

CABINET

19 MARCH 2021

REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND RESOURCE AND SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

A.1 SCRUTINY OF PRIORITY FOR ACTIONS 2021/22 AND MONITORING DELIVERY OF THOSE ACTIONS

(Report prepared by Keith Durran)

BACKGROUND

The Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 8 February 2021 heard how the Council had previously approved a Corporate Plan for 2020/24 and that it had established Council's strategic direction for those four years. That strategic direction itself sought to reflect the issues that mattered most to local people, the national requirements from Government and the challenges that faced the District over that time period. The Corporate Plan had been adopted unanimously at the Council meeting held on 21 January 2020 (Minute 78 referred).

The themes of the 2020/24 Corporate Plan were:

- Delivering High Quality Services
- Building Sustainable Communities for the Future
- Strong Finance and Governance
- Community Leadership through Partnerships
- A Growing and Inclusive Economy

Members were informed that Cabinet established each year its priority actions to deliver against the Corporate Plan and thereby ensured that the ambition of that Plan remained central to its work. The priority actions did not cover every separate element of the ambition of the four year Corporate Plan; nor were they intended to indicate that other projects, schemes or activities were not being pursued. They were though intended to reflect imperatives across the Council and for the District and actions that it was right to focus on in that year.

Members also heard that 2020 had been an exceptional year not only nationally but globally. The Council's Community Leadership role had never been more important. The Council had taken on additional responsibilities and supported its residents and businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst Tendring District Council had not formally reported on its performance against its priorities during 2020, much had been achieved including but not limited to:

- The roll out of numerous grants in excess of £38million to businesses
- The adoption of a local Back to Business Agenda which not only supported businesses to survive but prepared to help them flourish.
- An Economic Growth Strategy focused on recovery for the future.
- Allocation of monies from the Tendring Community Fund to Ward Councillors that provided grants to local organisations that enabled them to respond to the pandemic locally.
- Business continuity arrangements had immediately been invoked to ensure Council services remained in place where they were able to do so and for

those services impacted by the various lockdowns, staff were redeployed to work with different teams in response to the pandemic, such as the Community Hub.

- Adoption of a Climate Change Action Plan to meet the Council's aspirations towards the Climate Emergency.
- Section 1 of the Local Plan had been found sound by the Planning Inspectorate thereby establishing the 5 year housing supply of 550 dwellings per annum, a North Essex vision and the Garden Community at Tendring Colchester Borders
- A balanced budget and revised governance arrangements had ensured democratic decision making continued throughout.
- Council had adopted a Corporate Housing Strategy in order to deliver homes to meet the needs of local people, making the best use of, and improving, existing housing and supporting people in their homes and communities. Separate strategies and policies had been introduced to assist in reducing homelessness and rough sleeping in the District, providing financial assistance policies for private sector housing and acquiring land and buildings to increase council housing stock.

All of those had provided a strong foundation on which the Council would continue to deliver its priorities during the remaining years of the Corporate Plan. The 2021/22 actions would, of themselves, underpin further actions in 2022/23. As such, it was appropriate to invest time and energy to delivering them.

A provisional list had been prepared following consultation with individual Portfolio Holders and the Leader of the Council and that was set out at Appendix A to the report before the Committee.

COMMUNITY AND LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION(S) TO CABINET

During the consideration of this matter it was **RECOMMENDED** to **CABINET** that:

- Any specific schemes that Members wish to be considered be submitted to the appropriate Portfolio Holder for an initial evaluation and then submitted to Cabinet for its formal decision.
- Cabinet re-examines its position with the view to establishing a wider focus in relation to the expenditure of monies.

RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

The Resource and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 1 February 2021 heard the same report and **RESOLVED** that the Committee notes and fully endorses this report and thanks the Cabinet for bringing forth this piece of work.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S COMMENT(S) AND RECOMMENDATION(S) TO CABINET

Leader of the Council's Comment(s)

The comments of the Leader are as follows:-

“I welcome the fact that Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been able to contribute to the discussion on the key priority actions for 2021/22. This matter is addressed in the report later in the agenda and the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be taken into account at that point in the meeting.”

Recommendation(s) to Cabinet

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be thanked for the views submitted and the comments of the Leader of the Council be endorsed.