
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET,
HELD ON FRIDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2026 AT 10.30 AM
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, AT THE TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-
ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

PRESENT:

Councillor I J Henderson

Councillor A P H Baker

Councillor M Barry

Councillor P Kotz

Councillor G R Placey

Councillor G G I Scott

Councillor A Smith

PORTFOLIO:

Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism (Chairman)

Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning

Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Public Realm

Portfolio Holder for Assets & Community Safety

Portfolio Holder for Partnerships

Portfolio Holder for Arts, Culture & Heritage

Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT

Group Leaders Present by Standing Invitation: Councillor J B Chapman BEM (Leader of the Independent Group)

Also Present: None

In Attendance: Chief Executive (Ian Davidson), Corporate Director (Economy and Wellbeing) & Deputy Chief Executive (Lee Heley), Corporate Director (Finance and IT) & Section 151 Officer (Richard Barrett), Corporate Director (Operations & Delivery) (Damian Williams), Corporate Director (Planning and Community) (Gary Guiver), Director (People) (Katie Wilkins), Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) (Keith Simmons), Assistant Director (Housing and Environment) (Tim R Clarke) and Democratic Services Manager (Ian Ford)

Also in Attendance: Environmental Health Manager (Grant Fenton-Jones), Corporate Governance, Performance & Procurement Manager (Karen Hayes), Programme Manager (LGR) (Dennis Leeks), Housing Manager (Matthew Wicks), Democratic Services Officer (Bethany Jones) and Communications Officer (James Dwan)

1. CHAIR

In the absence of the Leader of the Council, the Chair was occupied by the Deputy Leader (Councillor I J Henderson).

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors M E Stephenson (Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance), J D Bray (Leader of the Reform UK Group) and P B Honeywood (Leader of the Conservative Group).

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Barry and:-

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet, held on Friday 24 April 2026, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members on this occasion.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

In his absence, there were no announcements by the Leader of the Council on this occasion. However, the Deputy Leader of the Council (Councillor Henderson) referred to a recent event that had taken place at one of the District's primary schools which had involved a number of Council Officers at which a formal, proper election had been held. He thanked the Officers that had been involved and regretted that he had been unable to attend due to a prior engagement.

Councillor Henderson then invited the Chief Executive (Ian Davidson) who made remarks along the following lines:-

- *it had been a really good day involving over 300 young people;*
- *the polling station had been run by students from the school (Spring Meadows School, Harwich);*
- *election was for an elected representative and for a deputy representative to sit on the Sir David Amess Children's Parliament which would actually meet in the Houses of Parliament precincts;*
- *each of the six candidates had produced a video to state what they stood for and those videos had been superb;*
- *they had espoused good behaviour and culture and how they would represent their school and the community;*
- *TDC election staff had been present and had set it up a proper polling station including polling booths and ballot papers with a photo of the candidate in the place where a party logo would normally be placed as they all had stood as "independents";*
- *the polling station staff had then conducted the counting of the votes, followed by the usual declaration of result process;*
- *Anna Firth, former MP, who had succeeded Sir David Amess in the by-election held following Sir David's murder had been in attendance and had "sworn in" the successful candidates in the same way as MPs were sworn into the House of Commons;*
- *Sir Bernard Jenkin MP had acted in the "Speaker of the House of Commons" role in welcoming them to the Children's Parliament;*
- *all credit was due to Spring Meadow School in taking part and also to the Sir David Amess Trust who had organised it and above all to all of the children who had taken part.*

The Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) (Keith Simmons) recorded his thanks to those Councillors who had provided "rosettes" for the six candidates to wear, and they had been kept as mementoes by them.

Councillor Henderson felt that this was something that should be shared around as it was important to get young people involved and to recognise the importance of the democratic process in the hoping of improving electoral turnouts at future elections.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CABINET MEMBERS**Launch of the Lynch Plant & Haulage Construction Training Centre**

The Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (Councillor Henderson) announced that, accompanied by the Partnerships Portfolio Holder (Councillor Placey), he had attended that event at the Colchester Institute on 11 June 2026. He felt that this facility met the employment needs of the District, and possibly the whole of the County. Councillor Henderson read out an outline of the Centre as follows:-

- *the training centre was designed to equip individuals with the practical skills and industry knowledge required to access careers within the infrastructure construction sector; and*
- *the partnership would deliver specialist programmes including plant operation, traffic marshalling and rollers.*

The emphasis was therefore on heavy plant machinery. Adam Ward, the Assistant Principal at the Colchester Institute had stated that this was an important early milestone in their journey as a clean energy technology excellence college supporting adults to access high profile in-demand careers and was a clear, strategic priority as it provided a pipeline of skills and labour for the clean energy sector.

The Portfolio Holder had subsequently had conversations with the Deputy Chief Executive of the Institute that they presently had funding provided by Essex County Council for 96 places at the centre and hoped to be awarded more. The Institute were also investigating the opportunities for military 'leavers' funded by Sizewell 'C' and had four employers already interested in taking on apprenticeships.

Councillor Henderson felt that the good news for this District was that the Institute intended to work with the Council and the Department for Work & Pensions in targeting the District's NEETs to join the scheme. He reported that Sizewell 'C' would require over 800 plant operators with a similar demand at the Lower Thames Crossing. Other projects seeking such skills included National Grid, Anglian Water and likely the Tendring / Colchester Borders Garden Community.

The Partnerships Portfolio Holder (Councillor Placey) endorsed Councillor Henderson's comments. Councillor Placey had been particularly impressed that they were not just teaching individuals how to use the machinery but also good work ethics such as punctuality.

Tendring Jobs and Skills Fair

The Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (Councillor Henderson) informed Cabinet that this year's Fair would be held on 1st October 2026 in the Princes Theatre, at the Town Hall. He encouraged all to spread the word. Last year's fair had attracted 900 – 1,000 job seekers.

Another Jobs and Skills Fair would be held on 7th July 2026 at the Sunspot in Jaywick Sands.

Science, Technology, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Event – 12 June 2026

The Partnerships Portfolio Holder (Councillor Placey), accompanied by the Environment & ICT Portfolio Holder (Councillor Smith), had attended this latest annual event, held on this occasion at the University of Essex for Year 6 pupils. Out of 14 schools attending, 11 had been from the District of Tendring. In total 624 pupils had attended with 504 pupils being from Tendring Schools.

There had been six workshops covering wind energy, health care science, conservation, drama, autonomous vehicles and games & AI. The pupils had been fully engaged and had shown great energy.

As well as external organisations, the workshops had been delivered by students studying at the University. 14 businesses had attended in the hope of “sowing the seeds” for future career aspirations.

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD) – Award for Best Plan category at RTPI East of England Awards for Planning Excellence 2026

The Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder (Councillor Baker) made the following statement:-

“Chairman, I am delighted to announce that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD) has recently won the Best Plan category at the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) East of England Awards for Planning Excellence 2026, and will hopefully be shortlisted for the national awards, which will be announced in December.

The award is a hugely significant endorsement of the long-term vision, partnership working and technical excellence behind the DPD, which was prepared jointly by help guide the delivery of a sustainable new Garden Community on the border of Tendring and Colchester.

The Best Plan category celebrates planning documents that demonstrate excellence in shaping high-quality places and providing a robust framework for sustainable development. Securing this award is a proud moment for everyone involved in the project and reflects the strength of the councils’ shared commitment to creating a new community that is well-connected, infrastructure-led and landscape-led, while supporting homes, jobs, services and lasting environmental enhancement.

This is a fantastic achievement and a real tribute to the ambition, care and collaboration that has gone into producing a plan that will help shape sustainable growth and high-quality placemaking for years to come and I hope you will agree, Chairman, that we, as Cabinet, should recognise the hard work that has gone into the preparation of not only this document but the ongoing work that is being undertaken by a relatively small team into making the Garden Community happen.”

Beach Patrol Service

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Public Realm (Councillor Barry) commended the efforts of the Council’s beach patrol service who had stepped up their work in the current spell of heatwave weather. He indicated that the Team during the previous heatwave at the end of May 2026 during the Whitsun holiday period had moved 186

swimmers who were getting out of their depth; reunited 9 missing persons with family and friends; moved on 155 people from potential danger around or under the piers at Clacton and Walton; performed 29 first aid care; moved 251 people from rocks / groynes and had contacted the emergency services on 12 occasions.

Councillor Barry reported that due to the extraordinary weather this week the beach patrol had been activated earlier than usually the case which had paid dividends. Yesterday, there had been six rescues; which demonstrated the Council's commitment to keeping its residents and visitors safe. He reiterated the message that visitors to the District's beaches needed to respect the water and listen to the advice given to them. He congratulated the Beach Patrol Service, and it showed how valuable a service this was that the Council provided.

7. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE COUNCIL

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by Full Council on this occasion.

8. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY A COMMITTEE - REFERENCE FROM THE PLANNING POLICY & LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE - A.1 - ADOPTION OF THE REVISED ESSEX COAST RECREATIONAL DISTURBANCE AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION STRATEGY (RAMS)

Cabinet considered a reference report that enabled it to consider the recommendations made to it by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee in relation to the adoption of the revised Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.

It was reported that the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee ("the Committee"), at its meeting held on 8 June 2026 (Minute 8 referred), had considered a detailed report of the Corporate Director (Planning and Community) (A.3) which had sought the Committee's agreement to the adoption of the revised Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Essex Coast RAMS) and associated tariff, and which had set out the changes from the original 2018 RAMS strategy. That report had also sought the Committee's agreement to the updated governance framework supporting Essex Coast RAMS, including the withdrawal of the existing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and its replacement with a Technical Advice Note (TAN).

Following such approval by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee the revised Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Essex Coast RAMS) and associated tariff, as attached in Appendix 1, (replacing the existing 2018–2038 Strategy), was required to be submitted to Cabinet for formal adoption.

At its aforementioned meeting, the Committee had been reminded that the Essex Coast RAMS set out how the Council, working in partnership with other Essex authorities, would protect the unique wildlife of the Essex coastline whilst enabling new homes and development to come forward. It provided a co-ordinated, partnership-led approach to mitigating the recreational impacts of new residential development on protected coastal habitats and bird populations, ensuring that planned housing growth across Essex could take place in a lawful and sustainable way, whilst safeguarding sensitive species and habitats protected by international nature conservation designations.

Members were made aware that the strategy established a strategic framework to address the in-combination effects of residential development on internationally designated coastal habitats and enabled the Council, in its role as Competent Authority, to meet its statutory duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017(as amended).

It had been reported to the Committee that RAMS funding had already delivered tangible mitigation measures along the Tendring coastline, including the Coastal Ranger Service, targeted visitor engagement and behaviour change initiatives, and partnership projects such as Share Our Shores to protect beach-nesting birds. Those interventions, supported by ongoing monitoring, had demonstrably improved ecological outcomes and were particularly important in managing peak seasonal visitor pressures.

Cabinet was informed that the updated Strategy was supported by a refreshed evidence base, including a new visitor survey, and introduced significant changes to the scale and duration of mitigation required. Most notably, it ensured mitigation was secured for the full lifetime of development and reflected a substantial increase in planned housing growth across the Zone of Influence (ZOI) arising from the Government's revised mandatory housing targets. As a result, the RAMS tariff was proposed to increase to £476 per dwelling (or qualifying unit), ensuring that the full cost of mitigation was applied in a fair and proportionate manner.

The report to the Committee had also sought approval to withdraw the existing RAMS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and replace it with a Technical Advice Note (TAN), ensuring the guidance remained up to date and consistent across the Essex Coast RAMS partnership.

The Committee's decision at its meeting held on 8 June 2026 had been as follows:-

“RESOLVED that the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee –

- a) notes the revised and updated Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Essex Coast RAMS) associated RAMS tariff, and proposed changes to the governance arrangements, as set out in this report (A.3); and*
- b) recommends to the Council's Cabinet that it:*
 - i. adopts the revised Essex Coast RAMS and associated tariff, as set out at Appendix 1 to report A.3, superseding the original Essex Coast RAMS (2018-2038) Strategy;*
 - ii. approves the implementation of a revised RAMS tariff of £476 per net additional dwelling (or equivalent qualifying development), to take effect from 1 August 2026;*
 - iii. withdraws the adopted Essex Coast RAMS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), noting that its content is no longer fully aligned with the revised Strategy, evidence base and tariff;*
 - iv. agrees to replace the SPD with an Essex Coast RAMS Technical Advice Note (TAN); and*

- v. *authorises the Corporate Director (Planning and Community), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, to finalise and publish the TAN for use alongside the updated RAMS Strategy.*

Cabinet had before it the following written comments of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder:-

"I attended the meeting of the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee at which this matter was considered, and I would like to thank the Committee for its careful consideration of the revised Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and for recommending its adoption by Cabinet. I support the Strategy, which provides a clear and robust framework for addressing the impacts of new residential development on internationally important coastal habitats.

The revised Strategy is also a very positive example of joint working across Essex, with partner authorities coming together to establish a consistent and evidence-led approach to mitigation. Importantly, adopting the revised Essex Coast RAMS will help to ensure that the Council continues to meet its legal obligations under the Habitats Regulations, while supporting sustainable growth in a lawful, co-ordinated and responsible way."

At the meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning made the following statement:-

"Chairman, I am pleased to introduce this report that highlights recommendations from the most recent Planning Policy & Local Plan Committee for Cabinet to adopt the revised Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS).

That Committee, which I attended, had considered a very detailed report which set out the changes from the original 2018 RAMS strategy, together with a new tariff, along with asking for agreement to the updated governance framework, including the withdrawal of the existing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and replacing this with a Technical Advice Note (TAN).

Because we are blessed with internationally important wildlife habitats around our coast at Hamford Water, the Stour Estuary and the Colne Estuary, every inch of Tendring is within the Zone of Influence where new housing development and population growth could increase potential disturbance to those habitats. Under Environmental Law and the Habitat Regulations, the Council has a legal duty to consider and mitigate the impact of the development, and the RAMS strategy and associated mechanism for securing a tariff-based contributions from developers helps fulfil that legal duty.

The Essex Coast RAMS had set out how this Council, working in partnership with other Essex authorities, would protect the unique wildlife of the Essex coastline whilst enabling new homes and development to come forward.

It provided for a co-ordinated and partnership-led approach to mitigating the recreational impacts of residential development on protected coastal habitats and bird populations, ensuring that planned housing growth across Essex could take place in a lawful and sustainable way, whilst safeguarding sensitive species and habitats protected by international nature conservation designation.

The strategy established a strategic framework to address the in-combination effects of residential development on internationally designated coastal habitats and enabled the Council, in its role as Competent Authority, to meet its statutory duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017(as amended).

Funding has already delivered tangible mitigation measures along the Tendring coastline, including the Coastal Ranger Service, targeted visitor engagement and behaviour change initiatives, and partnership projects such as Share Our Shores to protect beach-nesting birds. Those interventions, supported by ongoing monitoring, have demonstrably improved ecological outcomes and are particularly important in managing peak seasonal visitor pressures.

The updated Strategy, which is shown from Page 40 onwards, was supported by a refreshed evidence base, including a new visitor survey, and introduced significant changes to the scale and duration of mitigation required.

Most notably, it ensured mitigation was secured for the full lifetime of development and reflected a substantial increase in planned housing growth across the Zone of Influence (ZOI) arising from the Government's revised mandatory housing targets. As a result, the RAMS tariff is proposed to increase to £476 per dwelling (or qualifying unit), ensuring that the full cost of mitigation was applied in a fair and proportionate manner.

Chairman, I do not intend to say anymore, there is a lot more detail in the attached Appendices, including the original report to the Planning Policy & Local Plan Committee, which I would encourage members to read, and my comments are shown on Pages 18-19. The recommendations are shown on Page 19, and I commend them to Cabinet."

The Portfolio Holder for the Environment & ICT made the following statement:-

"I am pleased to second this report.

By way of context, RAMS stands for the Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy. In simple terms, it RAMS is a framework that ensures new housing development contributes towards protecting our internationally important coastal habitats from increased visitor pressure — things like walking, dog activity, and general recreation that, over time, can disturb sensitive wildlife.

This strategy is therefore about making sure that growth is balanced with the proper protection of our natural environment.

This is an important piece of work, not just for Tendring, but for the wider Essex coastline. It strikes a careful and necessary balance between supporting sustainable development and preserving the sensitive coastal habitats that make our area so special.

The Essex Coast RAMS ensures that as new homes are delivered, there is proper mitigation to address the cumulative impact on protected sites. Without this coordinated approach, there would be both environmental harm and significant constraints on the ability to bring forward development.

What is particularly important is that this is a joined-up, county-wide approach. By working collaboratively with other Essex authorities, we are ensuring consistency, fairness, and a clear, robust framework that developers understand.

The revised strategy and updated tariff reflect the latest evidence and costs, helping to ensure that mitigation measures remain effective and can continue to be delivered in practice.

From a local perspective, this is about protecting what residents value most — our coast, our wildlife, and our natural environment — while still enabling sustainable growth for our communities.

I also welcome the fact that this has been considered by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee, and that their recommendations are now before Cabinet for formal adoption. For those reasons, Chair, I am very happy to support the recommendations.”

Having duly considered the recommendations submitted to it by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee, together with the written formal comments of the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning:-

It was moved by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Smith and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet formally -

- (a) adopts the revised Essex Coast RAMS and associated tariff, as set out at Appendix 1 to this report (A.1), superseding the original Essex Coast RAMS (2018-2038) Strategy;
- (b) approves the implementation of a revised RAMS tariff of £476 per net additional dwelling (or equivalent qualifying development), to take effect from 1 August 2026;
- (c) withdraws the adopted Essex Coast RAMS Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), noting that its content is no longer fully aligned with the revised Strategy, evidence base and tariff;
- (d) agrees to replace the SPD with an Essex Coast RAMS Technical Advice Note (TAN); and
- (e) authorises the Corporate Director (Planning and Community), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, to finalise and publish the TAN for use alongside the updated RAMS Strategy.

9. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S ITEMS - A.2 - CONSEQUENTIAL MATTERS IN RESPECT OF THE FORMATION OF NEW PARISHES FOR CLACTON-ON-SEA, HOLLAND-ON-SEA AND WEST CLACTON & JAYWICK SANDS

Cabinet was aware that full Council, at its meeting held on 2 June 2026, had decided to accept the recommendations from the Community Governance Review in respect of Clacton-on-Sea, Holland-on-Sea and West Clacton & Jaywick Sands. That decision had approved the creation of three separate parishes for those communities with effect from 1 April 2027. As part of Council's decision, it had been resolved:

“invites Cabinet to consider the next steps to be undertaken and allocation of resources and, as part of this, to determine the steps the Council considers sufficient to secure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of the outcome and the reasons behind the Council’s decisions in this matter.”

The Leader of the Council’s report (A.2) therefore invited Cabinet to consider the appropriate level of resource to be allocated to work with community groups, residents and District and County Councillors for the three separate areas to support the establishment of the new parish councils. It also addressed the necessary arrangement to ensure that the tax base for the three new parishes was as accurate as possible in the time available; the development of an initial budget for each of the three parish councils; and, thereby, identify the appropriate initial precept for those three parish councils for 2027/28. Those precepts would need to be determined by the District Council in early 2027 as they would need to be in place ahead of the parish councils being formed on 1 April 2027.

Cabinet was reminded that provisions under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provided for different amounts of Council Tax to be calculated for different parts e.g. parished and unparished areas, of a district, depending on what, if any, special items related to those parts. A special item was an item (service) which related only to part of the district council’s area.

This Council currently incurred certain costs in respect of Open Space, Playgrounds and Recreation across Clacton, Holland and Jaywick. Those costs had been applied in a way that meant all Band D properties in those three areas funded the special expenses equally. With the formation of the three separate parishes there was a need to review the incurred expenditure and the recovery of those costs from households in the three separate areas. In 2026/27, this Council had allocated £714,519 as Special Expenses and £442,297 of that total related to the combined areas of Clacton-on-Sea, Holland-on-Sea and Jaywick Sands.

Members recognised that in the Community Governance Review for the area concerned there had been a good working relationship with the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC). In the Phase II consultation (across December 2025-February 2026) EALC had supported the various community meetings with senior representatives from their organisation and this had assisted attendees to hear more about live experiences from parish councils across the county. Given the limited capacity of the District Council to continue the community-based activity (undertaken in the review) for the period to the new parish councils coming into existence on 1 April 2027, Cabinet was invited to consider commissioning EALC to undertake more of that activity in that period. EALC was also able to support the development of initial budgets for the three separate parish councils.

Recognising that the report’s recommendations set out requirements and good practice in respect of the move from a decision to establish new parish councils and those new parish councils coming into being:-

It was moved by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Kotz and:-

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the contents of the report be noted, including the reference to the Council (in due course) determining the budgets for the three new parish councils for Clacton-on-Sea, Holland-on-Sea and West Clacton & Jaywick Sands and the Council Tax precepts for 2027/28 for those new parish councils;
- (b) the Assistant Director (Corporate Policy & Support) be authorised to commission the Essex Association of Local Councils (subject to an approval from the Leader of the Council and the Council's Section 151 Officer in relation to the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules) to undertake a range of work with the District Council to support the transition from the decision to create the three new parish councils to them commencing in existence from 1 April 2027 in the sum of £52,500 (on the basis that £25,000 would be recoverable from across the three new parish councils);
- (c) the required financial impact in 2026/27 of £27,500 be met from the Corporate Investment Fund (Revenue);
- (d) the associated work, including tax bases and special expenses that will be undertaken as part of the Council's wider annual budget setting processes for 2027/28 later in the year, be noted; and
- (e) it is noted that the costs incurred by the Returning Officer in administering the elections to the three new Parish Councils will be costs to be recovered from those Parish Councils.

10. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH, REGENERATION AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.3 - LOCAL REGENERATION FUND (LRF) - MILTON ROAD AND VICTORIA STREET: PROGRESS UPDATE

Cabinet considered a report of the Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism Portfolio Holder (A.3) which updated it on the Milton Road and Victoria Street schemes following completion of a competitive tender process identifying a preferred bidder.

Members recalled that the Homes for Dovercourt scheme was one part of the regeneration of Harwich town centre along the peninsula corridor from Dovercourt seafront to the Dovercourt station. A refurbished library with new accessible skills centre was already complete; upgrades to the town centre's public realm and connection to the seafront were underway, and with this scheme, new social housing and improved car parking was planned. This suite of regeneration projects was expected to revitalise the town, improve outcomes for residents and encourage private sector investment ahead of the planned arrival of the Freeport East Green Energy Hub at Bathside Bay.

The Homes for Dovercourt scheme would also see two disused and derelict sites in Dovercourt transformed by the Council, building on the Dovercourt Revisited masterplan that is:-

- At Milton Road, a derelict car park would be refurbished to provide a modern, fit-for-purpose car parking provision, with EV charging, cycle storage, soft landscaping and decorative railings celebrating local heritage;

- At Victoria Street, the site of the historic Victoria Hotel would be rebuilt, echoing the history of the site's design and Conservation Area, to provide eight new affordable homes and amenity space.

It was reported that the project would deliver an estimated £1.04m in Social Value, including four local employment opportunities, 52 apprenticeship weeks and student placement opportunities, c.£970,000 of local supply chain spend, alongside wider community and environmental benefits

A summary of progress made to date, including design, planning and procurement milestones and recent updates following the March 2026 Cabinet report, was as follows:-

- *RIBA Stage 3 design completed, and planning permission secured (Feb–Apr 2025);*
- *An initial tender exercise undertaken in 2025 had not achieved a viable outcome;*
- *The procurement strategy was revised to a two-stage approach to improve cost certainty, supported by a pre-market engagement exercise;*
- *Second procurement (April – May 2026) had attracted strong interest (13 submissions, 12 compliant);*
- *The tender evaluation had now been completed and a preferred contractor identified; and*
- *Project funding had been confirmed in the Council's Capital Programme within the April 2026 Cabinet Finance Report.*

Cabinet was informed that the Corporate Director (Place & Wellbeing) would use his delegated authority to enter into a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) with the preferred contractor, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders.

Through the PCSA, the contractor would work with the Council to finalise the design, delivery approach and cost. This would help manage risks early and improve cost certainty. A final construction price was expected in September 2026 and, if within budget, would be subject to a further Officer decision, in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders.

The procurement process had identified a preferred bidder and included:

- *A fixed cost of the PCSA stage of £69,300 (excluding of VAT);*
- *An estimate of the main works cost which would be refined during the PCSA period;*
- *A programme for completion of the works, which fell well within the funding envelope, and aligned with the above forecast for agreement of the main contract sum. The programme included the early completion of Milton Road Car Park.*

Cabinet was advised that the price submitted for the tender return was within the budget of £3.798m allocated to this project in the General Fund Capital Programme. A contingency of 10% had been included within the budget as a buffer against any potential cost over runs. The PCSA stage provided a defined period to work collaboratively with the appointed contractor and wider supply chain to refine the design, test buildability and progress value engineering, with the aim of reducing costs and securing a deliverable scheme within the available funding envelope.

Recognising that the appointment of a contractor under a PCSA would enable the Council to work collaboratively with the contractor to refine the design, manage risk and develop a robust and deliverable contract sum:-

It was moved by Councillor Henderson, seconded by Councillor Kotz and:-

RESOLVED that Cabinet -

- (a) notes and welcomes the progress on the second procurement exercise in securing a high level of interest from the market and a Preferred Bidder, and enacting the lessons learned from the previous exercise;
- (b) reinforces its ongoing commitment relating to the use and management of the Milton Road and Victoria Street sites, with Milton Road retained for public car parking provision, and the Victoria Street sites retained for housing purposes and being retained within the Housing Revenue Account (together with associated car parking provision), with no current intention to appropriate or dispose of any of the sites; and
- (c) notes and supports the progression of the project to the next stage, including entry into a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) with the preferred bidder, in accordance with the existing operational delegated authority.

11. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ICT PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.4 - ADOPTION OF FOOD & SAFETY SERVICE PLAN & ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Cabinet considered a report of the Environment & ICT Portfolio Holder (A.4) which presented to Cabinet a review of the current Food & Safety Service Plan and the Food & Safety Enforcement Policy that had been undertaken by the Food & Safety Manager to amend both documents, to include all legislative changes introduced and to ensure both documents actively reflected the work undertaken by the Food & Safety service in 2026 and beyond.

The report's recommendations sought Cabinet's approval of both documents, and for them to be published accordingly.

The Food & Safety Service Plan – 2026-2027 (Appendix A)

Members were aware that the Food and Safety Service Plan was an expression of Tendring District Council's continuing commitment to the provision of Food Hygiene and Safety, Health and Safety, Animal Welfare and other related services.

The Council was designated as a Food Authority under the Food Safety Act 1990.

It was reported that the Food Service Plan had been produced, as it was a requirement of the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in its Framework Agreement on Official Feed and Food Controls by Local Authorities. The FSA was the governing body that oversaw all areas that related to food safety and standards. The Council was working with the FSA to ensure Food Businesses within the District were safe and registered in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice (FLCOP).

This plan highlighted what the Food Safety service at Tendring District Council would do moving forward in relation to the statutory functions undertaken by the service, and how the Council would deliver Food Safety enforcement in accordance with current guidelines up to and including 2028, and would be reviewed annually in accordance with FSA requirements to include updates of the work completed during the previous year. The document set out the following priorities:

- *Food safety objectives detailing the Council's responsibilities as set out in legislation, associated statutory code of practice and national Guidelines.*
- *The current work programme within the Service.*
- *The Council's policy on food safety, sampling, provision of information to business, investigation of complaints and allegations of Food Poisoning, response to Food Safety Alerts and infectious disease control.*
- *Ensure that food and drink intended for sale for human consumption, which is supplied, manufactured, produced, stored, distributed, handled or consumed within Tendring complies with the law, is free from contamination and is without risk to the health of consumers (for people who work, live or visit Tendring District).*
- *Be committed to ensuring that satisfactory standards of food hygiene are practised and maintained throughout the district.*
- *Undertake an effective and planned programme of quality risk-based food safety inspections of food premises (by qualified and suitably trained officers), to ensure compliance with food law and to minimise risks to health and safety.*
- *Take appropriate enforcement action proportional to the risks involved and in accordance with the Council's Food Safety Enforcement Policy with due regard being given to the Primary Authority Scheme and guidance from relevant external bodies.*
- *To monitor foodstuffs manufactured, imported, stored or on display for sale in the Tendring district, through a planned yearly sampling programme which includes imported foods. To carry out reactive sampling for microbiological examination. More detail is held within the food sampling policy and procedure*
- *To carry out official sampling of products of animal origin (POAO) as defined in 853/2004, 2073/2005 and other associated food law.*
- *Promote good food hygiene and safety by informative updated communication to businesses and consumers in the Tendring District.*

The Food & Safety Enforcement Policy – 2026-2028 (Appendix B)

Members were informed that the Enforcement Policy covered the work undertaken by the Food and Safety service (also included were the statutory functions relating to Animal Welfare and Tattooing et al). It covered the delivery of enforcement having regard to the Better Regulation Delivery Office – Regulators Code 2014, and the Enforcement concordat.

Cabinet was aware that the Food and Safety service played a vital role in protecting and supporting the public, the environment, and groups such as residents, workers and businesses in the District of Tendring. It was important that those enforcement functions were carried out in an equitable, practical, and consistent manner, and that both those subject to and beneficiaries of regulation and those on whose behalf enforcement was carried out could understand the approach the Council took.

The Council had a duty to enforce a range of statutory instruments adopting a variety of formal and informal sanctions. This could include anything from advising food

businesses about what they needed to do to comply with the law, to prosecuting a householder for animal welfare issues. This placed the Council and its Officers in a position of responsibility to ensure that its approach fitted with national and local policy, codes of practice, and guidance. This was particularly important with regard to the economic challenges facing local government and business.

The policy set out the approach of the Council's Food and Safety service towards enforcement when dealing with non-compliance. It provided guidance on the full suite of powers available to achieve compliance with the legislation we enforce, and how discretionary powers might be used to regulate and raise standards in various sectors. The document was intended to communicate Tendring District Council's policy in respect of its approach to those affected by its activities and officers of the Local Authority.

It also set out the principles applied to encourage smarter, risk-based enforcement. The Council was committed to ensuring that its Officers acted in accordance with this policy. It was not in itself a statement of law and did not affect the discretion of the Council to take legal proceedings where this was considered to be in the public interest.

This policy had been written having regard to the principles outlined in the Better Regulation Delivery Office – statutory Regulators Code, the enforcement concordat and current legislation.

Cabinet was made aware that the current plan and policy had been most recently reviewed in October 2023, and both were due for review accordingly. The current review had been more comprehensive due to the new FLCOP, legislative changes for certain activities undertaken by the team, and the formation of the new unitary as part of LGR. The Council had had in place previous food safety service plans and had been compliant with FSA requirements; however, those documents had not previously been presented to Cabinet for approval. Following a review of the approval process it had been decided to present the plan and the enforcement policy to Cabinet.

Indication of the Work Completed by the Service Annually

It was reported that situated within the District were 1,275 food premises, all of which were included within the Council's proactive inspection programme. The Officer team was supported by a Uniform computer database system which maintained a business database of the District. Those businesses were inspected at different intervals following a risk rating that provided a score. That score would determine the frequency of inspections and would have regard for the type of operation undertaken by the business.

Over the past year the service had inspected and registered 273 new Food Businesses. Year on year the number of new businesses had increased, and this placed further pressures on the team which had limited resources.

In order to implement a Food & Safety Service Plan and a Food & Safety Enforcement Policy to protect public health, ensure legal compliance with food hygiene regulations, and maintain food standards and ensure consistent inspections, risk-based targeting of businesses, and appropriate actions against breaches of food law, ultimately reducing foodborne illnesses and safeguarding consumers:-

It was moved by Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor Barry and:-

RESOLVED that -

- (a) the Food & Safety Service Plan 2026 – 2027 in the form appended as Appendix A to the Portfolio Holder's report (A.4) be approved in so far as it relates to executive functions;
- (b) the Food & Safety Enforcement Policy 2026-2028 in the form appended as Appendix B to the Portfolio Holder's report (A.4) be approved in so far as it relates to executive functions;
- (c) both documents be referred to the Licensing and Registration Committee for consideration of the non-executive functions, which fall within that Committee's responsibility; and
- (d) subject to the decisions of the Licensing and Registration Committee, the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) be authorised to approve amendments or updates as may be required to the Food & Safety Service Plan and Food & Safety Enforcement Policy 2026-2027, and on an annual basis thereafter.

12. CABINET MEMBERS' ITEMS - REPORT OF THE HOUSING AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.5 - OUTTURN PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE REGULATOR OF SOCIAL HOUSING'S TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES FOR 2025/26

Cabinet considered a report of the Housing & Planning Portfolio Holder (A.5) which advised it of the Council's outturn performance against the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 2025/26.

Cabinet recalled that Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) were metrics that all social housing landlords in England were required to collect and report on to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The TSMs should also be published by those organisations for others to see.

It was reported that the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 had set in place measures intended to improve standards for people living in social housing. It had set out a new regulatory framework for the consumer regulation of social housing to strengthen the accountability of landlords for providing safe homes, quality services and treating residents with respect. The introduction of TSMs had formed part of this framework.

Since 1 April 2023, all social housing providers has been required by the RSH to collect data to inform TSMs and those were aimed at helping improve standards for people living in social housing by:

- *Providing visibility by allowing tenants to see how well their landlord is doing and enabling tenants to hold their landlords to account*
- *Letting tenants see how well their landlord is performing in comparison with other landlords*

- *Giving the RSH insight into which landlords might need to improve things for their tenants*

There were 22 TSMs and those were grouped into the following five themes:

- *Keeping properties in good repair*
- *Maintaining building safety*
- *Respectful and helpful engagement*
- *Complaints handling*
- *Neighbourhood management*

Members were reminded that ten of the TSMs were measured by landlords through their performance indicators and 12 were measured by an annual tenant perception survey. The RSH also set out its requirements (including mandatory questions and methodology) for data collection and reporting.

Landlords with 1,000 or more homes were required to send their data to the RSH by 30 June 2026 and the data for all landlords would be published by RSH in Autumn 2026.

Cabinet was informed that the Council's Outturn Performance Report against the TSMs had indicated a slight decline in tenant satisfaction with the proportion of respondents who reported that they were satisfied with the overall service from their landlord decreasing from 81.3% in 2024/25 to 78.7% in 2025/26.

Satisfaction with repairs, both overall satisfaction with repairs and satisfaction with the time taken to complete a repair, had further decreased. The reasons for this would be explored in more detail with the members of the Tenants' Panel. Conversely, the proportion of non-emergency and emergency repairs completed within the Council's target timescale had increased.

It was notable that there had been an overall increase in the number of complaints received. The number of complaints received at Stage 1 that had been responded to within the Housing Ombudsman's Compliant Handling Code timescales had improved when compared to 2024/25 figures but the opposite had happened in respect of Stage 2 complaints.

The proportion of homes that failed to meet the Decent Home standard had increased to 4.9%. This increase over the 2024/25 figure had been attributed to better data on housing stock quality following the completion of 3,022 stock condition surveys as at 31 March 2026.

The scores for 9 of the 12 TSMs, including overall satisfaction, reported via the tenant perception survey were above the benchmark for local authorities.

The Council would use information from the TSM data to inform ongoing understanding of its services and to plan service improvement.

At the meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Planning made the following statement:-

“Chairman, I am pleased to introduce this report to inform Cabinet of this Council’s outturn performance against the Regulator for Social Housing’s Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

As Cabinet is well aware, the Regulator for Social Housing has, since 1st April 2023, required all Social Housing providers to collect data to inform the Tenants Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and which are aimed at helping improve standards for people living in social housing by:

- Providing visibility by allowing tenants to see how well their landlord is doing and enabling tenants to hold their landlords to account.*
- Letting tenants see how well their landlord is performing in comparison with other landlords.*
- Giving the RSH insight into which landlords might need to improve things for their tenants.*

There are currently 22 TSMs, although the RSH has recently introduced a further one for landlords, for the year 2026/2027, and these are grouped into the following five themes:

*Keeping properties in good repair
Maintaining building safety
Respectful and helpful engagement
Complaints handling
Neighbourhood management*

Ten of the TSMs are measured by landlords through their performance indicators and 12 are measured by an annual tenant perception survey.

The RSH also sets out its requirements (including mandatory questions and methodology) for data collection and reporting.

Landlords with 1,000 or more homes are required to send their data to the RSH by 30 June 2026 and the data for all landlords will be published by the RSH in Autumn 2026.

The Council’s Outturn Performance Report against the TSMs indicates a slight decline in performance and tenant satisfaction with the proportion of respondents who report that they are satisfied with the overall service from their landlord decreasing from 81.3% in 2024/25 to 78.7% in 2025/26.

Chairman, the figures for each TSM are shown within Appendix A (pages 403-405), along with Appendix B (pages 407 – 409) which also shows the performance compared with previous years. Within Appendix D, which is the full report from ARP, at page 419 of the Agenda, is shown the performance as compared to the ‘benchmark’ and you will see that our figures are above this in all but one area, in the Tenant Perception Survey.

The ten measured from the Council’s own data show a slight increase in Stage 1 and 2 complaints received, and the percentage of Stage 1 complaints responded to within the timescales has improved, however there has been a drop in Stage 2 complaints

responded to within time. A report in relation to Complaints is due to be presented to Cabinet later in the summer.

You will also see a drop in the number of ASB cases, which is due to the way in which the Council now receives and registers such cases.

The proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Home Standard has increased, the percentage shown, 4.9%, relates to just 152 homes. The Stock Condition Survey of all our properties has almost concluded, there are just under 200 properties that are yet to be surveyed, and work continues to access and survey these. Any Category 1 hazards that were identified at the time of the survey being undertaken were dealt with straightaway. There are a number of reasons as to why a property may not meet the Decent Home Standard, in most cases this is due to the kitchen or bathroom being older than 20 or 30 years respectively, as specified in the standard. This does not necessarily mean those installations are in poor condition or in need of urgent replacement.

Chairman, it is also shown that the proportion of emergency and non-emergency repairs completed within this Council's target timescale continues to rise, this is something that I would personally like to improve further, and officers will be monitoring this going forward.

The next five measures relate to safety and 4 of the 5 sit at 100%, however Gas Safety checks remain constant. This is because gas safety checks are a rolling programme and in a small number of cases access to the property proves difficult to achieve. In those instances, immediate action is taken to enforce access or as a last resort disconnect the gas supply.

At the heart of our service are our tenants, and I can inform Cabinet that there is ongoing engagement with our tenants, through regular meetings of the main Tenant Panel, three sub-groups, and by our Tenant Involvement Officers.

One of the sub-groups looks at Complaints and Tenant Satisfaction Measures, and met on the 2nd June, which I attended, and made recommendations to the main Tenants Panel, which met on Tuesday 16th June. Their comments were as follows:

"We have looked at the TSM scores for 2025/2026 and feel that overall, the TSMs are satisfactory. We are pleased to note that most of the scores sit above the benchmark for local authorities although we would like to have seen an improvement over the 2024/2025 figures. Of some concern is the drop in satisfaction in relation to complaint handling and we would like to explore this further during the year.

We would be interested in seeing a comparison between in house and external repairs teams to see which our tenants receive a better service from.

Our observation is that communication between the call centre and repairs teams is sometimes poor – what you report and what they come out to repair can differ. We would like to ask the Repairs sub-group to investigate why this is happening and how to overcome it. We would like to know when the response/survey cards are being introduced again and are tenants able to submit repair requests without photos on the website – sometimes we have been told we have to provide photos.

We need to explain clearly the definition of what a repair is and what a complaint is. Tenants perhaps still do not know and that is why complaints and dissatisfaction with complaints has risen. We would like it explained again in Tending Reports.”

As you can see Chairman, there are a number of things mentioned, and I can state that at least one of their recommendations has been acted upon and is in place (submission of online repair request without having to provide photos) and that the suggestion about entering what is/is not a complaint, to go into Tending Reports (the quarterly Tenants Magazine) is now scheduled for the Summer issue. The main Tenant Panel endorsed the comments made by the sub-group.

I would like to put on record my thanks to both the Tenant Panel sub-group, and main Tenant Panel, for their comprehensive review of information made available to them on both complaints and TSMs, and their recommendations. I will also be attending the next Complaints & TSM sub-group meeting as I too would like to explore the drop in satisfaction with complaint handling.

Appendix C (pages 411 – 417) shows an action plan we put together following publication of the 2025/25 TSM figures. That plan is very much an ongoing plan and one that is being updated in light of these 2025/26 figures. I hope the inclusion of the plan in this report demonstrates the ongoing commitment that I and officers in the service have to listening to tenant's views and responding to them, along with what our own data shows us about the quality of the service we are providing to our tenants.

Chairman, I do not intend to say anything further, further details are in the report and appendices. The recommendations are shown on Page(s) 392/393 and you will note that there is a delegation to the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery) in consultation with myself, to develop a new action plan for 2026/2027, which will show how we intend to focus on improvement, as previously mentioned. I commend them to Cabinet.”

In order to formally receive the outturn performance report before its submission to the Regulator of Social Housing and publication on the Council's website:-

It was moved by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor Scott and:-

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the Council's Outturn Performance Report against the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix A to the Portfolio Holder's report (A.5), for publication on the Council's website and submission to the Regulator of Social Housing by 30 June 2026, be noted;
- (b) the Council's Performance against the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 2025/26 compared with performance for 2023/24 and 2024/25, as set out in Appendix B to the Portfolio Holder's report (A.5) be noted;
- (c) the current progress against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures Action Plan for 2024/25, as set out in Appendix C to the Portfolio Holder's report (A.5) be noted;
- (d) following the Council's Tenants' Panel examination of the data presented in this report and its appendices, the Corporate Director (Operations and Delivery), in

consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, be required to develop a new action plan for 2026/27 focusing on continuous improvement, with consideration to prioritisation, resources and on-going delivery; and

- (e) the Action Plan for 2026/27 be presented to the Council's Audit Committee in due course to review its effectiveness and the monitoring arrangements.

13. MANAGEMENT TEAM ITEMS

There were no formal items submitted to the Cabinet by the Management Team on this occasion.

The Chief Executive (Ian Davidson) stated that today's agenda had clearly demonstrated the amount of work that was being carried on despite the focus on, and distraction of, local government reorganisation. The Council's statutory duties and its duties to residents and to the area showed the amount of work that was going on as demonstrated by the Portfolio Holders' announcements and by the reports on today's agenda such as place shaping within the District; the increase in local democracy through the parishing of the previously unparished areas of the District; the economic improvements coming to fruition; improvements to the quality of life; increased housing provision.

Mr. Davidson gave the assurance that despite the distraction of LGR the Council continued to deliver on its responsibilities to residents as well as actively moving to increase the quality of life of those residents. Today's meeting had been all about the Council's staff and what they were doing and the importance of Portfolio Holders' responsibilities to see that work through. He therefore extended his thanks to the staff and to the Portfolio Holders.

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet members thanked Mr. Davidson and endorsed the comments that he had expressed.

The Meeting was declared closed at 11.29 am

Chairman