

# Unrestricted Document Pack

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
Fiona Marshall

## PLEASE NOTE MEETING DAY

18 April 2017

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the;

### FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

on **WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL 2017** at **7.30 pm**.

in the Council Chamber. Maldon District Council Offices, Princes Road, Maldon.

A copy of the agenda is attached.

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

#### CHAIRMAN

Councillor D M Sismey

#### VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor I E Dobson

#### COUNCILLORS

Mrs B F Acevedo  
J P F Archer  
Mrs H E Elliott  
A S Fluker  
B E Harker  
M R Pearlman  
Rev. A E J Shrimpton

#### *Ex-officio non-voting Members:*

Councillors B S Beale MBE,  
M F L Durham and  
Miss M R Lewis

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**AGENDA**  
**FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY 26 APRIL 2017**

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1. Chairman's notices (please see overleaf)

2. Apologies for Absence

3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (Pages 5 - 16)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee held on 7 March 2017 (copy enclosed).

4. **Disclosure of Interest**

To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraphs 6-8 inclusive of the Code of Conduct for Members.

(Members are reminded that they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting).

5. **Public Participation**

To receive the views of members of the public on items of business to be considered by the Committee (please see below):

1. A period of ten minutes will be set aside.
2. An individual may speak for no more than two minutes and will not be allowed to distribute or display papers, plans, photographs or other materials.
3. Anyone wishing to speak must notify the Committee Clerk between 7.00pm and 7.20pm prior to the start of the meeting.

6. **Chairman's Good News Announcements**

7. **Corporate Health and Safety** (Pages 17 - 24)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

8. **Corporate Communications Protocol** (Pages 25 - 42)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

9. **Supplementary Estimate and Virements: 8 February and 21 March 2017** (Pages 43 - 46)

To receive and note the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

10. **Permit for School Parents Parking** (Pages 47 - 50)

To consider the report of the Director of Customers and Community, (copy enclosed).

11. Any other items of business that the Chairman of the Committee decides are urgent

12. **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To resolve that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

13. **Waterfront Leases, Maldon** (Pages 51 - 56)

To consider the report of the Director of Customers and Community, (copy enclosed).

14. **Millfields Caravan Park, Burnham-on-Crouch** (Pages 57 - 60)

To consider the report of the Director of Customers and Community, (copy enclosed).

## **NOTICES**

### **Sound Recording of Meeting**

Please note that the Council will be recording any part of this meeting held in open session for subsequent publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting an announcement will be made about the sound recording. Members of the public attending the meeting with a view to speaking are deemed to be giving permission to be included in the recording.

### **Fire**

In event of a fire, a siren will sound. Please use the fire exits marked with the green running man. The fire assembly point is outside the main entrance to the Council Offices. Please gather there and await further instruction.

### **Health and Safety**

Please be advised of the different levels of flooring within the Council Chamber. There are steps behind the main horseshoe as well as to the side of the room.

### **Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)**

This meeting is being recorded and monitored by CCTV.



**MINUTES of  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
7 MARCH 2017**

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**PRESENT**

Chairman	Councillor D M Sismey
Vice-Chairman	Councillor I E Dobson
Councillors	Mrs B F Acevedo, J P F Archer, A S Fluker, and Rev. A E J Shrimpton
Ex-Officio Non-Voting Member	Councillor B S Beale MBE
Substitute Members	Councillors M F L Durham and Miss M R Lewis

**1073. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES**

The Chairman drew attention to the list of notices published on the back of the agenda.

**1074. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION NOTICE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs H E Elliott and B E Harker. In accordance with notice given Councillor Miss M R Lewis was attending as a substitute for Councillor Mrs Elliott and Councillor M F L Durham as a substitute for Councillor Harker.

**1075. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 January 2017 be approved and confirmed.

**1076. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**1077. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No requests had been received.

## **1078. CHAIRMAN'S GOOD NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

## **1079. UPDATE TO ICT STRATEGY 2015 / 19**

The Committee received the report of the Interim Director of Resources, providing an update of progress on projects in the Information Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2015 – 19.

The ICT Strategy was approved in March 2015 and the current status of projects was shown at Appendix 1 to the report. A number of additional projects had been identified since the ICT was approved and these were set out in Appendix 2.

It was noted that Security and IT security were included in level two of the plan and the Interim Director of Resources advised that there had been an Internal Audit on cybercrime and cyber security. The Interim Director of Resources had reviewed the recommendations from the audit and will be ensuring that the recommendations were being implemented. In response a question regarding Members security, the IT Manager explained that all Members were required to sign the Council's IT Policy which included commitment to IT security and training. The new Policy would also include cyber security.

In response to a question regarding the Council's iPads and the function 'find my iPad' the IT Manager advised that this function should be enabled on all Council iPads and he would ensure this was the case.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

## **1080. PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Director of Resources seeking the Council's approval of a Pay Policy Statement to meet the Localism Act 2011 requirements. The Pay Policy Statement for 2017 / 18 was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

In response to a question regarding Job Evaluation and the increased use of market supplements, the Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy explained that the Council was required to undertake Job Evaluation and she understood that to have not implemented would mean not being in compliance with legislation. Members were informed that pay supplements were allowed and used by the Council in response to skill shortages. The Chairman asked the Group Manager to look at how some of the posts with skill shortages could be filled and whether there was still a legal obligation to use Job Evaluation.

In response to a question regarding zero hours contracts, the Group Manager explained to the Committee when and how these were used, where appropriate.

The Group Manager clarified, in response to a question, that all information regarding Officers' salaries over £50,000 was published on the Council's website.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Pay Policy Statement attached as **APPENDIX 1** to these Minutes be adopted for the financial year 2017 / 18.

**1081. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENTS: 12 JANUARY - 17 FEBRUARY 2017**

The Committee received the report of the Interim Director of Resources, reporting virements and supplementary estimates agreed under delegated powers and procurement exemptions granted in the period 12 January to 17 February 2017.

Members were advised that there had been no virements or supplementary estimates for this period.

It was noted that there had been two procurement exemptions from Finance Services and the Leisure, Countryside and Tourism Services. Details of these exemptions were set out in the report.

The Interim Director of Resources informed Members that since publication of the report the exemption from the Leisure, Countryside and Tourism Service regarding commissioning a visitors hub in Burnham-on-Crouch had lapsed and Members were advised that no monies had been spent on this.

In response to a question regarding the exemption regarding asset valuation the Interim Director of Resources advised that the £19,000 detailed was the combined budget year end valuation of the Council's assets.

**RESOLVED** that the procurement exemption from Finance Services regarding Asset Valuation Services required for the Year End Accounts closure as set out in the report be noted.

Councillor B S Beale raised a point of accuracy regarding the Minutes at this point and was advised by the Chairman to take it up with the Committee Clerk after the meeting.

**1082. PROJECT 180 - ST. CEDDS HOUSE DEMOLITION AND FORMATION OF CAR PARK FINAL ACCOUNT**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Director of Resources seeking Members approval of a supplementary estimate for the payment to the contractor in relation to Project 180 – St Cedds House demolition and formation of a car park.

Members were reminded of a report from the Interim Director of Resources approved by the Council at its meeting on 15 December. A copy of the report was attached as Appendix A to the report. The report provided further background information regarding this project. A copy of the final statement of account was attached at Appendix B to the report together with the budgetary approval and expenditure to date.

Members commented on the contract process and it was felt that formation of the car park should have been a separate project to that of St. Cedds House demolition. The Interim Director of Resources agreed with these comments and provided Members with

further background information and details of the resulting overspend on the whole Project 180.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) that Members note the final account for the demolition and formation of the carpark contract;
- (ii) that the Committee approves a supplementary estimate of £11,046 for the final payment to the Contractor.

### **1083. PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Director of Resources outlining some of the steps the Council could take to improve its procurement practice and more importantly contract management once the contract had been awarded. The report sought Members' comments regarding implementing a culture of consistency, good procurement and contract management once the contract had been awarded.

The report provided detailed information regarding contract procurement and management including good practice. Members noted that operational arrangements were in place in respect of the oversight on procurement activity and to ensure the observance of the Council's Financial and Contract Procedure rules. The Council's current arrangements with the Essex Procurement Hub had also been reviewed.

The Interim Director of Resources pointed out that there had been a duplication of paragraph 3.7.2 in the report. The Director advised how he had drawn good contract practices and policies from various sources. Members were advised of the need to put in place arrangements to ensure clear monitoring of the capital programme in terms of its finances, physical works and spending against budgets.

Councillor D M Sismey suggested that in the interim the Council put a higher level of scrutiny on procurements with a budget of over £50,000.

Concern was raised regarding the use of Contracts Finder and it was felt that its use stopped more local businesses bidding for contracts with the Council. In response, the Interim Director of Resources advised that Contracts Finder was a Government service and system which the Council was required to use. The Director advised that when approached a number of local businesses had expressed a reluctance to spend the time and effort to bid for work through Contracts Finder and there was therefore a need for the Council to encourage them. He highlighted some of the work that could be done by the Council's Economic Development Service to support local businesses, part of which could include a guide on 'How to do business with the Council'.

In response to other questions the Interim Director of Resources explained that Prince2 practices whilst good for a large project proved onerous for smaller projects and therefore any recognised methodology would need to be adapted to the requirements of the project under consideration.. The Head of Legal Services is involved at the time of procuring contracts. The Director supported the suggestion for escalation of checking projects over £50,000 and advised that this could be brought in. He suggested that the

Corporate Leadership Team could be the final approver and sign off of a contract to go ahead and monitored through quarterly arrangements.

Councillor Sismey proposed that for contracts over £50,000 that as an interim arrangement until the new Director of Resources came back with a new approach that the Corporate Leadership Team sign off all key stages of such contracts and contractual terms. This proposal was duly seconded and agreed.

At this point in the meeting the Chairman welcomed Ms Carrie Cox, Finance Manager to the meeting and the Council. He also expressed his thanks and those of the Committee to Mr Kamal Mehta, Interim Director of Resources for the fantastic job he had done for the authority over the last five months.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the contents of the report be noted;
- (ii) that for contracts over £50,000 that as an interim arrangement until the new Director of Resources came back with a new approach that the Corporate Leadership Team sign off all key stages of such contracts and contractual terms.

#### **1084. FINAL COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2017 / 18**

The Committee received a verbal report from the Interim Director of Resources which advised that the Local Government Finance Settlement had been provisional at the time the Council set its own budget and the Council Tax for the area. The final settlement was published on 20 February 2017. There was no change between the provisional and final settlement. The Interim Director reported that there was a difference of £7,000 to what had been brought into the budget and considered by the Council in respect of one of the grants. The Interim Director of Resources suggested that this be corrected at revised estimates time in October / November rather than changing all figures at this time. This was noted.

#### **1085. URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman announced that in accordance with Section 100b(4) of the Local Government Act he had agreed to allow the Director of Resources to raise an urgent item of business as a response is required to a request from Simon Gallagher, Director of Planning at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by Monday 13 March 2017. This was agreed by the Committee.

#### **1086. URGENT BUSINESS: PLANNING APPLICATION FEES - AN OFFER FROM GOVERNMENT**

The Committee considered the urgent report of the Interim Director of Resources seeking Members approval to accept an offer from Government to increase planning fees by 20% from July 2017, on the basis that the Council commits to invest this additional income directly into the Planning Service.

It was noted that the report had been considered by the Planning and Licensing Committee at its meeting on 2 March 2017 who had recommended that this Committee support acceptance of the Government's offer.

Members were advised of a letter received from Simon Gallagher, Director of Planning at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (attached at Appendix 1 to the report) sent to all Local Planning Authorities (LPA) setting out the opportunity to increase planning fees by 20% from July 2017, as long as the LPA committed to investing the additional fee income directly into the planning service. The report expanded further on this request, along with Council's need to improve its competitive position in terms of recruitment and retention of planning staff. Appendix 2 to the report set out the revised Development Management Fees should Council accept the offer.

The Interim Director of Resources advised that he had made representation to the DCLG on behalf of the Council in light of the next Council meeting being after the deadline for response and the DCLG had agreed to wait until 6 April to receive the decision of this Council regarding whether it would accept the offer. Members were informed that the Finance Manager in conjunction with the Group Manager, Planning Services had considered the timing of all expected applications and it was estimated that an additional of £100,000 could arise if the Council accepted the Government's offer.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Government's offer to increase planning fees by 20% from July 2017 is accepted, with a commitment to invest this additional fee income directly into the planning service.

There being no further items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35 pm

D M SISMEY  
CHAIRMAN

(a)  
(b)

## Document Control Sheet

<b>Document title</b>	Pay Policy Statement
<b>Summary of purpose</b>	Compliance with Localism Act
<b>Prepared by</b>	Group Manager ; People, Performance and Policy
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>Version number</b>	5
<b>Approved by</b>	
<b>Approval date</b>	
<b>Date of implementation</b>	Immediate
<b>Review frequency</b>	Annual (or as necessary before then)
<b>Next review date</b>	January 2018
<b>Circulation</b>	
<b>Published on the Council's website</b>	Yes

### Validity Statement

This document is due for review by the date shown above, after which it may become invalid. Users of the strategy or policy should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the document.



MALDON DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

## Pay Policy Statement

Note: This Statement has been written to meet the statutory requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and to aid transparency in respect of Maldon District Council's policy regarding pay to the highest and lowest paid staff.

### 1. General policy

- 1.1 The Council has undertaken a Job Evaluation exercise which reviewed every post in the Council, up to and including the Chief Executive, on a consistent basis and placed them within a single unified pay scale. The pay scale was designed to be consistent with best practice and benchmarked as to value and applies up to and including Director level. In accordance with the Council's constitution, the remuneration of the posts of Chief Executive and Directors were set by the Appointments Committee composed of elected Members of the authority.
- 1.2 The Job Evaluation process was designed to achieve compliance with Equal Pay legislation and, further to this, the contractual terms and conditions of staff were also standardised at the same time. The effect is that the remuneration of all Council employees is governed by a single set of policies and procedures. This is reflected in the Pay Policy statements below.
- 1.3 The pay multiple for 17/18 is based on the ratio of the Chief Executives Salary to all other employees average FTE salary and equates to 3.64. The Government has considered setting twenty to one as a maximum. As a result it is not considered necessary to have a specific policy concerning the pay multiple. If the multiple starts to rise, for example above five to one, this could be reconsidered.

### 2. Policy regarding pay to "Chief Officers"

#### 2.1 Definition of "Chief Officers" for the purposes of this statement

- 2.1.1 The term "Chief Officer" as employed in the Localism Act has a different meaning to the use made of it at Maldon District Council. For the purposes of this Pay Policy Statement only, the relevant posts are considered to be:

- Chief Executive
- The three Director posts
- The Monitoring Officer

#### 2.2 Pay

- 2.2.1 Pay for the posts of Chief Executive was set by the Member Appointments Panel process and approved by the Council. The role of Director was introduced following the 2014 Senior Management Review and pay set by the Job Evaluation process. Now the pay line has been set it is subject to the same factors as the rest of staff pay, for example any annual pay award granted.

2.2.2 Any exception to this, such as a proposal to change the pay of senior staff out of line with normal pay awards would be subject to a report to the Council and approval being given.

2.2.3 An additional consideration is that the Chief Executive has delegated powers to award discretionary points on an officer's salary scale within approved budgetary limits where they deem it to be in the interests of the Authority. This only applies to points up to the maximum of the salary band for that post.

### 2.3 Performance related pay and bonuses

2.3.1 Maldon District Council does not have performance related pay or bonus payments for any staff. As there is no mechanism for linking pay and performance in this way 'earn back' arrangements are also not appropriate.

### 2.4 Fees, allowances, benefits in kind and expenses

2.4.1 The Chief Executive is also the Returning Officer for the District, meaning that the post holder has specific responsibilities in respect of all elections and national referenda held in the District. These duties attract fees that are variable depending on the election. For Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner, European elections and national referenda these are set by the Government. For County elections there are set by Essex County Council. For District and Parish elections they are set locally.

2.4.2 Apart from this no fees, allowances, benefits on kind or expenses are available to the posts listed in 2.1, other than those available to all staff and on the same basis.

### 2.5 Pension

2.5.1 All staff are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme in accordance with the terms of that scheme. No special considerations apply to the posts listed in 2.1.

### 2.6 Severance payments

2.6.1 Where senior staff leave in the normal course of business (resignation, retirement, etc.) the same procedures would be applied as for any other staff member and no additional payments would arise as a result.

2.6.2 Should a senior post be made redundant the post holder would receive redundancy payments in accordance with the Council's Managing Organisational Change policy that applies to all staff. The Council's policy is not to award any additional compensatory payments to staff.

2.6.3 Should a senior staff member leave as a result of a settlement agreement these, by their nature, are subject to negotiation with the individual and their representatives and so are variable in their terms. Such agreements are

formal legal arrangements and confidentiality binding on both parties is a key component, so any payment arising from such an agreement would not be published. Authorisation of the payment would be in accordance with the Council's terms of reference and scheme of delegation and it would need to represent value for money for the taxpayer in the circumstances.

2.6.4 Senior staff that were previously employed by the Authority and left with a severance or redundancy payment may be re-employed on a consultancy basis to cover short term staff pressures where it is considered appropriate in the public interest to do so.

## 2.7 Recruitment of senior staff

2.7.1 When recruiting to a senior post the salary offered would be that applicable to the grade of the post, as determined by Job Evaluation, and within the established pay line. No additional payments would arise, unless a market supplement to enable recruitment was considered justified due to a recognised technical skill shortage in the job market.

2.7.2 In the event that a senior post were to be filled by a person who had retired from another Authority and was in receipt of a pension it would be arranged so that the person was not better off overall, through abatement of pension and/or pay as applicable.

2.7.3 In accordance with the guidance set out in the Localism Act, Full council should be given the opportunity to vote before large salary packages (£100k or above) offered in respect of a new appointment. This will be considered by the Council should the opportunity arise in the future.”

## 2.8 Monitoring Officer

2.8.1 The Monitoring Officer is not subject to any addition payment.

## 2.9 Publication of remuneration of senior staff

2.9.1 This Pay Policy Statement, once approved by the Council, will be published on the Council's website.

2.9.2 The remuneration and pension contributions of the posts listed in 2.1 above are published annually in the Financial Statements of the Authority and a copy placed on the website.

**3. Lowest paid staff**

3.1 Definition

3.1.1 The lowest paid staff at Maldon District Council are those in Pay Band A (£13,560 to £14,890). This definition has been chosen as reflecting the reality of the pay line. The posts in Band A were placed there as a result of the Council's Job Evaluation scheme.

3.2 Pay Policy in respect of lowest paid staff

3.2.1 The Council has confirmed its commitment to paying the National Living Wage of £8.45 per hour. Therefore, those in Pay Band A and some in Pay Band B (£15,603 - £16,665) are paid a supplement.

3.2.2 On the whole no special considerations apply to the lowest paid staff. They are subject to identical terms and conditions, procedures and policies as all other staff. In some cases these policies give slightly different benefits to different levels of staff. For example the lowest five pay bands (A to E) an enhanced pay rates for overtime is paid. No enhancement above grade E is paid. In contrast the basic amount of annual leave increases with pay. Overtime is only paid in exceptional circumstances to staff.

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## **REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

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to  
**FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**26 APRIL 2017**

### **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on corporate health and safety activity from 1 January to 31 March 2017 (Quarter 4).
- 1.2 To agree a health and safety action plan for 2017 / 18.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) that accident and incident statistics for Quarter Four to be noted;
- (ii) that progress with the Health and Safety Action Plan for 2016 / 17 (**APPENDIX 1**) be noted;
- (iii) that the Health and Safety Action Plan for 2017 / 18 (**APPENDIX 2**), be agreed.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 There were ten accidents during quarter four, bringing the total for the year to twenty four:
  - Cut to hand whilst emptying recycling bin. No further action required.
  - Slip outside disabled toilet in reception area: floor was not wet, no obvious cause of accident. There has been a similar accident, to monitor.
  - Bruising to torso following car accident due to the fault of another driver on the way to a site visit: the injured person did not take any time off work. No further action required.
  - Member of the public tripped on pavement outside Brickhouse farm. As no defects, no further action required.
  - Bump to head in shower room. As no defects, no further action required.
  - Two falls in the new extended car park, both fell off the low kerb. Planning permission has been agreed to install additional lighting in this area.

- Bruising to hand when assisting in a lift: the load slipped and fell onto hand. No further action required.
  - Back injury whilst bending to find planning files in the basement. Storage of planning files is becoming an increasing problem both in the basement and the depot. The matter has been raised with Directors for resolution.
  - Slip on stairs near planning: no defects noted, no further action required.
- 3.2 As the accidents during quarter four were not of a serious nature, none had to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- 3.3 Four incidents of unacceptable behaviour were reported from staff within Housing, Customer Services, Planning Enforcement and Community Safety during quarter four. This brings the total for the year to eleven. This is more than usual as normally there are only one or two incidents reported per quarter.
- 3.4 Progress with the Health and Safety Action Plan can be seen in **APPENDIX 1**: actions during quarter four are highlighted in bold.
- 3.5 A Health and Safety Action Plan for 2017 / 18 has been drafted – **APPENDIX 2**.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 There have been no significant increases in the number of accidents or the seriousness of accidents. The last two quarters have shown an increase in the number of unacceptable behaviour incidents, although it is not clear why this should be. It could be that staff are better informed about the reporting procedure and reporting more incidents or customers are more aggrieved by the Council's actions.
- 4.2 Most of the actions in the plan for 2016 / 17 have been completed; conflict management training has been carried over to 2017 / 18. This is important due to the increased numbers of unacceptable behaviour incidents being reported.

#### **5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS**

- 5.1 Managing health and safety well helps protect the workforce and wider community who may be affected by the Council's activities ensuring that communities stay safe and healthy.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Good health and safety management reduces the number of accidents and injuries to both customers and employees alike. Reduced staff absence resulting from work related injuries or ill health ensures a better service is provided to customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.

- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Poor management of health and safety can lead to accidents, injuries, occupational ill health or dangerous occurrences. This may result in avoidable sickness absence and these incidents may be investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This could result in prosecution with fines or custodial sentences and an award of costs if found guilty by the courts. In addition the HSE has adopted a “Fee for Fault” policy in which it recharges the cost of investigations if liability is identified. Civil claims by individuals could lead to significant pay outs which in turn could lead to increased insurance premiums. It can also lead to poor publicity, reputational damage and impacts on staff morale.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – No additional resources required, however, by managing health and safety, there should be less impact on financial resources as identified in (iii) above.
- (v) **Impact of Resources (human)** – No additional resources are required, however, by preventing accidents and ill health, there should be less impact on human resources.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Good health and safety management of the workplace, for example, management of asbestos and legionella, helps provide a safer and healthier environment in which to live and work.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Gill Gibson, Health and Safety Adviser, (Tel: 01621 875813).

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HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2016 / 17

Subject	Action Required	Progress
Health and Safety Policy and Procedures	<p>To review all the corporate health and safety procedures falling due during 2016 / 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident and Near Miss Reporting</li> <li>• Asbestos Arrangements</li> <li>• Consultation Arrangements</li> <li>• Display Screen Equipment</li> <li>• Fire</li> <li>• First Aid Arrangements</li> <li>• Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</li> <li>• Risk Assessment</li> <li>• Stress</li> <li>• Workplace Arrangements</li> </ul>	<p>The following procedures have been reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation Arrangements</li> <li>• Fire</li> <li>• Asbestos Arrangements</li> <li>• Workplace Arrangements</li> <li>• Stress (under review – this is now a HR policy: <b>policy approved and now adopted</b>)</li> <li>• Accident and Near Miss Reporting</li> <li>• Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</li> <li>• <b>Display Screen Equipment (DSE)</b></li> <li>• <b>First aid arrangements</b></li> <li>• <b>Risk assessments</b></li> </ul>
Risk Assessments	<p>To audit /review all service risk assessments using a cross service approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks and Rangers and Street Scene</li> <li>• Environmental Health and Planning</li> <li>• Housing and Environmental Health</li> <li>• Facilities and IT</li> <li>• Finance and People, Policy and Performance (PPP)</li> <li>• Legal and Democratic Services by the health and safety advisor</li> </ul>	<p>The following risk assessments have been reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Health</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• IT</li> <li>• People, Performance and Policy</li> <li>• Revenues and Benefits</li> <li>• Customer Services</li> <li>• <b>Parks and rangers</b></li> <li>• <b>Facilities</b></li> <li>• <b>Legal and Democratic Services</b></li> </ul>
Vehicle Fleet Management	<p>To audit vehicle fleet management to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all vehicles are managed to good standards; and</li> <li>• all vehicles are subject to an inspection programme, records kept and linked to any defects found.</li> </ul>	<p>Meetings held with the Parks Supervisor; Community Protection Team Leader; River Bailiff; Maintenance Officer; Waste and Street Scene Manager. A corporate inspection sheet was circulated to all along with the corporate procedures in relation to workplace transport. Towable equipment and trailers to be included in vehicle inspection checks.</p>

Subject	Action Required	Progress
Training	<p>To deliver the health and safety training where required, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict management / diffusing aggression techniques</li> <li>• Refresher first aid training</li> </ul>	<p>To co-inside with Mental health Awareness Week in May, there was a ½ day training session for managers on mental health awareness to promote better management of this within the workplace.</p> <p>First aid refresher training completed by two first aiders. First aid refresher training to be completed by a third first aider in January 2017.</p> <p><b>Conflict management / diffusing aggression training has not been given: to be carried forward to next year</b></p>



Subject	Action Required	Timescale
Legionella	To review the procedures in place to manage the risk from legionella and identify any shortcomings	October 2017
Training	<p>To deliver the health and safety training where required, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict management / diffusing aggression techniques</li> <li>• Refresher first aid training</li> <li>• Mental health first aider training</li> <li>• Developing an e-learning module for manual handling</li> </ul>	<p>October 2017 (carried over from 2016-17 action plan)</p> <p>As and when required December 2017 March 2018</p>



## **REPORT of DIRECOR OF RESOURCES**

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**to  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
26 APRIL 2017**

### **CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present for consideration a revised Corporate Communications Protocol that takes account of and addresses the comments made by the Finance and Corporate Services (F&CS) Committee held on 24 November 2015 (Minute No. 625 refers).

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

To the Council:

That the revised Corporate Communications Protocol attached at **APPENDIX A** be adopted.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee undertook a review of the Members and Officers Communication Protocol in August 2015 and appointed Councillor Mrs P A Channer as the Member sponsor to work jointly with Officers to provide the Member input into the review of the Protocol.
- 3.2 The O&S Committee put forward its suggestions in a report to the Finance and Corporate Services (F&CS) Committee to amend the Communications Protocol documents accordingly.
- 3.3 The F&CS Committee considered the report from the O&S Committee on 24 November 2015. The Committees comments and resolution are attached at **APPENDIX B** and they asked for the Corporate Communications Protocol to be reviewed by Officers and referred back to the O&S Committee.
- 3.4 The particular points raised by the F&CS Committee and how these have been addressed are highlighted below:
- It was not clear how breaches of the protocol would be considered.  
*Addressed by: Addition to the Protocol at Appendix A of paragraphs 1.3.1 and 2.4 and 2.6.*

- The Press Office did not receive all communications from the press as stated on page 3 of the protocol.

*Addressed by: The Press Office does receive all communications from the press however, it is acknowledged that Members are approached directly by the press and the media for comment. The Protocol covers such instances in advice and guidance to Members in Section 2.*

- What was the process for Members to flag things up to the Press Office and at what point this should be done? In addition, how would these be responded to and Members kept in the loop?

*Addressed by: Added specific new paragraphs 1.2.4 and 1.3.9 to address the 'loop' back to the member. In terms of Member's ability to flag things up to the Press Office and the point at which it is done is a matter of judgement for the individual member, however, the advice and guidance is that it is always advisable to notify the Press Office of any direct approach to the member by the Press or media as soon as it arises. However, the Protocol sets out the advice and guidance in paragraph 2.2 in respect of the Member responding to a press or media enquiry in their Ward member, political party or individual capacity and further in paragraph 2.6.*

- It was felt whole communications protocol needed to be considered rather than just media matters, including other factors such as the forthcoming District rebranding which may feed into it.

*Addressed by: addition of new paragraph 3.2.2 to the Protocol.*

- The protocol should apply to both Members and Officers across the board and references within it should reflect this.

*Addressed by: identifying that the Protocol applies to Officers and Members across the board by setting out sections for Officers (Section 1.3 Council Staff) and members (Section 2 Members of the Council)*

3.5 In light of the comments made and in discussion with Officers and Councillor Mrs Channer a revised Corporate Communications Protocol was considered by the O&S Committee at their meeting on 29 March 2017.

3.6 The Committee noted the amendments which had been made and recommended that it is considered for adoption by the F&CS Committee.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 The Corporate Communications Protocol attached at **APPENDIX A** addresses the comments of the F&CS Committee. The revisions to the Protocol have been arrived at in discussions with Councillor Mrs Channer.

4.2 At the meeting of the O & S Committee on 29 March 2017, the Committee noted the amendments and endorsed the revised Corporate Communications Protocol for adoption by the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.

## 5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 5.1 The Council's vision and corporate goals underpin the Corporate Communications Protocol. The Council's vision and corporate goals are set out in section 3 of the Protocol.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None arising directly from this report.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None arising directly from this report.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – A good Corporate Communications Protocol is essential to safeguard the reputation of the Council.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None arising directly from this report.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None arising directly from this report.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None arising directly from this report.

Background Papers: None

Enquiries to: Emma Foy, Director of Resources, (Tel: 01621 875762) or Russell Dawes, Public Relations Manager, (Tel: 01621 875853).

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<b>Document title</b>	Corporate Communications Protocol
<b>Summary of purpose</b>	Three Yearly Review
<b>Prepared by</b>	Russell Dawes
<b>Status</b>	Draft
<b>Version number</b>	V1
<b>Approved by</b>	
<b>Approval date</b>	
<b>Date of implementation</b>	
<b>Review frequency</b>	Three Yearly
<b>Next review date</b>	
<b>Circulation</b>	
<b>Published on the Council's website</b>	

### Validity Statement

This document is due for review by the date shown above, after which it may become invalid. Users of the strategy or policy should ensure that they are consulting the currently valid version of the document.



**MALDON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL**

**1 INTRODUCTION, SCOPE AND CONTEXT**

1.1 ‘Corporate communication’ is a dialogue. It is about ensuring that an appropriate message is given, using the right medium, to all those who need to receive it, and how in return their messages are received.

1.1.1 The purpose of this protocol is therefore to:-

- Ensure that the Council communicates in an accurate, timely and appropriate way that meets its own needs and those of its stakeholders.
- Ensure that stakeholders are well informed on matters relevant to them.
- Ensure that stakeholders have an appropriate mechanism to communicate their views, feelings, opinions etc to the Council in a way that influences, and is seen to influence, Council decision making.
- Use all available methods in which to communicate our messages, promote, enhance and protect the Council’s reputation to secure maximum benefits for the Council and the District in general.

1.1.2 The scope of this protocol is therefore:-

- Communication with the media and other external stakeholders concerning the Council’s policies, plans and activities.
- Communication with colleagues internally to ensure that they are kept informed of our media response concerning the Council’s policies, plans and activities.
- Communication with our external partners and co-ordinate messages as necessary.
- Consultation with the community and other external stakeholders in so far as the Corporate Communications function interfaces with and contributes to the Council’s consultation strategy.

1.1.3 This protocol is mindful of a number of existing strategies but does not specifically deal in detail with the following:-

- Promoting the Maldon District as a visitor destination
- Individual service and business plans.
- Marketing or promoting individual services except as part of promoting a corporate message.
- Petitions including e-Petitions
- Emergency plan
- Economic Prosperity Strategy
- Member/Officer Protocol
- Code of Conduct

1.1.4 Whilst not directly in the scope of this protocol, it must also feed into other strategies, such as our Channel migration strategy, customers’ strategy, consultation strategy, specific service related marketing, Human Resources policies, financial services, e-Petitions etc.

- 1.1.5 The protocol now goes on to identify what core messages we want to promote to a variety of audiences, how we will do it and the implications for the Members of the Council, our Public Relations Team and colleagues both inside and outside of the organisation.

## **1.2 Council's Press Office Protocol**

- 1.2.1 The Council's press office is managed by the Council's Public Relations and Engagement Team and receives **all** communications from the Press and Media and issues **all** News Release/Statements on behalf of the Council.
- 1.2.2 The Press Office will not speculate on matters which are raised and will ask for an enquiry to be emailed in order to seek the necessary response in discussion with the relevant Officer, Director and Member as considered appropriate.
- 1.2.3 With the exception of the Chief Executive, Directors and the Council's PR & Engagement Team (Press Office team, which also includes the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager). No other Officer of the Council is permitted to speak or communicate with the Press and Media on any matters affecting the Council or its business in general, unless after discussion with the Press Office, and as authorised by the Chief Executive, and/or Director, the Leader and/or Deputy Leader of the Council or Committee Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman
- 1.2.4 If an issue is highlighted to the Press Office by a Member, a copy of the response given will be sent to the originating Member for information.**

## **1.3 Council Staff**

- 1.3.1 All staff must adhere to the paragraph above (1.2.3) and failure to do so will be seen as a breach of the Council's code of conduct and ultimately may result in disciplinary action being taken in line with our current policies.**
- 1.3.2 Staff should also show respect and courtesy to Members *at all times in line with the Member /Officer Protocol* and not be seen to do otherwise. Staff will also be reminded of the confidentiality of their posts and the availability of the whistleblowing policy.**
- 1.3.3 The PR & Engagement Team also works in conjunction with the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager with regards to Planning PR matters.
- 1.3.4 The Press Office may from time to time use the term 'Council Spokesperson' to respond to agreed enquiries but it should also be acknowledged that the press may also use this term as a matter of course following a response to an enquiry.
- 1.3.5 However, this is not the case for approved press releases which would normally have an agreed Member quote included.
- 1.3.6 A style guide is available for staff and this provides useful guidance on items such 'house' font, writing for the web and a variety of letter templates**
- 1.3.7 In the unlikely absence of anyone in the Public Relations and Engagement Team, media communications will be referred to either the Chief Executive's PA or the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager, who will deal as necessary with any enquiries.
- 1.3.8 Staff should ensure that Ward Members are advised of issues which may affect their Ward in addition to the relevant Committee Chairman/Vice Chairman/Leader or Deputy Leader as required.**

**1.3.9** *Either a member of staff or the Press Office will ensure that if an issue is highlighted to the press office by a Member, a copy of the response given will be sent to the originating Member for information.*

**Appendix 1 shows the process which should be followed when dealing with the media.**

## **1.4 Meetings of Council and Committees**

- 1.4.1 Copies of agenda, minutes and reports for meetings of the Council or its Committees are e-mailed to the Press and Media and placed on the Council's web site seven days before the meeting.
- 1.4.2 Facilities are provided at meetings for the Press to take notes of the proceedings and both the Press and Public may be excluded from a meeting whilst certain confidential matters (as provided for in the relevant legislation) are under discussion.
- 1.4.3 Members of the Public Relations and Engagement Team when available will attend agenda meeting to advise on any matters as necessary.

## **2. MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

- 2.1 Elected Members of the Council play a key and valuable role in communicating the work of the Council to its residents, the media and business community.
- 2.2 Elected Members can express a **Ward**, political party or individual personal view to the press, media or in public forums but should indicate that any such opinion does not necessarily represent the view of the Council.
- 2.3 An elected Member must be mindful of the Council's Code of Conduct and all other policies, procedures and regulations whenever he/she conducts the business of the authority, or conducts the business of the office to which he/she has been elected, appointed, or acts as a representative of the authority.

**2.4** *If Members fail to adhere to the paragraph above they may be in breach of the requirement for respect and confidentiality as stated within the Local Code of Conduct and may therefore have sanctions applied to them pursuant to the Code (local code of conduct).*

- 2.5 In addition Members should be mindful of the following;
- Elected Members should not disclose information that is of a confidential nature. This includes any discussion with the press on any matters which may have been discussed as a confidential item on the Council's or Committees' agenda or at any other private briefing or working group.
  - During the pre-election period or 'Purdah', elected Members should comply with the guidance issued. During this period news releases will be issued in the name of the Chief Executive, Director or Council Spokesperson as appropriate

## **2.6 Dealing with the media**

- 2.6.1 A Councillor should act with integrity at all times when representing or acting on behalf of Maldon District Council.
- 2.6.2 Make clear the capacity, in which they are providing the information. For example:
- as Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council
  - as Chairman of a Committee
  - as Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition
  - as an individual (i.e. letter to press for publication)
  - as Ward Councillor

- 2.6.3 Members are advised to keep a copy of any response which is given to the media so as to record the question and the response.
- 2.6.4 Members are advised to take a cautious approach when dealing with the media if asked for a comment on a controversial subject. It is advisable that the assistance or guidance of the Council’s press office is obtained, rather than being led into stating something you did not really mean to say.
- 2.6.5** *An elected Member should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Officer at meetings held in public or before the press. **This should be addressed through the existing Member/Officer protocol.***
- 2.6.6 The Chairman of the Council is the Civic and Ceremonial head of the Council to which is attached great importance in terms of the Council’s profile of the District both locally and outside of the District. A separate and detailed protocol already exists for this position and is therefore not part of this Communications protocol.

**3. OUR VISION, VALUES & MESSAGES**

- 3.1 Underpinning the communications protocol is the overall vision of the Council, and its four corporate priorities: one internal and four external. Our vision is clearly focussed on the type of community we are striving to achieve and our priorities demonstrate our commitment to support our overall vision.

<p><b>Our Vision</b> To make the Maldon District a better place to live, work and enjoy</p> <p><b>Our Goals</b> Helping communities to be safe, active and healthy Protecting and shaping the District Creating opportunities for economic growth and prosperity Delivering good quality, cost effective and valued service</p>
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- 3.1.2 As part of this protocol the Council’s vision and corporate identity will be reinforced.
- 3.1.3 Alongside our vision, brand and values, we need to identify the key messages we wish to promote and in what areas we wish to be recognised for our success.
- 3.1.4 Key messages must run throughout all communication we have with our residents and partners and need to relate to the community. They are critical to:-
- Reinforce what we are trying to achieve; and
  - Provide a clear, simple focus for our actions.
- 3.1.5 Repetition of message is important so that the use of key messages becomes standard practice.  
*- If the story does not contain a key message, don’t tell the story*

**3.2 The Council’s good name**

- 3.2.1 The Council has a well known brand which is depicted on livery and stationery as a Thames Sailing Barge but there is a need to continually enforce this message corporately in all of our internal and external communications.
- 3.2.2** *In addition, the Council is acting as an advocate and supporter of the ‘Sense of Place’ brand which is being used to promote the District and its eclectic mix of businesses. This complements the Council’s own brand and is used in line with the specific Sense of Place guidelines.*

- 3.2.3 Our Customer Contact Centre promotes the Council's good name through their endeavours to ensure that customer enquiries are dealt with at the first point of contact and together with our Customers Strategy provides a solid foundation in which to ensure that the Council is customer focussed.

#### **4. COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE**

- 4.1 In order to effectively communicate the message to our residents it is important that any communication is:-

- Relevant to them and where they live
- Timely and accurate
- In plain English (and other formats as appropriate)
- Factual
- Honest – admitting when we're wrong and being prepared to apologise.

#### **4.2 Letting the community tell our story**

- 4.2.1 Day-to-day communications should focus on the service users and tell the story through their eyes – how has this new service affected their lives? Why is it making an impact in their community?

- 4.2.2 Charter Marks, ISO Accreditation, Beacon Awards and such like may be important to the organisation, but residents may not perceive their true value if the message is not seen as a high priority for our residents.

- 4.2.3 To communicate our message effectively we need to turn the message around to focus on them – how are we going to make their life better?

- 4.2.4 The Public Relations and Engagement Team will assist in enabling stories originating from the Council to be written in a more proactive manner:-

- Sourcing contributions from our residents and partners where possible
- Members to endorse initiatives, where possible.
- Wider involvement of Members: feeding back information from successful community projects.

#### **4.3 Keeping the public well informed – key sources and publications**

- 4.3.1 All Key publications should be co-ordinated centrally and reviewed by the Public Relations and Engagement Team to ensure that key messages are used appropriately and consistently.

- 4.3.2 These core methods of communication would need to be identified but could include:-

- Specific service information leaflets
- Online A-Z Guide
- The Courier (annual)
- Media releases
- Council Tax information
- Our Web site
- Social Networking Sites

#### **4.4 Specific Service Information Leaflets**

- 4.4.1 There is a critical need for the public to have a clear understanding of the range of services we provide and who they should contact.

4.4.2 Feedback in the past has suggested that customers:-

- Do not understand what services are provided by the Council
- Do not know the best way to access services

### **4.5 A-Z Guide of services**

4.5.1 The online A-Z guide of Council services provides an excellent method of communicating the services undertaken/offered by the Council

### **4.6 The 'Courier' - Council newspaper**

4.6.1 The Courier is produced annually and distributed door-to-door as well as being available via our web site and covers matters which affect our residents or which relate to the District.

4.6.2 The Vision for the Courier is to provide;

- Factual and cross cutting information about the work we do
- Greater involvement from our partners, providing information that is 'joined up', reflecting the fact that customers are concerned with the services they need, and not with who provides them.

### **4.7 Media Releases**

4.7.1 It is vital that the Council is able to tell its story in its own words to its residents and the most effective way of managing key messages is through a good relationship with the media.

4.7.2 A toolkit called 'working with the Media' is available on the intranet and from the Public Relations and Engagement Team has been developed in order to assist colleagues in how to help us to raise our profile of the Council in the print and broadcast media. It gives a template of how to construct a news release and other useful hints and tips.

4.7.3 A regular press briefing is just one way in which to ensure that the correct message is given and understood to the media and these will be co-ordinated as necessary.

4.7.4 Specific promotions/campaigns will require a managed communications action plan developed by the Public Relations and Engagement Team and will require key actions/milestones.

4.7.5 A regular dialogue with the media is vital in order to maintain and build good relations with them.

### **4.8 Council Tax Information**

4.8.1 The current Council Tax bill information is provided mainly as part of the online billing process and provided information about how we spend the money.

4.8.2 Opportunities are also used to communicate messages to residents who use monthly billing and this in the past has included messages from our partner organisations.

### **4.9 Web Sites**

4.9.1 Web sites are a key Communication tool and provide the Council's with world-wide 'shop window'.

4.9.2 Our corporate web site was upgraded in 2016 and provides information which can be viewed across a number of devices using 'responsive' technology. Our ability to offer on-line

transactions 24/7 has increased together with a web site which can be developed to meet any future needs.

- 4.9.3 The information on the site will be accurate, interesting, useful and user friendly. This will be monitored by the Public Relations and Engagement Team, Web Site Super User Groups and IT.
- 4.9.4 The Visit Maldon District web site was also refreshed and re-designed in 2016 to meet the growing demands of our visitors. A new events calendar, e-shop and tourism branding as part of the Sense of Place project has enabled the production of a vibrant interactive site

#### **4.10 Social Networking**

- 4.10.1 The Council is proactively using social networking as one of the key communications tools.
- 4.10.2 We manage our social media through an online dashboard and are continually expanding our use of the social media channels and have developed an acceptable use of social media guidance document for staff.

#### **4.11 Selling the vision**

- 4.11.1 To maximise the impact of the key messages, the Council must promote itself and its work to the community. This can be done cost-effectively (although requiring some budget) and will help to reinforce key messages in a visual way.
- 4.11.2 This promotion should:-
- Reflect the vision and brand image;
  - Show how the Council is adding value and making lives better;
  - Take credit for the work that the Council does; and
  - Signpost customers to services.
- 4.11.3 This should be a combination of PR and advertising (each supporting the other) to get across key messages about our services with a strong visual element, for example the refreshed approach to our recruitment activities.

#### **4.12 Branding everything we do**

- 4.12.1 It is important that the Council receives the credit for the work that it is responsible for and where we are working in partnership with others for example:-
- Leisure Centres and car parks - should have appropriate branded signage.
  - Major project developments - funding should be set aside at the earliest time for promotional activity and branding.
  - Partnership working – wherever the Council is working in partnership equal branding opportunities should be given
  - Seeking opportunities to use both the Council's own brand whilst also supporting the 'Sense of Place' brand.

### **5. ENGAGING WITH THE RESIDENTS**

- 5.1 Closer engagement with residents should be seen as key to improving the quality and effectiveness of Council services.
- 5.2 Developing customer opinion and involving service users' needs to be undertaken constantly to maintain a highly level of service and customer satisfaction.

- 5.3 However, citizen and user engagement should not just be about consultation exercises, but it is a fundamental way in which to communicate with, involve and seek the views of local people.
- 5.4 Good media relations have an important part to play in any such consultation working with colleagues to ask the correct questions as per the Consultation Strategy which will inform future decisions.
- 5.5 This should not be seen as a once-a-year duty to consult, but an integral part of any regular feedback from stakeholders, community panels, focus groups, staff, youth forums, hard to reach groups and other partners as appropriate.
- 5.6 The Council has also demonstrated its commitment to improve the profile of the Council and local government in general as a partner in the LGA's Reputation in Local Government initiative.

**6. SUMMARY**

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of everyone to deliver effective communication. The Chief Executive, Corporate Leadership Team, Members and Staff must be responsible for driving the protocol by actively applying its principles to all aspects of their work.
- 6.2 The Public Relations & Engagement Team will work across services to deliver a comprehensive good news service and deal with bad news as and when it arises.
- 6.3 The Public Relations & Engagement Team, supported by Corporate Leadership Team and with Member consideration, will be responsible for strategic thinking, driving forward the good news and making day-to-day decisions about promoting the Council and its services.
- 6.4 By working together, the delivery of this communications protocol will ensure that the Council grows in reputation and builds a strong relationship with the public.

## Media enquiries

Members and officers are encouraged to inform the PR and Engagement team of items of potential media interest

All media enquiries including interviews should be directed to **press.office@maldon.gov.uk** in the first instance

### ENQUIRIES

Forwarded to the appropriate officer (**Planning issues:** the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager) to seek a response.  
If an issue is highlighted to the Press Office by a Member, a copy of the response given will be sent to the originating Member for information

### INTERVIEWS

Press office to liaise with the relevant Member, Director or their nominated spokesperson (**Planning issues:** the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager will assume liaison)

#### Matters of fact

The response must be agreed with the Director or nominated officer

#### Matters of contention or requiring comment

The response must be agreed with the Director or nominated officer and, at the discretion of the Director, attributed to the relevant Chairperson or Ward Member (in which case that Member's agreement must be obtained), Director or Council spokesperson. Exceptionally, a specific member of staff may be nominated by a Member or Director

Briefing for Member if appropriate

Press office to confirm arrangements with the media (**Planning issues:** the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager to confirm arrangements with the media and inform the press office)

Agreed response forwarded to **press.office@maldon.gov.uk**

Proof read and sent to the media

## Proactive media (news releases and statements)

Members and officers are encouraged to liaise with the PR and Engagement team regarding the production of news releases/statements on potentially controversial issues as well as 'good news' stories.

The PR & Engagement team has the sole responsibility to send approved news releases/statements to the media. Exceptionally, (eg in the event of urgent need and the non availability of any members of the team), the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager of Chief Executive's PA will assume responsibility.

All news releases/statements, including where possible a draft quote from a Member, must be approved by the Director



**Planning issues:**  
the Programme and Stakeholder Liaison Manager will obtain Member's approval/amendment of quote if appropriate before sending it to the press office



The approved news release should be sent to the press office where it will be proof read and any major amendments returned to the Director for approval



Press office will email requesting Member's approval/amendment of quote where appropriate

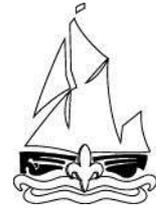


Approved news release/statement emailed to the media

All press releases/statements are emailed to the 'press contacts list', copied to Corporate Leadership Team, the originator of the news release, circulated to all Members and uploaded on to the Council's website and linked to our social media accounts

## **Media enquiries received by Elected Members directly from the media**

1. Members are encouraged to speak to the media on matters relating to their Ward
2. If a Member is approached to discuss a decision of Council or one of the committees they should ensure that they are clear in what capacity they are commenting (ie Ward Member, Committee Member, or individual)
3. Members are advised to respond in writing to the media so as to record the question and the response
4. Out of courtesy, the Leader or Deputy Leader or relevant committee Chairman/Vice Chairman should be made aware of any such approaches
5. It would also be helpful for the Council's press office to be made aware at [press.office@maldon.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@maldon.gov.uk)
6. Please note during an emergency this process replaced with the emergency protocol led via Gold Command



**EXTRACT of MINUTES of  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
24 NOVEMBER 2015**

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**PRESENT**

Chairman	Councillor D M Sismey (joined the meeting at Agenda Item 10)
Vice-Chairman	Councillor Mrs H E Elliott
Councillors	Mrs B F Acevedo, A S Fluker, and Rev. A E J Shrimpton
Ex-Officio Non-Voting Member	Councillor B S Beale MBE
Substitute Members	Councillors R G Boyce MBE CC, M F L Durham, Miss M R Lewis and Miss S White

IN THE CHAIR : COUNCILLOR MRS H E ELLIOTT (VICE-CHAIRMAN)

**608. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES**

The Chairman drew attention to the list of notices published on the agenda.

**609. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION NOTICES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J P F Archer, B E Harker, C A R MacKenzie and M R Pearlman.

In accordance with notice duly given Councillor M F L Durham was attending as a substitute for Councillor Harker, Councillor Miss S White as a substitute for Councillor Archer, Councillor R G Boyce as a substitute for Councillor Pearlman and Councillor Miss M R Lewis as a substitute for Councillor MacKenzie.

**625 MEMBERS AND OFFICER COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources seeking Members' consideration of suggestions by the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee following examination of the Members and Officers Communication Protocol (attached as Appendix A to the report) and amend it accordingly.

It was noted that the O&S Committee had highlighted three main areas of improvement and these were summarised in the report.

Members discussed the protocol and a number of concerns were raised regarding its content. In particular the following points were raised:

- It was not clear how breaches of the protocol would be considered.
- The Press Office did not receive all communications from the press as stated on page 3 of the protocol.
- What was the process for Members to flag things up to the Press Office and at what point this should be done? In addition, how would these be responded to and Members kept in the loop?
- It was felt whole communications protocol needed to be considered rather than just media matters, including other factors such as the forthcoming District rebranding which may feed into it.
- The protocol should apply to both Members and Officers across the board and references within it should reflect this.

Members were advised that the code of conduct would deal with any breaches of protocol amounting to a breach of the Member Code of Conduct.

After further discussion, Councillor A S Fluker, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny, proposed that this matter be referred back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for review in the light of the comments arising at this meeting. The Committee agreed that the document required further attention and consideration at a later date.

**RESOLVED** that consideration of the Member and Officer Communication Protocol be deferred for a review by Officers and also the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the light of the above comments, and referred back to this Committee at a future meeting.

There being no further items of business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:40pm.

D M SISMEY  
CHAIRMAN



## **REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

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to  
**FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**26 APRIL 2017**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENTS: 8 FEBRUARY to 21 MARCH 2017**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To report virements and supplementary estimates agreed under delegated powers to this Committee.
- 1.2 To inform Members of procurement exemptions that have been granted in the period.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the two Supplementary estimates granted during the period, as detailed in paragraph 3.3 below, are noted.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

##### **3.1 Rules and Regulations**

- 3.1.1 The approval and reporting arrangements in relation to virements and supplementary estimates are set out in the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures. These are as follows:

##### Virements (movements) within the same budget head:

- Agreed by the relevant Director and the Director of Resources.

##### Virements between different budget heads:

- Up to £20,000 – Director and Director of Resources and reported in monthly Members Bulletin;
- Over £20,000 up to £50,000 – Director, Director of Resources, in Consultation with relevant Standing Committee Chairman and reported to the next Finance and Corporate Services Committee;
- Over £50,000 - the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.

### Supplementary estimates:

- Up to £20,000 – Director, Director of Resources and Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee and the Leader of the Council and reported to the next meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee;
- Over £20,000 – the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.

3.1.2 The Contract Procedure Rules provide information in relation to procurement exemptions. The exemption enables the council to waive any requirements within the contract procedure rules for specific projects.

3.1.3 Procurement exemptions should be signed by the Officer and countersigned by the Director of Resources and where appropriate the Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.

### **3.2 Virements**

3.2.1 There were no virement requests to report.

### **3.3 Supplementary Estimates**

3.3.1 Two Revenue supplementary estimates relating to this period were received and granted:

- A supplementary revenue estimate was requested for £12,000 for a contribution towards a Judicial Review against a planning inspectorate appeal decision.
- A supplementary revenue estimate was requested for £20,000 for maternity cover arrangements for the post of Solicitor.

### **3.4 Procurement Exemptions**

3.4.1 There were no procurement exemption to report

## **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 The two supplementary revenue estimates detailed above were necessary to modify the approved budget to fit circumstances that have arisen since the budget was set.

## **5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS**

5.1 The adherence to the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures contributes towards the corporate goal of ‘Delivering good quality, cost effective and valuable services’.

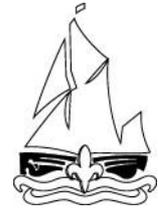
## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None identified.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None identified.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – These are discussed above.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Emma Foy, Director of Resources, (Tel: 01621 875762).

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**REPORT of  
DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY**

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**to  
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE  
11 APRIL 2017**

**AND**

**FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
25 APRIL 2017**

**PERMIT FOR SCHOOL PARENTS PARKING**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is to propose a new permit to enable parents to pre pay for the use of Council's car parks for picking up and dropping off their children at school.
- 1.2 This matter is brought forward for consideration with the agreement of the Chairman due to the procedural and preparation work required in order for the new arrangements, if agreed, to take effect from 1 June 2017.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To the Community Services Committee:

- (i) that a parking permit is made available to all parents of children attending Maldon schools to use to park in the Council car parks for a standard school term of 39 weeks;
- (ii) that the new arrangements commence on 1 June 2017 and until then the informal arrangements continue;

To the Finance and Corporate Services Committee

- (iii) that subject to approval of (i) and (ii) above, a new parking permit for parents of children attending Maldon Schools to use to park in the Council car parks for a standard term of 39 weeks costing £200 per year is introduced. The Permit cost will be linked to any variation in future parking charges;
- (iv) that subject to (iii) above, the Council's 2017 / 18 Fees and Charges be updated accordingly.

### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 As part of the 2017 / 18 budget setting process it was agreed the existing ‘informal’ free use of the Council’s car parks by parents to drop off and pick up school children should be withdrawn. This privilege had applied to three schools; St Francis Catholic Primary School, Maldon Court Preparatory School and the Watership Downs Nursery School. As a consequence, the car park users were advised to purchase tickets for the period of their stay or purchase a standard £580 permit which would enable them to park at any time.
- 3.2 Following the Council decision (Minute No. 768 refers) the three schools were written to advising that from the commencement of the summer term (18 April 2017) those parents using the car park would have to pay the same minimum £1 rate as other users of the car parks for each stay. There have been ten complainants from the Preparatory School and none from the other two schools regarding this decision. Some of the complainants accept that there should be a charge for the use of the car park but that the £580 tariff is too high. Given the speedy nature of the morning drop offs they do not want to have to go to the machine and pay each time but would be prepared to pay for a more appropriately priced permit.
- 3.3 After a discussion with the Bursar of the Maldon Court School it was agreed to give the parents more time to make other travel arrangements by extending the commencement of the charging date to 1 June 2017.
- 3.4 Officers have considered the issues raised by parents to see if a solution could be found which results in car park users paying for the time spent in the council car parks but reduces the inconvenience to our customers. It is clear most parents wish to pay for a 30 minute period twice a day. The current minimum stay and charge is for one hour at a cost of £1.
- 3.5 It is proposed in future that all parents of children attending local Maldon Schools are offered a permit that will enable them to park in the Council car parks and which is reflective of the cost of half an hours usage twice a day for the purposes of picking up and dropping off school children. The minimum tariff available to users of the car parks is £1 so the Schools permit will be a specific concession and not available to any other customers.
- 3.6 The permit would reflect a standard school term of 39 weeks and cost £200 which includes a £5 administrative charge. The scheme would be administered directly by the Council to maintain control. Enforcement of the permit system would be undertaken by the existing Council enforcement team.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Schools parking permit would enable parents to continue to park in the Council’s car park but at a rate which is reflective of their minimal use. The new permit system will be administered directly by the Council to maintain control.

## 5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 5.1 This report links to the Corporate Goal of delivering good quality cost effective and valued services

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The Council has adopted a ‘fair use’ and ‘user pays’ principle for its car parks recently introducing both evening and weekend charges. Feedback from parents affected seems to indicate a willingness to pay for parking but any charge should reflect the time spent in the car park and be convenient to use.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – No issues identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None identified.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The cost of the permit reflects the use of the parking spaces and a small administrative charge is included within the cost of the permit.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified as existing staff will administer and enforce the new permit. An administrative charge included within the permit which will cover any additional costs.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – No issues identified.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to:

Karen Bomford, Group Manager – Community and Living, (Tel: 01621 875827).

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## **ADDENDUM**

The Community Services Committee considered this report at its meeting on 11 April and resolved:

That the Council does not make available parking permits to parents of children attending Maldon schools to use in Council car parks and the Finance and Corporate Services Committee be advised accordingly.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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