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Community Leadership Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

15 April 2025

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON TUESDAY, 15TH APRIL, 2025 AT 7.30 PM
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA,
CO15 1SE**

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| Present: | Councillors Steady (Chairman), Davidson, Doyle, Ferguson, Griffiths and Oxley |
| Also Present: | Gina Placey (Partnerships Portfolio Holder) |
| In Attendance: | Damian Williams (Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery)), Keith Simmons (Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) & Deputy Monitoring Officer), John Fox (Head of Health & Partnership), Katie Koppenaal (Democratic Services Officer) and Bethany Jones (Democratic Services Officer) |

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Barrett, Vice-Chairman of the Committee gave his apologies with no substitution.

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 14 AND 28 JANUARY 2025

It was moved by Councillor Doyle, seconded by Councillor Griffiths and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes from the meetings of the Committee held on 14 January 2025 and 28 January 2025 be approved as correct records and be signed by the Chairman.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest by Councillors in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting.

15. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

On this occasion no Councillor had submitted notice of a question pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 38.

16. REFERENCE FROM THE COUNCIL'S CRIME AND DISORDER (FAMILIAL VIOLENCE/ABUSE) TASK AND FINISH GROUP - A.2 - FINAL REPORT - CONCERNING CRIME AND DISORDER (FAMILIAL VIOLENCE/ABUSE)

The Committee heard the Final Report of the Council's Crime and Disorder Task and Finish Group (Familial Violence/Abuse) to consider the recommendations made to it as set out in the report.

The Task and Finish Group, had concluded the elements of its enquiry into Crime and Disorder, having focussed its attention on the issue of familial violence/abuse. There had been four meetings of the Task and Finish Group between November 2024 and April 2025. The Task and Finish Group's report was set out at Appendix A.

It was moved by Councillor Doyle, seconded by Councillor Davidson and **RESOLVED:-**

That the Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends the following actions for adoption by Cabinet, on the basis that the actions seek to take forward priorities from the Crime & Disorder Reduction Strategy (being presented to Council on 20 May 2025), and noting that most of the actions will be directed to the Council's community safety partners:-

- (1) That the Council's Community Safety Team undertake analysis of data from the National Centre for Domestic Abuse in relation to familial abuse in order to conclude whether that data provides the basis for a broader consideration of these matters by the Task and Finish Group.
- (2) To encourage the Community Safety Partnership to advocate and champion local support services for survivors of domestic abuse in the district.
- (3) To utilise the County Wide Strategy Workshop to ensure that the importance of tackling Domestic Abuse is addressed by the proposed Mayoral Combined County Authority for Greater Essex from its creation and the intended new unitary councils across Essex from 1 April 2028;
- (4) That the Council's Community Safety Team ensure training about types of domestic abuse and how to signpost individuals to domestic abuse support services are available to Reception and Admin staff across the Council;
- (5) To advocate and champion local refuge services for domestic abuse survivors and their children; and ensure that all available materials are reviewed and the updated materials are then made available to District Councillors and to Town and Parish Councils for their use.
- (6) To encourage the Community Safety Partnership to urge school and academy leaders to take up the 'Healthy Relationships' sessions provided by the Police and Fire Joint Education Team; and
- (7) To encourage the leaders of Secondary schools and academies Tending to participate in the Stronger together Teenage Show 2025 (funded by Tending District Council (see https://youtu.be/aAZ73nXbY_c) seeking to combat violence against women and girls and challenge toxic teenage cultures;
- (8) To engage with other Local Authorities in relation to domestic abuse priorities in line with local government reorganisation proposals for Greater Essex and sharing best practice.

The Committee noted that it might be beneficial for the Familial Violence Task and Finish Group to continue its work into 2025/26 in order, amongst other things, to consider the analysis of data from the National Centre for Domestic Abuse and to receive updates on the actions set out in the recommendations to Cabinet.

17. **REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CORPORATE POLICY & SUPPORT) -
A.3 - HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

The Committee consider the Council's draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as outlined in the appendix to the Portfolio Holder report submitted to Cabinet on 21 February 2025.

In accordance with Article 6.02 of the Constitution,

the Committee looked at the Council's draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy which had been approved for consultation purposes at the formal meeting of the Cabinet held on 21 February 2025. At that meeting (Minute 134 refers), it was:-

"RESOLVED that Cabinet –

(a) approves the Health and Wellbeing Draft Strategy for public consultation;

(b) agrees that Officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, initiate a minimum eight-week consultation process and seek stakeholder comment on the Health and Wellbeing Draft Strategy; and

(c) agrees that following that consultation the final Health and Wellbeing Strategy be presented to Cabinet for its approval and adoption."

As a stakeholder, this Committee was now being consulted for its comments.

| Questions by Members:- | Answers given:- |
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| Is there any evidence to suggest that grouping many multiple-occupancy households in the more deprived areas across the District (that we are seeing more of) is responsible for heightened negative social factors such as drug and alcohol abuse, social services involvement etc. which is subsequently responsible for a large fraction of suicides? | <p>Houses in multiple occupation tend to be associated with areas with the greatest deprivation for example Pier Ward has high numbers of houses in multiple occupation and also is one of the District's most deprived wards and within the 10% most deprived wards nationally.</p> <p>Those most deprived areas are more likely to be associated with negative social factors which could include drug and alcohol abuse.</p> <p>However, even in areas where there are lower numbers of houses in multiple occupation but otherwise suffer from significant deprivation, they are likely to suffer from challenging social factors which also include drug and alcohol abuse.</p> <p>Housing is however one of the significant drivers of poor health in our area and therefore improving the quality</p> |

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| | <p>of housing will have a beneficial effect on residents health.</p> <p>There is a high suicide rate within Tendring compared to other areas although it is not possible to draw conclusions as to the individual drivers for suicide as there is not a common thread.</p> <p>Suicide prevention approaches tend to focus more around providing broader support, training for the wider population such as delivering mental health first aid training to staff or community work to help develop resilience.</p> <p>Additionally, we are working with many departments as outlined in the strategy, and one of these is the planning department who we endeavour to make great strides with.</p> |
| <p>What are we doing about private landlords allowing tenants to live in poor housing conditions?</p> <p>The help you are referring to means that the tenant must make the report, I cannot do it on their behalf. In my experience the tenant will say "if I phone them, I will be evicted". So how can we help?</p> | <p>John Fox - We can help them, this can be done through our housing teams. If there are any particular examples it is definitely worth directing us to them so they can be visited by a housing officer.</p> <p>Damian Williams - it is a very complex matter but ultimately, we do not have power of entry if the tenant has not made the report. As it stands, we need the tenant to come to us and make the report.</p> |
| <p>Is this an opportunity to explore joint working across North Essex (such as Colchester and Braintree) and look at common issues and solutions to ensure best practices and shared understandings are implemented?</p> | <p>The draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been written in close alignment with partners including the local Health and Wellbeing Alliance (the Alliance) and also Essex County Council and their Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p> <p>The Alliance covers the northeast Essex footprint (Tendring and Colchester) and there is already significant joint working across this patch. For example, there is a focus on health inequality and deprivation which is a common issue and a drive to address these issues via a wider determinants approach</p> |

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| | <p>focussing on prevention and early intervention.</p> <p>As Braintree sits outside the Alliance footprint there has not been significant interaction with them in relation to writing the Strategy although they can be invited to take part in the consultation exercise.</p> <p>However Essex County Council's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy takes an Essex wide approach and is therefore relevant to Braintree and Colchester as well as Tendring and the draft Strategy aligns with this.</p> |
| <p>Whilst I understand that we cannot establish specific drivers for suicide, do we have any idea on the demographic that is most effected by suicide in our district?</p> | <p>We are currently looking at statistics that show predominantly middle-aged men and women (which has changed in recent years from predominantly men of this age) are most affected but after this it is extremely difficult to determine if other factors such as occupation or other social factors are more prevalent.</p> |

It was moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Davidson and

RESOLVED:-

That, having considered the contents of the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Tendring, this Committee recommends to Cabinet that:-

- (a) the priorities and practical steps be supported.
- (b) representations about the ICB and ICS footprints be made without exacerbating problems for local residents.
- (c) it be noted that suicide data and associations with demographic practice will come back to the Committee at a later date.
- (d) the impact around concentrations of populations, exacerbations of issues and the role the planning team can play in that be noted.
- (e) the scrutiny of the implementation of the strategy be considered as a potential item for inclusion within this Committee's 2025/26 Work Programme.

18. **REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CORPORATE POLICY & SUPPORT) -
A.1 - WORK PROGRAMMING - INCLUDING MONITORING OF PREVIOUS
RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS**

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) which provided an update on its approved Work Programme for 2024/25 (including progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme), feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which public notice had been given.

Members were reminded that the Council had commissioned the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) to undertake an 'Overview & Scrutiny Development Review' in 2021 as a way of further improving that function at the Council. Two relevant recommendations arising from that review had been:

"Further strengthening the annual process for developing work programmes for each O&S committee - Engaging Members, Officers, partners and the public to prioritise the topics for review. This could include a selection criteria to identify appropriate topics for the work programme. Currently the work programme is also the last item on the agenda at O&S meetings, we would recommend bringing it to the beginning, so it can be given greater priority and benefit from more considered discussion, rather than being subject to the inevitable end of meeting fatigue.

Reviewing how the recommendations are made and how impact is measured – This could include putting the 'recommendations monitoring report' at the beginning of agendas to orientate O&S towards outcomes-focused meetings, alongside an emphasis on finding strong recommendations from questioning to present to Cabinet (or partners) as improvement or challenge proposals."

The inclusion of the matters set out in the "purpose of this report" section above sought further re-enforcement of the inter-relationship of the matters referred to. As such, it had been designed to further support consideration of work programming of the Committee and contribute to addressing progress with the Corporate Plan.

The detailed matters relating to the following matters had been set out in the relevant Appendix identified:

- (1) Work Programme for 2024/25 approved by Full Council on 6 August 2024 – Appendix A;
- (2) feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken –Appendix B; and
- (3) a list of forthcoming decisions for which notice had been given since publication of the agenda for the Committee's last meeting –Appendix C

In considering work programming matters, the Committee was further reminded of the other recommendations from the CfGS review undertaken in 2021:

"Considering greater use of task and finish groups – This more informal type of O&S can allow improved cross-party working and detailed investigation of a single issue focussed on producing substantive recommendations.

Improved agenda planning and management - Committees should focus on one or two substantive items per agenda to allow for cross-cutting themes to be properly identified and explored, and different insights brought to bear on critical issues.

Considering how to engage the public in the work of O&S - This could include O&S going on more site visits in the community, inviting the public to offer ideas for work programmes, and greater use of social media channels for resident input and communicating the progress and impact of scrutiny work.

A clearer focus on democratic accountability - Scrutiny of Cabinet Members should form a key part of the work programme, providing an opportunity to hold the Leader and portfolio holders to account for delivery of the corporate plan and any other issues O&S feel is important."

In considering the Work Programme of enquiries, the Committee must have had regard to the Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the themes of that Corporate Plan were:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
- Championing our local environment
- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer
- Financial Sustainability and openness

Members were aware, that an update on NHS Dentistry Provision had been due to be received at this meeting of the Committee. Unfortunately, due to a change in officer responsibilities at SNEE ICB and the annual leave of the new officer in charge, this item had had to be postponed until the next meeting of the Committee which was due to be held on 17 June 2025.

It was also noted that the Committee had held an Informal Meeting on Thursday 10 April 2025, with the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support) to discuss the work programme and agenda for this meeting.

During the discussion of this report, Members received an update of the work of the Task & Finish Groups established by the Committee, as appropriate, namely:

- Joint working with Parish and Town Councils; and
- Youth Provision for School Age Children outside of school

Officers had been beginning the process of developing the Committee's work programme for 2025/26. Initially, this had involved seeking suggestions from:-

- Members;
- the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council (through a joint meeting under the Cabinet/Overview & Scrutiny Protocol with the Chairman of the two Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which had also involved the Chief

Executive, the Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support);

- Management Team;
- Town and Parish Councils, partner agencies and community groups; and
- The public.

Officers will then collate the replies received that are relevant to this Committee, associating suggestions with a corporate plan theme, identifying information sources and possible invitees and what might be the benefit of the enquiries. That collation will then be firstly discussed with the Chairman of the Committee and then by the Committee at an informal meeting, which will be arranged in due course.

The proposed Work Programme for 2025/26 together with my annual review of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2024/25 will be formally submitted to the Committee for its approval at its meeting due to be held on 17 June 2025.

The Work Programme, as recommended by the Committee, together with the annual review of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2024/25, will then be submitted to the meeting of the Full Council due to be held on 15 July 2025 for its approval.

| Questions by Members:- | Responses:- |
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| For Clacton Councillors who sit on the Committee, would we need to declare an interest in relation to the Community Governance Review for Clacton? | Keith Simmons – There is no specific requirement to declare an interest, I am however an advocate of showing transparency to the public as to why you may need to. |
| Can we get a statement from the Monitoring Officer that can be read out for clarity? | Yes, we can. |

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Committee:-

- a) notes the progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme 2024/25, plus any feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations and the list of forthcoming decisions;
- b) notes the oral updates on the work of the two Task and Finish Groups established by the Committee (as referenced in the Work Programme at Appendix A):
 - (i) Joint working with Parish and Town Councils; and
 - (ii) Youth Provision for School Age Children outside of school
- c) notes the arrangements that are being made for the Committee to consider and decide in due course its Work Programme for 2025/26.

1. **Report of the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) - A.1 - Work Programming - Including Monitoring of Previous Recommendations and Summary of Forthcoming Decisions**

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) which provided an update on its approved Work Programme for 2024/25 (including progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme), feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which public notice had been given.

Members were reminded that the Council had commissioned the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) to undertake an 'Overview & Scrutiny Development Review' in 2021 as a way of further improving that function at the Council. Two relevant recommendations arising from that review had been:

"Further strengthening the annual process for developing work programmes for each O&S committee - Engaging Members, Officers, partners and the public to prioritise the topics for review. This could include a selection criteria to identify appropriate topics for the work programme. Currently the work programme is also the last item on the agenda at O&S meetings, we would recommend bringing it to the beginning, so it can be given greater priority and benefit from more considered discussion, rather than being subject to the inevitable end of meeting fatigue.

Reviewing how the recommendations are made and how impact is measured – This could include putting the 'recommendations monitoring report' at the beginning of agendas to orientate O&S towards outcomes-focused meetings, alongside an emphasis on finding strong recommendations from questioning to present to Cabinet (or partners) as improvement or challenge proposals."

The inclusion of the matters set out in the "purpose of this report" section above sought further re-enforcement of the inter-relationship of the matters referred to. As such, it had been designed to further support consideration of work programming of the Committee and contribute to addressing progress with the Corporate Plan.

The detailed matters relating to the following matters had been set out in the relevant Appendix identified:

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Considering how to engage the public in the work of O&S - This could include O&S going on more site visits in the community, inviting the public to offer ideas for work programmes, and greater use of social media channels for resident input and communicating the progress and impact of scrutiny work.

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It was also noted that the Committee had held an Informal Meeting on Thursday 10 April 2025, with the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support) to discuss the work programme and agenda for this meeting.

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| Can we get a statement from the Monitoring Officer that can be read out for clarity? | Yes, we can. |

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Committee:-

- d) notes the progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme 2024/25, plus any feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations and the list of forthcoming decisions;
- e) notes the oral updates on the work of the two Task and Finish Groups established by the Committee (as referenced in the Work Programme at Appendix A):
 - (iii) Joint working with Parish and Town Councils; and
 - (iv) Youth Provision for School Age Children outside of school
- f) notes the arrangements that are being made for the Committee to consider and decide in due course its Work Programme for 2025/26.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.56 pm

Chairman