



Essex County Council

## Corporate Policy and Scrutiny

11:30	Tuesday, 26 May 2020	Online Meeting
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The meeting will be open to the public via telephone or online. Details about this are on the next page. Please do not attend County Hall as no one connected with this meeting will be present.

**For information about the meeting please ask for:**

Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer, or  
Peter Randall, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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### Essex County Council and Committees Information

All Council and Committee Meetings are held in public unless the business is exempt in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972.

In accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, this meeting will be held via online video conferencing.

Members of the public will be able to view and listen to any items on the agenda unless the Committee has resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting as a result of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

#### How to take part in/watch the meeting:

**Participants:** (Officers and Members) will have received a personal email with their login details for the meeting. Contact the Democratic Services Officer if you have not received your login.

## **Members of the public:**

### **Online:**

You will need the Zoom app which is available from your app store or from [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us). The details you need to join the meeting will be published as a Meeting Document, on the Meeting Details page of the Council's website (scroll to the bottom of the page) at least two days prior to the meeting date. The document will be called "Public Access Details".

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## **Accessing Documents**

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Please note that an audio recording may be made of the meeting – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

		<b>Pages</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Membership, Apologies and Declarations of Interest</b>	<b>5 - 6</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> To note and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 February 2020.	<b>7 - 12</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Questions from the public</b> A period of up to 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make representations on any item on the agenda for this meeting. No statement or question shall be longer than three minutes and speakers will be timed.	
<b>4</b>	<b>Covid-19 Finance Update</b> Committee to receive report CPSC/03/20, alongside a presentation from Cllr Chris Whitbread, Cabinet Member for Finance and Stephanie Mitchener, Director of Finance and Engagement.	<b>13 - 20</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Work Programme - May 2020</b>	<b>21 - 22</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b> To note that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 30 June 2020 at 10.30am.	
<b>7</b>	<b>Urgent Business</b> To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.	
<b>8</b>	<b>Urgent Exempt Business</b> To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.	

## **Exempt Items**

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

**That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.**

**Committee:** Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee

**Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

**Recommendations:**

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

**Membership**

(Quorum 4)

Councillor M Mackrory (Chairman)  
Councillor J Abbott  
Councillor M Buckley  
Councillor G Butland  
Councillor M Garnett  
Councillor M Hardware  
Councillor S Lissimore  
Councillor M Maddocks  
Councillor V Metcalfe (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor J Moran  
Councillor M Platt  
Councillor R Pratt  
Councillor A Sheldon  
Councillor A Turrell  
Councillor J Young (Vice-Chairman)



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**Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held at 11.30am in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Tuesday, 25 February 2020**

**Present:**

*County Councillors:*

M Mackrory (Chairman)

M Buckley

I Grundy (substitute)

M Hardware (up to 12pm)

M Maddocks

V Metcalfe (Vice Chairman)

J Moran

R Pratt

A Sheldon

M Steptoe

J Young (Vice Chairman)

**1 Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**

The report on Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations was received and noted. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Garnett (for whom Councillor Grundy substituted).

**2. Minutes**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Questions from the public**

There were no questions from the public.

**4. Procurement overview and update**

The Committee considered report CSPC/03/20 comprising an update on ECC procurement practices.

The following joined the meeting to introduce the item and respond to questioning:

County Councillor Dick Madden (substituting for Cllr David Finch), Cabinet member for performance, business planning and partnerships.

Laura Lee, Head of Procurement (Place and Corporate)

Steve Ede, Head of Procurement (People)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Madden introduced the item and passed over to officers for the presentation. The full presentation can be found here. Key points included:

- (i) ECC manages 306 contracts with c1300 suppliers.
- (ii) The average value of a managed contract is £5.7m with a total cumulative value of £5.8bn.
- (iii) ECC is the only County Council endorsed by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS).
- (iv) ECC operates through the procurement/commission cycle model:
  - a. Step 1: Reviewing service – evaluating contract performance and category planning to help inform commissioning strategy.
  - b. Step 2: Going to market - carrying out sourcing/extension activity.
  - c. Step 3: Awarding contract – transition to new service.
  - d. Step 4: Managing contract - contract management and supplier relationship management throughout the lifetime of the contract.
  - e. Step 5: Repeat process from Step 1.
- (v) ECC has adopted a new 'best practice' approach based on work carried out through the recent Ringway Jacobs contract extension process. This includes a greater focus on Benchmarking, market insight, peer insight, options appraisal and internal independent scrutiny.
- (vi) Horizon scanning for new procurement exercises – members were invited to look over upcoming procurement exercises in Place, corporate and Adult Social Care.

During subsequent discussion the following was highlighted and/or noted:

- (i) The use of short term/one-off purchasing. It was noted that ECC has always, and will continue to, prioritise long term sustainable contracts for all of the good and services we use. This includes stationary, catering etc.
- (ii) Auditing procedure for smaller contracts under £100,000 in value. It was explained by officers that the central contracts management team would only have an overview role on these circumstances, with management taking place in the service itself.
- (iii) ECCs moral responsibility to ethically source providers, particularly in relation to paying UK taxes. Officers explained that ECC would carry out certain checks (convictions, compliance with the law etc.). Monthly checks are also carried out on all of ECC providers regarding their financial viability - to mitigate financial risk on the part of the authority. Specific checks around the amount of UK tax accompany pays would not be carried out.



- (iv) Rewarding social value in procurement exercises. Officers explained that ECC has in the past largely defined 'social value' as the number of apprentices a provider allows for. The formula for determining a successful procurement bid has been split 70 % according to price and 30% according to quality. In the future, ECC will be looking to think a little more reflexively about how procurement exercises define 'social value' – it is hoped that a future iteration of the procurement framework will reflect this.
- (v) Contract extensions. Members of the committee raised concerns around the timing of contract extension exercises. It was remarked that by the time contract extension processes start taking place, it is often too late to begin a large scale reprocurement exercise, should it be recommended. Members recalled findings from the RJ contract extension task and finish report as a prime example of this.
- (vi) The use of experts to properly inform reprocurement exercises. Members questioned whether or not ECC is reluctant to call in external expertise to ensure that procurement and reprocurement exercises are suitably informed and comprehensive – relying instead on internal expertise. Officers advised that external expert guidance was taken where necessary, but usually only when the service provided is perhaps too technical.
- (vii) The upcoming TCS Fujitsu contract. It was agreed by members that this should come to corporate scrutiny following cabinet in March.

Conclusion:

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their update.

The following actions were **agreed** to be scheduled into the Work Programme:

- (i) An item on the Fujitsu TCS contract to be added to the work programme for the April or May meeting of CPSC.
  - QUESTION: How does ECC adequately assess the moral quality of organisations we procure with? Do we vet companies that enter bids to ensure that they are paying correct UK tax?
  - QUESTION: Are we adequately assured that we have the subject matter and technical expertise in house to assure the quality of contracts placed?

## 5. Commercial Property Investment Strategy

The Committee considered report CSPC/04/20 comprising an update on the ECC commercial investment property portfolio.

The following remained from the previous agenda item to introduce and support the discussion.

County Councillor Dick Madden, (substituting for Cllr David Finch), Cabinet member for performance, business planning and partnerships.

The following joined the panel to support the agenda item.

James Cook, Head of Finance, Major Programmes, Finance & Procurement.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Madden introduced the item and asked the officer to present. Key points included:

- (i) Previous update to CPSC in November.
- (ii) Original ambition £150m to be invested in commercial property.
- (iii) So far £33m had been invested in commercial property over 3 locations. The portfolio was balanced between retail, light industrial and office.
- (iv) These generate £1.8m p.a. gross rent
- (v) Engagement of external organisation to provide advice on future investment direction.
- (vi) Investment paused in 2019 due to uncertainty and changes in central legislation surrounding local government borrowing. The investment strategy is now pushing forward, with additional funds added from the sale of Essex Education services in 2019.
- (vii) There was an appetite to look within Essex to invest. This would allow the council to invest according to the councils economic development priorities.

The following were highlighted, and/or noted in subsequent discussion:

- (i) Officers had provided gross yield, but were unsure about the total net yield and the cost of external advisory consultants. The Cabinet Member assured members that these details would be provide outside of the meeting.
- (ii) Sustainability of yield. Members raised concerns around the sectors invested in, particularly the sustainability of retail income. Officers assured members that there was great confidence that ECC is managing the portfolio appropriately – with ongoing risk analysis to minimise falls in revenue. The portfolio itself is very diverse, including multiple sectors and our own housing portfolio.
- (iii) External advice. Members asked for assurances that officers were certain that the current advice being received was adequate to steer a future investment strategy. Officers assured members that the external consultants were providing advice only on the investment strategy itself, not specific investments.
- (iv) Risk sharing with consultants. Members were informed that there is no risk share in the contract itself. If, however, ECC was to

- receive bad advice on any matter then the organisation would carefully explore options to respond.
- (v) Social value of investments. Members enquired as to how, if at all, ECC measures the local community wealth building impact of commercial investment and factors this into eventual investment decisions.
  - (vi) Members remarked that, in districts where investment strategies had been successful, it's been through maintaining close relationships with district partners to ensure that each others interests are secure.

### Conclusion

The Chairman thanked officers for their contributions.

The following questions were agreed by the committee to pass on to the Leader for response:

- when the time comes to re-evaluate the consultancy we receive from our advisors, will we be looking at Essex based companies who might know more about local investments and will the size of the company impact this?
- What is the net yield of our commercial investments?

## **6. Work Programme**

The Committee considered and noted report CPSC/05/20 comprising the current work programme for the Committee.

Members discussed the potential to explore a joint working group with the place services committee to provide further scrutiny to the Ringway Jacobs highways contract.

Members discussed the potential to add an item on devolution to the work programme. Officers agreed to take this away as an action and explore when this might be most appropriate.

## **7. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be on Tuesday 31 March at 10.30am.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 13.15pm.

**Chairman**



<b>Report title: COVID-19 Finance Update</b>	
<b>Report to:</b> Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
<b>Report author:</b> Stephanie Mitchener, Director of Finance	
<b>Date:</b> 26 May 2020	<b>For:</b> Discussion
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Tina French, Head of Strategic Finance and Insight Telephone: 03330 138461 Email: <a href="mailto:tina.french@essex.gov.uk">tina.french@essex.gov.uk</a>	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide a briefing on the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 None – the report is for information and discussion.
- 2.2 To ask the Committee if there are further questions or points, they would like us to raise with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The COVID outbreak spread to the UK in late January 2020. On 11 March, the outbreak was declared a pandemic. On 20 March, the government shut all schools, restaurants, pubs, indoor entertainment venues and leisure centres, with some exceptions. On 23 March, the government imposed a lockdown on the whole population, banning all "non-essential" travel and contact with people outside one's home (including family and partners), and shutting almost all businesses, venues, facilities, amenities and places of worship. People were told to social distance when in public.
- 3.2 The Council had to act quickly.
- 3.3 The number of COVID-19 cases has grown significantly since early March. The frail and elderly are the most vulnerable. The health and care sectors are significantly affected and face high demand and pressures on workforce due to COVID-19 related absences.
- 3.4 However the pandemic has affected other Council services as facilities have had to close, which includes, but is not limited to Libraries, Country Parks and Recycling Centres.

3.5 There was significant and urgent work undertaken across the council and social care providers to ensure an effective response in order to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of people in Essex and our most vulnerable residents
- Support providers suffering financial hardship as a result of COVID-19
- Support providers within the social care market to remain sustainable at a time when they may be under significant pressure in order to ensure that care staff can continue to work and do not suffer financial hardship as a result of COVID-19
- Maintain statutory duties.

It was also vitally important that we sustain providers of social care to make sure that they can continue to operate in the face of demand and workforce pressures. The council took firm and swift action to protect the social care provider market.

3.6 The Government has made several announcements in response to the pandemic. A summary is attached below along with some Frequently Asked Questions.



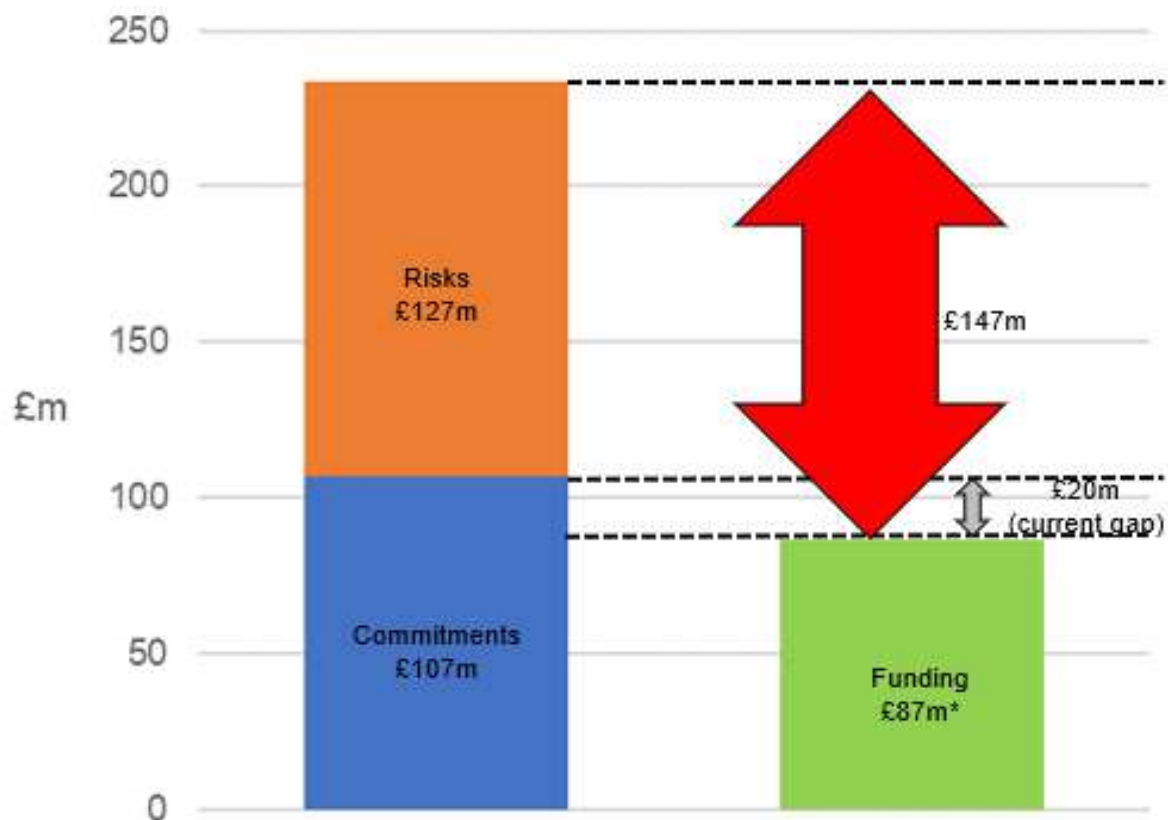
LA FAQs .docx

#### **4. Estimated costs and income pressures**

4.1 At the time of writing, the Council has approved decisions totalling £74.5m. An overview of these decisions is shown at Appendix 1. The majority of decisions relate to Adult Social Care. These decisions have been temporarily financed from the Emergency Reserve and the General Balance pending the receipt of emergency funding from the government (the impact on reserves is set out in section 8).

4.2 There are also other future cost pressures or potential income losses, for which the Council has not yet taken decisions or are currently in the governance process. These include Operation Shield, additional children's social care costs, loss of income (notably from closed services) and anticipated non-delivery of savings where capacity has been redirected to focus on the pandemic. The latter is notably demonstrable in Adults Social Care which has an ambitious change and savings programme approved by Cabinet in February 2020 which will need re-appraising in light of the pandemic response. These other pressures are estimated at £32.2m, which equates to a total value of £106.7m. This is before any underlying losses on council tax and rates (which technically do not hit the revenue account until 2021/22 due to how tax is managed in the Collection Fund) but in financial strategy terms is critical to making decisions about our spending commitments given this is key to sustainability.

4.3 Below sets out the estimated cost of the first infection wave and the potential funding available.



\* Includes an assumed £23m from CCGs

- 4.4 To date the Council has received £37.4m of additional funding from central government and is due to receive a further £26.2m from the second tranche of funding, therefore a total of £63.6m. This leaves an estimated shortfall of £43.1m. This could reduce to £20.1m, if we successfully claim a share of the NHS £1.3bn allocated to Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs); currently modelling shows that we have expenditure of £23m which we consider eligible to claim against the NHS funding. However, until this is formally agreed it remains at risk.
- 4.5 Discussions are underway with CCGs and we are close to agreeing a set of principles for how we work together, in relation to funding and decision making.
- 4.6 Within the position, there is forecast lost income of £14m, of which £5m relates to fees and charges. The remaining £9m relates to adult social care client income (£5.7m) and other income (£3.3m). In addition, there is further risk of £4.2m on income from fees and charges, particularly in relation to place, education and registrars. Also, some of these services have ongoing staff commitments, therefore we are looking to furlough staff where appropriate (see 4.7 below).
- 4.7 The Council has considered the furloughing of staff, where that staffing expenditure is funded by fees and charges; i.e. there is no further recourse to

funding. This work is underway but it is estimated that the likely monthly claim will be circa £300,000, which will offset some of the fees and charges lost income.

- 4.8 The committed expenditure position includes costs for supporting Operation Shield. These are estimated so far at £750,000. This reflects the costs associated with mobilising provisions supplied by central government for those in Category A and, also Category B as well as the creation and operation of Essex Welfare Service (EWS) which includes; staffing, technology and volunteering costs to assist those who are unable to access support. A Cabinet Member Action is being prepared, noting that there may be the potential of mutual aid which could reduce this value.
- 4.9 The Council is required to complete monthly returns to Government on estimated cost and income pressures.

## 5. Risks and Opportunities

- 5.1 In addition to the costs and pressures set out above, there are also a number of financial risks. We estimate that our current risk exposure could be **£128m** (total £234m including the costs and pressures set out above). Below are some areas where we are likely to see significant risk and potentially costs or loss of income:
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies** will present additional future costs; it is not simply whether we need to provide or fund PPE for the care market, but given recent government guidance we are also assessing what the PPE need is for Essex directly employed staff, community schools and other supply chain areas.
  - **Adult Social Care Self-funders**, a letter from the MHCLG suggests local authorities should support the market more broadly where they have private arrangements with self-funders. We await further guidance from government, but direct intervention would be financially unsustainable with the current funding availability.
  - **Ongoing impact for both adults and children social care** - after the pandemic the health service will go back to normal but adult social care will still be feeling the impact as people will remain in residential beds and in the care system. There will be impacts on chronic health conditions both directly and indirectly as a result of the pandemic (e.g. COVID related health issues and impact of deferred care for other conditions). The pandemic will also impact on people's mental health, as well as the economic situation. There are many factors to consider that are social and community based that will take a long time to come through.
  - **NHS may announce the end of the Emergency Period** before the end date of the contractual arrangements we have entered into around block bed provision in particular, and therefore we may not be able to reclaim total costs from the NHS
  - **Future waves** of the pandemic could increase demand due to people starting to present at hospital again, which are likely to require additional funds in the future. The timelines for this are still unknown



- **Tax revenues** are at considerable risk due to the number of new Universal Credit (UC) applicants nationally and the unknown impact of non-payments. To date, the increase in UC applications has not yet flowed into the council tax system, this is being monitored.

There is also a potential opportunity in relation to demand. The decisions made to date are based on a set of demand assumptions in a constantly changing environment, however the actual demand could be lower, therefore reducing potential cost. For example, the predicted amount of beds needed is going down so that may mean we spend less than we originally assumed.

- 5.2 Council Tax take and collection levels remain a key risk. We are in continuing discussions with the Essex district councils on this and other matters. We are working with Pixel Financial Management, commissioned via the County Councils Network, to undertake modelling in this area. If the Council Tax collection rate reduced by 1% for the full year this would equate to circa £7m loss in income to ECC.
- 5.3 At this stage, it is difficult to assess the impact on business rates collection levels due to complexity of the number of reliefs and grants which mean that April's cash collection is not comparable to that of April 2019.
- 5.4 Referral levels in Children's Services remain low as do Domestic Abuse volumes and it is felt that increased demand will be seen once schools return and full access to families is resumed and so the risk remains that pressures could increase through care levels. As an example of future cost, should placements increase by 10% a 6-month pressure could be £3.6m. From discussions with other local authorities their experiences align with Essex where they have not seen an increase in care levels but are however raising the risk that they could in 3 - 6 months' time.
- 5.5 It is anticipated, once schools return, that there could be an increase in volume of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) which may result in an increased cost and so push the High Needs Block within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) into further deficit.
- 5.6 There is risk around developers and other contractors' costs and viability, and the potential impact on our ability to deliver the capital programme. At present this has not manifested in significant changes to the programme, with the construction industry prioritised in the government guidance on return to work, but we will continue to carefully monitor the situation.
- 5.7 The position and risks and opportunities are being continually monitored and will be reported in the monthly internal reporting and quarterly reports to Cabinet.

## **6. Medium Term Impact**

- 6.1 Based on what we know, the majority of the £106.7m commitments are likely to be one-off in nature. This does assume that the transformation pause, which

delays the realisation of planned savings, is a one-off impact. However the risks could impact longer term.

6.2 The Spending Review has been delayed.

6.3 The Government have confirmed that the move to 75% business rates retention and changes to how funding is distributed between councils under the fair funding review will not now go-ahead next year. This means that there will be another 'emergency year' of funding to 2021/22 for Local Government, and we need to prepare our medium-term planning against a backdrop of continued funding uncertainty. Over the coming weeks, we will commence drawing up scenarios for our medium-term modelling.

## **7. Other key financial issues**

7.1 The deadline for the draft accounts for 2019/20 to be produced has been pushed back to 31<sup>st</sup> August, with the deadline for publishing the final audited accounts on 30<sup>th</sup> November. Whilst the extended dates now provide additional flexibility and time to close our accounts for 2019/20, we are still planning to produce the draft accounts by the end of June and to publish our final, audited accounts by the end of September. This recognises the need to draw a line under the 2019/20 financial year as soon as practicably possible, in order to support the ongoing response to COVID-19 and on our subsequent financial recovery. The provisional outturn should be presented to Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> June. The Chief Accountant worked closely with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) to influence and work through the impact of COVID-19 on the revisions to the national accounts closure timetable.

7.2 We are starting to see a reduction in the level of debt we are collecting. We are monitoring on a weekly rather than a monthly basis with the focus on chasing recent rather than old debt.

7.3 There are areas for which the sector is awaiting clarity from MHCLG and Treasury, including:

- What more can be done on council tax and rates support before it recovers to a sustainable footing
- Clarity as to when capital grant funding will be confirmed and received, i.e. HIF & if flexibility will be given on grant conditions (notably timing) given the likely slippage or reprofiling of some capital projects

## **8. Reserves**

8.1 As referred to in 4.1, decisions totalling £74.5m have been approved. These decisions have been temporarily funded from the Emergency Reserve and the General Balance pending the receipt of the additional funding from government.

8.2 This means that the Emergency Reserve has been reduced to under £1m (from £10m). The General Balance now stands at £60.2m after recent decisions on the additional Government funding (FP/681/04/20 and FP/698/05/20).

## 9. Other Government Support

- 9.1 The Government has provided additional support to businesses and residents, including:
- Grants to businesses who are eligible for Small Business Rates Relief and Rural Rates Relief would receive a grant of £3,000, and those businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors with an additional cash grant of up to £25,000 per business (£10,000 for those with a rateable value of under £15,000)
  - Business rate reliefs for retail, hospitality and leisure sectors
  - Business rates holiday for nurseries
  - Loans to businesses, as well as bounce back loans to smaller businesses
  - Hardship fund to provide support to economically vulnerable households, to provide more council tax relief, either through existing council tax support schemes or through complementary reliefs
  - Additional funding for Business Improvement Districts
  - Pledged to spend £76m to support vulnerable children and victims of domestic violence and modern slavery
- 9.2 As at 12<sup>th</sup> May, £240m of grants have been paid to businesses, out of the £342m initial allocation for districts in Essex. This means that 82% of businesses have been paid, which is over the Government's floor target of 80%. The districts have paid all businesses they have had contact with, however with several businesses currently closed, it is proving difficult to obtain bank details for some in order to pay the grant over. We are supporting the districts on communications to increase the number of businesses that can be paid.
- 9.3 On the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, the Government announced an additional 5% uplift to the £12.3bn funding previously announced for the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants Fund (RHLGF), which equates up to £617m. Further guidance will be sent out shortly, as well as specific allocations. As this is a discretionary scheme, this will require formal governance within the districts.
- 9.4 The current focus of District Councils is on the payment to businesses, after this focus will switch to the payments of the hardship fund to qualifying residents.
- 9.5 Districts are not offering blanket payment deferrals on Council Tax, however there has been a small overall increase in non-payments so far, and exceptional requests to change payment plans from 10 to 12 months, but the situation is being monitored.
- 9.6 We are working closely with District Council's Finance Officers to collect data to establish and monitor the overall position on Business Rates and Council Tax. However, it will be difficult to predict the overall impact for the year, and therefore on the Collection Fund until trends become more established.

## Breakdown of decisions made to date relating to the first Wave of COVID-19 Infections

Service Area	£000	Detail
Adult Social Care	18,600	To secure residential care capacity in order to support the timely discharge of people from hospital.
	11,400	To support providers to cope with the anticipated demands placed upon them.
	7,400	To purchase up to 332 beds in care homes which are currently closed/mothballed.
	7,000	To reimburse some of the additional costs incurred by residential and nursing care providers during the 16-week period from 19 March 2020 – 8 July 2020.
	5,550	To secure capacity for those currently using Day Care where centres are closing and to support sustainability of the market during the emergency.
	3,988	To Provide extra equipment supply to support people home from hospital and Support the wider health and social care system by moving to seven-day working for social workers and equipment deliveries.
	2,000	To secure personal protective equipment (PPE).
	1,200	To support our most vulnerable service users with care technology for a maximum period of six months.
Corporate and Customer Services	10,000	To put in place measures relating to the management of additional body storage facilities as a result of COVID-19.
Place Services	2,720	To compensate for anticipated loss of income as a result of the suspension of Highways and Transportation services.
	2,465	To compensate the anticipated loss in income as a result of the suspension of Essex Outdoors service.
	783	To compensate the anticipated loss in income as a result of the temporary closure of County Parks facilities.
	650	To compensate the anticipated loss in income as a result of the temporary suspension of classroom-based learning at Adult Community Learning centres.
	550	To compensate the anticipated loss in income as a result of the temporary closure of Colchester and Chelmsford Park and Rise services.
	173	To compensate the anticipated loss in income as a result of temporary closure of Essex Records Office and suspension of certificates service.
<b>Total Approved Decisions (as at 7<sup>th</sup> May)</b>	<b>74,479</b>	

## CORPORATE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (as at 15 May 2020)

### WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20 – (ADOPTED BY SEPTEMBER 2019 COMMITTEE MEETING)

Approach to topic selection – where can the committee conduct reviews quickly, influence change and make a difference to the residents of Essex

Date/Timing	Issue/Topics	Focus/other comments	Approach	RAG
<b>May 2020</b>				
May 2020	Financial response to Covid-19 pandemic	Members to explore how ECC has responded to the pandemic and work with officers and Cabinet Members to discuss implications moving forward.	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
<b>June 2020</b>				
June 2020	Preliminary outturn report 2019-20	Regular item	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
June 2020	Commercial Investment Strategy	Post financial year-end performance update on the MedTech investment, to facilitate a more general discussion on commercial investment strategy and returns	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
<b>July 2020</b>				
July 2020	Corporate Systems Contract	Members to begin work on scrutinising procurement process for new corporate systems contract.	Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers.	
July 2020	Work Programming session			
<b>August 2020</b>				

<b>**NO MEETING PLANNED**</b>				
<b>Topics identified being pursued</b>				
TBC	Essex Legal Services – update on external charging policy		Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
TBC	Reserves		Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
TBC	ECC's Trading Activities		Presentation by Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
TBC	Brexit		Presentation by the Leader and relevant officers	