.

The meeting was declared closed at 10.20 pm

Chairman

RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 APRIL 2025

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A.1 OUTCOME FROM THE SPENDELLS HOUSE CAPITAL SCHEME REVIEW

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The report provides the Committee with the review document arising from the review of the Spendells House Capital Scheme. That review document is set out at Appendix A to this report. This report also reminds the Committee that the Council's Audit Committee also has a role in reviewing the subject of Appendix A and provides details of guidance in respect of the roles of Audit and Overview & Scrutiny in relation to such matters.

SCOPE - THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The matter of the Spendells refurbishment project to provide temporary accommodation for homeless families has been referenced in several reports provided to the Committee over a number of years. The issue of unauthorised expenditure in respect of the project was reported to the July 2024 meeting of the Committee. On 17 December 2024 the Committee was advised that arrangements would be made with the Chairmen of this Committee and of the Audit Committee to receive the findings in relation to the investigation into the Council's development of Spendells House, Naze Park Road, Walton-on-the-Naze (and specifically the unauthorised expenditure).

This investigation report into the project is set out at Appendix A to this report. It has been the subject of a joint briefing for Members of this Committee and Members of the Audit Committee on 26 March 2025. The Audit Committee then considered the detail at Appendix A at its meeting on 27 March 2025. At that meeting on 27 March, Audit Committee approved the following having considered that detail:

"[...] (b) [...] that the findings be noted and that Officers be requested to bring these together with the outcomes from other various reviews of major projects, in addition to any associated recommendations from External/Internal Audit for consideration as part of the annual review of the Council's governance arrangements at the earliest opportunity in 2025/26;

[...]

(d) the Chief Executive Officer be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to give a half yearly update on the matters raised in the review of the Spendells Capital Scheme Review;"

INVITEES

None. The report author, the Council's Chief Executive (Mr Ian Davidson) will be in attendance to present the report.

BACKGROUND

The Committee is reminded of the following extracts from the Council's Constitution in respect of its role in respect of the matter to which this report relates:

ARTICLE 6 – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FUNCTION

6.01 General Role and Functions:

The Council will appoint two Overview and Scrutiny Committees, whose terms of reference

are as set out below. Within its functions, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will:

1. Review or scrutinise executive decisions made by the Cabinet (including those delegated to Portfolio Holders and Officers) or are due to be made by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder **including performance in relation to individual decisions over a period of time**;
2. Act as a consultee on policy development and review of policies;
3. Submit to Full Council for approval an annual overview and scrutiny work programme;
4. **Make reports or recommendations to the Cabinet or the Council as appropriate, with respect to the discharge of any Council function or on any matter affecting the authority's area or its inhabitants.**
5. Prepare and present an annual performance report to Full Council covering the outcomes of the overview and scrutiny functions by each committee;
6. Deal with any Call-in of Cabinet decisions (including those delegated to Portfolio Holders and Officers) in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules;
7. Consider requests for scrutiny reviews under the Councillor Call for Action process and petitions as referred under the Petitions Scheme and Council Procedure Rules.

To perform the role of Overview and Scrutiny and its functions in relation to the effective use of the Council's resources including approval of discrete researched and evidenced reviews on the effectiveness of:

Financial Forecast Budget setting and monitoring (including General Fund & Housing Revenue Account but excluding those budgetary matters delegated to the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

- Colchester/Tendring Borders Garden Community
- Housing Strategy and **Homeless Service**
- **Service Delivery and Performance** (where not delegated to the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
- **Procurement and Contract Management**
- Transformation and Digital Strategies
- Customer Service and Standards

The highlighting above is to draw out the relevant areas of the Committee's overview and scrutiny role as it concerns the subject of this report.

In respect of the review of the subject of this report, the Committee's attention is drawn to CfGS guidance on the respective, and in part overlapping, roles of Audit and Overview and Scrutiny. That guidance states that:

"Given these overall functions and responsibilities there are a few areas of policy and practice where the work of the audit committees and scrutiny committees could overlap. For example:

- Reviewing regular finance and performance reports;
- Reviewing council commercial activity, including oversight of procurement;
- General review of value for money arrangements."

The same guidance also suggests that areas for collaboration (or perhaps agreement as to who is taking the lead) are:

- Action on mindset and culture.

- Securing good governance.
- Risk.
- Value for money.
- Wider policy issues, and the impact of council strategy on financial management.

Looking at these matters it is worth repeating here that the Audit Committee of this Council, on the subject of this report, has already approved:

“[...] (b) [...] that the findings be noted and that Officers be requested to bring these together with the outcomes from other various reviews of major projects, in addition to any associated recommendations from External/Internal Audit for consideration as part of the annual review of the Council’s governance arrangements at the earliest opportunity in 2025/26;

[...]

(d) the Chief Executive Officer be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to give a half yearly update on the matters raised in the review of the Spendells Capital Scheme Review;”

It may be helpful for the Committee to consider its focus, using the CfGS guidance referred to above, in respect of this item and the separate item for consideration at this meeting around the Cabinet projects update.

RELEVANT CORPORATE PLAN THEME/ANNUAL CABINET PRIORITY

The Corporate Plan themes for the Council for the period 2024-28 are:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
- Championing our local environment
- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer
- Financial sustainability and openness

The overall project of Spendells can be said to contribute to several of the above themes. In regard to this specific report, the expanded text of the financial sustainability and openness theme above, is relevant:

“To continue to deliver effective services and get things done we must look after the public purse; that means carefully planning what we do, managing capacity, and prioritising what we focus our time, money and assets on. Tough decisions will not be shied away from, but will be taken transparently, be well-informed, and based upon engagement with our residents. We will give clarity on where the Council spends the money it is provided with.”

DESIRED OUTCOME OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM

Having considered the report and debated it in its formal meeting, the Committee is invited to note the decision of the Audit Committee in respect of the detail at Appendix A and whether there are any further matters the Committee wishes to refer to the Cabinet/Portfolio Holder.

DETAILED INFORMATION

The detail in respect of the review is set out in Appendix A to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

- (a) notes that, in respect of the detail of the review set out in Appendix A to this report, the Audit Committee approved:
“that the findings are noted and that Officers be requested to bring these together with the outcomes from other various reviews of major projects, in addition to any associated recommendations from External / Internal Audit for consideration as part of the annual review of the Council’s governance arrangements at the earliest opportunity in 2025/26.” and
- (b) determines whether it has any comments or recommendations it wishes to put forward the relevant Portfolio Holder or Cabinet.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

Minute 50 of the Committee’s meeting on 22 July 2024 - That, once the Chief Executive’s formal review (on how the issue of unauthorised expenditure arose and developed in respect of the Spendells project) has been completed, the Cabinet reports on its lessons learnt.

Minute 57 of the Committee’s meeting on 23 September 2024 – Noted the position.

Minute 64 of the Committee’s meeting on 17 December 2024 – it was noted that arrangements would be made with the Chairmen of this Committee and of the Audit Committee to receive the findings in relation to the investigation into the Council’s development of Spendells House, Naze Park Road, Walton-on-the-Naze.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

The initial report of unauthorised expenditure in relation to the Spendells project was submitted to Cabinet on 17 May 2024. That report, and the Section 151 Officer’s addendum to that report are set out here:

<https://tdcdemocracy.tendringdc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=134&MIId=2261&Ver=4>

The includes the following statement at the time from the Monitoring Officer:

“The Monitoring Officer is a co-author of the Report, only in so far as complying with the Section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 obligations and has not been directly provided with information regarding the specification, contract and variations and requests Cabinet to rely on the assurances provided by the project team officers. The previous decisions have however, been reviewed.

In the previous decision section of this Cabinet report, the last decision made (recorded and published) in relation to the Spendells project was on 1st August 2023, to appoint the main contractor to complete the Refurbishment and Adaptation works, accept the revised tender of ARC Group London to carry out the works and to instruct the Head of Legal Services to enter into the contract with ARC Group London on behalf of the Council. The Tender Price was redacted but referred to in a previous decision of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder and the Leader of the Council and Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder on 13th June 2023, which referred to a contract price of £1.25million. A further decision by the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder and the Leader of the Council and Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder on 21/07/2023 included the additional inflationary costs that had become apparent.

Whilst it is accepted that with JCT contracts, variations are permitted through contract management, the governance needs to be in place beforehand to ensure unauthorised spend is not committed. No further decisions have been made to authorise the variations to the contract to increase its cost, ensure the business case was still advantageous, value for money considerations and ensure the budget provision was in place. Any instructions issued seeking variations to the works are consequently unauthorised and this report is informing Cabinet that rectification is required.

Instructions were given by the project team to the contractor without following the Council's Financial Procedure Rules. [...]"

APPENDICES

A – The report of the Chief Executive in respect of the project.

REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Name	Keith Simmons
Job Title	Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support)
Email/Telephone	ksimmons@tendringdc.gov.uk / 01255 686580

OUTCOME FROM THE SPENDELLS HOUSE CAPITAL SCHEME REVIEW

Introduction, Background and Objectives

On 24th May 2024, a joint report of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing and the Monitoring Officer, was presented to Cabinet, which provided a further update on the provision of temporary accommodation via the Spendells House project. The report also reported a review of the Budget position and Reference under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The purpose of the report was as follows:

- To update Cabinet on progress with Spendells House being retained and reconfigured for the provision of temporary housing accommodation
- To seek continued support for the project in the light of the options available and the ongoing need for the accommodation
- To seek additional funding for additional work to address matters that were not within the specification and were brought to light in the course of the project
- To inform Members of a breach of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and legal decision-making requirements with regard to variation of a contract without sufficient approvals in place and the actions taken in response

The Monitoring Officer was the co-author of the report, only in so far as complying with the Section 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 obligations. An addendum report was also presented to the same meeting of Cabinet providing further update on Spendells House and review of budget and reference with the comments of the Assistant Director Finance and IT and Section 151 Officer.

Subsequently the Chief Executive Officer:

- (a) Instructed that a formal review be undertaken to provide further clarity on how the issue arose and developed (including the governance arrangements associated with issuing verbal orders), which in turn can inform any further actions along with informing decision making and project delivery in the future;
- (b) issued a directive to all Senior Managers relating to financial and budget management, which explains the consequences and expectations of them in their roles and will be supported by further collective meetings with Senior Officers over the coming weeks / months; and
- (c) commenced arrangements for the implementation of a Senior Officer Project 'Board' that in turn will report directly to the Council's Senior Management Team on a regular basis.

In respect of Item b) above, the directive referred has been issued and will form part of on-going collective meetings with senior officers over the course of the year as necessary, with an initial session held at a recent Senior Management Forum event.

In respect of Item c) above, arrangements remain ongoing and a further update will be provided to the Committee later in the year which will also be informed by the outcome of the review highlighted in a) above.

In respect of item a) above, this report sets out the initial outcome and recommendations emerging from that review with further details set out below.

In instigating the review, the Chief Executive directed the following:

1. To review the issues in relating to Spendells House, supported by the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer with the Internal Audit Manager and Executive Projects Manager – Governance, duly appointed to conduct the review.
2. The scope of the review to cover the following areas:
 - a) Financial position
 - b) Identify spend which has not been approved
 - c) Was the spend unforeseeable or omitted from the specification of the project
 - d) Who agreed the unauthorised spend
 - e) As a result of the review, recommendation as to whether there should be a disciplinary investigation on any officers

Background

Spendells House is a 1960s constructed sheltered housing scheme with shared washing facilities and limited living space by modern standards.

Key dates for decisions on Spendells House are set out below;

- **10 November 2017** Cabinet received the report of the then Housing Portfolio Holder and approved formal consultation on the future of two Sheltered Housing Schemes including Spendells House.
- **23 March 2018** Cabinet received the report of the then Housing Portfolio Holder and decided on the Closure of two Sheltered Housing Schemes.
- **26 June 2020** Cabinet decided to bring Spendells House back into use as temporary accommodation - A.5 – minute no. 25.

Officers arranged for the site to be stripped internally of all asbestos and a specification and a formal procurement process were completed.

The procurement process was completed, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure and the lowest tender returned was in the sum of £1.250m.

- **23 September 2022**, a further decision by the then Cabinet was proposed in order to consider a report on the review of budget position and award of contract and agreed to Spendells House.
- **14 February 2023**, the Full Council decided to allocate additional funding for the project as part of the HRA budget setting process.
- **March 2023**, a proposal for further decision on the future use of Spendells House, Walton-on-the-Naze - Approval of financial business case was published.
- **June 2023**, the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder, Leader of the Council and Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder considered an update on Spendells House and Review of Budget. The Leader and Portfolio Holder noted the increased costs, to be financed through capital receipts, noted the updated business case and confirmed support for the project. ref: 11505.
- **21 July 2023**, the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder, Leader of the Council and Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder considered a further update on Spendells House and further review of budget and agreed to continue with the project proposing to finance additional costs by reallocating money from within the HRA capital programme ref: 11622.
- **1 August 2023**, the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Housing decided to appoint ARC to complete the work and to authorise the Head of Legal Services to enter into the construction contract.

- **16 October 2023**, Work on site started.

Review and Outcomes

The review undertaken involved speaking with relevant officers along with obtaining information and documentation covering and supporting the following elements:

- Current financial position
- Contract and specification
- Management oversight – governance and financial approval processes
- Unauthorised spend
- Conclusion and recommendations

Current Financial Position

At its meeting on 24 May 2024, Cabinet approved an additional budget of £860,000 and the Chief Executive has approved via a separate decision, a further budget of £60,000 to meet the cost of fire doors.

The above brings the total capital project budget to £2.387m with a detailed history below:

Report	Adjustment	Total Project Budget (Capital)
Full Council February 2022 – HRA Capital Programme 2022/23	Reflected Initial Estimate	£600,000
Budget 2023/24 as agreed by Full Council February 2023	Addition of £800,000	£1,400,000
24 May 2024 Cabinet Report Item A.6	Addition of £860,000 (plus addition of furniture costs and other associated budget adjustments)	£2,327,000
Decision of the Chief Executive 10 June 2024	Addition of £60,000 to support the cost of replacement fire doors	£2,387,000

As at the 18 March 2025, the total capital expenditure incurred is £2,342,629. It remains the Service’s expectation that the project will be delivered within the total existing capital budgets.

Contract

The contract between Tendring District Council and ARC Group London was signed and sealed on 30 Jan 24 utilising an Intermediate Building Contract 2016 (JCT).

The terms of the contract included a number of relevant elements such as responding to delays and extensions etc. It is worth highlighting the contractor provided their advice to extend the construction period along with a longer lead in time.

As with most construction projects, the contract allows for variations and it states that the Council may sanction in writing any variation made by the Contractor otherwise than pursuant to an instruction.

In terms of the definition of a variation, the contract states:

1. The alteration or modification of the design, quality or quantity of the Works including:

- 1 - the addition, omission or substitution of any work
 - 2 – the alteration of the kind or standard of any of the materials or goods to be used in the Works;
 - 3 – the removal from the site of any work executed or Site Materials other than work, materials or goods which are not in accordance with this Contract;
2. The imposition by the Employer of any obligations or restrictions in regard to the following matters or any addition to or alteration or omission of any such obligations or restrictions that are so imposed or are imposed by the Contract Documents in regard to:
- 1 – access to the site or use of any specific parts of the site;
 - 2 – limitations of working space;
 - 3 – limitations of working hours; or
 - 4 – the execution or completion of the work in any specific order.

In terms of the valuation of a variation, the contract states that amounts are as agreed by the Employer and the Contractor or, where not agreed, the amount valued by the Quantity Surveyor (a 'Valuation').

Some key points identified against the key elements of the process are as follow:

Contract Specification

- Consideration could have been given to obtaining external support in writing the specification.
- The specification could have minimised contract variations and covered reasonably foreseeable issues – there were 40 variation orders issued.

Management Oversight and Governance

- It took just over a year to produce a business case and then appointing a contractor to begin works.
- Unclear process for dealing with variations to the specification and contract
- There was a period of long-term sickness absence during the project and related to the oversight role.
- The project may have benefitted from additional capacity.
- The financial position of the project was not discussed during project meetings.
- The initial project completion date was the end of March 2024, then extended to the end of August 2024 and then November 2024 for completion and handover.
- £600,000 was allocated to the budget and the scheme was originally intended to be a refurbishment, decoration and alterations. However, the scope of the project grew as part of its intended use to meet the on-going demand for temporary accommodation in the district which was a significant cost to the Council.
- Unclear decision-making responsibilities, particularly where additional funding was required to complete the project.
- The relevant experience of key Officers supporting the project.

Financial Approval

- The contract variation instructions were recorded on the contractor's system but not recorded on TDC systems or a project management chart.
- Contract variations were informed by the contractor after they identified issues and then notifying the Council, who then assessed the request and a price given by the contractor in order to complete those variations.
- Some issues may not have been foreseeable and therefore not included in the original specification.

- Overspends first came to light around 8 February 2024.
- Some issues could have been addressed earlier in the project.
- The process for managing variation orders was controlled by the contractor not the Council.
- Variations were approved without a financial quote being provided upfront by the contractor, along with details of the work required to allow time to review and inspect before approval.
- Misunderstanding of the requirements for quote documentation.

Unauthorised Spend

As reported to Cabinet in May 2024, the total unauthorised spend on the project equates to £386,535.12.

Some key points / issues identified included:

- Misunderstanding of approvals, budget availability and decisions required.
- Timing of updates to Senior managers
- The project budget contingency was not reassessed

Summary and Conclusions

Although it is felt that the Council's underlying / current governance arrangements and internal control processes are reasonable / adequate, there are a number of issues and recommendations identified regarding the project, with the aim of strengthen such arrangements as follows:

- The scoping, management and adherence to the Council's Governance Framework.
- Specification - specifications must be robust, complete and clear. Specifications should be compiled by service area experts, and if these cannot be provided internally then services should be sought externally with an associated budget. Sufficient capacity should also be considered and allocated, with management oversight. A thoroughly prepared specification would negate the requirement for significant and numerous contract variations, although minor variations may still be expected.
- Contingency - contingency should not only be considered at the beginning of the project, but it should also be considered when tenders are returned as this may impact on the overall budget and therefore the level of contingency required. It is good practice to apportion between 10-20% of the overall budget dependant on the scale of the project.
- Project management - the project should report progress against time, budget and potential issues. Mechanisms within services need to be in place to ensure that senior management are aware when significant issues arise, in this instance substantial variations to the contract. Although regular meetings were occurring, these were without structure to the agenda and did not necessarily demonstrate the financial commitment of the project, and therefore opportunities to identify potential unauthorised earlier were missed.
- Decision making - constitutional requirements do not appear to have been adequately considered during the life of this project. It is therefore recommended that for future projects, all project leads review and consider constitutional requirements at both the planning stage and during the implementation of the project, to ensure that any statutory requirements are followed in addition to the contract terms.

- Training - adequate training for Officers should be provided before undertaking any project, including specification writing, project management and contract management, especially of this scale. Appropriate supervision and support should also be provided at the inception of the project.
- Strategic oversight – a Project Board will provide a consistent strategic approach to all projects going forward. All project managers are to report progress against targets including any potential issues that may occur. When providing financial information, this should also include amounts already committed, potentially using GANT charts may help. The minimum expectations of reporting standards should be agreed from the outset.
- Contract management - the Council's interests must be prioritised when managing contracts. This includes using the Council's own processes and systems and not relying on contractor processes and direction, as it may be difficult to validate information and ensure that we comply with constitutional and statutory requirements. Control must be retained by the Council, even if the expertise lies with the contractor.
- Contract variation - contract variations must be limited by ensuring a robust specification is produced (as aforementioned). Variations should not be approved unless quotations or financial impact is provided in advance as well as being challenged when requested by a contractor. It may be beneficial to limit variation orders that can be approved in line with current constitutional requirements. The correct financial approvals must be sought in order to negate unauthorised spend.
- Unauthorised spend - managers should be aware of their constitutional responsibilities when authorising spend. Once Cabinet has approved an overall budget, managers should update and request additional funding if necessary from the Portfolio Holder / Cabinet, at the earliest opportunity prior to committing the Council to further expenditure.
- To include sessions within future staff inductions to draw attention to the Council's high level governance arrangements, policies and procedures. This could be complemented via a six monthly induction 'follow up' session aimed at senior managers that can provide further detail in key areas such as budget and financial responsibilities long with procurement and other requirements set out within the Council's Constitution.

In addition to the above and based on the detailed findings / outcomes, the matter has been referred for review against the Council's HR policies to determine any further necessary action.

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RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 APRIL 2025

REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A.2 PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROJECTS – UPDATE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report implements the commitment given at the 17 December 2024 meeting of the Committee by the Leader (Minute 64 refers) to “pull together a comprehensive list of all of TDC’s current projects” and to submit these at a meeting of the Committee.

SCOPE - THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The scope of this report is to address the commitment provided to the Committee on 17 December above as set out above.

INVITEES

None. The Leader of the Council (Cllr Mark Stephenson) will attend the meeting to present this report.

BACKGROUND

In receiving the initial report to it on 22 July 2024 in respect of the unauthorised expenditure in respect of the Spendells project, the Committee recommended to Cabinet (inter alia):

“that Portfolio Holders review, with their Corporate Directors, the performance and project management of all existing projects within their respective portfolios and report their findings to the Leader of the Council by the end of September 2024 (and that this also then be submitted to this Committee at its next programmed meeting).”

Following consideration of the above by Cabinet on 20 September (Minute 46 refers), the Committee then met on 23 September 2025 (Minute 57 refers), and resolved to:

“Invite the Leader of the Council to its next meeting and receive a report outlining the progress with the Cabinet’s decision as follows; “Portfolio Holders should review, with their Corporate Directors, the performance and project management of all existing projects within their respective portfolios and report their findings to the Leader of the Council and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee together with such additional actions as the Leader wishes to undertake.”

The Leader then attended the Committee’s meeting on 17 December 2024 (Minute 64 refers) and there was a discussion of the outcome of the Portfolio Holder reviews of their projects. The detail of that discussion, as recorded in the Minutes of that meeting are set out in Appendix A to this report.

The Leader is attending this meeting in order fulfil the commitment given to the Committee on 17 December 2024 and submit a comprehensive list of all of TDC’s current projects. This list is set out at Appendix B to this report.

RELEVANT CORPORATE PLAN THEME/ANNUAL CABINET PRIORITY

The Corporate Plan themes for the Council for the period 2024-28 are:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
- Championing our local environment
- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer
- Financial sustainability and openness

The various projects of the Council can be said to contribute to many, if not all, of the above themes. In regard to this specific report, the expanded text of the financial sustainability and openness theme above, is relevant:

“To continue to deliver effective services and get things done we must look after the public purse; that means carefully planning what we do, managing capacity, and prioritising what we focus our time, money and assets on. Tough decisions will not be shied away from, but will be taken transparently, be well-informed, and based upon engagement with our residents. We will give clarity on where the Council spends the money it is provided with.”

DESIRED OUTCOME OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM

The Terms of Reference for this Committee clearly allocate its responsibility for oversight of Service Delivery and Performance by the Council. Management of Projects is within scope of the Committee as it performs its ‘critical friend’ role to Cabinet on behalf of the wider Council.

DETAILED INFORMATION

The information submitted by the Leader in respect of projects within the control of Cabinet is set out at Appendix B to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee determines whether it has any comments or recommendations it wishes to put forward to the Leader/Cabinet.

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

Minutes of this Committee’s meeting on:

- * 22 July 2024 (Minute 50 refers)
- * 23 September 2024 (Minute 57 refers)
- * 17 December 2024 (Minute 64 refers)

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

None.

APPENDICES

- A – Extract from the Minutes of the Committee’s Meeting on 17 December 2024 (Minute 64 refers)
- B – List of Projects within the control of the Cabinet

REPORT CONTACT OFFICER(S)	
Name	Keith Simmons
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EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2024 (MINUTE 64)

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND ELECTIONS - A.2 - PORTFOLIO HOLDER PROJECTS - PERFORMANCE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Democratic Services & Elections (A.2) which enabled it to consider the outcome of its decision from its meeting on 23 September 2024 (Minute 57 referred) which had been considered by Cabinet on 15 November 2024 (Minute 75 referred). The Committee had recommended, in the light of the unauthorised expenditure found in relation to the Spendells temporary accommodation project that Portfolio Holders reviewed performance and project management of all their existing projects. This review, the Committee had requested, should be completed in time for the findings to be reported to this meeting together with any additional actions determined by the Leader. The Leader of the Council attended this meeting to discuss the outcome of the Portfolio Holder reviews of their projects.

The Chief Executive (Ian Davidson) referred to the announcement by HM Government of its White Paper on Devolution and Local Government re-organisation (LGR). He outlined the context in relation to the timescales for completing the projects and other constraining effects on the Council's key projects that would need to be kept under close review moving forward. Responding and reacting to the White Paper would have a significant effect on this Council's capacity and resources. It would also challenge this Council to maintain its current good performance in terms of Value for Money judgements (which had been recognised by the Council's External Auditor). Mr. Davidson then responded to Members' questions as follows: -

<u>Committee Members' Questions</u> (Summary)	<u>Responses (Chief Executive, unless otherwise stated)</u> (Summary)
Will there be a clause in the new Waste Management Contract that will protect TDC in the event that it disappears under LGR?	There are a myriad of contracts that will need to be gone through. Harmonisation of contracts with other local authorities would take place over time. If TDC was to cease to be then the burden of such contracts would fall on the successor Authority. These are all matters that need to be closely considered alongside other matters such as TDC's close working relationships with the District's Parish and Town Councils.
As LGR progresses will there be a grading system introduced for projects that are underway or are still in the planning stage?	Excellent question. This is just the sort of thing that Officers will need to examine and then facilitate the Cabinet in making its decisions. For some projects, TDC is already contractually obliged having accepted the relevant external funding. The Council's Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer will both play a key role in that process. [Director (Governance)] – These are daunting times for local government as it is facing its largest re-organisation since the passing of the Local Government Act 1972. This is also happening alongside large-scale changes to the national planning, housing and procurement statutory frameworks. Already, cautionary messages are being issued to Councils about looking at, in the New Year, transformation projects whether planned or already underway.
Should this overview and scrutiny committee be concentrating on the process in terms of LGR and its effect on TDC's projects?	It would be valid for this Committee to look at the process for choosing which projects are continued or are ceased. A report will be submitted to Full Council in January 2025 that will place all the available information before Members in order to allow them to debate this matter.

	[Director (Governance)] – Officers will, of course, keep Members up-to-date as matters progress. It is expected that tools will be provided in due course for Members by bodies such as the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Eventually an Order will be made in Parliament that will set out all those functions (including contractual matters) that will be put over to the new Authority.
Has TDC been involved in any Best Value related collaborations with neighbouring Authorities on these large projects/contracts e.g. Waste Management?	Yes, most certainly e.g. with Colchester CC and Essex CC on the TCB Garden Community. Another example would be regarding collection methods and mechanisms for purchasing collection vehicles for the new waste collection contract. [Leader of the Council] – Other examples would include the Health & Well-being Alliance, procurement, Emergency Planning, new HR systems and the NEC audit.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor M Stephenson) then addressed the Committee and stated that the Leader/Portfolio Holders' review of projects had focused on three key aspects i.e. capacity, governance and finance. He was broadly comfortable that Portfolio Holders were on top of their respective projects. Councillor Stephenson commended the Committee for their recommendation as this had proved to be a very useful exercise for both Officers and Portfolio Holders. He intended to pull together a comprehensive list of all of TDC's current projects which he would submit to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Leader of the Council then responded to Members' questions as set out hereunder. The Chairman (Councillor P Honeywood) acknowledged that the Leader had not had sight of the questions before the meeting

<u>Committee Members' Question (Summary)</u>	<u>Responses (Leader of the Council, unless otherwise stated) (Summary)</u>
Have all the cameras been granted planning permission?	No. A number of planning applications had been submitted and any that were still outstanding would be submitted shortly. These planning applications would be required to be considered by the Planning Committee.
Regarding the CCTV project, what has happened and what is the progress?	Outlined the timeline to the Committee and undertook to circulate the timeline to Members after the meeting.
How did the CCTV project get so far behind schedule?	There were problems with specifications and the tender process.
Is everything going to be completed for the CCTV project by March 2025?	The aim was to have everything completed by 10 April 2025.
Since the Safer Street Funding briefing note has been circulated, what has happened since then?	Will provide a written answer circulated to all members of the Committee.
Is the Council adhering to the terms of the funding agreement?	Yes, but will confirm that in writing.
What is the financial risk to the Council?	Not aware of any risk. Money is passported and there has been an extension of time granted.
Regarding the site at Weeley, what is the end date for the project? What has happened since 2023 when the heads of terms were signed? How long were the heads of terms agreed for? What happens if there is no completion of the development? Are the housing prices right for the	This is a sensitive issue best answered by the Corporate Director. There are things going on in the background but they are of a sensitive nature. [Corporate Director (Operations & Delivery)] – It's undeniable that this matter has not proceeded as quickly as TDC would have liked. Officers have been pushing hard but, as yet, have not reached an agreement with the Developer. Is aware of the ongoing cost liabilities to the Council of this site.

<p>development? Is the deal still good for the Council? What is the procedure for property acquisitions or disposals in relation to tender? What was the process that was undertaken?</p>	<p>Will start to look at alternative options for the disposal of this site in an effort to speed up a resolution. Frustrating for all concerned. Any alternative to the current negotiating process will require a further report to Cabinet and a new decision. The negotiations have been lengthy, detailed and problematic (e.g. ransom strips).</p> <p>[Chief Executive] – To an extent, TDC is in the hands of Developers and their willingness to release sites into the housing market. Obviously, this would be done on a ‘drip feed’ process in order to avoid a sudden ‘glut’ and a depression of house prices.</p> <p>[Councillor M Cossens] – The site at Weeley will be a key focus of the work of the Asset Management Arrangements Task & Finish Working Group.</p>
<p>Further to the responses just provided, this needs close examination to learn lessons for the future. Is going out to a re-tender one of the alternative options?</p>	<p>[Corporate Director (Operations & Delivery)] – Yes, that is one of the options.</p> <p>[Chief Executive] – There is a requirement for seven dwellings to come into TDC’s housing stock. This has been a complicating factor and has meant that it has not been a straight-forward land sale.</p>
<p>What projects do you have underway? What was the review process taken?</p>	<p>Review of projects had focused on three key aspects i.e. capacity, governance and finance. He was broadly comfortable that Portfolio Holders were on top of their respective projects. He intended to pull together a comprehensive list of all of TDC’s current projects which he would submit to a future meeting of the Committee. List being refined all the time. Had been a very useful exercise for both Officers and Cabinet Members to bring this list of all the projects into one place.</p>
<p>Further to the responses just provided, will this factor into the Administration’s priorities going forward and will this Committee have a say in producing that list?</p>	<p>Yes, they will. The draft initial priorities list for consultation purposes will be submitted to Cabinet on Friday. No though yet has been given to producing milestones for these priorities.</p>
<p>What is the progress with Clacton Town Board?</p>	<p>Previous Conservative Government earmarked £20million over a ten-year period. The matter was paused whilst the General Election was held and whilst the new Labour Government considered and confirmed its regeneration priorities. Therefore, the CTB has been effectively in limbo as a result but it has remained determined to take advantage of any opportunities that comes its way and it has been able to proceed with smaller initiatives like empty shop wrapping in Clacton Town Centre and the development of a website.</p>
<p>How many times has the local MP been to the meetings of the Clacton Town Board?</p>	<p>Will provide a written answer circulated to all members of the Committee.</p>
<p>If LGR goes ahead, will that make the CTB more important as a way of ensuring input into decision making at the local level?</p>	<p>Yes, it will. The CTB is very determined to take ownership of Clacton’s future.</p>
<p>What are the milestones for the savings plans?</p>	<p>[Director (Finance & IT)] - A report will be submitted to Cabinet on Friday that details when savings will come into the Budget in 2025/26 and 2026/27.</p>
<p>Are you behind or ahead with the savings plan?</p>	<p>[Director (Finance & IT)] - Not behind and ahead in some ways but it will require concrete work, actions and decisions made going forward. Worry is about the</p>

	<p>unexpected/unforeseen (e.g. Covid-19) occurrences that could knock TDC off-course. Overall, TDC is currently in a good position.</p> <p>[Chief Executive] – TDC is not in danger of having to issue a Section 114 Notice unlike many other Councils. The External Auditor is content with TDC’s approach of a rolling ten-year financial forecast. This ‘smooths out’ the process and avoids annual wholesale ‘panic’ cuts of services.</p>
<p>What is the current position with the old Savoy nightclub in Clacton Town?</p>	<p>[Chief Executive] – This is a commercially sensitive matter at this time but forms part of TDC’s overall partnership project with the Arts Council. Willing to give more detail in writing to Members.</p>

It was moved by Councillor P Honeywood, seconded by Councillor Doyle and:-

RESOLVED that the Committee, having discussed the review of performance and project management undertaken by Portfolio Holders with the Leader of the Council:-

- (a) looks forward to receiving the further written answers in due course from the Leader of the Council and would welcome any further expanded responses to those already provided at the meeting; and
- (b) reserves the right to submit any comments or recommendations to Cabinet on this matter once it has considered the Executive’s budget proposals and initial highlight priorities at its meeting due to be held on 13 January 2024.

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Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Private Sector Housing damp and mould enforcement	MHCLG Funded project to increase enforcement in the private rent sector with a focus on damp and mould	130K	Under way - commenced April 2024. Some delays getting the project under way not caused by us but due to project team at MHCLG. £30k funding extension offered this week from MHCLG to extend for six months.
Jaywick Sands Healthy Homes	Dedicated team set up to deliver private rented sector interventions in Jaywick Sands along with wider open space and waste management improvements	£900K	Under way. Three year extension to funding agreement signed at end of March. Recruitment now starting to build the team up to full capacity again.
Procurement of waste & recycling collection and street cleaning contract for 2026 onwards	Waste contract procurement	£300K project budget, circa. £9K anticipated contract value	SQ stage completed, invitations to submit detailed solutions commenced last week of November
Clacton Town Centre CCTV	Additional and replacement cameras well as software, columns etc	£200K inc fees and costs	Contract started. Statutory consents (except highways) in place. Final completion (subject to highways) estimated at the start of June. Funders notified.
Weeley Council offices - disposal	Disposal option previously agreed but delivery stalled	Subject to contract	Proposed Cabinet decision on 11 April 2025 to determine whether to continue with current negotiations or review other options.
Reinstatement of promenade Dovercourt	Sea water has damaged the revetment and caused erosion under the promenade	£72K	Completed. Some additional work identified and completed.

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Compete works under the land swap deal to improve Clacton Leisure Centre	Car park extension, cricket square assessment and some landscaping only remain outstanding	£28K	Car park extension completed. Refurbishment of cricket square to be undertaken at the end of the season.
Office Transformation	Last works to complete refurbishment at Mill Lane Walton and Store at Alexandra Gardens	£80K	Works at Mill Lane nearly complete. Unexpected need to rebuild the rear gable wall. Some minor service issues remain to resolve.
Beach Hut Strategy	Strategy set. Implementation in stages	Within existing budgets	Commercial leases complete, to be rolled out. Some decayed TDC owned huts to be renewed within allocated funds. Beach hut specifications tailored to areas in progress. Further actions subject to review of priorities.
Dovercourt Leading Lighthouse and Causeway - Phase 1B Survey and Condition Study of the Unsighted Legs	Phase 1A_Structural and Condition Survey of the Lighthouses completed in Spring 2024, outlined further exploratory work required on the 'unsighted' legs of the lighthouse on the foreshore. Phase 1B_Structural and Condition Survey of the Unsighted Legs to commence w/c 9th December 2024.	Phase 1B - £52K	In progress - work commence w/c 9th December 2024

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Tendring Witch Heritage Trail	Wooden carved benches and information boards in four locations across Tendring: Walton-on-Naze, Manningtree/Mistley, Harwich and St Osyth. Working with Professor Alison Rowlands from the University of Essex and Historic England.	£49K	Procurement completed and contract awarded.
Sunspot Jaywick Workspace	Workspace for new and expanding businesses in Jaywick Sands. Includes cafe, events space, meeting rooms, retail and flexible workspaces.	£5.3M	Construction complete. In snagging stage. Final account being considered by Cabinet.
Orwell Place car park	Construction of the Orwell Place car park	£2.3M	Construction complete. In snagging stage. Final account outstanding
Tendring District PlayZones	The PlayZone Programme is an exciting new investment programme aimed at tackling inequalities in physical activity and access to facilities by funding community-led spaces by providing new multi sports pitches	£1.4M	In progress - tech surveys under way

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Walton Lifestyles Building Management System & Air Handling Unit	Replacement of an existing Air handling unit & installation of a new Building Management System to decrease running costs and carbon footprint	£350-450K	In progress - tender closed and evaluation of bids at present
Clacton Leisure Centre Oil Boiler	To replace the oil boiler system at Clacton leisure Centre, under a funding bid with Salix	£1.4M	In progress - Funding Application submitted awaiting to hear back by May 2025
CLC Pool leaks	To address leaks within pool pipework at Clacton Leisure Centre	£40K	In Progress - Watch and waiting brief
Capacity spend for the Town Centre	for Community consultation for business, youth and visitor. Additional street cleaning and shop wrapping, graffiti removal and banners	£250K	In progress
Green Spaces Fund	To improve green spaces in Dovercourt Town Centre, linking to the Seafront	£0.5M	Project scoping & initiation
HSA Seed Funding	Pilot scheme to put decisions regarding towns back into the hands of the businesses and communities	£237K	Year 1 complete. Currently working on year 2.

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Funding for communities and businesses outside of the Clacton area	Grants provide to businesses and communities to support project or procurement of equipment that will enhance and support their growth	£660K	All money spent and waiting for notification of whether this will continue.
Need & Demand Study	Establishing an evidence base for future uses for TDC-owned heritage assets in Clacton town centre	£0.02M	Out for procurement
Funding for projects within the Tendring area under pre-agreed interventions	A range of projects and grants under 5 interventions. A series of open calls for projects have gone out to partners, businesses, organisations and internal services	£1,188K	Monitoring and providing information to Gov. Dealing with any underspends to ensure the maximum amount is spent. Supporting successful applicants.
Carnarvon Terrace	To deliver 28 new homes along with replacement car parking and approx 1400 sq.m. flexible commercial use	£19.75M	In planning (as of w/c 9.12.24)
Milton Road and Victoria Street	8 new-build town houses for social rent & replacement car parking	£3.8M	In planning (as of w/c 9.12.24)
Community Transport Buses	Providing three new minibuses	£0.21M	Scoping complete, subject to December Cabinet
Sunspot Centre solar PV		£0.15M	

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
	Installing solar PV to Sunspot to reduce running costs		Scoping complete, subject to January Cabinet
Extending the Healthy Homes Initiative	Funding to support the acquisition and/or demolition long-term vacant and or dangerous dwellings.	£0.2M	Scoping complete, subject to December Cabinet
Jaywick and Clacton Shopfront Improvements	Improving tired shopfronts to improve pride in place	£0.5M	Scoping complete, subject to December Cabinet
Jaywick Sands Public Open Space	Enhancing public open spaces in Jaywick	£2M	Project scoping & initiation

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Seafront Micro Venue	Repurposing disused toilet block for seafront arts, exhibition and community micro venue	£0.5M	Scoping complete, subject to December Cabinet
Repurposing Martello Tower	Repurposing up to two of the underutilised towers into event or culture venues	£2M	Project scoping & initiation
Active Wellbeing Centre Phase One	Supporting ongoing project at Clacton Leisure Centre to integrate health & wellbeing services	£3M	Awaiting completion of existing project
Town Centre Building	Acquiring and repurposing the [...] [town centre building] for community and/or cultural usage. [Note: redacted due to commercial sensitivity]	£5M	Out for procurement
Cultural masterplanning	Masterplanning and visioning funding to support establishing necessary partnerships, actions and capacity to develop a cultural quarter	£100K (Revenue)	Project scoping & initiation
ECC Funding agreement	· Improvements to 3 bus stops	£4.23M combined	Funding agreement under discussion

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
(Bus infrastructure in Clacton & Jaywick; Skills Hub Fit-out; Tudor Fields; Town Centre public realm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Equipment for the Skills Hub in the new Clacton Library · New pedestrian and cycle route in Jaywick · Wayfinding and public realm improvements to Clacton-on-Sea town centre 		awaiting legal resource
NHS Funding agreement (Urgent Treatment Centre)	Contribution towards building a new urgent treatment centre and new primary care facility at Clacton Hospital	£2M	Funding agreement under discussion awaiting legal resource
Active Ageing Outdoor Gym	Outdoor gym to help improve conditioning and maintain fitness with a specific aim for older people and to assist rehabilitation	£70K	Completed by November 2024
Dig 4 Jaywick	A community garden for the benefit of residents to support addressing social isolation and improved mental health	£15K	In progress and ongoing
Community Support and Employment Officers	Officers to support those furthest from employment address all their barriers to employment	£95K	Year 1 complete and currently seeking funding to extend for one or two more years in line with DWP's bidding process

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Fuel Poverty Officer	Officer to support residents facing financial hardship through fuel poverty and increasing access to benefits	£70K	Ongoing
Housing Benefits and Early Intervention Officer	As part of a multi-disciplinary team in Children's Social Care to deliver support to those most in need around housing and benefits	£70K	Ongoing
Family Solution Officer	Officers to provide support to families most in need and address the range of issues they face by working with specific families to provide ongoing support	£110K	Ongoing
Wellbeing Hubs in Primary Schools	An intervention model for supporting primary school children around their mental health and build resilience for them and their families	£68K	Ongoing
Junior Ambassadors Project	A racial and cultural awareness raising project for children in year 5/6	£15K	Ongoing

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Sing for Lung Health	Sing for Lung Health work with community choirs to help those with long term respiratory conditions manage their symptoms and reduce isolation. Working with the Health Alliance.	£5K	Money to be committed by end of financial year 2024/25 with a view to launch in April/May 2025
Advisory and Support Service for 2025/2026	Procurement to deliver an advisory and support service for Tendering.	TBC	Procurement to start in February with a view for the contract to be awarded in April 2025.
TCB Garden Community	Progress the TCB Garden Community project through the planning process.	£100k 2024/25, £50k 2025/26 - with intention of costs being covered entirely from developer contributions and government funding going forward. Recruitment of additional officers into the TCB Project Team is underway.	On schedule - pending timely report from the Planning Inspector on the soundness of the Development Plan Document (DPD) in early 2025. DPD requires Full Council adoption at TDC and CCC. First planning applications expected Spring 2025 for determination mid 2026 - by Joint Committee.
Local Plan Review	Carry out mandatory review of the Local Plan, taking into account government changes to housebuilding targets.	£175K pa - utilising underspend from previous years (reflecting the multi-year nature of Local Plan work).	Awaiting confirmation of NPPF housebuilding targets. Timetable to be adjusted with aim of reaching submission stage by end of 2025.

Project	Brief description	Value	Status
Conclusion of the Careline review.	Implementing the Cabinet's final decision on the future of Tendring Careline - which could see the telecare and lifting service cease in June 2025.	£746K transition fund agreed by Cabinet to bring about implementation of final decision.	Final course of action dependent on exploration of third-party proposals. Final Cabinet decision February 2025, implementation by end of June 2025.
Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Local Listing	Review of all 20 Conservation Areas in Tendring and setting up of a local list of locally important heritage assets.		Ongoing
Essex Procurement Partnership	Progress reported to Cabinet in February 2025, on the development of the partnership with 4 other Councils. With a draft Collaboration Agreement and Procurement Strategy for adoption.	Just in excess of £100K per annum (GF & HRA)	Collaboration Agreement ready for competition, with implementation of the new arrangement commencing in April 2025.
Social Value Policy	Recently reported to Cabinet and Council – SV Policy adopted to gain social value through procurement activity	No financial value but SV is non-financial and data will be collated and reported upon	Adopted Policy to be monitored throughout the year.
Citizens Access Portal	Introduction for Citizens Access Portal	£60,404 ex VAT per annum	In progress Council Tax & Business Rates module to Go Live within next month, with Citizen Access - Benefits module to follow in new financial year

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RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 APRIL 2025

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CORPORATE POLICY AND SUPPORT)

A.3 WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25 – INCLUDING MONITORING OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

(Report prepared by Ian Ford)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The report provides the Committee with an update on its approved Work Programme for 2024/25 (including progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme), feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which notice has been given since publication of the agenda for the Committee's last meeting.

The report also provides an opportunity for updates on the work of the Committee's Task and Finish Groups.

INVITEES

None.

BACKGROUND

The Council commissioned the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) to undertake an 'Overview & Scrutiny Development Review' in 2021 as a way of further improving that function at the Council. Two relevant recommendations arising from that review were:

“Further strengthening the annual process for developing work programmes for each O&S committee - Engaging Members, Officers, partners and the public to prioritise the topics for review. This could include a selection criteria to identify appropriate topics for the work programme. Currently the work programme is also the last item on the agenda at O&S meetings, we would recommend bringing it to the beginning, so it can be given greater priority and benefit from more considered discussion, rather than being subject to the inevitable end of meeting fatigue.

Reviewing how the recommendations are made and how impact is measured – This could include putting the ‘recommendations monitoring report’ at the beginning of agendas to orientate O&S towards outcomes-focused meetings, alongside an emphasis on finding strong recommendations from questioning to present to Cabinet (or partners) as improvement or challenge proposals.”

The inclusion of the matters set out in the “purpose of this report” section above seeks to further re-enforce the inter-relationship of the matters referred to. As such, it is designed to further support consideration of work programming of the Committee and contribute to addressing progress with the Corporate Plan.

DETAILED INFORMATION

WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

The detailed matters relating to the following matters are set out in the relevant Appendix identified:

- (1) Work Programme for 2024/25 approved by Full Council on 6 August 2024 – See Appendix A;
- (2) feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken – See Appendix B; and
- (3) a list of forthcoming decisions for which notice has been given since publication of the agenda for the Committee’s last meeting – See Appendix C.

In considering work programming matters, the Committee is further reminded of the other recommendations from the CfGS review undertaken in 2021:

“Considering greater use of task and finish groups – *This more informal type of O&S can allow improved cross-party working and detailed investigation of a single issue focussed on producing substantive recommendations.*

Improved agenda planning and management - *Committees should focus on one or two substantive items per agenda to allow for cross-cutting themes to be properly identified and explored, and different insights brought to bear on critical issues.*

Considering how to engage the public in the work of O&S - *This could include O&S going on more site visits in the community, inviting the public to offer ideas for work programmes, and greater use of social media channels for resident input and communicating the progress and impact of scrutiny work.*

A clearer focus on democratic accountability - *Scrutiny of Cabinet Members should form a key part of the work programme, providing an opportunity to hold the Leader and portfolio holders to account for delivery of the corporate plan and any other issues O&S feel is important.”*

The Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is one of two overview and scrutiny committees established by the Council to specifically focus on the following areas of Council work (as detailed in Article 6.02(i) of the Council’s Constitution):

To perform the role of Overview and Scrutiny and its functions in relation to the effective use of the Council’s resources including approval of discrete researched and evidenced reviews on the effectiveness of:

Financial Forecast Budget setting and monitoring (including General Fund & Housing Revenue Account but excluding those budgetary matters delegated to the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

*Colchester/Tendring Borders Garden Community
Housing Strategy and Homeless Service*

Service Delivery and Performance (where not delegated to the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Procurement and Contract Management

Transformation and Digital Strategies
Customer Service and Standards

The Constitution provides for the two overview and scrutiny committees to submit a work programme to full Council for approval. Rule 7 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules sets out the position as follows:

“Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will submit a work programme for the year ahead and a review of the previous year’s activities to the full Council for approval. In addition it will be responsible for co-ordinating and prioritising its work programme on an ongoing basis.

In preparing, co-ordinating and prioritising its programme, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will take into account:-

- *The General Role and Principles of undertaking its functions, as set out in Part 2 Article 6*
- *the planned work on the preparation of elements of the Budget and Policy Framework;*
- *provision for budget scrutiny and scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy, as appropriate;*
- *the need for statutory timetables to be met;*
- *the expressed wishes of the members of the committee;*
- *requests from the Cabinet to carry out reviews and/or suggestions from the liaison meetings held under the Cabinet Overview & Scrutiny Protocol; and*
- *requests from Members and/or Group Leaders in accordance with Rule 8.”*

In considering the Work Programme of enquiries, the Committee must have regard to the Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the themes of that Corporate Plan are:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
- Championing our local environment
- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer
- Financial Sustainability and openness

It should also be noted that the Committee will hold an informal meeting on Wednesday 9 April 2025 with the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support) to discuss the work programme and the agenda for this meeting.

Work Programme – 2025/2026 Municipal Year

Officers are beginning the process of developing the Committee’s work programme for 2025/26. Initially, this will involve seeking suggestions from:-

- Members;
- the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council (through a joint meeting

under the Cabinet/Overview & Scrutiny Protocol with the Chairmen of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which will also involve the Chief Executive, the Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support);

- Management Team;
- Town and Parish Councils, partner agencies and community groups; and
- The public.

Officers will then collate the replies received that are relevant to this Committee, associating suggestions with a corporate plan theme, identifying information sources and possible invitees and what might be the benefit of the enquiries. That collation will then be firstly discussed with the Chairman of the Committee and then by the Committee at an informal meeting, which will be arranged in due course.

The proposed Work Programme for 2025/26 together with the annual review of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2024/25 will be formally submitted to the Committee for its approval at its meeting due to be held on 1 July 2025.

The Work Programme, as recommended by the Committee, together with the annual review of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2024/25, will then be submitted to the meeting of the Full Council due to be held on 15 July 2025 for its approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

- (a) considers and notes the progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme 2024/25, plus any feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations and the list of forthcoming decisions;**
- (b) invites oral updates on the work of the three Task and Finish Groups established by the Committee (as referenced in the Work Programme at Appendix A):**
 - (i) Asset Management Arrangements (Cllr. Mark Cossens is its Chairman);**
 - (ii) Council Enforcement Arrangements (Cllr. Paul Honeywood is its Chairman);**
 - (iii) Housing Strategy Development and Temporary Accommodation (Councillor Dan Casey is its Chairman);**
- (c) notes the arrangements that are being made for the Committee to consider and decide in due course its Work Programme for 2025/26.**

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RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ENQUIRIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN 2024/25

Item	Date of Enquiry	Relevant Corporate Plan Theme/Annual Cabinet Priority	Information to be provided in advance	Those to be invited to attend	Articulated value of undertaking the review
Post delivery scrutiny of the Sunspot commercial workspace in Brooklands, Jaywick	Off agenda briefing note by the end of September 2024	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness	<p>Management arrangements for the commercial workspace.</p> <p>Details of the lettings of the business units, shops and café and the use of the covered market area and event hall (including lease terms) from the opening of the development.</p> <p>Details as to how the operation of the workspace supports enhances, compliments activities at the Jaywick Resources Centre.</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Tourism</p> <p>Corporate Director, Place and Economy</p>	To provide the Committee with information on the development since it opened and identify matters for further enquiry, would be beneficial.
To examine the Asset management arrangements of the Council and consider the extent to which asset	Through A Task and Finish Group	<input type="checkbox"/> Championing our local environment	A complete list of TDC assets (specifically property & land) and the ward they are located in.	<p>Portfolio Holder Assets</p> <p>Assistant Director,</p>	The enable the examination of asset management and utilisation with a view to supporting

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<p>acquisition and disposal is strongly linked to the ambitions of the corporate plan.</p> <p>The enquiry will look at land assets and their use/value to the Council and community properties, investment in them and the use to which they are put, IT Assets and Beach Hut (bases).</p> <p>[This matter will not look at Human Resources or matters in the Housing Revenue Account].</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pride in our area and services to residents <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Partners to improve quality of life <input type="checkbox"/> Raising aspirations and creating opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer <input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness 	<p>Repairing obligations (for this Council) costings in relation to maintenance for land & property asset.</p> <p>The enquiry will look at unused assets (eg toilet block at the junction of Coppins Road and Old Road, Clacton).</p> <p>IT equipment and software acquisition, maintenance licences, disposal and the opportunity to harness digital solutions and be as efficient in transactional services, as possible across the Council. This should look at contacts (and costs of contact) and use of AI chatbot systems to improve experience and reduce multiple handling enquiries.</p>	<p>Building and Public Realm</p> <p>Assistant Director Finance IT</p> <p>Appropriate other Portfolio Holders and Officers</p>	<p>delivery of the corporate plan 2024 and recommendations to release assets that do not contribute to that plan or otherwise rationalise assets to improve effectiveness and efficiency of those assets.</p>
<p>Housing Strategy Development and Infrastructure and</p>	<p>Through Task and Finish Group</p>		<p>Policies and Practice documents of the Council in respect of</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder, Housing and Planning.</p>	<p>To look at possible improvements to temporary</p>

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<p>Temporary Accommodation. The enquiry will include a look at how the Council maintain its list of private landlords and if the Council quality check those properties as suitable.</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Working with Partners to improve quality of life</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness</p>	<p>the use of private rented accommodation for those needing housing.</p> <p>The average time people are placed in temporary rented housing accommodation. Details of complaints by those people in rental accommodation. Numbers of HRA properties over the last five years including acquisitions and disposals.</p> <p>The current housing strategy and any development draft of a new strategy as well as an assessment as to how the current strategy has been delivered.</p>	<p>Assistant Director, Housing and Environment</p> <p>A representation of private landlords</p>	<p>accommodation provision and make recommendations there on.</p> <p>To determine the strategic direction of the Council in respect of Housing and the extent to which this has been delivered.</p>
<p>Careline Transition Arrangements</p>	<p>Committee meeting due to be held on 1 July 2025 (or at a</p>		<p>Since the Cabinet decision on 21 February in respect of the future of Careline,</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Partnerships</p>	

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	Special Meeting of the Committee before then if required)		Officers have been able to progress with more detailed discussions with Colchester City Council and Colchester Helpline about how our respective Careline and Helpline services operate and the best route towards a smooth transition, which has included engaging staff in discussions on a more technical level to understand the capability of IT systems and mobile devices. Our HR Team has also been actively engaging with all staff, both collectively and on a one to one basis in the run up to the formal consultation on staff transfer arrangements. Officers are also progressing with the review of third-party contracts with legal advice ahead of	Corporate Director (Planning and Community) Assistant Director (People)	
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			<p>decisions to serve notice and terminate the remaining contracts ahead of the transfer.</p> <p>All of these workstreams and discussions will feed into the heads of terms for a legal agreement and a detailed transition plan that will require Portfolio Holder agreement in due course; but at this point in time, the detail of the transition is still being worked up and Officers will not be in a position to report much by way of an update to this Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny meeting on that detail. Officers however do consider that there will likely be more to report come July once Officers have completed the current phase of discussions</p>		
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			and have moved more into the detailed consideration of heads of terms and transition milestones.		
COMPLETED					
Portfolio Holder Update	22 July 2024	<input type="checkbox"/> Championing our local environment <input type="checkbox"/> Pride in our area and services to residents <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Partners to improve quality of life <input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness	Updated the Committee on work in relation to his role as Portfolio Holder.	Councillor Mike Bush – the then Portfolio Holder for Environment	Enabled the Committee to be aware of the significant areas of the responsibility with in the Portfolio and the areas the Portfolio Holder was addressing currently.
Portfolio Holder Update	At Committee on 23 September 2024	<input type="checkbox"/> Championing our local environment <input type="checkbox"/> Pride in our area and services to residents <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Partners to	Updated the Committee on work in relation to his role as Portfolio Holder.	Councillor Peter Kotz – Portfolio Holder for Assets	Enabled the Committee to be aware of the significant areas of the responsibility with in the Portfolio and the areas the Portfolio Holder is addressing currently

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		<p>improve quality of life</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness</p>			
<p>Council Enforcement arrangements including the extent to which enforcement powers are looked at in a silo or corporate way to ensure that (with in the purposes of particular enforcement powers) the Council considers the ability to address non-compliances robustly.</p>	<p>Through Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>[This continues the work in 2023/24 where enforcement arrangements around planning, was examined].</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Championing our local environment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pride in our area and services to residents</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness</p>	<p>The detail to the extent to which the Corporate Enforcement Group has provided the route to ensuring a corporate consideration to utilising a range of enforcement powers to address problem premises.</p> <p>An update on the implementation of recommendations made in 2023/24 around planning.</p> <p>To examine fly tipping and the use of mobile CCTV as part of enforcement.</p>	<p>Leader of the Council</p> <p>Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery</p> <p>Assistant Director, Partnerships</p> <p>Appropriate Portfolio Holders and Officers</p>	<p>To identify any possible areas for improved enforcement arrangements and to make recommendations there on.</p> <p>Final Report of the Working Group on Fly Tipping and Mobile CCTV enforcement was submitted to the meeting of the Committee held on 23 September 2024.</p> <p>The Committee's recommendations were then submitted to the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 November 2024.</p>

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					Cabinet’s decision is set out in Appendix B.
<p>Pre-Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>Consider long-term forecasts. Challenging assumptions/testing zero base budgeting. Consider repeated overspends/underspends Addressing performance/budget requirements.</p>	<p>At Committee on 13 January 2024 [Pre-meeting 6 January 2025]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Championing our local environment <input type="checkbox"/> Pride in our area and services to residents <input type="checkbox"/> Working with Partners to improve quality of life <input type="checkbox"/> Raising aspirations and creating opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer <input type="checkbox"/> Financial sustainability and openness 	<p>The 2024/25 Budget and update the end of Q3, draft budget for 2025/26 and the financial strategy plus details of significant overspend and underspend over the last five financial years.</p>	<p>All Portfolio Holders</p> <p>All Members of Management Team</p>	<p>To provide the envisaged reality check on budgets and financial plans prior to their approval and ensure that there are clear links between budget setting and strategic/operational plans.</p> <p>At its formal meeting held on 13 January 2025, the Committee considered the Executive’s initial budget proposals for 2025/26 in respect of both the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for in accordance with the provisions of Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rule 3 of</p>

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					<p>the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>The Committee's recommendations were submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting held on 31 January 2025.</p> <p>Also at its meeting held on 31 January 2025, the Committee considered the Executive's initial highlights priorities proposals.</p> <p>The Committee's recommendations were submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting held on 17 March 2025.</p>
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Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 17 December 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING REPORT – 2024/2025 MUNICIPAL YEAR

(Prepared by Ian Ford)

Recommendation(s) Including Date of Meeting and Minute Number	Actions Taken and Outcome	Completed, follow-up work required or added to Work Programme
<p><u>THE SPENDELLS PROJECT</u></p> <p>At the Committee’s meeting on 22 July 2024 (minute 50 refers):-</p> <p>RECOMMENDED to CABINET:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That, once the Chief Executive’s formal review (on how the issue of unauthorised expenditure arose and developed in respect of the Spendells project) has been completed, the Cabinet reports on its lessons learnt; 2. that the report referred to in (1) above should articulate a robust response and action plan for going forward; 3. that a more detailed financial breakdown of the seven items not included in the specification for the Spendells project be reported to Cabinet; and 4. that Portfolio Holders review, with their Corporate Directors, the performance and project 	<p>This item was reported to Cabinet on 20 September 2024.</p> <p>Having duly considered the recommendations made by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee together with the response of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning thereto, Cabinet:-</p> <p>RESOLVED that –</p> <p>(a) the Chief Executive’s formal review, when completed, be reported to the Cabinet including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) a more detailed financial breakdown of the seven items not included in the original specification, of additional expense itemised in the previous report to Cabinet; ii) the lessons learnt; iii) articulating a robust response and action plan for going forward; <p>(b) Portfolio Holders should review, with their Corporate Directors, the</p>	<p>Completed</p>

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<p>management of all existing projects within their respective portfolios and report their findings to the Leader of the Council by the end of September 2024 (and that this also then be submitted to this Committee at its next programmed meeting).</p> <p>At the Committee’s meeting on 23 September 2024 (minute 57 refers), it considered the Cabinet’s response and decided, inter alia:-</p> <p><i>“Invite the Leader of the Council to its next meeting and receive a report outlining the progress with the Cabinet’s decision as follows:-</i></p> <p><i>“Portfolio Holders should review, with their Corporate Directors, the performance and project management of all existing projects within their respective portfolios and report their findings to the Leader of the Council and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee together with such additional actions as the Leader wishes to undertake.””</i></p>	<p>performance and project management of all existing projects within their respective portfolios and report their findings to the Leader of the Council and the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee together with such additional actions as the Leader wishes to undertake in response.</p> <p>This item was reported to Cabinet on 15 November 2024.</p> <p>The response of the Housing & Portfolio Holder had been:-</p> <p><i>“As I have stated on more than one occasion I meet weekly with the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) along with the Director for Planning and Communities, to discuss the situation, at that time, of ongoing projects within the Housing and Planning Portfolios, along with many other issues.</i></p> <p><i>Within the Housing Portfolio there are currently two major projects, one being the Honeycroft development of 13 bungalows in Lawford, and the other the refurbishment of Spendells House to temporary accommodation for families, which are both discussed at the weekly meetings, covering the progress, and finances of both. Having visited both sites recently, I can say that</i></p>	<p>Follow-up - Leader of the Council attended the meeting of the Committee held on 17 December 2024.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council (Councillor M Stephenson) addressed the Committee and stated that the Leader/Portfolio Holders’ review of projects had focused on three key aspects i.e. capacity, governance and finance. He was broadly comfortable that Portfolio Holders were on top of their respective projects.</p> <p>Councillor Stephenson commended the Committee for their recommendation as this had proved to be a very useful exercise for both Officers and Portfolio Holders. He intended to pull together a comprehensive list of all of TDC’s current projects which</p>
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	<p><i>work is progressing very well, and although I have been informed of potential dates of opening, I would not want to commit to those publicly until they are a certainty.</i></p> <p><i>As the Committee have been advised, there is a review of the Spendells project, which is still ongoing, and it would be wrong of me to comment on that process, which is being undertaken under the direction of the Chief Executive.</i></p> <p><i>Once the conclusions, and any recommendations, of the review have been made available to both myself and Cabinet, I will be in a better position to identify what actions must be taken in relation to any similar projects that come forward.”</i></p> <p>The Leader of the Council had thanked the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee for all of their work on this matter.</p> <p>Having duly considered the recommendations made by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee together with the response of the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning thereto, Cabinet had:-</p> <p>“RESOLVED that the recommendations made by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and that the response of the Portfolio Holder</p>	<p>he would submit to a future meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council then responded to Members’ questions as set out hereunder. The Chairman (Councillor P Honeywood) acknowledged that the Leader had not had sight of the questions before the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee, having discussed the review of performance and project management undertaken by Portfolio Holders with the Leader of the Council decided that it:-</p> <p><i>(a) looks forward to receiving the further written answers in due course from the Leader of the Council and would welcome any further expanded responses to those already provided at the meeting; and</i></p> <p><i>(b) reserves the right to submit any comments or recommendations to Cabinet on this matter once it has considered the Executive’s budget proposals and initial highlight priorities at its meeting due to be held on 13 January 2024.</i></p>
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<p><u>SCRUTINY OF FLY TIPPING AND MOBILE CCTV ENFORCEMENT</u></p> <p>At the Committee's meeting on 23 September 2024 (minute 59 refers), it considered the final second report from its Council's Enforcement Arrangements Task and Finish Group, which had been submitted following that Group's conclusion of its enquiry concerning fly tipping and mobile CCTV enforcement.</p> <p>The Committee had recommended to Cabinet that:-</p>	<p><i>responsible for Housing and Planning thereto be endorsed."</i></p> <p>This item was reported to Cabinet on 15 November 2024.</p> <p>Cabinet had before it the following response from the Portfolio Holder for the Environment:-</p> <p><i>"I note the recommendations of the Committee and thank them for work they have carried out.</i></p> <p><i>I have been in discussion with the relevant service to explore the feasibility and resource implications of adopting the Committee's recommendations."</i></p>	<p>The Leader of the Council has been invited to attend this meeting of the Committee to give an update on the progress with the Council's corporate projects. The Leader's report (A.2) can be found elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.</p> <p>Similarly, the Chief Executive has been invited to attend this meeting to present the outcome of the review of the unauthorised expenditure in relation to the Spendells House Capital Project. The Chief Executive's report (A.1) can be found elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting.</p>
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<p><i>“(1) in order to develop a more holistic picture of the issues involved and the development of strategies to address them, in addition to highway fly-tipping incidents, records be kept and analysed for fly-tipping on other public land such as open spaces, public realm, Council assets, Beachfronts et cetera;</i></p> <p><i>(2) further steps be undertaken to engage with volunteer litter picking groups to ensure there is greater awareness of the issues around taking waste from private property and of the steps taken by Officers to identify perpetrators of fly-tipping (and the need to preserve that evidence to ensure it can be used in action against perpetrators);</i></p> <p><i>(3) it develop a similar approach to that of the London Borough of Redbridge with its online ‘Wall of Shame’ showing footage of fly-tipping with a view to encouraging understanding of the issue, the Council’s efforts to address fly-tipping and to receive information on perpetrators;</i></p> <p><i>(4) it encourage residents to supply their own footage, possibly through ‘RING’ (or other manufacturers) camera-door bells of fly-tipping captured by them;</i></p> <p><i>(5) it inform Councillors that if they notice dog fouling, un-retrieved dog waste, they should inform the Council’s Community Safety Team who can look at deployment of Ambassadors with a view to detecting the perpetrators and, in the issues</i></p>	<p>Cabinet had also before it the following response from the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships:-</p> <p><i>“I also note the recommendations and thank the Committee.</i></p> <p><i>I have raised the recommendations within the report with the relevant service. I am happy to explore the option to use AI functionality, where appropriate. I have asked the service to assess the impact of using AI on our existing policies and delivery of service.”</i></p> <p>Having duly considered the recommendations made by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee together with the responses of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment and the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships thereto, Cabinet had:-</p> <p><i>“RESOLVED that the recommendations made by the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and that the responses of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment and the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships thereto be endorsed.”</i></p>	
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<p><i>persist, to evidence a decision to deploy mobile CCTV cameras to address the problem;</i></p> <p><i>(6) consideration be given to the deployment of a mobile 'phone application for reporting incidents of fly-tipping and other crimes such as dog fouling and graffiti similar to that in place in Cheshire West and Chester Council;</i></p> <p><i>(7) consider how best to support members of the public to find details of licensed waste carriers (after the UK Government has concluded its review of the online access to that data);</i></p> <p><i>(8) details of fly-tipping hot spots on the highway/public land in the District be circulated to Councillors together with the stepped approach to enforcement relevant to that hot spot site and that this should be alongside summary details of the deployment of mobile CCTV cameras as part of addressing environmental crimes such as fly-tipping;</i></p> <p><i>(9) the reasons for the non-deployment of a mains powered or a battery powered CCTV camera in the High Street, Clacton-on-Sea with a view to deterring and/or detecting fly-tipping at the junction with Beach Road be set out and addressed with the relevant decision makers.</i></p> <p><i>(10) on the basis that the Council's policies, procedures and codes in respect of CCTV are reviewed in this current calendar year, they be amended to provide that as and when CCTV cameras</i></p>		
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<p><i>are to be purchased, or grant applications made to fund CCTV cameras, consideration be given to the relative benefit of those cameras having AI functionality that can be deployed and that for mobile CCTV cameras consideration should also be given to alternative acquisition options such as rental rather than purchase.”</i></p>		
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Recommendations monitoring for those recommendations from earlier meetings of the Committee have been previously reported to the Committee and, as such, are not repeated here as there is no further update to be provided on them.

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Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 13 April 2025

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 13 – SCRUTINY OF PROPOSED DECISIONS

(Prepared by Ian Ford)

The below forthcoming decisions are those published since 17 December 2024 – the publication date for the Committee’s last ordinary meeting and are still ‘live’.

In presenting the following, the Committee’s attention is drawn to the agenda item notes in respect of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 13.

DESCRIPTION OF DECISION	KEY DECISION – YES/NO	DECISION MAKER	Decision Due Date
Update on the waste and recycling collection and street cleaning contract procurement	YES	Cabinet	9/5/25
Approval of the Council’s draft Housing Strategy for Consultation Purposes	YES	Cabinet	9/5/25
Clacton Leisure Centre – External Salix Funding Application to Replace Existing Swimming Pool Boiler with Carbon Efficient Alternative	YES	Cabinet	9/5/25
Housing No Access Policy	YES	Cabinet	9/5/25
Outturn for the 2024/25 Highlight Priority Actions	NO	Cabinet	27/6/25
Treasury Outturn 2024/25	YES	Cabinet	27/6/25
Financial Outturn 2024/25 and Proposed Allocation of the General Fund / HRA Variances for the Year	YES	Cabinet	27/6/25
Terms for a lease renewal over Holland Public Hall, Frinton Road, Holland-on-Sea	NO	Assets Portfolio Holder	Not before 5/12/24
Land swap at Honeycroft, Lawford	NO	Assets Portfolio Holder	Not before 5/12/24
Financial Outturn 2024/25	YES	Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder	Not before 2/6/25
Terms for the lease of a shop property in Dovercourt	NO	Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder	Not before 5/12/24

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LUF/CRP Projects: Agreement of Final Procurement Strategy	YES	Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder	Not before 17/2/25
Review and revision of existing housing policies - Pets Policy	YES	Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder	Not before 20/12/24
Acquisitions and Disposal Policy (Housing)	YES	Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder	Not before 11/4/25
Housing Repairs Term Contract, Budget Review and Repairs Arrangements	YES	Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder	Not before 11/4/25
Termination of Third Party Careline Contracts	NO	Partnerships Portfolio Holder	Not before 7/4/25