MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, HELD ON TUESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER, 2025 AT 7.30 PM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15 1SE

Present:	Councillors P Honeywood (Chairman), Amos (Vice-Chairman), Bush, Bensilum, Goldman, Harris, J Henderson, Newton and Steady
Also Present:	Councillors M Stephenson (Leader of the Council) (except part of item 24 and item 25) and Smith (Portfolio Holder for Environment and ICT) (except part of item 24 and item 25)
In Attendance:	Lisa Hastings (Corporate Director (Law & Governance) & Monitoring Officer) (except part of item 24 and item 25), Richard Barrett (Corporate Director (Finance and IT)), Damian Williams (Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery)) (except part of item 23, items 24 and 25), Keith Simmons (Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support)), Tim Clarke (Assistant Director (Housing and Environment)) (online) (except part of item 23, items 24 and 25), Jonathan Hamlet (Waste and Recycling Manager) (except part of item 23, items 24 and 25), Katie Koppenaal (Democratic Services Officer) and Bethany Jones (Democratic Services Officer)

18. ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIRMAN

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

RESOLVED that Councillor Amos be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies for absence submitted nor substitutions made on this occasion.

20. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Goldman and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 30 July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

Councillor P Honeywood enquired whether Councillor M Stephenson, Leader of the Council, had responded to the letter concerning the Spendells overspend, which had followed the Committee meeting held on 30 July 2025. The Leader of the Council confirmed that a response would be provided before the conclusion of the current meeting.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made by Members on this occasion.

22. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

No Questions on Notice pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 38 had been submitted by Members for this meeting.

23. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT) - A.2 - WASTE AND STREET CLEANING CONTRACT/IMPLEMENTATION

The Committee had before it the report of the Assistant Director (Housing & Environment) (A.2) which had set out to support them with their enquiry in respect of the Council's waste and street cleaning contract re-procurement progress and implementation.

Members were reminded that the Committee's Work Programme for 2025/26 had included an item that the Committee should consider how it wished to conduct its scrutiny of this item.

The Council's contracts for waste and recycling collection and street cleaning had both expired on 31 March 2025.

At its meeting held on 26 July 2024, Cabinet had agreed to the commencement of a procurement process to appoint a contractor to deliver the Council's waste and recycling collection and street cleaning service from 2026 onwards, based upon a set of principles, which had translated into a specification for detailed solutions to be submitted against.

The final specification had been issued to bidders in August 2025 with bidders having been invited to submit their final tenders by 12 noon on 17 September 2025.

It was highlighted to Members that Officers were currently continuing to finalise the tender evaluation process and an associated report had been prepared to be presented to Cabinet on 14 November 2025, that would include a recommendation to award the contract along with the necessary funding / budget adjustments as required. The appointed contractor would be delivering their services from 1 April 2026.

Questions by Members:	**Answers:**
Why, when we started this procurement, did we go out for a gold-plated service that was clearly unaffordable?	(Councillor M Stephenson) I will be taking this question given that Councillor Smith was not the Portfolio Holder for Environment & ICT when the procurement process started in July 2024. *For information on the development and evolution of the service specification please refer to the Cabinet reports from July 2024 and May 2025 that have been*

	supplied to the committee as background information. *The price of any service such as this is unknown at the outset. As this service was last procured in 2011 it was reasonable to expect higher costs, and this was covered in the July 2024 Cabinet report.* *It is only once prices have been sought from bidders that a true indication of contract cost can be established. The competitive dialogue process used for this procurement allowed for indicative prices to be submitted by bidders prior to dialogue commencing. The dialogue process than allowed for discussion about the Council's requirements before a final service specification is agreed.* *The Portfolio Holder Working Party, established to support the development of the contract specification was involved in and therefore aware of the higher standard of service included in the first specification issued to bidders.* *The waste and recycling collection aspects of the service specification are driven by the need to be compliant with the Environment Act 2021 and collection of a wider range a recyclable material, including glass, from the kerbside from April 2026.* *On the street cleaning side, a higher standard of specification was chosen in order to deliver the best possible services for our residents and visitors. This is something residents indicated they wanted to see through the feedback to the Corporate Plan consultation undertaken during 2023.*
Can the Council clarify who the appointed waste contractor will be and provide more detail on the contract specifications, as the current documentation is too vague to explain	(Councillor M Stephenson) The procurement process has been ongoing for approximately eighteen months, and I note that it was not included in the Committee's Work Programme until

clearly to residents?	August 2025. It is regrettable that the Cabinet meeting I October was postponed, as its original scheduling would have enabled many of Councillor Bush's inquiries to be addressed publicly. Nonetheless, substantial information has already been made available, as reflected in the extensive set of reference documents provided. At present, the only outstanding details pertain to the final cost and the appointed contractor.
At the commencement of the procurement process, was there awareness of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), including the recommendations concerning the establishment of the Unitary Authority and its potential implications? To what extent were these factors incorporated into the initial considerations? Additionally, have the 11,000 new homes adopted within the Local Plan been factored into the scope and requirements of the contract?	(Councillor M Stephenson) At the outset of the procurement process, Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was not under consideration and therefore excluded from the Waste and Street Cleaning Contract. Once LGR discussions commenced, the contract was deemed unaffordable, as noted in the May 2025 Cabinet report. Recognising the likelihood of transitioning to a new unitary authority within two years, we concluded that a 7–8 year contract was no longer viable. Instead, we opted to develop a revised contract that would avoid creating a cliff-edge scenario for the incoming authority. This approach reflects potential cost-saving opportunities under a unitary model, where responsibilities for both collection and disposal would be consolidated. Our overarching goal remains to position the District for long-term success. New routes are an integral component of the new contract, as they are in the current agreement.
What were the reasons behind the Cabinet's decision, despite the advice given by Officers, to pursue a contract previously deemed 'unachievable,' and what are the financial implications for taxpayers?	(Councillor M Stephenson) The Cabinet was informed of an increase in costs; however, this was anticipated given the nature of the seven-year contract initiated in 2018. It was understood that inflationary pressures would naturally lead to higher costs by 2025. At no point prior to the May 2025 Cabinet report was the contract described as unaffordable. The decision to pursue a "gold-plated" contract was driven by resident

	feedback, which clearly indicated a preference for a high-quality service. To support the development and delivery of this contract, the Council engaged a range of expert organisations, including the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA). A budget of £400,000 was allocated for consultant recruitment, though not all of this funding was utilised. In addition to EELGA, the Council appointed Eunomia (procurement consultants), WRM Sustainability Ltd (specification and performance consultants), and Sharpe Pritchard LLP (legal advisors). These firms were selected due to the recognised need for specialist expertise, which the Council did not possess internally. Their contributions were instrumental in shaping and finalising the contract. During the competitive dialogue process, a proposed price was submitted that exceeded the Council's expectations by £7 million. It was at this juncture that the May 2025 Cabinet report formally identified the contract as "unaffordable."
To clarify, Officers told this Committee, but did not tell the Cabinet?	(Councillor M Stephenson) While I cannot comment on what others may have conveyed to you, I can confirm that at no point were we advised by Officers that the contract was unaffordable.
How many meetings of the Portfolio Holder Working Group for this procurement have there been - and what were the dates of the meetings?	(Councillor Smith) *There were four meetings:* *28 September 2023* *16 November 2023* *30 May 2024* *1 October 2024 – Final meeting in order to feed back the work of the group to the Waste Contract Project Board.*
Why was the last meeting of the Portfolio Holder Working Group held over a year ago?	(Councillor Smith) As the procurement process had commenced, it was deemed inappropriate for the group to continue discussions on the matter. Similarly, this

	evening, given that the proposal has not yet received Cabinet approval, there are specific aspects of the topic that we are unable to comment on at this stage.
Please clarify why extending the current contractor is not being considered as an alternative to recruiting a new one. Also, I need assurance that a tangible solution to the concerns raised is actively being pursued and not just under discussion.	(Lisa Hastings) A detailed report providing further information will be published alongside the Cabinet agenda on Thursday, 6 November 2025, in advance of the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 14 November 2025. This report is intended to address and clarify the concerns you have raised. However, please note that the name of the contractor and the financial details involved cannot be disclosed publicly at this time. I understand that the Committee has chosen to proceed with its line of questioning. However, I would like to note that the Portfolio Holder for Environment & ICT has prepared a statement that may address several of the forthcoming queries. This statement was not available at the time the report was published.

Following an invitation from the Corporate Director (Law and Governance), the Portfolio Holder for Environment & ICT read out the following statement:

(a) *"At its meeting on 26 July 2024, Cabinet agreed to the commencement of a procurement process to appoint a contractor to deliver the Council's waste and recycling collection and street cleaning service from 2026 onwards, based upon a set of principles, which translated into a specification for detailed solutions to be submitted against.*

(b) *The Council's project team has been supported throughout the procurement process by four external organisations, chosen for their experience in supporting similar procurements elsewhere.*

(c) *The price for the initial detailed solutions provided by bidders at the Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions (ISDS) stage was not affordable by the Council, being potentially over £7m per annum above the current associated budgets.*

(d) *In response to the affordability position and Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals for Greater Essex, at its meeting on 23 May 2025 Cabinet agreed a revised set of Core Specification Principles aimed at reducing the price at final tender stage (the changes were):*

- *a shorter contract term – from eight to an initial three-year contract term with an optional two-year extension period;*

- *a reduction in specification, mainly in relation to street cleaning, aimed at reducing the level of risk and uncertainty whilst increasing affordability but not offering a lower level of service than currently, in particular continuing a fortnightly collection of residual waste;*
- *that the Council does not take any risk on the value of the dry mixed recycling (DMR) collected at the kerbside; and,*
- *that the Council does not fund the up-front purchase of any vehicle fleet.*

TABLE 3 within the May Cabinet Report set out the complete set of Core Specifications (see attached).

(e) A revised draft specification was sent to bidders following the May 2025 Cabinet meeting and officers entered competitive dialogue discussions with each individual bidder during June and July 2025, after which the Council's requirements were finalised via a decision by the Corporate Director for Operations and Delivery on 14 August 2025, and final detailed solutions (tenders) were invited with a tender closing date of 17 September 2025.

(f) The terms and conditions of the expected contract requirements form part of the procurement process, some clarification questions received related to the service specification but none that fundamentally alter the specification or contract terms. Therefore, subject to the recommendations being approved, no further decisions are required for the contract documentation to be completed.

(g) The Council has undertaken its tender evaluation process ensuring there is full compliance with the requirements of the service specification. The price must also be within a range that is affordable to the Council, over the initial contract duration of three years, subject to budget adjustments.

(h) The Council will require an additional budget in order to pay for the service, taking into account one off grant funding received by the Council.

(i) In anticipation of increased contract costs, £2.417m has already been set aside as part of finalising the outturn position for 2024/25. Further monies are being identified that can be freed up by refocussing budgets. The details will be contained within the Cabinet report but reassurances can be given that the price is affordable to the Council.

(j) Prior to Cabinet approving the award of the contract, the financial implications to the Council need to be considered and balanced against compliance with the statutory duties regarding waste and recycling collection.

(k) Refocussing of existing budgets in order to continue providing the statutorily required waste service may impact the speed and scale of investment elsewhere within the Council's overall budget.

(l) It is planned to develop a fully funded two year financial 'work programme' / budget that will enable the Council to fully support and protect front line services.

(m) In order to ensure an effective delivery of the new contract and a smooth transition to the new recycling collection services, officers will be developing an

implementation and communications plan. This will be jointly developed with the successful bidder who, as part of their tender submission, were required to submit a comprehensive mobilisation plan.

(n) Overall, the new contract, as specified, will provide residents of and visitors to the district a level of street cleaning that is at least equivalent to that provided currently, and all residents will receive an enhanced recycling collection service alongside the continuation of fortnightly or weekly residual waste collection."

Can you provide clarification on the distinctions between the three contract versions: the current contract in operation, the enhanced version incorporating additional features, and the newly proposed contract? (Councillor P Honeywood) For clarification, the three versions referred to are the overall service within the contract that is currently in place, the service that is now being proposed and the "gold-plated" service. We are looking for clarification on the differences between the three.	(Councillor Smith) The primary distinction lies in the scope of services outlined in the new proposed contract. The previous version was structured around a performance-based model, which would have required continuous street-level tasks such as emptying litter bins under the street cleaning provision. This approach proved to be financially unsustainable. As a result, we have decided to revert to the existing contractual framework. The updated proposal reflects this shift, and the specific changes in the new contract are as follows: • Single contract covering street cleaning and waste/recycling services • Built-in performance standards and accountability framework • Council to manage customer contact centre and handle complaints • TDC may access live vehicle data for performance monitoring • Initial 3-year term with optional 2-year extension • Annual formal review plus quarterly waste board meetings for improvements • Contractor funds upfront vehicle purchase • Bulky item collection included and managed by contractor • Founder Road depot leased to contractor at no charge • Container delivery teams retained for golden waste service • Fortnightly residual waste collection via wheely bins • Recycling compliant with

	Environment Act 2021: twin-stream, alternate weekly (containers vs. fibres) using boxes • Weekly food waste collection for all households, including flats and rural areas • Chargeable garden waste service unchanged in frequency and cost • Contractor assumes full risk on dry recyclable material value • Frequency-based street cleaning with scheduled bin cleaning/emptying • Option for mobile response team • New beach cleans added at Holland-on-Sea • Additional blue bins on seafront for summer peak • Summer period extended: March to September annually
Following on from the earlier question on the Portfolio Holder Working Party, what was the date the specification was finalised before it went out to procurement?	(Damian Williams) The answer depends on which stage of the procurement process is being referenced, as the current process differs significantly from the one undertaken 14 years ago. At that time, there were dialogue phases that led to a reassessment, particularly when it was identified that the cost would increase by £7 million. This prompted a need to revisit the approach. Therefore, it's important to clarify whether the reference point is when the specification was issued for tender—reflecting the current, fully costed proposal being submitted—or whether it pertains to the earlier dialogue stage, as key milestones occurred at different times.
Were any amendments to the contract implemented without prior consultation with the Portfolio Holder Working Group?	(Councillor M Stephenson) Cllr Bush chaired three meetings of the Portfolio Holder Working Party. A fourth and final scheduled meeting was subsequently held, which I attended. During this session, the group reached a natural conclusion. With the procurement phase underway, there was no further requirement to convene additional meetings.

	(Lisa Hastings) Following a thorough review of the Cabinet reports, I can confirm that the working group last convened in October 2024. At that meeting, they provided feedback on the high-level specification, which subsequently progressed through a staged process, as outlined by the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery). The group did not reconvene prior to the May 2025 Cabinet report. The May 2025 report offers a detailed account of the limited options available to the Council at that time. It also clearly identifies the changes made to the core specification, which included: • A shortened contract term to accommodate Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) • A reduced specification to reflect affordability constraints • A decision to avoid financial risk associated with dry mixed recycling and kerbside services • A determination not to fund the upfront purchase of the vehicle fleet
Could you please confirm whether external consultants have been engaged during this process? If so, it would be helpful to understand the associated costs, including the overall expenditure expected by the end of the engagement. Additionally, I'd appreciate insight into the specific expertise these consultants have contributed that may not be available within our internal team. Lastly, could you clarify whether there is an intention to proceed with the purchase of these vehicles?	(Councillor M Stephenson) Yes, consultants were engaged as part of this process. To streamline decision-making and minimise delays involving Cabinet and other stakeholders, an initial allocation of approximately £300,000 was set aside for consultancy support. As the project progressed, it became clear that additional resources were required, and a further £100,000 was approved. All related decisions are publicly available. The Council appointed EELGA, Eunomia, and WRM Sustainability Ltd to provide expert advice. Detailed information regarding expenditure to date will be included in the forthcoming Cabinet report. (Councillor Smith) We are not going to be purchasing the vehicles.
Could you please clarify the current approach to black sack collections	(Damian Williams) Current collection schedules will remain unchanged. In

considering the legislative changes effective from March 2025, which mandate weekly food waste and glass recycling collections? Additionally, what is our strategy for communicating these service updates to residents? Clear and timely communication will be essential to ensure understanding and compliance.	accordance with legislative requirements, food waste and glass recycling will continue to be collected directly from doorsteps. For residents living in flats, the arrangements are more complex due to a range of logistical considerations. The Waste and Recycling team is actively developing a clear and comprehensive communication plan to ensure all affected residents are well informed. Please be assured that all changes will be carefully planned and executed to maintain a high standard of service.
For confirmation, will the frequency of street cleaning remain the same in each individual road?	(Councillor Smith) Yes.
Could you confirm whether dog waste bins are included in the scope of the contract? I would also like to propose that particular attention be given to the provision and maintenance of these bins, as they are a frequent source of resident complaints. Considering this, could a provision be considered to make it easier for Parish Councils to request dog waste bins, as the current process can be unnecessarily drawn out and difficult to navigate?	(Councillor Smith) This provision is currently in place and will remain so under the new contract. Although the bin emptying is part of the contract, implementing additional bins is a separate issue to the contract itself. (Councillor M Stephenson) Technology is now in place to confirm that bins are being emptied according to schedule, enabling more effective issue resolution and eliminating any uncertainty regarding contractor attendance. Once the waste contract is fully implemented, we will be in a better position to explore and address the ongoing issues related to dog waste bins.
Could you please clarify whether wrapped dog waste can be disposed of in any Council bin? I was under the impression that this was permitted but would appreciate confirmation.	(Councillor Smith) Yes, it can.
I'm pleased to see how comprehensive the performance management is. Could you confirm whether any missed household waste collections must be collected within 28 days? If so, will there be any associated penalties for missed or delayed collections?	(Jonathan Hamlet) Household waste is typically collected within 48 hours, not 28 days. While the current contract does not impose formal penalties for delays, the forthcoming performance framework will introduce specific KPIs that must be met. Details of any associated penalties will be made publicly available following the

	Cabinet meeting next week.
With the population increase within the District, how do we determine how many additional bins we need to facilitate this growth? Could consideration be given to the provision of dog waste and litter bins in response to projected population growth, to ensure infrastructure keeps pace with community needs? Following the confirmation that dog waste can be disposed of in any Council bin, could you clarify whether a single standardised type of public bin will now be used? Additionally, will these bins be larger to accommodate increased usage? It has been observed that the collection of black bin liners occasionally results in residue being left on the road. Could you confirm whether the new contract includes provisions requiring operatives to clear such residual waste as part of their duties?	(Jonathan Hamlet) In accordance with the contract, service provision is currently aligned with new developments identified in both the Forward Plan and Local Plan. As these developments become operational, the associated properties will be supplied with bins and integrated into the collection schedule. In time, having built in the stronger KPI's and performance management to the contract, it then becomes a much stronger service. We will continue to collaborate with Town and Parish Councils to support local communities in meeting their dog and litter bin needs, working closely with stakeholders to ensure appropriate provision where required. Our preferred approach is to transition to a single-use public bin model, a practice we have been implementing for several years. Traditional dog waste bins, typically constructed from soft metal, are prone to rust and deterioration. When these bins require replacement, they are generally substituted with larger litter bins that can also accommodate dog waste. This solution offers added benefits for residents, as the bins have greater capacity and are emptied more frequently. This matter is best addressed through operational channels rather than scrutiny. Nonetheless, we remain committed to working collaboratively with Town and Parish Councils, as well as the wider public, to identify and raise awareness of such issues.
Is there the option for the procurement process to be delayed allowing sufficient time for thorough scrutiny by the Committee?	*(Councillor Smith) No – delaying the procurement will cause delays to contract implementation and leave the Council exposed and in the position of not having a contractor in place the deliver services from April 2026.* *We do not recognise the suggestion that*

	there has been insufficient time for thorough scrutiny, given the duration of this procurement process thus far and Cabinet's detailed reports being in the public domain and available to the Committee. *The Committee sets its work programme, and it is noted that for the Work Programme for 2025/26, the Waste and street cleaning contract progress/implementation has been included.* *The Committee cannot be part of the decision-making process for the award of the contract, and assurance is given that the process has been robust and further details will be contained within the Cabinet report (14 November 2025) on funding.* *Is there any further assurance the Committee requires?*
Would fixed penalty notices be issued? Specifically following incidents of littering along the Clacton-on-Sea seafront?	*(Councillor Smith) This is not relevant to the procurement of this contract. The contractor will not be responsible for enforcement but are obliged to alert the Council where they find evidence of fly tipping or persistent littering or misuse of litter bins, etc.*
Can you provide a detailed breakdown of the locations at which blue bins would be situated? Could you clarify why litter bins are removed from Clacton seafront during the winter months, despite continued use of the area by dog walkers and the ongoing need for waste disposal facilities?	*(Councillor Smith) No, the locations are adjusted based on experience and seasonal demand.* (Councillor Smith) There must be a seasonal variation in the bins provided. In my ward, when reports are received regarding bins being full, it is frequently the case that one specific bin is heavily used while others nearby remain largely empty.
What scope exists to amend the contract, or whether the terms are now fixed and non-negotiable? If changes to the contract are required—such as those arising from legislative updates—does the contract	(Jonathan Hamlet) The current contract is robust and includes provisions for quarterly and annual reviews. It also incorporates mechanisms to accommodate changes in legislation. We have benefited from the expertise referenced earlier, and the contract

permit the contractor to adjust the associated costs accordingly?	allows for flexibility to implement amendments where necessary. Yes, but it would need be transparent and scrutinised by officers and the waste board and they would need to clearly outline where any additional costs would be coming from.
Does the contract include provisions allowing the Council to issue notice in the event of non-compliance with Service Level Agreements (SLAs)? Additionally, is there a mechanism for the contractor to serve notice, and if so, what is the required notice period?	(Jonathan Hamlet) Yes, there is an established procedure in place, similar to the current arrangements, whereby either party may terminate the contract should mediation efforts fail following a breakdown in service. While I am currently unsure of the specific notice period required, I will confirm this. It is important to note that such occurrences are exceptionally rare. (Damian Williams) Most contracts typically include reciprocal clauses designed to protect the interests of both parties; therefore, yes, such provisions would apply equally to both sides.
Would it be possible to move into Part B of the meeting to address matters that are not appropriate for discussion in the public domain?	(Lisa Hastings) Yes, provisions do exist to move into Part B. It's important to note that the term "commercially sensitive" does not preclude the Committee from accessing the information; rather, it indicates that such matters are not appropriate for discussion in the public domain.
Would it be feasible to develop a Councillor information pack to support the effective communication of these details to residents?	(Councillor Smith) We would be more than happy to facilitate this.

It was moved by Councillor P Honeywood, seconded by Councillor Bensilum and **RESOLVED:-**

"That pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded temporarily from the meeting on the grounds that the Committee's deliberations will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, of the Act."

The Committee's discussions originally held under Part B have subsequently been made public following the release of the Cabinet meeting agenda scheduled for 14 November 2025, which included those details in the public domain.

Following its decision to exclude the press and public to enable it to discuss commercially sensitive information, the Committee proceeded as follows:

Questions by Members:	**Answers:**
What is the total cost of the contract and is it at an equal cost over each year?	(Richard Barrett) The total cost of the contract over three years is approximately £7.8 million. While this exact figure may not be explicitly stated in the report due to the complexity of the contract, it reflects the overall financial commitment. Grant funding has been secured, though the amount is relatively modest—around £500,000. Consequently, the Council will need to identify funding for the remaining £7.4 million. The expenditure will be higher in the first year.
Does that figure include business and administrative costs, or does it solely reflect the contractual expenditure? Additionally, has the impact of the projected 11,000 new homes been factored into the calculation?	(Richard Barrett) Yes, that is the total cost to the Council.
Who is the new contract being offered to?	(Councillor M Stephenson) Veolia (Lisa Hastings) To clarify, the contract has not yet been awarded. In May, two contractors were involved in the process; however, following that stage, only one formal submission was received. In accordance with procurement regulations, a 10-day standstill period is required once a contract is awarded, during which any challenges may be submitted. This process must be followed even in cases where only a single contractor has submitted a bid. Officers have undertaken a thorough review of all aspects of the contract to ensure due diligence. Following the Cabinet's decision in November and the subsequent awarding of the contract, a significant amount of implementation work remains.

Following the above discussions, the press and public were formally readmitted to the meeting.

Following the deliberations referred to in the above resolution the press and public were formally readmitted to the meeting.

Questions by Members:	**Answers:**
Once the waste has been collected, what happens to it?	(Councillor Smith) Black sack waste is transported to the Endeavour facility in Rivenhall, where it is thermally treated and converted into electricity. Plastic and cardboard materials are sent for recycling, while food waste is processed into biofuel.

The meeting was then temporarily adjourned, during which the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery), the Assistant Director (Housing and Environment), and the Waste and Recycling Manager departed.

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

(a) recommends to Cabinet that the Council apply a proportionate compliance framework in the early stages of the contract rollout to allow for reasonable adjustments accommodating residents' needs and ensuring equitable access to services;

(b) recommends to Cabinet that the Portfolio Holder Working Party, that initially supported the move to procurement of the Waste and Street Cleaning Contract, be re-established to address mobilisation, implementation and delivery of the contract requirements going forward utilising all the relevant Key Performance Indicator data including delivery percentages by Ward and considers the appropriate practice and process in respect of the deployment of sanctions for underperformance or breach of contract terms;

(c) recommends to Cabinet that a clear communication plan be developed and then executed to keep residents informed of (impending) service changes, including the changes being introduced in the new contract (such as the introduction of services such as glass collection);

(d) encourages Cabinet to implement the proposal, accepted by the Portfolio Holder for the Environment and IT at the Committee's meeting, for the preparation of an information pack for Councillors (and possibly Town and Parish Councils) in respect of the new contract and the arrangements for collection of waste and recyclable materials going forward in the District and that this be developed with input from Members across the Council;

(e) notes that the reported cost of the new Waste and Street Cleaning Contract was broadly in line with where Members of the Committee considered it would be; and

(f) notes and accepts Officers' proposal to provide detailed information regarding the contract termination provisions of the new contract.

24. REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (FINANCE & IT) - A.1 - FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2024/25

Members had been presented with the report of the Corporate Director (Finance & IT) (A.1) which provided an overview of the Council's financial outturn for the year 2025/25 as well as in-year budget adjustments for 2025/26 to date.

The Committee heard that on 27 June 2025, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance had considered the detailed Financial Outturn position for 2024/25 and made an executive decision as follows:

(a) that the financial outturn position for 2024/25, as set out in the Officer report and its appendices, be noted;

(b) that the financing of General Fund capital expenditure for 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix D, be approved;

(c) that the movement in uncommitted and earmarked General Fund reserves for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix E, be approved;

(d) that the General Fund revenue carry forward items totalling £15.093m, as set out in column 4 of Appendix K, be approved;

(e) that the General Fund capital carry forwards totalling £59.477m, as set out in Appendix D, be approved;

(f) that, in respect of the HRA, the movement on HRA balances for 2024/25, including any commitments set out within Appendices H and/or I, along with recharges to the HRA from the General Fund of £3.025m for the year and the financing of the HRA capital expenditure, as set out in Appendix I, be approved; and

(g) that the overall General Fund outturn variance of £5.417m for 2024/25 that is being carried forward via the Revenue Commitments Reserve be noted; and

(h) that Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposed allocations from the variance amount, as set out within Table 3.

It was reported that subsequently, on 25 July 2025, Cabinet had considered an overview of the financial outturn for 2024/25 and the proposed allocation of the general fund variance for the year and other in-year budget adjustments. It had been resolved by Cabinet that:

(a) the high-level Financial Outturn Position, as set out in this report (A.5), and the favourable General Fund Revenue variance of £5.417m for the year, which is currently held within the Revenue Commitments Reserve be noted;

(b) the use of the General Fund Outturn for the Year of £5.417m, as set out in Appendix A (Section 1), be approved;

(c) in respect of the additional £1.000m set aside to support the delivery of savings / efficiency plans and wider corporate priorities, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance, be authorised to utilise this funding during the year;

(d) in respect of the additional £1.000m set aside for Coast Protection Works, this be added to the remaining budget of £0.970m associated with earlier decisions, and that the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT, be authorised to utilise this funding during the year;

(e) the budget adjustments for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A (Sections 2 and 3), be approved;

(f) the Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Corporate Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder, be authorised to adjust the outturn position for 2024/25 along with any corresponding adjustment to earmarked reserves as a direct result of any recommendations made by the Council's External Auditor during the course of their audit activities relating to the Council's 2024/25 accounts; and

(g) Officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, be requested to continue to explore opportunities to support the Council in addressing the increasing financial challenge associated with the demand for homelessness / temporary accommodation, and to present reports to future meetings of Cabinet, including the potential options associated with the possible levying of charges, balanced against various issues such as the circumstances of those seeking support.

Questions by Members:	**Answers:**
What is the total amount of ringfenced funding? What are the specific purposes for which these funds are being allocated? And are the associated projects or initiatives expected to be delivered as planned?	*(Councillor M Stephenson) It is assumed that the reference to ring fenced funding relates to where a decision has been made to allocate a budget via the budget setting process, financial performance reports or separate decisions during the year. With this in mind, the associated decisions would have set out the basis / purpose of the funding (and / or further delegations agreed) and the items would subsequently be included within the budget with progress reported within the regular financial performance reports that would provide commentary around the delivery of the projects /*

	initiatives as necessary. Was there any particular ring-fenced funding the Committee would like more information on?
Is there a document you can provide with all the ringfenced budgets?	(Richard Barrett) I am amenable to engaging in a discussion outside the meeting to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the intended outcomes.
What is the financial impact should the cost of the Waste Contract exceed initial expectations?	*(Councillor M Stephenson) As set out in the May 2025 Cabinet report, it was highlighted that the proposed approach would be based on the use of one-off funding, supported by savings and efficiencies within the overall GF revenue budget as necessary. This remains the planned approach with no direct impact on the provision of existing services.*
Can you provide clarification on the source of any additional funding required and the anticipated budgetary position in such circumstances?	*(Councillor M Stephenson) Following on the above, and as set out within the outturn report for 2024/25, £2.417m has already been set aside to support the cost of the contract. In accordance with the proposed use of one-off money set out above, it is proposed to utilise a limited number of currently uncommitted one-off budgets to meet the initial three-year cost of the contract.*
Is there a contingency plan is in place to address any potential overspend associated with the Carnarvon Terrace project?	*(Councillor M Stephenson) As set out within previous reports, such risks have been highlighted and discussed and included within risk management plans and a contingency sum has been allocated to the project from within the overall agreed budget.* *The consideration of this key issue will also be revisited within the associated report following the completion of the procurement process, which is planned to be presented to Cabinet in early 2026.*
Can you provide assurance that, should any such overspend occur, this Committee would be formally notified?	*(Councillor M Stephenson) Such issue would form part of Cabinet reports as necessary and therefore available to all Members. They would also be included*

	within the regular financial performance reports as necessary, that already form part of the Committee's work programme.
I would appreciate clarification regarding the £45,000 allocated for the creation of a fixed-term Refugee Support Officer position. Specifically, is this funding sourced from the Government? Additionally, could you confirm the duration of the fixed-term appointment? I am also interested in understanding the core purpose of this role and the specific needs it is intended to address within the current context. Is this talking about illegal immigrants? Do we know who these people are? Have we been informed by the Government that they are arriving and do we offer them housing?	(Councillor M Stephenson) This is regarding refugees and once they have been granted the right to remain. It was about dealing with people who have been given asylum status and working with them, which we felt we were not doing well enough? No, this is not about dispersing illegal immigrants. It pertains to supporting those who have been granted the right to remain, facilitating their transition and integration through the next stages of resettlement. I do not believe these questions are directly relevant to the agenda item currently under discussion. Therefore, I would kindly ask that they be submitted outside of the Committee for consideration through the appropriate channels.
Do Colchester and Braintree have a Refugee Support Officer and the same Government funding?	(Councillor M Stephenson) I don't know. I will endeavour to find out that information and it will be added to the written response.
Homelessness costs have doubled, what do you attribute that to?	(Councillor M Stephenson) This is a nationwide issue and not unique to Tendring. However, our associated costs have not risen to the same extent as in some other areas, largely due to proactive initiatives such as the Spendells project and the fact that we do not currently have any individuals experiencing homelessness accommodated in hotels. Nationally, homelessness figures continue to rise. In response, the Portfolio Holder responsible for Housing and I are working closely with an Officer Working Party to explore and implement strategies aimed at reducing costs and improving outcomes.

What are the percentage of voids we have where we can house these people?	(Councillor M Stephenson) Under 2%, which is our goal.
Could you please confirm whether the increase in asylum seekers is contributing to the reported figures? It was previously noted at a meeting that there is a correlation between homelessness and unemployment. In light of this, could you clarify why the homelessness figure is continuing to rise and resulting in increased costs for the Council?	(Councillor M Stephenson) Asylum seekers represent a very small proportion of those reflected in our data. Approximately 75% of individuals currently in temporary accommodation are there due to factors such as antisocial behaviour, issues with landlords, and family disputes. The remaining 25% encompasses a wide range of other causes—around 20 distinct categories—with asylum seekers ranking among the least prevalent. While this may be a more prominent issue in other areas, it is not currently a significant concern within Tendring. A report from the Officer Working Party addressing temporary accommodation is scheduled to be presented to Cabinet in January. This report is expected to provide comprehensive responses to many of the questions currently being raised.
With reference to the 2% of void properties within the District, could you advise on what measures might be taken to mitigate the associated costs? To what extent is this issue influenced by a shortage of rental properties? Additionally, could you provide clarity on the current number of vacant homes in the area?	(Councillor M Stephenson) The issue at hand relates to both homelessness and the housing waiting list. Introducing a policy that prioritises individuals experiencing homelessness for placement into void properties would present several challenges. Many of these properties are currently undergoing refurbishment, which is a time-consuming process, and others are classified as long-term voids that we are actively working to address. If we were to allocate voids directly to those in temporary accommodation, it could inadvertently create a perception that bypassing the housing waiting list is a viable route to securing a council property. This could, in turn, lead to an increase in demand for temporary accommodation, further exacerbating the pressures on our housing services.

At this stage of the meeting, the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and ICT, and the Corporate Director (Law and Governance) left the meeting.

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

(a) notes the questions raised regarding the use of the refugee settlement grant and whether similar arrangements are in place within neighbouring authorities, and looks forward to receiving a response from the Leader of the Council;

(b) notes the request for an investigation into ringfenced funds and anticipates receiving the relevant documentation at its meeting in January 2026; and

(c) recommends to Cabinet that assurance be provided confirming the Committee would be notified in advance of any underspend that may impact the Council's funding.

25. REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CORPORATE POLICY & SUPPORT) - A.3 - WORK PROGRAMMING - INCLUDING PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

The Committee had been furnished with a report that provided its approved Work Programme for 2025/26, feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respect of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which public notice had been given,

The report had also invited the Committee to reappoint the "Asset Management" Task and Finish Group, the "Housing Strategy Development and Infrastructure and Temporary Accommodation" Task and Finish Group and the "Council Enforcement Arrangements" Task and Finish Group. Where the memberships of the Task and Finish Groups had still been outstanding, a delegation to the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support) had been approved at the Committee's previous meeting to finalise those memberships.

Members were reminded that the Committee's Work Programme, as approved by Full Council at its meeting held on 14 August 2025, included the continuation of the work of the "Asset Management" Task and Finish Group, the "Housing Strategy Development and Infrastructure and Temporary Accommodation" Task and Finish Group and the "Council Enforcement Arrangements" Task and Finish Group. The Work Programme had set out an aspiration for the final report of those Task and Finish Groups to be submitted to the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in December 2025. To facilitate that, the Committee held a discussion regarding those memberships.

A list of the nominations for membership of each of the Task and Finish Groups submitted prior to the meeting had been as follows:

Asset Management

- Councillor Steady
- Councillor Bensilum

- Councillor Newton
- Councillor Bush

Housing Strategy Development and Infrastructure and Temporary Accommodation
- Councillor P Honeywood
- Councillor Goldman

Council Enforcement Arrangements
- Councillor Casey
- Councillor Steady (second preference)
- Councillor Goldman (second preference)

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

a) notes its approved Work Programme 2025/26 (Appendix A) together with the feedback to the Committee on the Executive's decisions made in respect of previous Committee recommendations (Appendix B) and the list of forthcoming decisions (Appendix C);

b) notes the remaining contents of the report; and

c) authorises the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy and Support), following consultation with the Committee's Chairman, to:

- reconstitute the Asset Management Task and Finish Working Group, Housing Strategy Development and Infrastructure and Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group and the Council Enforcement Arrangements Task and Finish Working Group; and

- appoint individual Councillors to serve on the Task and Finish Groups referenced in the Work Programme as, ultimately, approved by Council and then to make appropriate arrangements to call meetings of those Task and Finish Groups.

The meeting was declared closed at 10.31 pm

Chairman

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