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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET,  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 24TH JANUARY, 2020 AT 10.32 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), Paul Honeywood (Housing Portfolio Holder), Lynda McWilliams (Partnerships 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), Michael Bush (Deputy Leader of the Tendring Independents Group) and Ann Wiggins (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group)

**Also Present:** Councillor Gina Placey

**In Attendance:** Ian Davidson (Chief Executive), Paul Price (Corporate Director (Operational Services)), Ewan Green (Corporate Director (Planning and Regeneration)), Richard Barrett (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits Services & Section 151 Officer), Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections), Tim Clarke (Head of Housing and Environmental Health), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer) and William Lodge (Communications Manager)

**95. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Carlo Guglielmi (the Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance & Governance), Gary Scott (the Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group) and Mark Stephenson (the Leader of the Tendring Independents Group).

**96. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Friday 20 December 2019 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

**97. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Allen, Bush, Chapman, I J Henderson, McWilliams, Stock, Talbot and Wiggins each declared a personal interest in respect of report A.4 insofar as they were all elected members of a parish or town council within the District and insofar as that report referred to this Council's local council tax subsidy grant to parish/town councils.

**98. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

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The Leader of the Council (Councillor Stock OBE) made the following announcements:-

Sophie Floyd

*"I would like to congratulate one of our very own apprentices, Sophie Floyd, for her recent success with the Public Services People Managers Association (PPMA). Sophie, a Career Track Apprentice in the HR team who has just begun her level 3 apprenticeship, took part in the PPMA 2020 Apprentice of the Year event.*

*This event is designed to test candidates' personal qualities, while also building their confidence and resilience – all to help talent shine, and showcasing the tremendous breadth and depth of that emerging talent within the public sector.*

*In total 13 people took part in this national event, and Sophie was given the Spirit of the Programme Award.*

*Sophie is a fantastic talent within the People, Performance and Projects department here at Tendring District Council, a role which sees her supporting a lot of corporate work right across the authority, and she is heavily involved with the team.*

*This award is justly deserved, and I think reflects not only a celebration of Sophie's own fantastic talent, but is also a wider statement on the success of our Career Track team and the 'grow your own' ethos we have here at Tendring.*

*Well done Sophie. And well done to the HR and Career Track teams as well."*

Brexit

Councillor Stock referred to the UK's imminent departure from the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020 and noted that there would be no drastic changes on 1 February 2020 due to the Withdrawal Agreement. However, he stated that this might not be the case if no trade agreement was reached with the EU by the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020.

Councillor Stock then responded to a question from Councillor I J Henderson in relation to this Council's budgetary and practical preparations for Brexit.

**99. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CABINET MEMBERS**

There were none on this occasion.

**100. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE COUNCIL**

There were none on this occasion.

**101. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY A COMMITTEE**

There were none on this occasion.

**102. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS - A.1 - TENDRING4GROWTH**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Leader of the Council (A.1) which sought its endorsement of proposed actions to develop and deliver the corporate plan theme Tendring4Growth as a catalyst for sustainable economic growth across the District, supporting businesses and communities.

It was reported that Tendring4Growth (T4G) would be a catalyst to create growth through partnership and investment across the District. T4G would bring together partners, local businesses and communities to ensure growth in the District was sustained and that it benefited all who lived and worked in Tendring.

It was felt that Tendring4Growth would underpin and support delivery of the following Corporate Plan (2020-2024) priorities:

- Develop and attract new businesses
- Support existing businesses
- More and better jobs
- Promote Tendring's tourism, cultural and heritage offers
- Maximise our coastal and seafront opportunities

Cabinet was informed that T4G would underpin actions and services delivered by the Council and it was a brand through which Tendring could be promoted both locally and nationally. The success of T4G would be dependent on both internal and external factors which focused on the services and support offered and the way in which those were delivered. This was dependent on T4G becoming embedded into the culture of the Council and having a positive impact both internally, with staff and elected Members, and externally with local businesses and residents.

Members were made aware that, whilst local businesses and stakeholders had had some degree of exposure to the T4G there was a requirement for further investment in branding & promotion, T4G Business Week and the provision of dedicated business support activity (a 3 year external commission) in order to help stimulate and sustain business growth. Those activities would help to bolster business growth rates; support new start-ups and attract inward investment. In total a budget of £90,000 was sought in 2019-20 to deliver Tendring4Growth activity.

Cabinet was advised that the report now before it set out how Tendring4Growth could be used as a means of drawing together activities, projects and initiatives within the Council that are linked to the objectives in the Corporate Plan, the Local Plan and other key place shaping strategies for the District such as Housing; Economic Growth; Creative & Cultural; Tourism; and Heritage.

It was considered that T4G needed to be a Council wide philosophy that underpinned the organisation's strategic thinking and its operational activity to ensure long term success. T4G would be embedded corporately within the culture of the organisation at all levels (Members and Officers) and this would be achieved by developing linked principles and values (leadership tools; typically including strategies and policies) and then reinforcing those through practices and processes (management tools) including communications, training and delivery of services.

It was reported that actions to support delivery would be developed as part of annual Departmental Service Plans. In order to track progress and impact a set of "Success

Measures” would be established for T4G, including outputs and outcomes from activities, and this would be reported to Members through an Annual Report.

Following matters raised by the Leader of the Tendring First Group (Councillor Allen) and echoed by the Leader of the Council (Councillor Stock OBE), the Chief Executive (Ian Davidson) undertook to include the topic of Section 106 Legal Agreement monies and how they were allocated and spent by this Council on the agenda for a future All Members’ Briefing.

Having considered the proposals contained in the Leader’s report:-

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor McWilliams and:-

**RESOLVED** that –

- a) the overall approach to Tendring4Growth, as outlined in the report of the Leader of the Council, be approved;
- b) the allocation of £60,000 of agreed Section 106 funds to commission a 3 year business support service be approved;
- c) the allocation of £30,000 from the Regeneration and Investment Budget to deliver actions for 2020-21, be approved;
- d) the actions to deliver Tendring4Growth will be developed as part of annual Departmental Service Plans is duly noted; and
- e) an Annual Report on Tendring4Growth activity will be produced is duly noted.

**103. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.2 - NORTH ESSEX ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a detailed report of the Business and Economic Growth Portfolio Holder (A.2) which sought its approval of the North Essex Economic Strategy.

Members were informed that the North Essex Economic Strategy 2040 had been developed through a partnership of Braintree District, Colchester Borough, Essex County, Tendring District and Uttlesford District Councils. Those Councils had recognised that the challenges and opportunities affecting North Essex would best be addressed through a collaborative approach to achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The shared ambition was to promote, plan and deliver sustainable, strategic growth at scale and over the long-term; providing the housing, employment, necessary supporting infrastructure and innovations required in order to ensure the best outcomes for both the current and future communities of North Essex.

Cabinet was made aware that the Strategy provided a platform for strategic intervention at a scale which would achieve transformation in the overall economic prosperity of the North Essex area (and complimented local economic activity which the partner councils delivered). The partnership between the five Councils was set within a structure which brought the required leadership from Members and senior officers together with technical input from economic growth teams. The North Essex Economic Board, made

up of Portfolio Holders from each of the Partners, had led the development of the Strategy.

It was reported that the ideas and priorities set out in the North Essex Economic Strategy would contribute to both the Essex Prosperity Prospectus and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Local Industrial Strategy. The Strategy would also form the basis for the continued promotion of North Essex to Government, key national agencies and industry.

Members were advised that the Strategy had been articulated through an overall Vision and four related Missions, namely:-

The Vision:

*“North Essex is a high-value, productive and sustainable economy. People choose to live and work locally, in new and established communities that are well connected and inspire innovation and creativity”*

The Missions:

1. Driving innovation and technology adoption
2. Developing a skilled and resilient workforce
3. Creating a network of distinctive and cohesive places
4. Growing a greener, more sustainable economy

Cabinet was informed that, alongside this Strategy a rolling ‘action plan’ would also be developed, owned by the North Essex Economic Board, through which business cases for interventions could be identified, scoped and further developed. This would enable the Board to consider options in relation to each proposed action, identify lead partners and consider potential risks, with a view to working collectively on shared objectives. The action plan would be subject to annual review and would be monitored and updated over the initial five years of this Strategy. It was being proposed that each Partner would contribute £20,000 in order to create a development budget of £100,000 which would be used to undertake feasibility studies and to develop business cases for interventions arising from the Action Plan.

Having considered the proposals set out in the Portfolio Holder’s report:-

It was moved by Councillor Newton, seconded by Councillor McWilliams and:-

**RESOLVED** that –

- a) the North Essex Economic Strategy be approved;
- b) the Strategy’s priorities will contribute to the Essex Prosperity Prospectus and the SELEP Local Industrial Strategy is duly noted;
- c) the partnership structures which are in place to facilitate the Strategy are duly noted;
- d) an Action Plan will be developed to guide delivery of key actions is duly noted;
- e) the Council contributes £20,000 as development funding be approved; and

f) a process for reporting progress will be established by the partners is duly noted.

**104. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.3 - FREEHOLD PURCHASE OF TWO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a joint report of the Housing Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.3) which sought its approval, in principle, for the freehold purchase of two residential properties in Clacton-on-Sea.

Cabinet was informed that it was proposed to purchase two vacant freehold three bedroomed houses. The properties were currently vacant and were owned by a Registered Housing Association. Members were aware that, for a number of years the Council had had a strong demand for three bedroomed houses.

It was reported that, in October 2019 Portfolio Holder approval had been obtained to initiate the Council's Property Dealing Procedure, in order to obtain an independent valuation of the properties and to negotiate a price with the owners. Those market valuations had now been obtained and the negotiations with the owners had been completed satisfactorily,

In order to enable the house purchases to be progressed to their conclusion and ensure that those properties remained available for social housing:-

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

**RESOLVED** that the freehold purchase of the two properties be authorised, in principle, subject to Cabinet's decision on terms and the necessary authorisations to the Head of Governance and Legal Services to enter into a contract and transfer deed to complete the purchase of the properties to be taken later in the meeting when it considers the related private and confidential report.

**105. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.4 - LATEST FINANCIAL FORECAST / FINAL BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2020/21**

Earlier in the meeting Councillors Allen, Bush, Chapman, I J Henderson, McWilliams, Stock, Talbot and Wiggins had each declared a personal interest in respect of this item insofar as they were all elected members of a parish or town council within the District and insofar as the report referred to this Council's local council tax subsidy grant to parish/town councils.

The Cabinet gave consideration to a comprehensive report of the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder (A.4) which sought its approval of the latest financial forecast and final General Fund budget proposals for 2020/21 (including Council Tax proposals) for onward recommendation to full Council on 11 February 2020.

It was reported that, since the Cabinet's last meeting held on 20 December 2019, additional changes had been required to the Financial Forecast, primarily as a result of new, or revised, information becoming available which included the Government's Financial Settlement announcements. Those required changes had resulted in a surplus for 2020/21 of £0.461m, a change of £0.484m compared to the £0.023m deficit

presented to Cabinet in December 2019. The updated forecast had now been translated into detailed estimates which were set out in Appendix D to the Report of the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder.

Cabinet was made aware that this figure might change as further adjustments might be required as part of finalising the budget for presenting to Council on 11 February 2020, with a delegation included in the Portfolio Holder's recommendations to reflect this.

Cabinet was informed that the forecast surplus of £0.461m in 2020/21 had been contributed to the Forecast Risk Fund in accordance with the long-term forecast principles.

Cabinet was advised that taking all of the changes into account, the Council Tax requirement was £8.354m, which was based on a £5 increase for this Council's services in 2020/21 with a Band D council tax of £172.64.

Members were made aware that in line with legislative requirements the Council's Section 151 Officer had confirmed the robustness of the estimates along with the adequacy of reserves.

It was reported that although Prudential Indicators were set out in the report, the approval of the associated Treasury Strategy for 2020/21 for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee was recommended to be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance. This repeated the approach taken the preceding year.

Cabinet was aware that, in accordance with the Constitution, the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been consulted on the Updated Financial Forecast. That Committee had met on 16 December 2019 and 6 and 8 January 2020 and its comments back to Cabinet were set out in the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder's report together with his responses thereto.

Having considered the information in the report and in order to allow the financial forecast and final General Fund budget proposals for 2020/21 to go forward to full Council in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution and legislation:

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor McWilliams and:-

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet approves:-

- (a) the latest financial forecast set out in Appendix A;
- (b) that if the financial position changes prior to Council considering the budget on 11 February 2019, delegation be given to the Chief Executive to adjust the forecast / budget, including the use of Reserves, in consultation with the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder;
- (c) that in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder, the Chief Executive reports directly to Council in respect of the formal draft resolutions necessary to implement the Cabinet's budget

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proposals along with any late information or notifications received from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government etc.;

- (d) that the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be thanked for the work they have undertaken, and continue to undertake, in supporting the development of the forecast / budget and agrees the comments of the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder in response to those of the Committee as set out in this report;
- (e) that in respect of the Treasury Strategy 2020/21, delegation be given to the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance to approve the Strategy for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that, following the consideration of the comments from the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee the following, final, budget proposals be made (based on a £5 increase in a Band D Council Tax for district services):-

- (a) that the detailed budgets as per Appendix D of this report be approved which provide for a Council Tax Requirement for 2020/21 of £8.354m (excluding parish precepts);
- (b) that the Council agrees and formally approves:
  - (i) the specific recommendations, calculations and other matters in respect of the Council's requirements – Appendix F; and
  - (ii) the Council Tax for this Council's services – Appendix I.

**106. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.5 - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2020/2021**

There was submitted a joint report by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance (A.5), which sought Cabinet's approval of the final Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget proposals for 2020/21, including the movement in HRA balances; the level of fees and charges and the HRA Capital Programme.

Cabinet was aware that, at its meeting held on 20 December 2019, it had considered, inter alia, the initial Housing Revenue Account Budget Proposals for 2020/21. The budget proposals at that time provided for a surplus of £0.363m that was to be contributed to the HRA Capital Programme.

It was reported that the initial budget proposals had been subject to consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee which had met on 6 and 8 January 2020 to consider them and that Committee's comment was set out in this joint report along with the response thereto from the Housing Portfolio Holder.

Members were advised that, since the Cabinet's meeting held on 20 December 2019, only a very limited number of changes had been required, primarily as a result of new or revised information becoming available.



Cabinet was made aware that the changes required resulted in a revised surplus for 2020/21 of £0.281m, a change of £0.082m compared to the £0.363m surplus presented to Cabinet in December 2019. Appendix A to the joint report provided further details across the various lines of the HRA budget. That figure could change as further adjustments might be required as part of finalising the budget for presenting to Council on 11 February 2020, with a delegation included in the Portfolio Holders' recommendations to reflect this.

It was reported that the revised forecast surplus of £0.281m in 2020/21 had remained as a contribution to the Capital Programme (as originally set out in December 2019), albeit at a lower amount. The proposed HRA Capital Programme for 2020/21 therefore now totalled £3.457m and continued to provide for a range of schemes and projects as set out within Appendix C to the joint report.

Members were informed that the average weekly rent remained unchanged to the figure reported in December at £82.42, an increase of 2.7% over the comparable figure of £80.25 for 2019/20.

Cabinet was advised that all other figures presented to it in December 2019 remained unchanged and included the following:

- 1) the HRA general balance was forecast to total £5.029m at the end of 2020/21, which retained a strong financial position against which the Housing Strategy and associated HRA 30 year Business Plan could be developed.
- 2) HRA debt continued to reduce year-on-year as principal was repaid with a total debt position at the end of 2020/21 forecast to be £38.442m (a reduction of £1.664m compared with the figure at the end of 2019/20).

Having considered the information provided in the joint report:

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

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) if the financial position changes prior to Council considering the HRA budget on 11 February 2020, the Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, to adjust the forecast / budget, including the use of reserves; and
- (b) Cabinet thanks the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the work they have undertaken, and continue to undertake, in supporting the development of the forecast / budgets and agrees the comment of the Housing Portfolio Holder in response to the one comment made by the Committee as set out in this joint report.

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that a 2.7% increase in dwelling rents in 2020/21, along with the detailed HRA Budget proposals for 2020/21, as set out in Appendices A to D of the Joint Report be approved.

#### **107. MANAGEMENT TEAM ITEMS**

There are none on this occasion.

**108. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was moved by Councillor Stock OBE, seconded by Councillor McWilliams 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 16 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.

**109. EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER 2019**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Friday 20 December 2019 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

**110. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - JOINT REPORT OF THE HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER AND THE CORPORATE FINANCE & GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO HOLDER - B.1 - TERMS FOR THE FREEHOLD PURCHASE OF TWO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES**

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) the terms for the freehold purchases of two properties in Clacton-on-Sea be approved; and
- (b) the Head of Governance and Legal Services be authorised to enter into a contract and transfer deed to complete the purchase of the property on the agreed terms and subject to such other terms that she considers necessary.

The Meeting was declared closed at 11.44 am

**Chairman**