



**MINUTES of
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
16 MARCH 2023**

PRESENT

Chairman	Councillor S White
Councillors	Mrs P A Channer, A S Fluker, K M H Lagan, N G F Shaughnessy, R H Siddal, C Swain and Mrs M E Thompson
Substitutes	Councillor S J N Morgan

643. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through some general housekeeping arrangements for the meeting.

644. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION NOTICE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M F L Durham CC and W Stamp. In accordance with notice duly given Councillor S J N Morgan was attending as a substitute for Councillor Durham.

645. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned at 19:32 to resolve a technical problem with sound on the YouTube live stream.

646. RESUMPTION OF BUSINESS IN OPEN SESSION

RESOLVED that the meeting resumes at 19:39 in open session.

647. MINUTES - 26 JANUARY 2023

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 January 2023 be approved and confirmed.

648. MINUTES - 9 FEBRUARY 2023 (CONTINUATION OF MEETING ON 26 JANUARY 2023)

In response to a question regarding whether the Senior Specialist – Legal had been present at this meeting it was confirmed that she had been in attendance.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 February 2023 be approved and confirmed.

649. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were none.

650. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests had been received.

651. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN FOR 2023 / 24

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery updating Members on the Council's annual Climate Action Plan for 2023 / 24.

Members were reminded that following the Council declaring a Climate Emergency in February 2021 a Climate Action Strategy (CAS) had been adopted (December 2021) and contained 60 actions along with five pledges which were outlined in the report. In addition, the Council had committed to producing an annual Climate Action Plan (CAP) and Appendix 1 to the report set out the CAP for 2023 / 24 identifying each of the priority actions aligned to each of the CAS Pledges. The CAP would inform, help enable and update the Maldon District community about the Council's work on the climate emergency.

The Committee congratulated and thanked the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager and her team for the report and work undertaken.

A lengthy debate ensued, during which a number of questions were raised and to which the Strategy, Policy and Communications Manager provided detailed responses including:

- The CAP related to the next 12 months and would be an annual Plan delivering against what the Council was hoping to achieve over that period. However, in addition to the short-term actions identified Officers had included details of medium- and long-term actions.
- Training had been provided to staff and Members and a number of changes to current procedures within the Council had been amended to ensure consideration was always given to the CAS.
- The Officer outlined the budget approved in relation to the CAP and how these monies provided an Officer resource as well as enabling the Council to work with community groups and partners to engage and promote the work. The CAP set out those organisations the Council was working with to progress not only the work of the CAS but also ensure that the District received any funding allocated and was included in the roll out of any wider initiatives.
- The Strategy Theme Lead worked with national cycle paths to ensure there was connectivity across the district and beyond. The Council was working with Essex County Council (ECC) in its work to create a Strategic Transport Strategy. Emissions along with 20 mile per hour zones would feed into this work and marking of cycle paths on roads had been highlighted by Officers but likely to be on a scheme-by-scheme basis.

- The Director of Service Delivery confirmed that the Council's Countryside and Coast Officer had started this week and one of their objectives would be to deliver against the CAP as well as completing other work such as the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- The Council was working with housing partners to ensure they had a decarbonisation plan, applying for decarbonisation funds and were improving the fabric of their housing stock both in terms of making housing sound but also sustainable in the future. In respect of retrofitting, the Council was expecting the providers to have clear plans as to how this would be done. In addition, work with ECC to ensure skills and training for such work to be done locally was ongoing.
- Although the Council was not promoting veganism, it was providing residents with a choice and the skills to be involved in different initiatives along with community projects, such as grow your own, to give better health outcomes. This work was carried out through the Council's health and wellbeing work and One Maldon ensuring that any climate action fed into such initiatives.

In addition to the additional information provided by the Officer, a number of other comments were raised by Members, these included:

- Encouraging Parish Councils to access free initiatives which were available from ECC.
- With regards to procurement the Council should be encouraging contractors to use biofuels or other greener options and looking at how they are going to operate.
- Air quality, specifically in relation to Market Hill, Maldon and Latchingdon should be addressed.
- The Council should look to introduce a policy to encourage people to have electric or dual fuel cars and install car chargers.
- Concern regarding how some statements within the CAP may conflict with other Council policies and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- The Council should prosecute people who drop litter, fly tip etc.
- Consideration should be given to removing co-mingled waste collections for apartment blocks.
- Farmers had recently lost European Union (EU) Grants and it was questioned whether they would sign up to sustainable farming without further support and investment. Although noted that a large number were environmentally friendly. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs should be in charge of the use of chemicals, particularly in relation to sustainable farming.
- In respect of pledging less waste, it was noted Maldon was the best Local Authority for waste collection in Essex.
- Rather than deterring car use in Maldon Town Centre, the Council should look at ways of encouraging low emission cars into Council Car parks.
- The Plan should be outcome based and have local Maldon outcomes not necessarily Essex wide ones.

The Chairman proposed an amendment to the recommendation, that all the thoughts and responses from this Committee were built into the quarterly performance report. This was duly seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Council's annual Climate Change Action Plan (CAP) for 2023 / 24 be noted;
- (ii) that the CAP be monitored quarterly via quarterly performance reports to the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee and these reports include the thoughts and comments raised at this meeting by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

652. DELIVERING THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027 PRIORITY - 'HELPING THE ECONOMY TO THRIVE'

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Strategy, Performance and Governance updating Members regarding the ongoing and new activity to deliver the Corporate Priority 'Helping the Economy to Thrive'.

The report set out the four areas of achievement under this corporate priority and provided an update from Officers on work being undertaken under each area. This included:

- Launch of the District's Investment Prospectus, Local Maldon District (LMD). This would provide the Council with a coordinated approach to supporting inward investment and maximising business growth.
- The Council had supported the formation of the Maldon District Tourism Group (T23) which would assist in the development of a new Tourism Framework. This Framework would provide clarity on the core tourism functions of the Council.
- How the Supporting Local Business Programme would build on the most successful parts of the former Sense of Place Business Network.
- How the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) presented significant opportunity for the Council to support the District's economy and businesses. Together with the Rural Community Council of Essex the council would be proposing a partnership bid to the Magnox Socio-Economic fund to support and enhance the delivery.
- As part of the UKSPF's year one Investment Plan the Maldon Market recovery commission would be exploring options to invest in a new and improved Maldon Town market.

In response to a question regarding an indoor market for Maldon, the Strategy Theme Lead: Prosperity advised that although an attractive idea there would be significant revenue costs, and this was not currently with the budget allocation Officers were working with.

A lengthy debate ensued and in response to comments and questions the Strategy Theme Lead: Prosperity provided the following information to Members:

- The current location of the Maldon market was the location considered most viable by consultants following a report undertaken last year. The Council was exploring options for a market however no funds were being committed at this time.
- £25,000 had been allocated into an investment plan for the shared prosperity fund but this would only be used if, following a soft market engagement exercise, viable business cases came forward. The Chairman requested that

before any monies were spent on any feasibility study that this should come back to this Committee as her opinion was that any company wishing to run the market should be able to run their own feasibility study.

- The Council actively promoted the area for film presentation and were working with the newly establish Essex County Council film office to do this. In addition, the Council had a specific page on the visit Maldon District website regarding filming in the District.
- Member briefings had been arranged, starting the following week, covering three areas (as detailed in the recommendation set out in the report) and a reminder would be sent out to Members. It was confirmed that the session recordings and materials would be shared with Members and further time offered if requested.

Councillor A S Fluker proposed that the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed. The Chairman moved the recommendations, and these were duly agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) That Members note further Member briefings will be offered regarding:
 - Supporting local businesses and inward investment;
 - Tourism and the visitor economy;
 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) funded activity.
- (ii) that Members note the Council's Maldon District Tourism Group (T23) has commenced;
- (iii) That the delivery of the UKSPF year one Maldon Market recovery project and the partnership with Rural Community Council of Essex to deliver the REPF be endorsed.

653. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

In response to a Point of Order the Chairman advised the Committee that Agenda Item 11 – Burnham-on-Crouch – Long Lease Agreement had been withdrawn from this agenda.

RESOLVED 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 Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

654. LEGAL ACTION AND DEBT RECOVERY

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources seeking Members' agreement of recovery action for licence fees.

The report detailed background information regarding a licence and agreements in place regarding payment of the licensing fee. The Senior Specialist – Legal provided Members with a detailed update regarding the licence, legal position and payment options.

In response to a question regarding boats having insurance the Officer advised she did not have this information and would have to ask the relevant Officers to respond to Members.

Following further discussion the Chairman put the recommendations as set out in the report. This was duly seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee, to enter into negotiations to agree a monthly licence fee as set out in the report;
- (ii) That if no agreement can be made as set out in (i) above any outstanding payment is written off as unrecoverable, in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.

655. BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH - LONG LEASE AGREEMENT

The Chairman provided the Committee with further detail regarding the withdrawal of this report.

In response to a discussion regarding this report coming back to the Committee as the lease had only recently been agreed the Chairman proposed that the matter be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This was duly seconded. Councillor A S Fluker proposed that the Monitoring Officer be asked to provide a report regarding this matter. This proposal was duly seconded. The Chairman then put each of the proposals to the Committee but following a separate vote being taken on each they were declared lost.

There being no other items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.01 pm.

S WHITE
CHAIRMAN