

## Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2024

### Questions to Portfolio Holders on the Highlight Priorities and Grants Report

<u>Question to which Portfolio Holder</u>	<u>Question from Member of the Committee</u>	<u>Question to be asked.</u> <i>(followed by supplementary question(s) based on response – initially from questioner – and others only if time permits)</i>	<u>Answer from Portfolio Holder</u> <i>(If time is tight the question and the response may be read into the record rather than spoken)</i>
<b>HIGHLIGHT PRIORITIES</b>			
Cllr M Stephenson	Cllr Griffiths	I note on page 9 that it is anticipated by 2026/27 that there are likely to be initial development work on the Garden Community Site. I also note that on page 12 (reference B5) that a highlight priority for 2024/25 is intended to be the development of the DPD for the Garden Community. So my question is where is the imperative around stewardship of public facilities as part of the Garden Community. If that is not correct at the beginning it will have negative implications for decades. Surely that should be a highlight priority.	The need for robust stewardship arrangements for both the governance and management of assets within the Garden Community are a requirement of the adopted Local Plan and the emerging Development Plan Document. These arrangements will need to be in place and tied into a s106 legal agreement before the first planning permissions are granted. The Lead Developers Latimer are considering necessary stewardship arrangements alongside their work in preparing the planning application and the Members of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community have been giving consideration to a variety of stewardship models and examples of best practice from across the country, with guidance from Officers and expert consultants. Whilst the highlight priority refers to the DPD and the development of the Garden Community thereafter, the

			requirements of the Local Plan and the DPD themselves make it implicit that stewardship arrangements will be confirmed, as stated above, through the s106 legal agreement on the first planning permission.
Cllr M Stephenson	Cllr Griffiths	I note at reference F4 on page 14 that there is intended to be a new communications strategy – will that specifically address the problems we have at TDC of differentiating ourselves from services provided by others. In this regard I specifically note that in the corporate plan consultation many residents thought that TDC was responsible for road and pavement repairs (eg potholes) and clearly we are not. In my mind there should be an effort to tell the public just who is responsible for which services.	The Communications Strategy hasn't been drafted completely as of yet as it is necessary to take on board the feedback from consultees on the initial proposed highlight priorities. As such, this feedback around the relative responsibilities of partners, including Essex County Council (ECC), will be reflected on as the draft new Communications Strategy is developed. Having said that, the Strategy is intended to be a guiding principle on the delivery of Communications by the Council and the distinction between TDC and ECC is only one element to consider.
Cllr G Placey	Cllr Steady	On page 12 at reference D1 it mentions measures to reduce Health Inequalities; what will those measures include please? I ask as to whether it includes signing up to compassionate communities.	<p>Firstly, may I point out that we are going in the right direction with our health indices improving as reported recently. But as Chris Witty said when he visited us, there is no silver bullet, no one size fits all and there is still a lot of work to do.</p> <p>There are a broad range of ongoing health inequality initiatives. This includes a Fuel Poverty Officer to help support residents to access the correct type of fuels and</p>

			<p>tariffs and also to maximise benefits. Funding from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) has enabled us to provide specialist support to Children's Social Care to help families most in need as part of a multidisciplinary team.</p> <p>Family Solutions has been funded with a specific post in Harwich to support struggling families and to develop community resilience. The ICB funding has also been used to enable the voluntary sector to directly address cost of living issues via food and fuel vouchers and support and is also being provided to help support with hospital discharge. Further funding has been provided by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to support those furthest from employment; two staff are now employed to deliver this.</p> <p>The work with Active Essex around the Local Delivery Pilot Sport England funding has also provided multiple examples of supporting communities as the funding was focussed on the most deprived areas and has included initiatives such as Essex Pedal Power, Beat the Streets and Parkplay which encourage people to get active and has been proved to enable easier access to work and Education .</p>
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			Following a meeting with the Hospice a report has now been produced to consider signing up to the Compassionate Communities charter taking into account the resource implications but also the benefits of doing this.
<b>GRANTS REPORT</b>			
Cllr G Placey	Cllr Doyle	Do we monitor the spending of grants we give out, to make sure they are used correctly?	<p>The monitoring of grant allocation is undertaken. For example, the health inequalities funding provided by the Integrated Care Board includes ongoing liaison with the organisations to ensure utilisation of the funding along with the provision of reports highlighting the work being undertaken. Specific evaluation of projects will also be undertaken</p> <p>Officers undertake monitoring of Tendring Community Fund grants by keeping in regular communication with grant recipients to understand how their funded work is progressing and by requiring impact reports to be completed and returned. These reports ask for details on how the funding has been spent, any issues or delays that have arisen, resident feedback and photographs of the projects where appropriate. Officers also collect information about any underspend of funding.</p>

		<p>Do we carry out financial risk assessments on organisations that are successful in being awarded a grant?</p> <p>The draft policy at Appendix A2 doesn't appear to reference guidance to aid people in applying for grants, can this be included?</p>	<p>Steps are taken to determine the financial position of organisations that are successful; for example with the Tendring Community Fund application, particularly with larger grant amounts, the application form asks the applicant to confirm that they have the appropriate governing documents, that they have a bank account with two unrelated signatories and that they could provide a copy of their annual accounts or a budget forecast for the coming year if requested. The cross party working group that allocated this fund also adds the local knowledge element</p> <p>Guidance could be provided to assist those applying for grants and can be included in the final grants policy.</p>
Cllr G Placey	Cllr Griffiths	<p>Would it be possible to building into the structure of TDC that Portfolio Holders are responsible for the grants that come out under their remit, that a sub committee is formed, that meets once every six months or so, that then goes through the grants, somewhat similar to the licencing committee.</p> <p>Can we have someone in to explain the Subsidy Control Act 2022? Ref page 25.</p>	<p>We will take the suggestion back and look at appropriate mechanisms for ensuring that, in so far as is possible, there are common good practices and procedures applied to grant giving by the Council.</p> <p>The Subsidy Control Act 2022 seeks to regulate the provision of subsidies. Provision of grant funding may constitute a subsidy if it is provided to an enterprise</p>

			<p>which provides them with an economic advantage so that other similar enterprises could not access the funding.</p> <p>Four criteria are used to determine if allocation of funding is a subsidy and these are a) is funding from a public authority, b) does it provide an economic advantage to an enterprise (an organisation offering goods and services on the market) c) is the funding provided to specific beneficiaries and d) does it have an effect on competition or investment.</p> <p>Allocation of funding must be in accordance with the Act although there is the opportunity to develop a Subsidy Control Scheme which will permit the allocation of funding to a specific beneficiary if it is in line with the scheme which would amongst other things include reference to the policies and aims of the funder.</p> <p>If there is an open call for funding allocations so different organisations can bid or if a procurement process is used then funding is unlikely to be regarded as a subsidy.</p>
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Cllr G Placey	Cllr Steady	When applicants make their submission, do we scrutinise their financial situation? Do we check if they have applied for/received other grants from us or partner organisations under the same or similar schemes?	<p>The Tendring Community Fund application form asks the applicant to confirm that they have the appropriate governing documents, that they have a bank account with two unrelated signatories and that they could provide a copy of their annual accounts or a budget forecast for the coming year if requested. Evidence of these being in place may be required before an application is approved and this will depend on the level of funding applied for.</p> <p>Applicants are asked in the TCF application form to provide details of any other grants they have been successful with as well as any they have applied for and are waiting to hear about. Officers will determine the levels of funding an organisation has recently received for other projects by consulting with grant givers internally at TDC, such as for the Shared Prosperity Fund, as well as externally with CVS Tendring and the Health Alliance's domain funding for example. These steps ensure officers would be aware of any risks of funding duplication for the same project before a grant is awarded.</p>
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