MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET, HELD ON FRIDAY, 24TH JULY, 2026 AT 10.30 AM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15 1SE

PRESENT:	PORTFOLIO:
Councillor M E Stephenson	Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance (Chairman)
Councillor I J Henderson	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism
Councillor A P H Baker	Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning
Councillor P Kotz	Portfolio Holder for Assets & Community Safety
Councillor G R Placey	Portfolio Holder for Partnerships
Councillor G G I Scott	Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture & Heritage
Councillor A Smith	Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT

Group Leaders Present by Standing Invitation: Councillors J D Bray (Leader of the Reform UK Group), J B Chapman BEM (Leader of the Independent Group) and P B Honeywood (Leader of the Conservative Group)

Also Present: None

In Attendance: Chief Executive (Ian Davidson), Corporate Director (Finance and IT) & Section 151 Officer (Richard Barrett), Director (People) (Katie Wilkins), Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) (Keith Simmons), Assistant Director (Sport, Culture & Health) (Mike Carran), Assistant Director (Housing and Environment) (Tim R Clarke), Acting Head of People (Marcia Fuller), Democratic Services Manager (Ian Ford), Work Based Learning Manager (Debianne Messenger), Democratic Services Officer (Bethany Jones) and Communications Officer (James Dwan)

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mick Barry (the Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Public Realm).

15. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Henderson and:-

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on Friday 26 June 2026, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman, subject to the inclusion of the word “Engineering” in the relevant sub-heading under Minute 6 (Cabinet Members’ Announcements).

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members on this occasion.

17. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

There were no announcements made by the Leader of the Council on this occasion.

18. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CABINET MEMBERS

Tendring Youth Awards

The Portfolio Holder for Partnerships made the following announcement:-

"I would like to take a moment to recognise the fantastic Tendring Youth Awards, which this year marked its tenth anniversary with a brilliant celebration at the Princes Theatre in Clacton on Tuesday 7th, just a couple of weeks ago.

The evening was a wonderful reminder of the talent, kindness and community spirit we have among young people across Tendring. From young carers and lifesavers to volunteers, performers, environmental champions and those who have shown real determination in their learning and personal growth. The finalists and winners were truly inspiring.

It was also right that the awards recognised the adults, groups and organisations who support young people and help them to thrive. Their work often happens quietly in the background, but it makes a real difference to families and communities across our District.

I would like to congratulate all of this year's nominees, finalists and winners, and thank the Tendring Youth Awards committee, sponsors, supporters, volunteers and everyone involved in making the event such a success.

Above all, I want to say how proud we should be of the young people celebrated at these awards. They are a credit to themselves, their families and Tendring, and they give us every reason to feel positive about the future of our District."

The Leader of the Council echoed those sentiments.

Harwich – Felixstowe – Shotley Foot Ferry

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism made the following announcement:-

"I bring some good news to Cabinet today on the back of Freeport East's Board meeting on Wednesday of this week. There has been a long-standing call for support for the Harwich – Felixstowe – Shotley Foot Ferry. The Tourism Group in Harwich has continually lobbied for extra support to help, perhaps, the Ferry service to extend beyond its normal short period of operation during the summer.

The good news is that as one of the Freeport East Transport Masterplan's priorities the Foot Ferry the Freeport East Board has now agreed to delegate authority to its Chief Executive to finalise a financial agreement with the owners of the Foot Ferry to extend its operating period into the winter. This will extend, and remove existing barriers to increasing, visitor footfall for Harwich, Felixstowe and Shotley. It will also "test the water" to see what commuter interest there is between those ferry destinations.

The funding is there for a three year period and it will be monitored on a yearly basis to see how successful it is. But if we don't try it we will not know how successful it could be and what the need is. So, I am really pleased that we are going to make that connection and it is also what Freeport East is all about. It is making a direct connection between Tendring District and the Suffolk border. Freeport East was created on the back of deprivation and the need to create jobs and skills. What we have always said is if we can make that mutual connection between Felixstowe and Tendring it opens up opportunities for people taking on jobs and opportunities across the water. So, I am really pleased to report that news today."

The Leader of the Council endorsed that this was a good news story.

<u>Story Walks and Well-being</u>

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT made the following announcement:-

"I wanted to take a moment today to highlight a wonderful initiative our Council recently supported – the <u>Story Walks</u> campaign delivered in partnership with Essex storyteller, James Lawrence, known as <u>Man About Country</u>.

I had the privilege of joining the guided walk at The Naze, Walton and as I shared on social media afterwords, the experience really brought home the deep, practical value of three simple things: 'walking, talking and mindfulness'.

First, <u>the walking</u>. Getting outside and moving along our coast is not just about physical health – it is about discovering, preserving and taking genuine pride in Tendring's extraordinary landscapes and natural heritage.

Second, <u>the talking</u>. Walking side-by-side creates a natural, unpressured space for people to chat, connect and share experiences. James' brilliant storytelling reminded us that our local history and identity are rich, vibrant and something to be proud of.

And finally, <u>the mindfulness</u>. In a world that often feels rushed and screen-focused, taking three hours to walk in nature, listen and truly be present is one of the best preventative mental health measures we can encourage for our residents.

Initiatives like this touch on so many of our corporate priorities – from public health and mental well-being to local tourism, culture and community cohesion. I want to commend the team for backing this initiative and urge us to keep supporting opportunities that get our residents outdoors, connecting with one another and experiencing the best of Tendring."

The Chief Executive expanded on those sentiments, and he mentioned that The Naze had featured in a recent episode of the BBC's *Countryfile* TV programme.

19. <u>MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE COUNCIL</u>

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by Full Council on this occasion.

20. <u>MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY A COMMITTEE</u>

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by a Committee on this occasion.

21. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council on this occasion.

22. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.1 - OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2025/26 AND PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF THE GENERAL FUND VARIANCE FOR THE YEAR AND OTHER IN-YEAR BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS 2026/27

Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder (A.1) that provided it with an overview of the financial outturn for 2025/26, and which sought Cabinet's approval of the allocation of the overall 2025/26 General Fund revenue variance along with several proposed budget adjustments across 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Cabinet recalled that the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder had agreed the overall financial outturn position for 2025/26 on 30 June 2026, with a high level summary of the General Fund revenue position as set out below:-

Variance for the year before carry forward requests	(£23.167m)
Less revenue carry forwards requested by Services	£19.778m
Variance for the year after requested carry forwards	(£3.389m)

Some key highlights of the Portfolio Holder report mentioned above are as follows:

1) *the favourable variance for the year of £3.389m was currently being held in the Corporate Investment Fund (Revenue) via the Revenue Commitments Reserve;*

2) *requested revenue carry forwards totalled £19.778m which remained subject to on-going and separate review. Once the review had been completed and agreed under an existing delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance, the money relating to any items not agreed would be transferred to the relevant Corporate Investment Fund.*

3) *strong, effective and proactive financial management continued to influence the outturn position each year. Set against this approach, the complementary and comprehensive reviews as part of the quarterly financial performance / budget reports during the year, had provided opportunities to reflect on issues affecting the Council's general financial position in 2025/26, with timely revisions made where necessary.*

4) *the majority of budget areas had therefore performed to this adjusted position, with only a limited number of variances being highlighted at the end of the year, with many of the items therefore relating to issues highlighted / discussed during the year rather than new items emerging.*

5) *following the introduction of the two-year financial plan that had been developed as part of the budget setting process for 2026/27, that in-turn reflected an holistic*

approach to a two-year window leading up to 1 April 2028 (the potential vesting day for the new Unitary authority based on the Government's current timetable), the outturn position formed an important element of this wider position.

It was reported that the Council's overall general fund reserves totalled £44.368m at 31 March 2026. (excluding the General Fund outturn variance of £3.389m for 2025/26). However, £40.368m was in respect of earmarked reserves, which related to future years' commitments (including the currently requested carry forward amounts). Earmarked reserves therefore predominantly reflected previously identified priorities of the Council. The balance of £4.000m was the level of uncommitted reserves that were held based on a broad risk assessed approach, which included a 'working balance' that formed part of the Council's treasury management processes. The total earmarked reserves also included the balance on the Forecast Risk Fund of £7.235m, which was in-line with the previously agreed amount that remained available to support the Council's financial plans in future years.

In respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the outturn position for 2025/26 reflected an overall favourable variance of £1.652m, that had been transferred to general balances to support the HRA in future years. The HRA general balance at the end of 2025/26 totalled £3.996m.

The Portfolio Holder's report (A.1) also provided a timely opportunity to briefly reflect on the position for 2026/27 and 2027/28, with some further proposed adjustments set out within Appendix A, which reflected / supported the delivery of Council priorities / Departmental Plans and the two-year financial plan.

The recommendations within the report (A.1) set out a number of delegations associated with the delivery / implementation of the various items agreed within Appendix A as necessary.

Cabinet was aware that the Council's two-year financial plan would be subject to updates throughout 2026/27 and would need to reflect new / emerging issues along with any significant changes to issues already identified. In respect of the latter, the two-year plan would need to be reviewed in light of the outturn position for 2025/26.

To enable the financial outturn position for 2025/26 to be noted and to allocate the overall General Fund favourable outturn variance for 2025/26 along with agreeing a number of proposed budget adjustments in 2026/27 and 2027/28:-

It was moved by Councillor Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Smith and:-

RESOLVED that -

(a) the high level Financial Outturn Position, as set out in this report (A.1) and the favourable General Fund Revenue variance of £3.389m for the year, which is currently held within the Corporate Investment Fund (Revenue) via the Revenue Commitments Reserve, be noted;

(b) the use of the General Fund Outturn for the year of £3.389m along with the other budget adjustments, as set out in Appendix A to report A.1, be approved;

(c) in respect of the additional £0.250m set aside within the existing Contingency budget, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance, be authorised to utilise this funding during the year;

(d) in respect of the additional £1.000m set aside to support general capacity within the Council, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance, be authorised to utilise this funding during the year;

(e) in respect of the additional £0.050m set aside in both 2026/27 and 2027/28 to support the extension to the existing local sports grant schemes, the Corporate Director (Place and Wellbeing), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Public Realm, be authorised to implement the necessary associated arrangements; and

(f) the Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder, be authorised to adjust the outturn position for 2025/26 along with any corresponding adjustment to earmarked reserves / Corporate Investment Funds as a direct result of any recommendations made by the Council's External Auditor during the course of their audit activities relating to the Council's 2025/26 accounts.

23. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.2 - TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE 2025/26

Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Finance & Governance Portfolio Holder (A.1) that reported on the Council's treasury management activities and Prudential Indicators for 2025/26.

It was confirmed that borrowing and investments had been undertaken in accordance with the 2025/26 Annual Capital and Treasury Strategy that had been approved by full Council on 31 March 2025.

Summary of the Council's Borrowing Position:

Amount Outstanding at the end of March 2026	**Average Interest Rate Paid in 2025/26**	**Total Interest paid in 2025/26**
£0.112m (General Fund)	6.884%	£0.008m
£28.120m (HRA)	3.591%	£1.048m

Members were informed that no new external borrowing had been undertaken in 2025/26 for either the General Fund (GF) or Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Summary of the Council's Investment Position:

Value of Investments held at the end of March 2026	**Average Interest rate on Investments 2025/26**	**Interest Earned on Investments 2025/26**
£97.642m	4.378%	£4.949m

Cabinet was made aware that the amount of interest earned from investments had remained at a relatively high level during the year. Although the Bank of England had announced some interest rate reductions during the year, many of the Council's investments were fixed for 6 months at a time and therefore such reductions did not necessarily feed immediately through to the investment income earned. The rate at the beginning of the year was 4.5%, with modest reductions made over the course of the year, with the rate at the end of March 2026 being 3.75%. Advantages from the Council's cashflow position had been also seen during the year due to the significant Government grant income relating to the associated major regeneration projects. Estimated investment income had increased through the quarterly financial performance and budget reports during the year - from **£1.806 million** at the start of the year to **£3.878 million** at the end of the year, with the outturn figure being **£4.949 million** as set out in the table above.

It was reported that the Council continued to hold one property within its Commercial Investment Portfolio, which had a balance sheet value at 1 April 2025 of **£2.212 million**. This 'book value' had been decreased by the Council's appointed valuers by **£0.076 million** at the end of 2025/26. However, this was an 'accounting' valuation and not a direct value that would be achieved on the market if it was sold. In-line with the budget, rental income of **£0.237 million** had been earned on the property in 2025/26, in line with estimates.

The treasury performance figures for the year were set out in Appendix A with the Prudential Indicators attached as Appendix B.
It was reiterated that responding to inflation continued to be a challenge for the Bank of England with their current forecast suggesting CPI could breach 4.5% in 2026, which was a stark contrast to their earlier forecast which had suggested inflation would reach their target amount of 2% from 2026/27.

In terms of interest rates, the forecast from the Council's own treasury advisors was for rates to remain steady at the current level of 3.75% in March 2026 to 3.5% in September 2027. Steady returns were therefore expected throughout 2026/27.

In terms of borrowing costs, the outstanding loans currently held by the Council were at fixed rates and were therefore not subject to any short / medium term fluctuations such as those mentioned above. The Council would continue to consider the opportunities from borrowing internally whilst current market interest rates remained relatively high, which was relevant when existing HRA loans matured and are 'replaced'.

As reflected within the recommendations in this report (A.2), it was proposed to increase the maximum amount that could be invested per money market fund to **£6.000m** from **£4.000m,** as set out within the Council's Treasury Management Practices (TPM's). This approach would provide Officers with the required additional flexibility when making investment decisions during the year but still set against a proportionate balance with risk.

To provide timely / key financial information to Members and to demonstrate compliance with the Treasury Management and Prudential Codes:-

It was moved by Councillor Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Smith and:-

RESOLVED that -

a) the Treasury Management performance position for 2025/26 be noted;

b) the Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2025/26 be approved; and

c) an amendment to the Council's Treasury Management Practices be approved that allows the maximum amount of money that can be invested per money market fund to increase to £6.000m from the current limit of £4.000m.

24. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGENERATION & TOURISM PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.3 - PRIDE IN PLACE PROGRAMME CLACTON-ON-SEA: CAPACITY FUNDING, YEAR 1 DELIVERY FUNDING, MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND DELEGATED AUTHORITY ARRANGEMENTS

Cabinet considered a report of the Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (A.3) which formally advised Council of the UK Government's endorsement of the Pride in Place 10 Year Vision and Investment Plan and the intended release of the Year 1 funds to pursue the initial delivery steps in the Vision. That Vision had been developed and approved through the Clacton Town Board and the area to which the Vision applied was that of Clacton-on-Sea and Holland-on-Sea. This Council was the Accountable Body under the programme and, through a decision of the Leader of the Council taken in November 2025, had endorsed the principles set out in the 10 Year Vision.

Cabinet recalled that the Council had previously received funds under Pride in Place to meet expenditure associated with the development of the 10 Year Vision and community engagement. Prior to this report, several decisions had been taken since the initial identification of Clacton as a locality to receive £20m over 10 years from the UK Government.

Members were informed that this report sought Cabinet's approval to confirm and implement the financial and governance arrangements necessary to give effect to the decisions of the Clacton Town Board in respect of the Clacton Pride in Place Programme. Specifically, the report sought:

- *approval of the Year 1 Delivery Funding allocation (£360,000 capital and £232,000 revenue) and the proposed projects to be funded in 2026/27 as approved by the Clacton Town Board at its meeting on 27 March 2026;*
- *approval of a Memorandum of Understanding between Tendring District Council (as Accountable Body) and the Clacton Town Board (MoU 1 the TDC/Board MoU), which sets out the governance, assurance and programme management arrangements between the two parties;*
- *approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between Tendring District Council (as Accountable Body) and the UK Government's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (MoU 2 the TDC/MHCLG MoU), which is the grant agreement with the UK Government and which must be signed by TDC and returned to MHCLG before Year 1 delivery funding (£360,000 capital and £232,000 revenue) can be released; and*
- *a delegation of authority to give effect to funding decisions of the Clacton Town Board, including the ability to vary spending arrangements where necessary, subject to the governance safeguards set out in this report.*

Cabinet was cognisant that the Clacton Pride in Place Programme (formerly Plan for Neighbourhoods and, before that, Long Term Plan for Towns) was a UK Government-funded regeneration programme for Clacton-on-Sea. The Clacton Town Board ("the Board"), established in March 2024, oversaw delivery of up to £20 million over ten years under the programme. This Council acted as the Accountable Body for the programme, and was responsible for ensuring compliance with legal, procurement and financial requirements.

It was reported that the Board's 10-Year Vision and 4-Year Investment Plan had been submitted to MHCLG in November 2025 and had been formally endorsed on 23 March 2026. This endorsement had triggered the requirement to finalise and sign two separate Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) before Year 1 delivery funding could be released, namely:

- *MoU 1 TDC/Board MoU: the governance agreement between TDC as Accountable Body and the Clacton Town Board, setting out the programme management, assurance and financial control arrangements between the two parties. MHCLG had confirmed it wished to see this document before it was finalised. A draft had been approved by the Board at its January 2026 meeting and a revised version approved at the March 2026 meeting. This MoU was attached at Appendix B to the Portfolio Holder's report.*

- *MoU 2 TDC/MHCLG MoU: the grant agreement between TDC as Accountable Body and the UK Government (MHCLG). This was the document that directly triggered the release of Year 1 delivery funding (£360,000 capital and £232,000 revenue) once it had been signed by TDC and returned to MHCLG. This MoU was attached at Appendix C.*

In advance of the Year 1 delivery funding to which this report related, the programme had received £600,000 in capacity funding, of which £129,237 had been spent and a further sum committed. The capacity funding had been used to establish governance structures, develop the Regeneration Plan, undertake community engagement, build the Love Clacton brand and appoint key staff including the Programme Manager and part-time Communications Officer.

Year 1 delivery funding of £360,000 capital and £232,000 revenue was now available subject to both MoUs being signed.

The Clacton Town Board had approved the Year 1 delivery programme and budget at its meeting on 27 March 2026. The first MHCLG six-monthly monitoring return had been submitted in May 2026 in respect of the use of the capacity funding and the initial plans for Year 1 delivery funding.

This report therefore sought the necessary Cabinet approvals and delegations to enable this Council as Accountable Body to sign both MoUs and implement the Board's Year 1 funding decisions efficiently and transparently, in compliance with MHCLG requirements and the Council's own governance obligations.

Given that this Council had obligations as the Accountable Body for the Pride in Place Programme to ensure that public funds were utilised appropriately, that procurement requirements were observed and that openness and transparency requirements were complied with and that approval of the MoU and of the delegation to implement the

Board's delivery funding decisions was therefore an essential step in enabling the programme to move into that delivery phase and avoid unacceptable delays in programme delivery whilst not over-ride separate decision making in respect of the individual elements of that overall budget allocation (following a decision by the Clacton Town Board):-

It was moved by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Stephenson and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet -

(a) welcomes the endorsement by the UK Government of the locally developed and approved 10 Year Vision and Investment Plan for Clacton as the principal document for delivery of the Pride in Place programme here;

(b) approves the Year 1 delivery funding programme for the Clacton Pride in Place Programme, as set out in this report and Appendix A, comprising £360,000 capital and £232,000 revenue as approved by the Clacton Town Board at its meeting on 27 March 2026;

(c) approves:

(1) the finalised Memorandum of Understanding between this Council (as Accountable Body) and the Clacton Town Board (MoU 1 TDC/Board MoU) as set out at Appendix B to this report, and authorises the Chief Executive to then sign on behalf of the Council;
(2) the Memorandum of Understanding between Tendring District Council (as Accountable Body) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MoU 2 TDC/MHCLG MoU) as set out at Appendix C to this report and authorises the Chief Executive to then sign on behalf of the Council. This signature will trigger the release of Year 1 delivery funding;

(d) delegates authority as follows to give effect to delivery funding decisions of the Clacton Town Board (upon production of an approved Minute from the Board/confirmation of a decision taken by Board Members outside of a meeting) that fall within the approved budgets and is otherwise in accordance with the MoUs applicable to this programme:

(1) Capital delivery funding is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Tourism to authorise capital expenditure decisions in line with Board resolutions;
(2) Revenue delivery funding is delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive following consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer; and

(e) notes that future year allocations of delivery funding will be reported to Cabinet within the appropriate budget update report and the delegations in (d) above will apply to those funds.

25. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGENERATION & TOURISM PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE - A.4 - TEN 14 CLACTON THRIVING - A CULTURE-LED FRAMEWORK FOR THE TOWN CENTRE: APPROVAL OF DRAFT REPORT TO PROGRESS TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Cabinet considered a report of the Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (A.4) which sought its approval for the Clacton Town Centre Culture-Led Framework (Clacton Thriving) to proceed to public consultation, prior to its consideration for formal adoption. The report also set out a vision for the future of Clacton-on-Sea and identified a range of interventions to support the regeneration of the town centre.

Community Regeneration Partnership

Cabinet was aware that the Ten_14 Culture-Led Framework formed part of the Government-funded Community Regeneration Partnership (CRP) programme for Clacton and Jaywick. The project had been identified through the Government's "Deep Dive" review of the area in 2024 and had been included within the package of regeneration projects selected by Ministers for investment.

Members were reminded that, on 20 December 2024, Cabinet had accepted the CRP funding and commenced delivery. The Ten_14 Culture-Led Framework had received total revenue funding of £100,000 and the detailed brief and approach for delivering the project had been set out in the Project Initiation Document (PID) approved by Officers, in August 2025, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture and Heritage. The design consultants, Publica, had been appointed in August 2025 which had represented a successful defrayment of funds.

Regeneration Context

It was reported that this Culture-Led Framework sat within the wider context of significant regeneration activity underway across Clacton, supported by a range of Government-funded programmes including the Community Regeneration Partnership and the Clacton Civic Quarter project. Those initiatives shared a common ambition to strengthen the town centre, improve the public realm, support economic growth and enhance quality of life for residents.

The Framework also supported the ambitions of the Clacton's *Pride in Place* programme by providing a clear strategic basis for future investment within the funded Pride in Place Regeneration Plan and beyond, helping to coordinate regeneration activity, attract external funding and ensure that projects contributed to a coherent long-term vision for the town centre. The Framework was also an opportunity to connect the multiple Government-funded regeneration projects underway in the town centre, to ensure they worked together to deliver best impacts for local communities.

Lastly, the Framework built upon and complemented the Council's Creative and Cultural Strategy (2019-2024) by translating its strategic ambitions into a place-based vision for Clacton town centre. The Framework used culture as a catalyst for regeneration, supporting priorities around economic growth, town centre vitality, community wellbeing, participation, heritage, creativity and place-making. In doing so, it provided a spatial and delivery-focused approach to achieving the wider objectives set out within the Council's Creative and Cultural Strategy and related regeneration programmes.

The Framework would also inform the update of the Creative and Cultural strategy that was currently under development.

Work to Date

Cabinet was informed that the Culture-Led Framework had been prepared as part of the Community Regeneration Partnership programme and provided an overarching vision and spatial framework for the future regeneration of Clacton Town Centre.

Developed by Publica Associates on behalf of the Council, the Framework built on extensive evidence gathering, the review of previous studies and strategies, baseline analysis, and engagement with residents, businesses, cultural organisations and stakeholders.

The Framework was structured around five interrelated themes: Open Spaces; "High Street"; Civic and Culture; Community Participation; and Governance. Those themes were translated into a series of spatial strategies, projects and practical interventions that sought to strengthen connections across the town centre, improve the quality of the public realm, support local businesses, increase cultural activity and encourage greater community participation.

The Framework adopted a Culture-Led approach to regeneration, recognising the role that culture, creativity and community activity could play in supporting economic growth, improving wellbeing, increasing civic pride and creating a more vibrant and attractive town centre.

It was intended to provide a long-term direction for future investment and project development whilst identifying a range of short-term opportunities and deliverable interventions that could contribute towards the wider regeneration ambitions for Clacton. As such, the Framework would inform the Clacton Town Board's plans for the town under Pride in Place; the longer term plans in the Framework were not funded and would require external investment, most likely from Government.

Next Steps

Public Consultation:

To undertake public consultation in September 2026 on the draft Culture-Led Framework and associated Action Plan to ensure that the proposals secured community support and developed a strong sense of ownership as delivery progressed. It was intended that public consultation would run in conjunction with Pride in Place to ensure a cohesive approach to both projects.

Consultation activity would include attendance at key public events, supported by target promotion through the Council's communications channels, including press releases, e-newsletters and social media. As the document, once adopted, would have weight in planning terms, this consultation provided an opportunity to join up with consultation on the Local Plan.

Adoption:

Following public consultation, the Final Report and accompanying Action Plan would be presented to Cabinet for formal adoption.

The PID had originally envisaged adoption of the framework as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However, this was no longer feasible in the light of the

Government's ongoing Planning reforms, which would replace SPDs with 'Supplementary Plans' under a revised plan-making system.

Notwithstanding this, the Culture-led Framework and Action Plan would be taken forward for formal adoption as a non-statutory document. Once adopted, it could be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications where relevant, providing a strategic framework to inform regeneration, place-making and investment within Clacton town centre. The Framework was being prepared with a view to informing decision-making in the town both in advance of, and following, Local Government Reorganisation.

To support the Council's ambition to bring about economic regeneration, improve quality of life, and address socio-economic issues in Clacton-on-Sea through the preparation of a Culture-Led Framework that advanced the objectives for growth set out in the Council's Local Plan and the Council's Corporate Priorities:-

It was moved by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Stephenson and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet -

(a) formally approves the Draft Clacton Town Centre Culture-Led Framework (Clacton Thriving), as set out in Appendix A to report A.4 and the accompanying Draft Action Plan, as set out in Appendix B to report A.4, for public consultation for a period of 8 weeks;

(b) requests that the consultation period commences on 17th August 2026, and authorises the Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture & Heritage to approve the consultation arrangements, prior to its commencement; and

(c) notes that the outcome of the consultation will be taken into consideration with the final documents when they are submitted to Cabinet for adoption in due course.

26. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE HOUSING & PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.5 - CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE HOUSING MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY

Cabinet considered a report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder (A.5) which presented the Housing Mutual Exchange Policy for its approval. The policy formalised the work that was already undertaken in the Housing and Environment service unit. This work complied with the legal framework associated with mutual exchanges and assisted the Council in meeting the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards as well as the requirements and recommendations of the Housing Ombudsman.

It was reported that the purpose of the Housing Mutual Exchange Policy was to enable eligible secure tenants of the Council to exchange their home with other eligible social or affordable housing tenants, in accordance with provisions under the Housing Act 1985 and the Housing Act 2004.

At the meeting, the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder read out the following statement:-

"Leader, I am pleased to present the Housing Mutual Exchange Policy for adoption by Cabinet this morning.

The purpose of the Housing Mutual Exchange Policy is to enable eligible secure tenants of the Council to exchange their home with other eligible social or affordable housing tenants, in accordance with the relevant legislation. It also formalises work already being undertaken within the Council's Housing Service.

The Policy itself provides clear guidance for tenants, and our partners, on the mutual exchange scheme, the eligibility criteria and sets out the circumstances for assigning or surrendering a tenancy, along with the grounds for refusing an exchange and providing a clear appeals process. The policy is also designed to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Housing Act 1985.

It improves housing mobility for social housing tenants, promotes more effective use of the Council's existing housing stock by enabling tenants to move to a property that is more suitable to their needs, and addresses under-occupancy and/or overcrowding pressures by releasing suitably adapted homes for those that need them.

It also assists the Council in meeting the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards as well as the requirements and recommendations of the Housing Ombudsman.

I do not intend to say much more, other than the Tenants Panel were consulted on the draft policy at their last meeting on 16th June 2026 and indicated their support for the introduction of this Policy."

To ensure that the policy was appropriately adopted, in accordance with the Council's Constitution and to evidence compliance with regulatory requirements:-

It was moved by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Kotz and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet -

(a) formally adopts the Housing Mutual Exchange Policy, as set out in Appendix A to the report (A.5), for implementation;

(b) authorises the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) to make future updates or amendments to the policy, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing; and

(c) requires that this Policy will be reviewed every two years.

27. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIPS PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.6 - TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL (CAREER TRACK) APPRENTICESHIPS

Cabinet considered a report of the Partnerships Portfolio Holder (A.6) which updated it on the activities of Career Track, the Council's apprenticeship training provider. The report also fulfilled the requirements of the Governors' Framework, which was designed to ensure the delivery of a high-quality experience for apprentices and employers, whilst meeting the expectations of funders and regulators. In accordance with this framework, the Tendring District Council (Career Track) Apprenticeship Governance Board ("the Board") provided Cabinet with an annual update to maintain transparency and effective governance.

To maintain appropriate oversight of Career Track in accordance with the Governors' Framework and the annual reporting role of the Board, whilst recognising the programme's contribution to the Council's Corporate Plan priority of raising aspirations and creating opportunities and to ensure that any significant emerging financial risks or variances were considered through the Council's established financial monitoring arrangements:-

It was moved by Councillor Placey, seconded by Councillor Scott and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet –

a) notes the annual review of Career Track, including the programme's impact, governance arrangements through the Board, quality assurance activity, financial position and proposed actions to support its continued development, together with the forecast subsidy reflected in the Council's long-term financial plans; and

b) requests that Officers continue to report financial updates through the two-year financial planning process and/or quarterly financial reporting arrangements, as appropriate.

28. MANAGEMENT TEAM ITEMS

There were no formal items submitted to the Cabinet by the Management Team on this occasion.

The Meeting was declared closed at 11.23 am

Chairman