
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET,
HELD ON FRIDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2019 AT 10.30 AM
ESSEX HALL - TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

Present: Councillors Neil Stock OBE (Leader of the Council)(Chairman), Joy Broderick (Independent Living Portfolio Holder), Carlo Guglielmi (Deputy Leader of the Council & Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder), Paul Honeywood (Housing Portfolio Holder), Mary Newton (Business and Economic Growth Portfolio Holder), Alex Porter (Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder) and Michael Talbot (Environment and Public Space Portfolio Holder)

Group Leaders Present by Invitation: Councillors Terry Allen (Leader of the Tendring First Group), Jayne Chapman (Leader of the Independent Group), Ivan Henderson (Leader of the Labour Group) and Mark Stephenson (Leader of the Tendring Independents Group)

Also Present: Councillor Gina Placey

In Attendance: Ian Davidson (Chief Executive), Martyn Knappett (Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services)), Paul Price (Corporate Director (Operational Services)), Ewan Green (Corporate Director (Planning and Regeneration)), Lisa Hastings (Head of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections), Richard Barrett (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits Services & Section 151 Officer), Anastasia Simpson (Head of People, Performance and Projects), John Higgins (Head of IT and Corporate Resilience), Gary Guiver (Planning Manager), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer), Debianna Messenger (Work Based Learning Manager) and William Lodge (Communications Manager)

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors McWilliams (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships) and Scott (Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group).

28. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Friday 19 July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Stock OBE and G V Guglielmi each declared personal interests in report item A.4 – North Essex Garden Communities Ltd: Approval of 2019/20 Interim Business Plan and Budget – insofar as they were, respectively, a Director and an alternate Director of that company.

Councillor I J Henderson, as a point of information, informed the meeting that he was the relevant Ward Member in relation to report item A.3 – Starlings Site and Milton Road Development, Dovercourt Town Centre.

30. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

There were none on this occasion.

31. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CABINET MEMBERS

There were none on this occasion.

32. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE COUNCIL

There were none on this occasion.

33. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY A COMMITTEE

There were none on this occasion.

34. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS - A.1 - NEW CORPORATE PLAN 2020 - 2024

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Leader of the Council (A.1) which sought its approval of the draft Corporate Plan 2020/24 and its initial proposals for consultation and examination by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Cabinet recalled that at its last meeting held on 19 July 2019 it had decided to “instruct officers to work with Portfolio Holders to bring forward proposals for a new Corporate Plan for the period 2020 to 2024...” It had also been agreed that the current strategic Performance Management arrangements should remain in place, consisting of

- A high level, strategic, long term Corporate Plan agreed by Council.
- An annual programme of Priorities and Projects to deliver the Corporate Plan aspirations agreed by Cabinet.
- Clear milestones and deliverables for the Priorities and Projects set out in the Performance Dashboard.
- Quarterly reporting of the Performance Dashboard to Cabinet and the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- Monthly monitoring of the Performance Dashboard by Management Team.

The draft Corporate Plan, as attached as Appendix A to the Leader of the Council’s report, followed the principles which had also been agreed at the last Cabinet meeting, namely:

- a “Plan on a Page”;
- with Community Leadership at its heart;
- with other cross-cutting themes identified such as Tending4Growth; and
- with a clear statement of the Council’s overall vision and values.

It was reported that a number of major topics and themes such as Jaywick, Garden Communities and support for local businesses, had been carried forward from the

previous Corporate Plan into this new draft because they were very long term and ongoing. Key points were as follows:

- Community Leadership remained as the predominant cross-cutting theme;
- Economic growth - "Tending4Growth" - was also highlighted as a theme which cut across a wide range of the Council's service activities and projects;
- Transformation – of the way the Council worked – no longer featured as a separate heading but was embedded as "modern facilities" and "24 hour digital services";
- The Council's commitment to work towards Carbon Neutrality had been included alongside "minimise waste; maximise recycling";
- Effective regulation and enforcement, a proactive Planning service and effective planning policies reflected the key importance of those activities to have a positive impact on the wider District and its residents with hopefully the benefit of an adopted Local Plan in the first year of the life of the new Corporate Plan;
- More emphasis and detail had been provided regarding working with partners as a Community Leader – setting out not just some of the key partnerships but what the Council aspired to achieve through that approach;
- The plan to embark on new housebuilding had been included, as was the desire to see town centres within Tending revitalized; and
- A growing and inclusive economy that included developing and supporting existing businesses as well as attracting new businesses and a commitment to promoting not just the major Tourism attractions of Tending but also the Heritage and Cultural offers.

Cabinet was aware that the success of the whole plan required a sound financial position over the long term and a continued commitment to the 10 year financial plan was vitally important. The Council was currently in year three of the Plan and the period of this Corporate Plan would see four years, when steady but significant reductions in the Council's base, ongoing budget were required. This would be very challenging in a time when central Government funding would be fully withdrawn, but the long term financial plan held out the prospect of the Council's budgets becoming balanced and self-financing without the need for further reductions in the following years.

Members were also aware that the success of the whole plan also required effective and positive governance in order to ensure the Council and its various resources – people, assets, IT and finances - were well managed in order to enable the Corporate Plan priorities and the full range of the Council's services to be delivered.

Cabinet was informed that the Vision and Values of the Council had been reviewed and considered in the light of changing circumstances – both in the world of local government and more widely – and it was felt that they remained appropriate and relevant so they had remain unaltered from the previous plan.

The timetable for completion of the Corporate Plan, including a period for consultation with the Council's two Overview and Scrutiny Committees, key public sector partners, businesses and community organisations, the wider public and an ultimate aim of the Plan being approved by Full Council in January 2020 was set out in Appendix B to the Leader of the Council's report. The arrangements for that consultation were set out in Appendix C to the report.

Having considered the information provided in the report and appendices thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves both the content of the draft Corporate Plan 2020 – 24, (as set out in Appendix A), as its Initial Proposals for consultation purposes and also the proposed arrangements and timetable for scrutiny, and consultation, (as set out in Appendices B and C to the report).

35. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.2 - REJUVENATING CLACTON TOWN CENTRE

The Cabinet gave consideration to a detailed joint report of the Business and Economic Growth Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.2) which –

- updated the Cabinet on the outcomes from the Clacton Town Centre Working Party and the progress of the Council's successful bid to the Government's 'Future High Streets Fund' in respect of Clacton Town Centre;
- sought the Cabinet's endorsement of the future vision for Clacton Town Centre and for the 'Love Clacton' brand;
- sought the Cabinet's approval for a 'Plan of Action' for Clacton Town Centre containing short, medium and long-term measures developed from the ideas of the Clacton Town Centre Working Party; and
- sought an agreed approach to on-going engagement with businesses, residents, visitors and partners in respect of Clacton Town Centre.

The detail of the report was submitted to the Cabinet under the following main headings:-

- (1) the work of the Clacton Town Centre Working Party to date;
- (2) the 'Future High Streets Fund';
- (3) the 'Love Clacton' brand and vision;
- (4) the plan of action for Clacton Town Centre; and
- (5) the future engagement with businesses, residents, visitors and partners.

Having considered the information provided in the report and appendices thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor Newton, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that –

- a) the summary of issues and challenges facing Clacton Town Centre identified by the members of the Clacton Town Centre Working Party, along with the ideas and suggestions for addressing those issues and challenges be noted;
- b) the inclusion of Clacton Town Centre in the Government's 'Future High Streets Fund' (as indicated in the August 2019 letter from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government attached as Appendix 1 to the report) and

the requirement to develop a more detailed business case as part of the next stage of the process be noted;

- c) 'Love Clacton' be endorsed as the brand to be adopted as part of a consistent approach to the branding and marketing of Clacton Town Centre and other attractions in Clacton;
- d) the 'Vision for Our Town Centre in 2030' (attached as Appendix B to the report) be endorsed as the overarching vision for the future of Clacton Town Centre;
- e) the Plan of Action for Clacton Town Centre (attached as Appendix C to the report) be endorsed and the Council's Officers be authorised to work with relevant partners to deliver the actions within it;
- f) a fund of £250,000 be allocated to the delivery of short-term actions within the Action Plan, as detailed within the resources and risk section of the report;
- g) the approaches for both delivery of actions and ongoing public engagement in relation to the Town Centre (as detailed in Appendix D to the report) be approved; and
- h) the Director for Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders, be authorised to submit a detailed business case for Clacton Town Centre to the Government's 'Future High Streets Fund' by the deadline of 30th April 2020.

36. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.3 - STARLINGS SITE AND MILTON ROAD DEVELOPMENT, DOVERCOURT, HARWICH

The Cabinet gave consideration to a joint report of the Business and Economic Growth Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.3) which sought its approval to –

- (1) deliver two key regeneration projects within Dovercourt Town Centre: the redevelopment of the Starlings site in Dovercourt Town Centre and the demolition of the Milton Road Car Park; and
- (2) allocate £1.595m from existing Council budgets to deliver those projects, including the appointment of a technical team, subject to the approval of the Business Case to be discussed later in the meeting.

Cabinet recalled that, at its meeting in July 2019, it had approved the Dovercourt Town Centre Masterplan, which articulated a vision for the regeneration and transformation of the town. The Masterplan was a prospectus for change and promoted a targeted range of development and public realm improvements in order to support the regeneration, transformation and renaissance required.

Cabinet had also approved at that meeting the preparation of a detailed business case for the redevelopment of the Starlings site and the Milton Road Car Park. Outline project proposals for those sites provide the focus of the joint report. The Business Case for

those projects was set out in a related private and confidential report which would be considered later in the meeting.

Members were aware that the Starlings site was located on Dovercourt High Street and had been derelict for some years. Despite being boarded the site was a blight on the town centre. The Milton Road Car Park was a two storey steel and concrete structure located adjacent to the Starlings site. The Car Park (which incorporated public toilets), was in the Council's ownership, and was now in need of significant improvement works if the facility was to retain any long term operational use.

Cabinet was reminded that the Dovercourt Masterplan advocated that the Starlings site be redeveloped to provide a new animated public space, public toilets, and a surface car park with the capacity to accommodate 59 car parking spaces (six of which being designated for disabled use). The Masterplan also advocated the demolition of the Milton Road Car Park and for the vacant site to be redeveloped for housing (which could take the form of nine, three storey town houses above a shared under-croft car park). The redevelopment of the site would incorporate provision for an additional fifteen public car parking spaces on Bagshaw Road.

It was felt that works to demolish the Milton Road Car Park would be an investment that would create a development site in Council ownership with the potential to generate a future capital value. There existed a range of scenarios through which the site could be brought forward for development, the detail of which would be the subject of a future report to Cabinet.

Members were informed that the redevelopment of the Starlings site and the Milton Road Car Park, in line with the concept designs provided in the Dovercourt Town Centre Masterplan, would provide a net gain in public car parking provision of six additional spaces (from 68 spaces to 74 spaces). They were also critical components in the Masterplan in securing a successful transformation and vibrant future for Dovercourt Town Centre. They would also have a positive regeneration impact on Dovercourt Town Centre and the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area by:

- a) bringing back into productive use a vacant and derelict site, which currently blighted the town and had a negative impact on Dovercourt High Street;
- b) creating town centre assets for the Council which would have positive uses now and in the future;
- c) supporting wider 'place shaping' objectives through the delivery of new housing;
- d) creating a more accessible public car park, and improving footfall in the town;
- e) creating new public realm and amenity space, providing the opportunity for greater animation thereby creating a more vibrant town centre;
- f) providing the potential for a multi-use 'event space' in the town centre, through the creative use of the proposed new surface car park;
- g) reducing the opportunities for crime and disorder through improved urban design;
- h) creating confidence in the development market, and encouraging private sector investment;
- i) giving the town's existing traders the confidence to invest in their businesses and in their property; and
- j) providing a high quality meeting place in the town centre and improving the opportunities for positive social engagement, helping to build civic pride and community cohesion.

Cabinet was advised that, subject to its approval and the Council's ability to secure control over the Starlings site, the two projects (which were inextricably linked and mutually dependent), would be phased in order to accommodate the Starlings site development first, thereby ensuring the availability of public car parking space at the time works to demolish the Milton Road Car Park were initiated. Delivery of the project would be led by the Council's Regeneration Team with technical specialists being appointed as required (in order to progress the design of the proposed Starlings scheme and the demolition methodology for the Milton Road Car Park; secure all necessary approvals; and oversee the phasing, construction, and delivery of these projects).

Having considered the information provided in the report and appendices thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor Newton, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that –

- a) the proposals for the acquisition and redevelopment of the Starlings site and the demolition of the Milton Road Car Park be approved;
- b) £1.595m funding be allocated to the project from existing budgets; and
- c) the above will be progressed subject to approval of the Business Case and relevant recommendations set out in the related private and confidential report that will be considered later in the morning.

37. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS - A.4 - NORTH ESSEX GARDEN COMMUNITIES LTD: APPROVAL OF 2019/20 INTERIM BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

Earlier in the meeting Councillors Stock OBE and G V Guglielmi had each declared personal interests in this item insofar as they were, respectively a Director and an alternate Director of NEGC Ltd.

The Cabinet gave consideration to a detailed report of the Leader of the Council (A.4) which sought its ongoing support, working together with Braintree District, Colchester Borough and Essex County Councils, in order to progress North Essex Garden Communities (NEGC); to approve the Interim Business Plan for 2019/20 for NEGC Ltd and specific governance arrangements for the project.

The report provided detail to the Cabinet principally on the following matters:-

- (1) the historical background to the current report;
- (2) the financial and legal implications for the Council;
- (3) the 2019/20 Interim Business Plan;
- (4) the 2019/20 Budget;
- (5) the Local Authorities' Funding Contributions;
- (6) the transfer of the Project Budget;
- (7) the issues of Stewardship; and
- (8) the current position.

Having considered the information provided in the report and appendices thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that –

- a) the 2019/20 Interim Business Plan and Budget (subject to confirmation of Government funding) for NEGC Ltd, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved;
- b) £350,000 be committed from the Garden Communities Budget and the associated delegations approved in order to enable phased drawdowns upon a formal request by way of a NEGC Board resolution in accordance with the agreed milestones and the agreement of the Council's Section 151 Officer;
- c) the Councils' Section 151 Officers be authorised to agree any future allocation of the project funds held by Colchester Borough Council between NEGC Ltd and the North Essex Authorities; and
- d) a report be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting in respect of funding requirements and financing options for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

38. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.5 - DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Cabinet gave consideration to a comprehensive report of the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.5) which updated it on the progress of the two year Digital Transformation investment programme based upon qualitative, time and cost reporting including those significant events/ changes which had affected the programme. The report also brought to Cabinet's attention details of cost pressures relating to digital working, partly arising from the changes referred to above.

The report provided detail to the Cabinet principally on the following matters:-

- (1) a new 'My Tendring' Customer Self-Service Portal;
- (2) Cloud Migration to the Public Cloud;
- (3) a new Tendring Leisure and Tourism App;
- (4) over-arching strategic Digital Transformation benefits;
- (5) Office Transformation Digital works;
- (6) Digital Transformation Programme Timescales;
- (7) Digital Transformation Programme Costs;
- (8) Microsoft Licensing costs; and
- (9) Northgate Electronic Document Record Management replacement.

Having considered the information provided in the report and appendices thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Porter and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet –

- (a) acknowledges the digitally enabled achievements delivered to date, including:
 - i. *My Tendring* portal major customer service improvements;

- ii. *My Tending* portal positive customer feedback;
 - iii. a strategic IT investment shift from large cyclical capital costs to an ongoing digital revenue cost model;
 - iv. enhancements to the Council's data infrastructure, cyber security protection and digital resilience;
 - v. developing in-house programming skills and expertise; and
 - vi. The new Leisure and Tourism App now promoting events.
- (b) recognises the Council's increasing use of digital technology to deliver efficient and effective services.
- (c) acknowledges the various changes which have affected the programme and the resultant "worst case" cost pressures that have emerged.
- (d) approves that the cost pressures of £181,754 in 2019/20 and £113,942 in 2020/21, as set out in the report, are reflected in the on-going financial forecast and financial performance reports.

39. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.6 - FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT: IN-YEAR PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE BUDGET AT END OF THE FIRST QUARTER 2019/20 AND LONG TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST UPDATE

The Cabinet gave consideration to a detailed report of the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.6) which provide it with an overview of the Council's financial position against the budget as at the end of June 2019 and which also presented an updated long term forecast.

Therefore the report was split over two distinct sections as follows:

- 1) the Council's in-year financial position against the budget at the end of June 2019; and
- 2) an updated long term financial forecast

In respect of the in-year financial position at the end of June 2019:

It was reported that the position to the end of June 2019, as set out in more detail within the appendices, showed that, overall, the General Fund Revenue Account was overspent against the profiled budget by £0.460m. However, it was relatively early in the financial year and therefore some expenditure or income trends could still be emerging and to date the variance primarily reflected the timing of expenditure and income.

In respect of other areas of the budget such as the Housing Revenue Account, capital programme, collection performance and treasury activity, apart from additional details set out in the report, there were no major issues that had been identified to date.

Cabinet was made aware that some necessary changes to the 2019/20 budget had been identified which were set out in Appendix H, with an associated recommendation also included within the report. The net impact of all of the budget adjustments would be moved to, or from, the Forecast Risk Fund. The long term forecast was based on the

identification of £0.500m of in-year outturn savings, which would be set aside over the course of the whole year within the Forecast Risk Fund to support the long term plan.

In respect of the updated long term financial forecast:

Cabinet was informed that the forecast had been reviewed and updated from 2020/21 onwards. An increase in unavoidable / on-going cost pressures was expected in 2020/21, which had had a knock on impact on the level of annual on-going savings required. Based on the initial forecast, the savings target had increased from £0.300m per year to £0.450m per year.

Overall it was felt that the revised forecast could still provide an effective method of managing financial risk and although the annual deficit or surplus position for each year of the forecast had been amended, they could still be accommodated within the overall projected long term financial position, supported by the Forecast Risk Fund that has been set up to underwrite such risks.

It was reported that a detailed review of risks associated with the long term forecast was subject to on-going review and was separately reported within Appendix J to the report.

It was considered important to continue to deliver against the new longer term forecast as it continued to provide a credible alternative to the more traditional short term approach, which would require significant additional savings to be identified in 2020/21.

In terms of delivering against the forecast for 2020/21 and beyond, work remained on-going across the five key work strands of:

- 1) Increases to underlying income;
- 2) Limiting expenditure / inflationary increases where possible;
- 3) The identification of savings / efficiencies;
- 4) Delivering a positive outturn position each year; and
- 5) The mitigation of cost pressures wherever possible.

Having considered the information provided in the report and appendices thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor P B Honeywood and:-

RESOLVED that –

- (1) in respect of the financial performance against the budget at the end of June 2019:
 - (a) the position be noted; and
 - (b) the proposed in-year adjustments to the budget, as set out in Appendix H to the report, be approved, with the additional requirement that the fund of £1.134million set aside for investment in the Council's property assets be spent in such a way as to reduce future cost pressures and to contribute to the Council's commitment to carbon reduction.

- (2) in respect of the Updated Long Term Forecast, the updated forecast be agreed and that the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the latest position.

40. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:-

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 15 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, of the Act.

41. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE CORPORATE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - B.1 - STARLINGS SITE AND MILTON ROAD DEVELOPMENT, DOVERCOURT, HARWICH

RESOLVED that –

- a) the business case for the redevelopment of both the Starlings site and Milton Road Car Park be approved;
- b) the allocation of funding from the Council's budgets to the value of £1.595m be approved for redevelopment purposes;
- c) the acquisition of the Starlings site (Plots 1, 2, and 3) for redevelopment purposes within the cost range identified in the report be approved;
- d) the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders as required, be authorised to agree the terms of land acquisition within the context of the report;
- e) the demolition of the Milton Road Car Park in line with proposals outlined in the Dovercourt Town Centre Masterplan be approved;
- f) the development options outlined in the report for the Milton Road Car Park site be noted and be the subject of a future report; and
- g) the Corporate Director (Planning & Regeneration), in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders as required, be delegated all such authorities necessary in order to deliver the Starlings and Milton Road Car Park projects.

The Meeting was declared closed at 12.15 pm

Chairman