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DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY,  
PERFORMANCE AND  
GOVERNANCE'S OFFICE  
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE  
AND GOVERNANCE  
Paul Dodson

13 January 2021

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the;

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

on **THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2021 at 6.00 pm.**

Please note that this will be a **remote meeting** – Members to access the meeting via Microsoft Teams. Members of the press and public may listen to the live stream via the [Council's YouTube channel](#).

A copy of the agenda is attached.

Yours faithfully



Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance

### COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN Councillor V J Bell

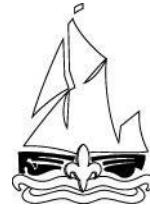
VICE-CHAIRMAN Councillor B S Beale MBE

COUNCILLORS M G Bassenger  
Miss A M Beale  
R G Boyce MBE  
R P F Dewick  
Mrs J L Fleming  
C Mayes  
C P Morley  
C Morris

Please note: Electronic copies of this agenda and its related papers  
are available via the Council's website [www.maldon.gov.uk](http://www.maldon.gov.uk).

## **Maldon District Council's Strategic Themes**

- Front line services retained;
- Best value procurement and project management ensured;
- Customers' expectations exceeded;
- Customer access through technology promoted;
- An open and transparent organisation;
- Fair funding proactively sought;
- Outcome led engagement and smart partnering;
- Continuing to work sustainably;
- Resilience and autonomy maintained;
- Increased income through commercialisation;
- Current Local Development Plan reviewed;
- Preparation for the next Local Development Plan period;
- A clean and tidy District;
- Reduced household waste;
- Our open spaces maintained for the enjoyment of all;
- Improved air quality;
- Partnership working to protect our countryside and coastline;
- Sound and tested environmentally friendly initiatives delivered;
- A five-year housing land supply maintained;
- Strategic sites delivered in accordance with the Local Development Plan brought forward;
- Affordable housing targets in the Local Development Plan achieved;
- Section 106 planning agreements are effectively discharged;
- Partnerships are developed to maintain coastal defences;
- Improved access to Superfast Broadband across the District;
- Working with communities and partners to support our health and wellbeing priorities: obesity, mental health, social isolation and loneliness, and older people's health;
- Partnership working to safeguard vulnerable adults, children and families;
- Effective engagement to support strong and resilient communities;
- Delivery of strategic employment sites in accordance with the Local Development Plan;
- Partnership working to provide an Enterprise Centre;
- Rural business and diversification supported;
- Improved access to Superfast Broadband across the District;
- Tourism supported and encouraged;
- Efficient and effective engagement with businesses.



**AGENDA**  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2021**

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1. **Chairman's Notices**
2. **Minutes of the last meeting** (Pages 5 - 8)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3 December 2020 (copy enclosed).

3. **Apologies for Absence**
4. **Public Participation**

To receive the views of members of the public of which prior notification in writing has been received (no later than noon on the Tuesday prior to the day of the meeting).

Should you wish to submit a question please completed the online form at [www.maldon.gov.uk/publicparticipation](http://www.maldon.gov.uk/publicparticipation).

5. **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).

6. **Report of the Working Group on Requested Scrutiny Items** (Pages 9 - 16)

To consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Working Group, (copy enclosed).

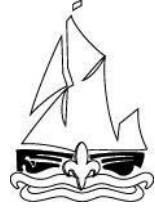
7. **Any other items of business that the Chairman of the Committee decides are urgent**

**NOTICES**

**Sound Recording of Meeting**

Please note that the Council will be recording and publishing on the Council's website any part of this meeting held in open session. At the start of the meeting an announcement will be made about the recording.

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**MINUTES of  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
3 DECEMBER 2020**

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**PRESENT**

Chairman	Councillor V J Bell
Vice-Chairman	Councillor B S Beale MBE
Councillors	M G Bassenger, C Mayes, C P Morley and C Morris
In Attendance	Councillors M S Heard, A L Hull and N J Skeens

**125. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the remote meeting, held under new regulations which came into effect on 4 April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. She took Members through some general housekeeping issues, together with the etiquette for the meeting and then asked Officers present to introduce themselves.

This was followed by a roll call of all Members present.

**126. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 October 2020 be approved and confirmed.

**127. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R P F Dewick and Mrs J L Fleming.

**128. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**129. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was none.

## **130. WORKING GROUP OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered the report of the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager to establish an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group (the Working Group).

The Chairman introduced the report and deferred to the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager (PPG) to go through the detail.

The PPG Manager informed the Committee that the report dealt with appointing to the working group who were responsible for:

- Reviewing scrutiny items put forward by Members as to their validity for the Committee Workplan, and reporting back to Committee with recommendations where relevant;
- Reviewing watching brief items and reporting back to Committee where relevant;
- Supporting the planning of overview and scrutiny work.

She reminded Members that the committee agreed to these terms of reference for the working group at the previous meeting on 15 October 2020. Furthermore, although working groups are not politically balanced, a request was made after the terms were agreed to make it so. She then drew Members' attention to section 3.4 of the report should members wish to appoint in this way.

The Chairman moved the recommendation in the report and this was seconded.

It was then noted that given attendance levels it was not possible to appoint in a politically balanced way. Councillor Morris proposed that the Working Group be appointed in a non-politically balanced manner. This was seconded by Councillor Mayes. The Chairman put the proposal to the Committee and it was agreed by assent.

The Chairman nominated Councillor Mayes to the Working Group and this was seconded.

Councillor Mayes nominated Councillor Bell to the position of Chairman of the Working Group. This was seconded.

The Chairman nominated Councillor Morris, and this was seconded.

Councillor Mayes nominated Councillor Morley, and this was seconded.

The Chairman then put all the aforementioned nominations to the Committee and they were agreed by assent.

**RESOLVED** that the Working Group appointments were agreed as follows:

Councillor V J Bell – Chairman  
Councillor C Mayes  
Councillor C P Morley  
Councillor C Morris

### **131. UPDATE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCESS IMPLEMENTATION**

The Committee considered the report of the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager that updated Members on process implementation and sought feedback that would help make further improvements.

The Chairman introduced the report and deferred to the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager (PPG) to go through the detail.

The PPG Manager informed the Committee that the report provided an update on the implementation of the working process agreed at the 15 October 2020 Committee. Following agreement of the Overview and Scrutiny process and mechanism at that Committee meeting, an online form had been created and circulated to Members should they feel they have an item for Overview and Scrutiny. To date no submissions had been received.

She advised that preparation for the first working group meeting had taken place, as the Working Group would need to meet shortly after this Committee to allow for report deadlines. The intention was that the working group meetings would then provide a standing item report to be reviewed at the Committee meeting. She welcomed suggestions for moving forwards.

The Chairman moved the recommendation in the report that Members review and feedback on the information provided. This was seconded.

In response to questions raised regarding the scrutiny submission and approval process the PPG Manager responded as follows:

- that the online form would be returned via the online link to the PPG Manager who would ensure it was submitted to the Working Group for review and approval;
- that all Members' suggestions would be put forward to the Working Group irrespective of how they were received, through the form or by email etc.;
- that a response system was built into the process to advise Members whether their item was approved to be considered by the Committee or not;
- that there were no time limits on the process, that the schedule of meetings for the Working Group would be driven by the scrutiny submissions.

The Chairman reassured Members that one of the tasks of the Working Group was to ensure that this process was widely publicised and given the highest possible profile.

The Chairman put the recommendation to the Committee and it was agreed by assent.

**RESOLVED** that Members reviewed and feedback on the information provided.

## **132. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON LIAISON COMMITTEES**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance that reminded Members of the existing representatives on Liaison Committees and the new appointment to be made for the remainder of the municipal year, to May 2021.

The Chairman introduced the report and deferred to the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager (PPG) to present.

The PPG Manager advised that there was one seat available on the Health, Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Essex County Council and that the report sought an appointment. She informed Members that although this was previously appointed to the Chairman, any committee member could be appointed to this seat.

The Chairman moved the recommendation in the report and this was seconded. She then called for nominations.

Councillor Mayes proposed that Councillor B S Beale be appointed to this Committee and this was duly seconded.

The Chairman put the proposal to the Committee and it was agreed by assent.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor B S Beale be appointed to the Health, Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Essex County Council.

## **133. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There being no further items of business the Chairman thanked all in attendance for their contributions and closed the meeting at 6.36 pm.

V J BELL  
CHAIRMAN



**REPORT of  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

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**to  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
21 JANUARY 2021**

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON REQUESTED SCRUTINY ITEMS**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Committee on Working Group discussions and make recommendations to build the Committee's workplan of scrutiny items.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the report of the Working Group activity be received and reviewed and assurance that the process for Overview and Scrutiny is effective, be confirmed, making recommendations where it is not;
- (ii) That the recommended scrutiny items and their timetable set out at paragraph 3.3 below, and additionally in **APPENDICES A** and **B** be adopted.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The newly appointed Working Group met on 8 December 2020 to:
- review the current process for Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) items and discuss promoting this wider;
  - review the current member form and any submissions (of which there was one);
  - review the Transformation timeline information and discuss potential workplan items associated with this.
- 3.2 The Working Group discussed ways to raise awareness of the new process and reporting form to all Members, and agreed on the following:
- Issuing regular links and reminders to the form to Members;
  - Requesting Officers to add a document with the overview and scrutiny process and a link to the form on Modern.Gov;
  - Reminding Members of the new process at Political Group meetings;
  - Asking the Leader of the Council / Chairman of the Council to officially launch/ announce the process at a Council meeting.

- 3.3 The Working Group reviewed the information on two potential scrutiny items and would like to put forward the following:

***Item 1 – further to discussion at previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings***

**Transformation – learning from what we have done (APPENDIX A)**

Did we achieve Outcomes of Transformation? Both high level and the finer detail.

Resident and customer experience, and Council reputation- what is the effect of Transformation?

Lead officer: Cheryl Hughes

Expected delivery time: 12 weeks

***Item 2- upon consideration of a Member form which had been submitted 08/12***

**A review of the Debt collection process and policy and the impact on residents (APPENDIX B)**

A review of to what extent bailiff and Attachment of Earnings are used, consideration of whether we be using bailiffs? What systems do we have in place to check vulnerability before we send debt to the Bailiffs?

Lead officer: Stuart Jennings

Expected delivery time: 12 weeks

- 3.4 If the Committee approves the scrutiny items listed in paragraph 3.3 above, the lead Officer will draw up full terms and draft work, engaging with the working group of the Committee throughout their investigation. A full report and findings will be brought back to the Committee for review.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The information set out is provided to update the Committee on the recent Working Group meeting and recommend items for the Scrutiny Workplan that have been identified as a result.

#### **5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES**

- 5.1 The challenge and work of overview and scrutiny can help assure the organisation that we are working to our Strategic Themes.

#### **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Good scrutiny will provide assurance that our processes are effective for our customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – Good scrutiny will provide assurance that we are working in a fair and equal way.

- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Good scrutiny and processes help to minimise organisational risk.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The investigations are not expected to incur any additional costs.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The investigations will be carried out by existing officer resource.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Not Applicable (NA).
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** –NA.

Background Papers: None

Enquiries to: Cheryl Hughes, Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager.

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<b>Overview and Scrutiny item: initiation document</b>	
<b>Name of item</b> Transformation – Learning from what we have done	<b>Lead officer</b> Cheryl Hughes
<b>Brief description of item</b> A review of to what extent the Transformation objectives were achieved, and the wider impacts of the Transformation.	<b>Lead member</b> Councillor Vanessa Bell
<b>Which of O&amp;S remit item links to</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters involving the review or scrutiny of decisions made or actions taken</li> <li>• Matters relating to Corporate risk</li> <li>• Matters affecting the Council's area or the inhabitants of the area, including the draft budget</li> </ul>	<b>Officers already approached?</b> Yes  <b>Service area(s) covered?</b> Corporate
<b>Questions to address in the scrutiny item</b> Did we achieve Outcomes of Transformation? Both high level and the finer detail?  For resident and customer experience, and Council reputation- what is the effect of Transformation?	<b>Outcomes for scrutiny item</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A review of the results against the original outcomes identified for transformation</li> <li>• Compilation of customer feedback and insight linking to the reputational effects</li> <li>• Detailed picture of customer experience and how this has changed through Transformation</li> </ul>
<b>Expected outputs to committee (e.g.) written report, verbal update</b> Written report	<b>Expected timetable for item</b> 12 weeks

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<b>Overview and Scrutiny item: initiation document</b>	
<b>Name of item</b> Debt Collection process	<b>Lead officer</b> Stuart Jennings
<b>Brief description of item</b> A review of the Debt collection process and policy and the impact on residents	<b>Lead member</b> Councillor Mayes
<b>Which of O&amp;S remit item links to</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of reference – item 9</li> <li>• Matters relating to the review of Corporate Policy</li> <li>• Matters involving the review or scrutiny of decisions made or actions taken</li> <li>• Matters affecting the Council's area or the inhabitants of the area, including the draft budget</li> </ul>	<b>Officers already approached?</b> Yes  <b>Service area(s) covered?</b> Finance Service delivery- Revenues and Benefits
<b>Questions to address in the scrutiny item</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a policy and is it being followed – processes involved.</li> <li>2. Is this for Council Tax/Business Rates collection or other debts.</li> <li>3. To what extent are bailiffs / Attachment of Earnings (AoE) being used, and how successful is this in terms of debt recovery.</li> <li>4. What revenue from enforcement has been collected by way of bailiffs and 'AoE'?</li> <li>5. How and to what extent are vulnerability checks being made.</li> <li>6. Is the Maldon District Council (MDC) approach consistent with general local authority practice.</li> <li>7. How and to what extent are the processes undertaken and practices being followed to the detriment of local residents.</li> </ol>	<b>Outcomes for scrutiny item</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To identify whether the policy requires review and revision (NB: due for ordinary review later in 2021).</li> <li>2. To identify whether the policy require to be supplemented with more detailed guidance.</li> <li>3. To identify possible changes to existing processes and practices designed to be less detrimental to local residents.</li> <li>4. Identify and agree recommendations to be made to the relevant Committee and/or Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).</li> </ol>
<b>Expected outputs to committee (e.g.) written report, verbal update</b> Written report to cover the questions identified	<b>Expected timetable for item</b> 16 weeks

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