

Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee

11:30	Thursday, 23 January 2020	Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
For information about the meeting please ask for:		

For information about the meeting please ask for: Lisa Siggins, Democratic Services Officer Telephone: 033301 34594 Email: democratic.services@essex.gov.uk

		Pages
1	Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest	4 - 4
2	Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2019.	5 - 7
4	Essex Housing Strategy Members to receive report (PSEG/01/20) and a presentation from Councillor Tony Ball , Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Lee Heley, Head of Housing Growth, and Steve Evison, Director, Strategic Commissioning & Policy, and Daniel Baker, Housing Growth Lead.	8 - 16

3 Questions from the public

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.

On arrival, and before the start of the meeting, please register with the Democratic Services Officer.

5 Date of next meeting

To note that the next Committee activity day will be on Thursday, 20th February 2020.

6 Future meeting dates.

To agree at the meeting the future meeting dates for 2020/2021 as contained in report (**PSEG/02/20**).

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7 Urgent Business

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.

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.

8 Urgent Exempt Business

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.

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. If there is exempted business, it will be clearly marked as an Exempt Item on the agenda and members of the public and any representatives of the media will be asked to leave the meeting room for that item.

The agenda is available on the <u>Essex County Council website</u> and by then following the links from <u>Running the Council</u> or you can go directly to the <u>Meetings Calendar</u> to see what is happening this month.

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If you are unable to attend and wish to see if the recording is available, you can find out by checking the <u>Calendar of Meetings</u> any time after the meeting starts. Any audio available can be accessed via the 'On air now!' box in the centre of the page, or the links immediately below it.

Should you wish to record the meeting, please contact the officer shown on the agenda front page.

Agenda item 1

- **Committee:** Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee
- Enquiries to: Peter Randall, Senior Democratic Services Officer

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: 5)

Councillor I Grundy Councillor B Aspinell Councillor T Cutmore Councillor A Erskine Councillor I Henderson Councillor S Hillier Councillor P Honeywood Councillor D Kendall Councillor B Massey Councillor R Moore Councillor R Pratt Councillor R Pratt Councillor W Schmitt Councillor C Weston Chairman

Minutes of the meeting of the Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Wednesday, 18 December 2019

Present:

1

Councillor I Grundy (Chairman)	Councillor B Massey
Councillor B Aspinell	Councillor R Moore
Councillor T Cutmore	Councillor C Pond
Councillor I Erskine	Councillor W Schmitt
Councillor S Hillier	Councillor L Scordis
Councillor D Kendall	

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest The report of the Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received, and it was noted that

1. The membership of the Committee was unchanged since the last meeting;

 Councillor I Henderson had sent his apologies, Councillor L Scordis attended as his substitute. Councillor R Pratt had also sent his apologies.
 A Code interest was declared by Councillor C Pond, as a member of the chartered institute of librarians.

2 Minutes

With regards to Minute 5 (Essex Green Strategy) the Committee noted that the recommendation which was proposed by Councillor Pond and seconded by Councillor Cutmore was agreed unanimously by the Committee.

Thereafter minutes of the meeting held on 28 November were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Questions from the public

Two members of the public, Sue Matthews and Carol Lissman asked questions in relation to item 4 (Essex Future Libraries Strategy) For a complete account, please follow this <u>link</u> to the meeting page to listen to the audio recording.

Members requested more details in regards to the planning process involved in the redevelopment of library premises. It was agreed that information about the procedure would be circulated to them.

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4 Essex Future Libraries Strategy

Members received report **(PSEG/21/19)** from Suzanna Shaw, Director Customer and Technology Operations and a presentation from Cllr Mark Durham, Deputy Cabinet Member for Customer, Communities, Culture and Corporate, Suzanna Shaw, and Juliet Pirez, Head of Libraries. Catherine Barton Data Quality and Compliance Manager and Carolyn Peters Citizen Services Lead were also in attendance.

The Essex Future Library Service Strategy 2019-2024 was approved by Cabinet on 23rd July 2019. A £3 million investment was awarded to improve the library service through: 1. Some library refurbishments; 2. Technology 3. Support and set up of Community run libraries August 2019 Implementation plans were drafted for the 3 keys areas aligned to the Investment and work to deliver commenced. The presentation included an update on:

- Library refurbishments
- Library management system
- Community run libraries

The presentation can be found here.

Following the presentation, members were invited to ask questions and the areas raised included:

- The provision of audio books and E services it was confirmed that this service continued to be offered and a service known as Borrowbox was also available to library users. With regards to E services, any changes thereto would depend on usage statistics and the costs involved
- Mobile library service it was confirmed that some older vehicles had been withdrawn but that the service would be reviewed in the new year.
- Community run libraries members were advised that an advantage of such was the flexibility available to their operation and additional funding options not available to ECC. It was also confirmed that if volunteers were unavailable at any time then ECC would step in to support operation during that time.
- Planning processes -clarification was requested regarding the consultation process and it was agreed that this would be provided to members
- New library management system it was confirmed that this would a much-improved system. There would be benchmarking with other Local Authorities and consultation with front line staff.

Members discussed the proposed new library management system and felt that details of the technical specification used to procure the new software be made available to PSEG members as early as possible. It was recommended that:

'The Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee Requests early sight of the specification for the new library management system in good time before a decision is taken on it's future direction.'.

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Pond and seconded by Cllr Hillier. This was agreed unanimously by the Committee

The Chairman thanked Councillor Durham and the officers for their attendance at the meeting.

5 Date of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next Committee meeting will be on Thursday, 23rd January 2020.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 12.48 pm

Chairman

AGENDA ITEM 4 REPORT 01/02/20

Report title: Essex Housing Strategy		
Report to: Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny Committee		
Report author: Daniel Baker, Housing Growth Lead		
Date: 23/01/19 For: Discussion		
Enquiries to: Daniel.baker@essex.gov.uk		
County Divisions affected: All Essex		

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Committee on the draft Essex County Council Housing Strategy consultation.

2. Background

2.1 In January 2020 the ECC Housing Growth team intends to go out to consultation on the Essex County Council Housing Strategy. The Draft consultation document has been included (Appendix A) for comment.

3. Session Aims

3.1 Members are asked to discuss the draft consultation document (Appendix A) and provide feedback and recommendations to members of the housing growth team.

4. List of Appendices

4.1 Appendix A: Draft Essex Housing Strategy consultation document

Essex County Council Housing Strategy: Draft Consultation Summary Document

Proposed approach, goals and high-level actions for comment, January 2020

Vision and priorities

Housing matters to Essex County Council (ECC). We are signatories to the long-term aspirations for the county set out in the <u>Vision for Essex</u>, that includes the ambition to use the development of new homes over the next 20 years as an opportunity to enhance the County. Building on the things that make Essex a great place to live – our countryside, our coastline, our heritage – and working with local people, businesses and communities.

We have embedded this vision in our <u>Organisation Strategy</u>, making it a priority to facilitate growing, thriving communities, and good quality, environmentally friendly new homes.

Housing goes well beyond new homes in growing communities. It underpins the council's strategic priorities to enable economic growth, support older people with care needs and other vulnerable groups to live independently, reduce health inequalities and create great places to grow up live and work.

ECC is taking action on climate change as demonstrated by the setting up of the *Essex Climate Change Commission*. We want to promote new ways to reduce carbon emissions from housing and promote Green Infrastructure as part of new housing growth.

We are proposing to develop an **ECC Housing Strategy** to demonstrate to our partners our common purpose in meeting these strategic priorities.

Working with partners

Ensuring the right numbers, types, affordability and quality of housing are provided across Essex relies on the cooperation of partners. Our Borough, City and District partners have statutory responsibilities for housing and local plan making ensuring land is identified for housing in the right places. Housing Associations and Private Developers build homes across the county. Homes England are investing funding, land and expertise to support delivery on behalf of government.

Our role in housing

ECC play an important role as part of the housing system in Essex. We deliver and maintain much of the large-scale infrastructure that businesses and residents require including transport, waste facilities and schools. We work closely with our Local Planning Authority partners to identify the infrastructure that is needed to support the growth set out in Local Plans. We work with borough, city and district councils and government to develop a strong partnership approach to support proposed Garden Communities and to make the case for transformational investments in transport infrastructure to help support housing growth across the county. In our role promoting economic growth across the county we want to ensure that housing growth is delivered as part of a place-based approach to attracting investment and job opportunities alongside securing access to appropriate skills and training opportunities for local communities.

We play a role in promoting sustainable development and protecting the environment. Ensuring that new homes and communities mitigate and adapt to climate change, support improved air quality, energy and water efficiency, waste and flood management (including SUDs, natural flood management) and are designed to be low carbon.

In our role as a care and support organisation we work with and shape the market to ensure the housing offer meets the needs of residents throughout their lifetime and with partners to ensure a joined-up approach to prevent homelessness. We work closely with our NHS partners on their estates and infrastructure planning to ensure new developments consider access to NHS services and self-care opportunities.

Our track record

We have an ambition to do more than the statutory minimum. To stand behind the ambitions of our partners for housing growth and reducing homelessness. We are well recognised as one of the leading county councils in the country on housing. Over the last five years we have worked to establish positive relationships with our housing partners and support their wider housing aims. We have invested in strong delivery capability exemplified in Essex Housing and a strategic Housing Growth Team. We have published the award-winning *Essex Design Guide*, including new content on digital, health and wellbeing, the ageing population, and Garden Communities, to improve new housing development and ensure that it is well designed, inclusive and sustainable in the long term. In 2019 we played a key role in helping to secure over £318m of central government Housing Infrastructure Fund investment which will benefit existing communities and deliver new infrastructure to enable housing growth in the county.

Our Housing Strategy

Our proposed strategy is a county council-owned document that closely links to those of our partners and sets out a coherent framework for our engagement with them. It will reinforce our focus on prioritising localities of greatest importance and identifying opportunities for people to live well and independently of social care. It will set challenging goals and create a practical framework to guide action.

We don't have all the answers and the purpose of this document is to share our emerging thinking with our partners and seek your views, before we develop a detailed action plan.

The goals of the strategy

The strategy will set out the broad housing challenges in Essex, but as an ECC-owned strategy we want to focus on areas where our expertise and resources can generate most value and provide additionality, not duplication of effort. These roles include Planning, funding and delivering infrastructure to support housing delivery; coordinating activity to ensure housing is available for vulnerable people and those with special requirements; a facilitating and enabling role on new settlements and large sites and on cross border issues; and strategic coordination on crosscutting issues e.g. homelessness prevention, improving health and wellbeing, and integration support for resettled refugees. We also see our role as helping to fashion and change the future, through co-creation and helping to shape and redirect the housing market to respond to future needs.

By adopting an approach that prioritises action on areas that align with ECC's capability and capacity the strategy we recognise there will be broader housing issues that are not directly addressed e.g. improving standards in private rented housing etc. <u>We encourage views</u>

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through this consultation of how ECC could further assist in addressing other important housing issues in partnership with the organisations who are leading on this work.

We are proposing that the strategy sets out three strategic goals that Essex County Council will work to achieve - Growing Essex while protecting the best of the county; Enabling people to live independently throughout their life; and Supporting people to have a stable home.

Strategic Goal 1: Growing Essex while protecting the best of the county

Draft Outcomes

ECC will work with our housing partners to support their ambitions for housing, so that over the next 15 years collectively we will see:

- The delivery of new homes which meet Garden Community principles across planned new Garden Communities in Essex
- Every part of Essex has the policies and land supply in place to deliver the number of new homes - including affordable homes – expected in line with local aspirations
- Increased investment secured to deliver supporting infrastructure that enables sustainable development of *new* communities and meets *existing* community needs
- Planning, delivery and maintenance of housing in Essex that helps to realise wider aims including to – transition to a zero-carbon economy, create beautiful homes and places, embed sustainable and active travel

Background: National government have set out a clear ambition to increase levels of housebuilding with a target set to see an average of 300,000 homes built a year by the mid-2020s. To achieve this ambition the government have introduced the Housing Delivery Test, alongside the five-year housing land supply test, and amended the National Planning Policy Framework to encourage higher levels of housebuilding.

There is a recognition nationally and locally that an increase in the number of homes built needs to be accompanied by a comparable increase in quality of these homes. Improving the energy efficiency and use of renewable energy in existing and new homes will play a crucial role in supporting efforts to address climate change and the legally binding target for the UK to be net zero carbon by 2050

Local Authorities in Essex are preparing Local Plans to deliver approximately 144,000 additional homes up to 2036. These plans represent a higher rate of housing site delivery than previous plans, with a potential countywide requirement of around 8,800 homes per annum to meet the demands of the Housing Delivery Test

Partners across Essex – Borough, City and District councils, developers, housing associations - have made real progress in increasing delivery over last five years with net annual housing additions more than doubling from 2,900 to 7,300 between 2013/14 and 2018/19 and affordable housing delivery at a seven year high of 1,250 homes in 2018/19. Ensuring that new housing delivery is responsive to local needs and demand for new high quality and low carbon housing will be a key future challenge to enable the people and places of Essex to flourish.

ECC recognise the need for new housing in Essex and want to see house building that keeps pace with population growth and consistent with the delivery of numbers outlined in Local

Plans. We recognise that more homes will generate increased revenue through council tax that will help to support the delivery of public services in Essex. We want to see these new homes built as part of places that deliver the right employment opportunities for existing and new residents, allowing businesses to expand and attracting new investment into our county. We want to maximise the opportunity for local people to gain the skills and experience to help build the new homes planned. We want to secure sufficient funding to deliver necessary infrastructure at an early stage in the development process reducing pressure on existing infrastructure and unlocking the delivery of housing sites. We aim for growing places and the delivery of new homes in Essex in ways that support our ambition for greater use of public transport, cycling and walking to tackle congestion, improve health and wellbeing and unlock wider environmental and social benefits. The establishment of new settlements in line with garden community principles is a key route to achieving many of the above outcomes and ECC are actively supporting work on the proposed Garden Communities across Essex.

Strategic Goal 2: Enabling people to live independently throughout their life

Draft Outcomes

ECC want to work with our housing partners to support their ambitions for housing, so that over the next 15 years collectively we will see:

- An increase in the availability of well located, well designed mainstream housing that is flexible to people's changing needs and enables more Essex residents to remain in their homes and live independent and healthy lives for longer
- ECC service users who require it are able to access high quality specialist and supported accommodation
- Adaptation and digital technologies widely adopted through co-design with residents to support people to live independently and healthily for longer and allow people to remain in their home

Background: Housing, Health and Social Care are intrinsically linked. Housing plays a vital role in the prevention, reduction, or delay of adult social care need. The government has committed to working to develop a cross party consensus on social care that will consider housing as a part of broader reforms to funding, care and support.

ECC will take a stronger role in influencing the market to ensure that more house builders and developers are providing homes, that promote independent living and healthy lives over the long term.

The fastest growing population in Essex is people aged over 85. We are committed to enabling older people to live independently. To support our ambitions, we are diversifying the housing offer for older people, to bring forward a programme of more appropriate housing, with care available on site. The development programme of ECC's direct delivery capacity through Essex Housing continues to provide an important element of meeting specialist housing need.

We want good quality housing with care for vulnerable groups, including (but not limited to) adults with disabilities, people with mental health needs, physical and sensory impairments, people with dementia, care leavers and young adults with special educational needs and disabilities to prevent the use of inappropriate residential care. We will provide forecasts of projected need for specialist housing and work to ensure that we are creating properly **Page 12 of 17**

designed groups of units in the right places to meet demand by working with partners, the market and through the planning process.

Strategic Goal 3: Supporting people to have a stable home

Draft Outcomes

ECC want to work with our housing partners to support their ambitions for housing, so that over the next 15 years collectively we will see:

- Partnership working to end the need for people to sleep rough in Essex, in line with the government's national ambitions; and
- A whole system focus on homeless prevention to stem the use of inappropriate temporary accommodation and end B&B and hotel use.

Background: The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has introduced new duties for local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. The government has introduced new funding to prevent homelessness and end rough sleeping. The Government has produced a *Rough Sleeping Strategy*, introduced a target to end rough sleeping by 2024 and set up the *Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Reduction Taskforce* to advise and oversee progress.

The rise of the private rented sector, changes to benefit rules and a lack of social housing are putting a strain on the housing system in Essex. Use of temporary accommodation has risen by 31% in the three years to 2017/18 and placements of homeless people into Essex from London and Hertfordshire are growing. The latest available figures estimate a total of 67 people to be sleeping rough across Essex with particular concentrations in our built-up urban areas.

The public sector has come together to work jointly to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in Essex, and to respond to increasing deprivation. ECC are in the process of commissioning an updated seven-year contract providing support for vulnerable people who are homeless and living in particular temporary accommodation. We want to build on successes such as the Homelessness Trailblazer project that have helped prevent homelessness in Essex.

Delivery and action plan

We will develop a detailed plan setting out the actions that ECC will take individually and with partners to help realise our housing strategy goals. Once adopted the final strategy action Plan will present the clear measurable activity that ECC will take to achieve our strategic goals with milestones set for the short (1-5 years), medium (5+) and long term (15+ years). The final action plan will clearly highlight the role ECC will play in delivery – whether that is in lead role, where we have shared responsibility as part of a partnership, or where we are supporting partners to help achieve outcomes. We also propose to summarise the high-level actions ECC will take in different localities in the county. We are proposing that the ECC Housing Strategy will be a five-year document with regular reviews of the action plan to ensure it remains relevant and up to date

An indicative high-level draft action plan is set out in **Appendix 1** below. We will use feedback we receive from the consultation responses to inform development of our final action plan. In recognition that many of the actions are cross-cutting and support progress towards more

than one of our strategic goals we have presented activity in the draft action plan according to three levels of intervention – *Better Places* (housing planned and delivered in ways that creates great places); *Better Homes* (influencing the type, quality and design of individual properties); *Better Support* (ensuring the right support to enable people to live well in appropriate homes).

In addition, we have identified four themes that will underpin the development and successful delivery of the strategy:

- **Building our knowledge** a focus on generating and using quality data, research and evaluation to inform decision making
- Building the system Strengthening our partnerships within the Essex housing system; with other public sector organisations, with the market and with central government
- Deliver value for residents promoting opportunities for reducing costs for ECC and other partners
- Technology and Innovation exploring ways to embed new technologies and ideas to realise our strategic goals

A schematic representation of the elements of the draft ECC housing strategy is included as **Appendix 2**.

Feedback

We are seeking views on our proposed approach and would like your response to the following questions:

- Do you think that the three strategic goals outlined in the strategy Growing Essex while protecting the best of the county; Enabling people to live independently throughout their life; and Supporting people to have a stable home – are the right ones to focus on? If not, which ones should be included?
- Are the draft outcomes for each strategic goal the best way to set the right level of ambition and measure progress?
- Have we identified the right areas of activity in the draft high-level action plan? Is anything missing?
- What are the three top actions that ECC could take to support housing across Essex?
- What are the opportunities for collaborative working with ECC to achieve these ambitions?

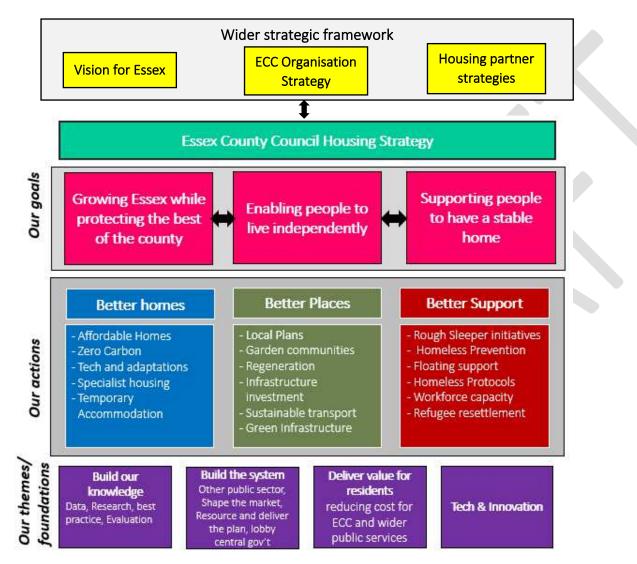
We want to hear from everyone involved in the housing system across Essex to help us answer these questions. The feedback we receive from our partners is a vital part of refining the areas of focus. Based on responses, we will develop a final strategy and action plan that sets out the steps we will take with partners to make progress towards the goals in this document. **We will publish a full strategy and action plan in 2020**.

To submit your comments please go to <u>https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/</u> (*page not yet live*) Please get in touch if you would like to discuss further at: <u>---@essex.gov.uk</u>

Appendix 1 Draft high-level action plan

	Strategic Goal 1: Growing Essex	Strategic Goal 2: Live Independently	Strategic Goal 3: Stable home
Better Places	 To support the development of Essex Local Plans Bring in funds for infrastructure to unlock housing and economic sites Support housing growth that embeds greater use of sustainable modes of transport Promote development that supports achievement of the Green Essex Strategy Support the development of new settlements on garden community and healthy new town principles Play a partnership role in locally-led regeneration of deprived communities 	 Support the development of new settlements on garden community and healthy new town principles 	
Better Homes	 Work with & support partners to deliver more <u>Affordable Homes</u> Collaborate to more quickly transition new & existing properties to <u>Zero Carbon</u> 	 Develop/commission <u>specialist housing</u> to meet the needs of ECC service users – children and adults Encourage the use of <u>new technologies and adaptations</u> to support people to live independently and healthily Work with the market to encourage the development of accessible <u>homes that promote independent and healthy living</u> 	 Work with & support partners to deliver more <u>Affordable Homes</u> Work with partners to support homeless prevention activity and reduce the use of inappropriate <u>Temporary Accommodation</u> in Essex
Better Support		 Investigate ways that housing provision can help ensure adequate <u>workforce capacity</u> to deliver housing related care and support <u>Integrate and support refugees</u> resettled in Essex 	 Work in partnership to develop, seek external funding and support delivery of <u>Homelessness and</u> <u>Rough Sleeper Initiatives</u> Ongoing evaluation and continuing improvement of ECC's contracts providing support to homeless people and helping prevent homelessness Deliver existing and grow use of <u>Protocols</u> to improve partnership approach to homelessness prevention Investigate ways that housing provision can help ensure adequate <u>workforce capacity</u> to deliver housing related care and support

Appendix 2 Draft ECC Housing Strategy Framework



AGENDA ITEM 6 PSEG/02/20

Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Policy and Scrutiny
	Committee
Date:	23 January 2020
	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS
Enquiries to:	Lisa Siggins, Democratic Services Officer
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	lisa.siggins@essex.gov.uk

The following dates have been identified as committee activity days for this Committee:

Thursday 21 May 2020 Thursday 25 June 2020 Thursday 16 July 2020 Thursday 24 September 2020 Thursday 29 October 2020 Thursday 26 November 2020 Thursday 17 December 2020 Thursday 17 December 2020 Thursday 21 January 2021 Thursday 25 February 2021 Thursday 25 March 2021 Thursday 22 April 2021

Please note that Members are requested to keep the full days open in their diaries for conducting committee business as a variety work and meetings are likely to be planned during the course of those days.