

Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee

10:00	Thursday, 26 June 2014	Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex
--------------	-----------------------------------	---

Quorum: 5

Councillor S Walsh
Councillor A Bayley
Councillor G Butland
Councillor T Cutmore
Councillor A Erskine
Councillor C Guglielmi
Councillor T Hedley
Councillor I Henderson
Councillor D Kendall
Councillor V Metcalfe
Councillor C Pond
Councillor S Robinson
Councillor K Twitchen
Councillor A Wood

Chairman

For information about the meeting please ask for:

Sophie Campion, Committee Officer

Telephone: 01245 430715

Email: sophie.campion@essex.gov.uk

www.essex.gov.uk/scrutiny



Essex County Council

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.

Most meetings are held at County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1LX. A map and directions to County Hall can be found at the following address on the Council's website:
<http://www.essex.gov.uk/Your-Council/Local-Government-Essex/Pages/Visit-County-Hall.aspx>

There is ramped access to the building for wheelchair users and people with mobility disabilities.

The Council Chamber and Committee Rooms are accessible by lift and are located on the first and second floors of County Hall.

If you have a need for documents in the following formats, large print, Braille, on disk or in alternative languages and easy read please contact the Committee Officer before the meeting takes place. If you have specific access requirements such as access to induction loops, a signer, level access or information in Braille please inform the Committee Officer before the meeting takes place. For any further information contact the Committee Officer.

Induction loop facilities are available in most Meeting Rooms. Specialist head sets are available from Duke Street and E Block Receptions.

The agenda is also available on the Essex County Council website, www.essex.gov.uk. From the Home Page, click on 'Your Council', then on 'Meetings and Agendas'. Finally, select the relevant committee from the calendar of meetings.

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.

Part 1

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

		Pages
1	Apologies and Substitution Notices The Committee Officer to report receipt (if any)	
2	Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29 May 2014.	5 - 8
3	Declarations of Interest To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members	
4	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 Committee Officer.	
5	Work Programme To consider report PSEG/19/14.	9 - 58
6	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation will be in attendance to provide an update on his portfolio and answer Members' questions.	
7	Part Night Lighting Scrutiny Review To consider the final draft scrutiny report of the Part Night Lighting Task and Finish Group, report PSEG/20/14.	59 - 86
8	Financial Inclusion - Monitoring of Scrutiny Report To consider monitoring report of the Financial Inclusion Task and Finish Group, report PSEG/21/14.	87 - 112
9	Public Transport Briefing To consider report PSEG/22/14.	113 - 114
10	Commissioning Strategies To consider report PSEG/23/14.	115 - 116

11 Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting will be held on Thursday 24 July 2014 at 10.00am in Committee Room 1.

12 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)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

13 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.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PLACE SERVICES & ECONOMIC
GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL,
CHELMSFORD ON 29 MAY 2014**

Present:

Councillor S Walsh (Chairman)	Councillor I Henderson
Councillor A Bayley	Councillor D Kendall
Councillor G Butland	Councillor C Pond
Councillor A Erskine	Councillor S Robinson
Councillor C Guglielmi	Councillor A Wood
Councillor T Hedley	

Councillor K Bobbin was also in attendance.

1. Membership

The Committee noted its membership as set out below:

Councillor S Walsh (Chairman)	Councillor I Henderson
Councillor A Bayley	Councillor D Kendall
Councillor G Butland	Councillor V Metcalfe
Councillor T Cutmore	Councillor C Pond
Councillor A Erskine	Councillor S Robinson
Councillor C Guglielmi	Councillor K Twitchen
Councillor T Hedley	Councillor A Wood

The Committee noted that Councillor Simon Walsh had been appointed as Chairman of this Committee at Full Council in May 2014.

2. Apologies and Substitution Notices

Apologies were received from Councillors K Twitchen, V Metcalfe and T Cutmore.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Councillor A Wood was nominated as a Vice-Chairman and with the agreement of the Committee was duly appointed.

Councillor D Kendall was nominated as a Vice-Chairman and with the agreement of the Committee was duly appointed.

With reference to the appointment of a vice chairman from the minority political groups, it was agreed that that position would be rotated annually in the following order: 2013/2014 was a Labour nominee, 2014/2015 is a Liberal Democrat nominee, and moving forward, 2015/2016 will be an Independent Group nominee, and 2017/2018 a UKIP nominee.

4. Minutes

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 10 February 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

6. Questions from the Public

No members of the public had registered their interest in asking a question on any of the items to be considered at the meeting.

7. Work Programme

The Committee noted report PSEG/17/14 concerning its Work Programme.

Christine Sharland, Scrutiny Officer, confirmed that an informal meeting of the Chairman and Group Spokesmen was taking place later that day to discuss topics being considered for inclusion in the work programme. A report seeking the Committee's approval of a programme for the next year would be presented to the next formal meeting of the Committee scheduled for 26 June 2014.

The Chairman stressed the need to adopt a more disciplined approach to the way that Committee resources are deployed in order to develop its overall effectiveness, and part of that process was to use topic selection criteria to produce a viable work programme.

8. Skills and Employment: Engagement with National Agencies and Programmes

The Committee noted report PSEG/18/14 reporting on the Committee Briefing held on 27 March 2014 on the County Council's engagement with national agencies and programmes in relation to skills and employment.

It was also noted that these issues were being fed into the topic selection process for possible inclusion in the Committee's future work programme.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 26 June 2014 at 10am in Committee Room 1. It was noted that the Committee's activities were likely to go into the afternoon on this date.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 10.08am.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		PSEG/19/14
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 June 2014	
WORK PROGRAMME AND TOPIC SELECTION (Minute 7/ May2014)		
Enquiries to:	Christine Sharland, Scrutiny Officer 01245 430450 Christine.sharland@essex.gov.uk	

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to propose a way forward for the effective planning and management of Committee activity over the coming year. It summarises the results of work championed by the Chairman to investigate and prioritise topics for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

Background

Given the Committee's broad and interesting remit it is inevitable that there is a vast array of topics that could be scrutinised. However, in practice it does not have an infinite capacity to deal with all the topics Members might wish to delve into. Over the past year they have had the opportunity to reflect upon the way that the Committee has conducted its work, and how they can both collectively and as individuals develop better good scrutiny practice. Experience has reinforced the argument that the Committee would be more effective if it adopted a more pragmatic approach to the way it plans and manages its work programme.

It is the Committee's prerogative to determine its own work programme and in doing so it must take account of relevant information to make informed choices. The onus is upon the Committee to manage effectively the resources at its disposal, and to prioritise the consideration of those topics where its input adds value to Council activity and may influence in practice the decisions made. It can use a variety of different approaches to the way it tackles a scrutiny review. However, it is not an effective use of resource if its programme is made up of issues where the Committee's impact will be minimal for instance the timing of a review is poorly instigated, it is duplicating work for which resources have already been allocated by other parts of the organisation, or topics may be of interest but the ability to influence future outcomes is unclear or extremely limited.

There are two appendices attached to this report that summarise the selection of topics for inclusion in the work programme.

Appendix A - sets out the proposed work programme for 2014/2015, and illustrates how resources may be allocated on a monthly basis towards topics and reviews.

Appendix B – collates a number of draft scoping documents that provide background on individual topics.

Although good practice advocates that a more managed approach will promote more effective co-ordinated committee activity, it is recognised that it can be difficult for the Committee to have overall control of the ad hoc demands it has to face from time to time. For example the call in of Cabinet decisions, petitions, and requests made by individual councillors.

Methodology

Although a work programme was developed last summer, it proved impossible to deliver and critically momentum was lost in the way it evolved in practice as unplanned work dominated its agenda. Consequently a more rigorous approach has been pursued this year in order to produce a new programme that takes account of experience of what has or has not worked well, and with reference to the good practice advocated in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Handbook and was part of the Scrutiny Training that Members' took part in last summer. .

Work on topic selection has been taken forward by the Chairman and Scrutiny Officer. Topics have been identified from various sources including Cabinet Members, Officers, past Committee activity, and not least suggestions put forward by Councillors themselves. All the topics have been investigated further to be able to prioritise them for inclusion or otherwise in the work programme and, in some cases, to highlight other pertinent measures to update Members on relevant activity.

The Chairman has also liaised with the Vice Chairmen and Group representatives during the development of the programme, and their input has been fed into the overall topic selection process not only in terms of individual topic but in the mixture of activity now proposed.

The scoping document template has proven to be a useful tool to collate information for the topic selection process. An abbreviated version of topics incorporated in the proposed work programme has been attached for the purposes of this report to provide a flavour of how the Committee might investigate certain aspects of a topic in a way that it can influence any future decisions that are made by the Cabinet. While the scoping documents have been drafted for the purposes of the topic selection process, it should be pointed out that the detailed planning of an individual review will be undertaken by the Committee and that planning will be incorporated into a fully developed scoping document.

The following extract from the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook sets out the parameters that have been taken into account in the development of the draft Committee work programme for 2014/2015.

Aims of the Work Programme

‘Overall the work programme will:

- Meet the criteria for chosen topics;
- Be balanced –
in terms of some being of longer duration and some being suitable for shorter study; and
of being balanced between the various OS roles identified in legislation and Government guidance in order to ensure that value is being added in different areas by the scrutiny process.
- Be mixed in terms of covering different topics/ services;
- Take into consideration the resources available to support scrutiny;
- Take account of members’ capacity so that unreasonable demands are not placed upon their time, as well as the demands upon support officers and what amount of time they can dedicate in support of the particular subject;
- Consider timescales for instance what are the deadlines in relation to other Council meetings, statutory deadlines, and the deadlines of other external partners. There should also be capacity in the timetable to enable flexibility within the work programme and the capacity to undertake ad hoc work if the committee regards it as a priority; and
- Regularly review and update the programme to ensure that new topics can be factored in and any changes accounted for.

At the end of this process a committee should have an agreed work programme, where the relative priority of items has been assessed, an indication of when each item is to be considered and how the item is to be reviewed.’

Extract from the Council’s own Overview and Scrutiny Handbook chapter on “Selection of Topics”

The selection of topics for inclusion in the work programme has not been an easy task. In line with the selection criteria set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook, the following questions have been asked to assess the relative priorities of suggested issues for review:

1. **RELEVANCE:** How relevant is the review topic to the Council and the people of the county?
2. **FEASIBILITY:** How feasible is it to undertake the review within the parameters set regarding timescale and resources?
3. **CLARITY:** How clearly defined is the review topic or does more work need doing to define the scope of the review?
4. **TIMING:** Why is it proposed to undertake the review now? Is the proposed duration of the review realistic?
5. **SUPPORT:** Are resources available to support the review? This would include member and officer time, expertise, finance, availability of information?
6. **PROPORTIONALITY/ OUTCOMES:** Are the outcomes of the review likely to justify the investment in this review?
7. **OPPORTUNITY COST:** What other reviews may have to be foregone in order to carry out this review?
8. **DUPLICATION:** Does the review duplicate review activity which is taking place elsewhere?
9. **PUBLIC INTEREST:** Does the need for public accountability require a review of the issue? Some reviews may be necessary even when there are no obvious outcomes for change.
10. **COMMITMENT/ ENTHUSIASM:** How strong is the commitment to undertaking the review and driving it forward to a successful conclusion?
11. **ADDED VALUE:** Are there particular advantages in Overview and Scrutiny members undertaking this review over other methods of review?

Analysis

In essence an important part of gathering information has been to focus upon identifying how the Committee might influence and add value to Council activity, the relationship to other work taking place or planned in the future including the timescales for any identified Executive activity so that any scrutiny work may be planned so its recommendations would in fact have the greatest impact upon actions proposed to be taken by the Council, and the overall impact a topic may have for the whole community.

Given the number of potential topics and wish to accommodate Members' interests a critical feature of the process has been to consider how different approaches to a topic could be harnessed to maximise resources. At the same time it has been necessary to balance the Committee's ability to cover a greater number of topics

than would be possible by concentrating totally on in depth projects without trying to cover so many topics that the scrutiny role is superficial. Based on the information obtained different methods of committee activity have been suggested for different topics ranging from -

task and finish groups conducting in depth reviews over a period of months,

to seminars where other expert contributors (both internal and external to the organisation) could be invited to assist Members in the examination of a topic, with a report being produced setting out the Committee's conclusions,

to briefings. For instance where the aim is to ensure that the Committee is updated on the various Cabinet Member portfolios falling within its remit.

It should also be noted that from time to time Cabinet Members also promote seminars and briefings designed to engage all County Councillors in the consideration of specific issues, rather than the more limited membership of one committee. Also information is disseminated electronically to all Councillors on a regular basis, and there are other means available to the individual Councillor to obtain information eg by making direct enquires of Cabinet Members, including in the case of Councillor Bass taking advantage of his regular Highways Surgeries.

It is also worthwhile pointing out that Cabinet Members may set up 'Member Reference Groups'. These groups are made up of non-executive councillors who will provide a sounding board for the Cabinet Member usually in the development of specific policies. They are not part of the Council's scrutiny committee framework, and do not draw on the scrutiny budget. While such a group would not preclude scrutiny activity on a related issue, it would not be an efficient use of resource to duplicate work and therefore any scrutiny committee involvement would have to be planned carefully to ensure a distinct role in any consideration of related work and proposals.

'Scrutiny' is sometimes seen as a useful opportunity to deflect a problem by Executive and Scrutiny Members alike. Scrutiny committees have been used as a means to disseminate or obtain information where alternative methods might be more appropriate without tying up limited scrutiny resources including agenda where realistically tangible outcomes are minimal.

By adopting an ongoing disciplined approach to the design and implementation of its work programme the Committee may over time create bedrock for a more effective scrutiny function in Essex through targeted, incisive, and timely work. Aside from the selection of topics there are other ingredients that are critical to that function including Members' own behaviour and team working.

The Work Programme for 2014/2015

The work programme as now proposed at Appendix A is based upon the objective prioritisation of potential scrutiny projects coupled with a realistic assessment of what may be achievable given the resource available. It is proposed that no more than two task and finish groups conducting in depth reviews be underway at any one time, and that some topics be addressed through seminars where a report may be written to record any conclusions and recommendations reached by the Committee, or a briefing where the primary aim is to update and inform Members on a topic. It is not possible for officers to support formal committee meetings on a monthly basis in addition to the full range of activity envisaged as part of an effective scrutiny function the work programme is intended to deliver, and the resources available to support that function (both in terms of Members and Officers).

The work programme as attached illustrates that while 'committee activity days' will continue to be scheduled on a monthly basis, it does not necessarily follow that a formal meeting will be held on that day. However, other relevant Member activity will be scheduled for those days. It is necessary to remind Members of earlier requests for them to set aside the full day in their diaries. It is a more efficient use of the Member and Officer resource to plan work on those days. If the work programme is to be implemented efficiently it will be important for task and finish groups to plan their work so their meetings etc. can be included in the overall timetable, then everyone involved in the scrutiny process will be better informed and able to manage their individual diaries.

To illustrate the allocation of resources over the course of the work programme, the attachment also sets out ongoing work on a monthly basis. This reinforces the fact that there is a range of work to be managed aside from activity days that is undertaken on behalf of the Committee, and why it is so important for work to be prioritised and planned in advance.

While an agreed work programme will assist in managing committee activity, this report has already alluded to the fact that unforeseen matters will arise from time to time that will affect Members' ability to achieve the goals published in the programme. However, it is hoped that by devising a more robust work programme not only will the Committee become more effective in managing its potential workload and producing positive results, other people will also develop a better understanding of the scrutiny processes in place. Other parties wishing to engage with the Committee will need to reciprocate with better practice in the way that engagement takes place, and provide earlier warning of potential issues for scrutiny. Critically the work programme will enable the Committee to lead in its scrutiny role by setting out its intentions sooner rather than later in the course of its activities.

In summary the work programme as now proposed comprises:

- **Task and Finish Group Activity**

It is proposed that the following in depth reviews be initiated during the summer with an emphasis on the establishment of task and finish groups to undertake the detailed planning of each project prior to any evidence being collated:

- Flood Management and Third Party Responsibilities ('Flood Management')
- Jobs, Welfare and Skills
- Communications Protocol issue arising a recommendation from the COMAH Scrutiny Report ('COMAH')

While this report proposes that no more than two task and groups take place at any one time, the mixture of reviews has been carefully chosen, and as an exception three reviews have been put forward for the following reasons:

- The Committee received a briefing on the topic of the preventative measures available to the County Council that may be taken to enhance improvements in flood management across Essex with particular emphasis upon the enforcement of third party responsibilities following its last meeting on 29 May. It is anticipated that the Flood Management review will be of a longer duration, and will require careful planning that could be usefully undertaken over the summer before any evidence is taken, and its work can be planned more flexibly within the Committee's overall work programme as it is envisaged as a longer running review perhaps around six months. The timing of the review is also important as its early inclusion in the programme will enable its findings to influence the emergence of related policies.
- For the Jobs, Welfare and Skills review additional resource from the Policy and Strategy Team is being made available to support a task and finish group for this particular project thus enabling its launch over the summer. It is suggested that a group should comprise no more than four committed members as it will be an intensive project and involve a lot of discussion with contributors from external organisations, so that co-ordination and communication across the whole group will be vital to its success or otherwise. The successful operation of the former Financial Inclusion Task and Finish Group could provide a useful model for this review.
- While it is acknowledged that from first appearance that the COMAH Communications Protocol review is not significant when compared to some of the other topics that have been prioritised, it is important in terms of the original scrutiny review together with the need to reinforce the monitoring of scrutiny outcomes. Overall it should be a short review and require no more than three or four group meetings depending on how its membership plans its investigation. It would be helpful to complete the review over the summer before other priorities accumulate over the autumn months.

Each task and finish group will be expected to undertake detailed planning for its proposed investigation and complete a scoping document setting out the framework for its investigation for the Committee's approval.

In the autumn it is proposed that subject to other group activity being concluded that a new in depth review of the opportunities to develop the Recycling Centres for Household Waste Service be initiated. The review will be introduced by way of a briefing following the recently concluded customer survey, which will be incorporated as a part of a site visit to the new waste facility at Courtauld Road, Basildon. Again the timing of the review is proposed so that it may inform the way that a modern service could be developed in the future, and its role in terms of the provision of broader recycling facilities.

- **Seminars**

Aside from in depth reviews to be conducted by task and finish groups it is proposed that over the course of the programme a number of seminars be organised with the aim of developing Members' understanding of topics, and providing a channel for the Committee to feed its views to the Cabinet.

For the purposes of the work programme it is intended to distinguish 'seminars' from 'briefings'. Seminars are likely to incorporate contributors from outside of the organisation, and will provide a mechanism for the Committee to cross examine various evidence that may be put forward. This scenario will require that Members participate in the planning of arrangements so that contributors are well briefed beforehand on what information is being sought from them, as well as the Committee demonstrating effective questioning and listening skills on the day. Depending upon the particular seminar a report can be drawn up setting out any conclusions reached by the Committee, and recommendations agreed at a formal meeting for forwarding to the Cabinet. Arising from seminars specific issues may be identified for more consideration as part of the topic selection process for possible inclusion in a future work programme.

It is suggested that this approach be adopted for the following topics:

- Energy Waste Strategy (NB This is scheduled for September 25 in order to influence planned Executive activity)
- Highways Maintenance (NB This is scheduled for October 23)
- Ringway Jacobs Contract (This will be scheduled when an opportunity arises depending on the scrutiny resource available)

- **Briefings**

Although it intended that briefings be designed to be more informative in nature and can require a less intensive use of scrutiny resources, they will form a crucial role in the Committee's activity by ensuring that Members are informed about topics that

are likely to feature in its future work programme, and to develop a better understanding of topics within its remit. The Local Transport Plan and Economic Growth is an example of a proposed briefing where an in depth scrutiny review could be conducted in the longer term. Also there is an item elsewhere on today's meeting agenda for an introductory briefing on the background for the provision of public transport.

Aside from topical briefings it is proposed to incorporate in the work programme specific briefings when Cabinet Members will be invited to attend a meeting to update the Committee on their portfolios, and to answer Members' questions. As part of these briefings Cabinet Members will be asked to cover issues that have been identified as particular areas of concern for instance an update on Country Parks and operational changes at Cressing Temple.

- **Future Work Programme**

As part of the topic selection criteria and allocation of resource, it is inevitable that some topics have to be deferred because other topics have greater priority than others or in terms of timing there are good reasons for delaying their consideration in order to be able to produce better scrutiny outcomes in the longer term. For this reason the following topics have been identified for inclusion in the longer term work programme or for maintaining in a list of topics for further consideration when the programme is reviewed.

- Local Highways Panels. It is proposed that a review be initiated in Spring 2015 when the Panels have been in operation for three years, and their effectiveness can be more investigated more fully.

The following topics will be included in a list of items to be considered for future review and potential inclusion in a future work programme:

- Parking Partnerships
- Economic Growth Partnership Working

The next steps...

Moving forward once the new work programme is agreed by the Committee, it is suggested that in future it could be reviewed on a bi annual basis when topics highlighted in the interim may be prioritised using the selection criteria. It is also proposed that where suggestions are made at meetings for more in depth work to be undertaken that has not been highlighted already in the work programme eg the setting up of a task and finish group, then any decision on its inclusion or otherwise be deferred until a future committee meeting. Cabinet Member proposals will be treated in the same way. This will enable the background necessary to be collated for a more objective view to be made of whether or not to pursue a project in light of its impact upon the programme as a whole.

Following this meeting Member preferences for the various proposed task and finish groups will be sought, and collated for consideration and confirmation at the next Committee meeting on 24 July.

Action required by the Committee at this meeting:

- 1. To consider for approval the work programme now submitted at Appendix A and for action to be taken seek Member preferences for membership of the following Task and Finish Groups so that the projects may begin over the summer:**
 - **Flood Management and Third Party Responsibilities**
 - **Jobs, Welfare and Skills**
 - **Communications Protocol issue arising a recommendation from the COMAH Scrutiny Report**
 - 2. To consider for approval the approach to the implementation of the work programme as set out in this report, and the good practice guidance set out in the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Handbook.**
-

Appendix A – Provisional PSEGSC Work Programme

Committee Activity Dates	Committee Activity Day/ Focus of Meetings	Ongoing Activity
2014		<i>NB in addition to specific work identified below as ongoing activity work will include preparation of agenda, arrangements for future meetings as well as unplanned matters arising such as call in of decisions, which will affect momentum of work now scheduled.</i>
June 26	26 June Formal Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work Programme – seek approval for topic selection and schedule ○ Part Night Lighting – seek endorsement scrutiny report ○ Financial Inclusion – seek endorsement scrutiny report ○ Briefing on Public Transport Network for Essex ○ Cllr Bass, Cabinet Member Q&A Session 	Work programme development
July 22 Extra briefing date related to following formal meeting (Full Committee)	Briefing on Commissioning Strategies Also briefing on another topic identified in work programme such as Local Transport Plan/ Economic Growth - TBC	
July 24	Formal Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commissioning Strategies 	July Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities

	<p>Followed by Task and Finish Group activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COMAH Communications TFG (NB need agree timetable to ensure completed before next formal Committee meeting in October) ○ Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG – agree meeting dates for planning of review ○ Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG - agree meeting dates for planning of review <p>Cabinet Member Update Briefing – afternoon – TBC</p>	<p>TFG – plan review (NB longer term aim completion New Year)</p> <p>COMAH Communications TFG – plan review, and investigate (NB limited review, aim completion in Autumn)</p> <p>Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG – plan review (NB longer term aim completion New Year)</p>
August	Mixture of seminar/visits/ task and finish groups	Ditto
September 25	<p>Full Committee visit to Courtauld Road with briefing with external contributors at the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update Members on Waste and Recycling issues • To initiate TFG RCHW Service in depth review • To consider options for Waste Energy Strategy • Cllr Walters, Cabinet Member Update 	<p>Arising from visit a report would have to be prepared for subsequent Committee agreement where it may wish to put forward comments to the Cabinet Member</p> <p>Also during September</p> <p>COMAH Communications TFG – completion of scrutiny report for Committee endorsement</p> <p>Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG – <i>investigation</i></p> <p><i>Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG - investigation</i></p>

2 nd or 9 th October Additional formal meeting to be scheduled	<p>Date to be agreed Formal meeting to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COMAH Communications TFG Scrutiny Report – if completed require endorsement for forwarding report to Cabinet Member ○ Update from Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG – require Committee approval of scoping document ○ Update from Flood Management TFG – require Committee approval of scoping document ○ Report Cabinet Member response to PNL Scrutiny report <p>Followed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cabinet Member Update Briefing ○ Task and Finish Group activity 	<p>October</p> <p><i>COMAH Communications TFG – completion of scrutiny report for Committee endorsement</i></p> <p>Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG – <i>investigation</i></p> <p><i>Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG - investigation</i></p> <p>Compile report arising from September visit to Courtauld Road</p>
October 23	Highways Maintenance Seminar – Full day	Arising from Seminar a report would have to be prepared for subsequent Committee agreement
November 27	<p>Formal Meeting:</p> <p>To catch up on any business that needs endorsement. However, in view of various TFG activity need to ensure that no new projects initiated to enable momentum to be achieved in in depth investigations. Committee meetings will be staggered hereinafter to take account of work programme requirements overall.</p>	<p>November</p> <p>Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG – investigation</p> <p>Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG - investigation</p> <p>RCHW Service TFG – plan review and investigation, and draft scoping document</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report Cabinet Member response to COMAH Communications Scrutiny Report ○ Report on Courtauld Road Visit ○ Updates from various Task and Finish Groups <p>Followed by: Cabinet Member Update Briefing</p> <p>Task and Finish Group activity</p>	Compile report on Highways Maintenance Seminar
December 18	Focus upon TFG activity and in depth investigations otherwise momentum likely to be lost in that work with knock on effects	<p>December</p> <p>Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG – draw conclusions/ finalise scrutiny report</p> <p>Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG - draw conclusions/ finalise scrutiny report</p> <p>RCHW Service TFG – plan review and investigation</p>
2015		
January 22	<p>Formal meeting: To catch up on any business that needs endorsement followed by other TFG activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG – seek endorsement of scrutiny report ○ Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG - seek endorsement of scrutiny report 	<p>January</p> <p>RCHW Service TFG – investigation</p> <p>Flood Management & Third Party Responsibilities TFG</p> <p>Jobs, Welfare and Skills TFG</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report of seminar on Highways Maintenance ○ Updates from Task and Finish Groups <p>Followed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Briefing - TBC ○ Cabinet Member briefing 	Review the Work Programme and report to subsequent meeting
February 26	Combination of seminar/visits/ task and finish groups	February RCHW Service TFG – Conclude investigation
March 26	<p>Meeting to conduct Committee’s formal business/ followed by other activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RCHW Service Scrutiny Report – Update report ○ <i>Updates from various Task and Finish Groups</i> 	March RCHW Service TFG
April 23	Combination of seminar/visits/ task and finish groups	April RCHW Service TFG
May 28	<p>Meeting to conduct Committee’s formal business/ followed by other activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Highways Panel: Briefing to initiate new in depth review ○ <i>Updates from various Task and Finish Groups</i> 	<p>May</p> <p>RCHW Service TFG</p> <p>Local Highways Panel TFG – <i>plan review</i></p> <p>Financial Inclusion TFG to liaise on Cabinet Briefing</p>

June	Combination of seminar/visits/ task and finish groups	June RCHW Service TFG Local Highways Panel TFG – <i>plan review</i>
July	Formal meeting: To catch up on any business that needs endorsement followed by other TFG activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Inclusion – progress report/ briefing to be commissioned from Cabinet <i>Updates from various Task and Finish Groups</i> 	July Local Highways Panel TFG – <i>plan review</i>
August	Combination of seminar/visits/ task and finish groups	August Local Highways Panel TFG - <i>investigation</i>
Topics where briefings/ seminars to be incorporated into the Committee's schedule of meetings subject to resource; to be considered for inclusion in the Committee's work programme in the future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ringway Jacobs Contract (<i>see scoping document focus on governance and performance issues</i>) ➤ Local Transport Plan/ Economic Growth Briefing – overview as longer term in depth review more appropriate for 2015 		

<p>Topics to be considered for inclusion in the Committee’s work programme in the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Highways Maintenance Strategies ➤ Parking Partnerships ➤ Economic Growth Partnership Working
<p>Topics to be addressed in as part of Cabinet Member Update Briefings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cressing Temple and Country Parks ➤ Carbon Emissions

Appendix B

Scoping Documents

Please note that while the scoping documents now attached are an abbreviated version of the full document template used for scrutiny planning purposes, they do nonetheless set out background to the topics that have been considered as part of the topic selection process to develop a viable and effective work programme for the Committee. For each project that is taken forward Members will produce a full scoping document to demonstrate the framework that they have planned to take the Committee's overview and scrutiny role forward, and how resources will be managed

List of Scoping Documents Attached

Third Party Responsibilities and Flood Management

Jobs, Welfare and Skills: Scrutiny of National Programmes in Essex

COMAH: Communications Protocol

Review of Recycling Centres for Household Waste Service

Developing a Better Public Transport in Essex

Essex County Council's Local Transport Plan (2015 – 2021) Strategy and Priority
Projects for Stimulating Economic Growth

Waste Energy Strategy

Highways Maintenance and Potholes

Ringway Jacobs Contract

Local Highways Panels

Economic Growth and Partnership Working

Parking Partnerships

Cressing Temple Barns

Review Topic (Name of review)	Third Party Responsibilities and Flood Management
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	To consider the preventative measures available to the County Council that may be taken to enhance improvements in flood management across Essex, with particular emphasis upon the enforcement of third party responsibilities.
Relevant Corporate Links	The Council has new statutory flood management responsibilities under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 coupled with existing powers under the Highways Act 1980. Consequently it would be appropriate for a review to establish how to use effectively the various powers available to it to reduce the incidence of flooding particularly as the Council now has enhanced powers as a Lead Flood Authority and the function has implications for more than one of its services requiring an effective use of its overall resources, both financial and staffing. Failure to discharge some of its duties could result in claims against the Council.
Timescales	Although in depth review the review would be focussed upon the powers available to the Council and the way that those powers may be exercised effectively. Consequently it could be contained within a six month period subject to detailed planning.
Rationale for the Review	<p>Flood management in various context has been a popular area of interest for Members given public interest in the topic especially as the incidence of flooding has increased recently. Furthermore there have been major changes in national legislation, and the County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority now has overall responsibility for local flooding (surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses). There is increasing expectation on ECC to utilise its powers, with the number of flooding cases being referred to the Lead Local Flood Authority for action. Member briefings have been held to promote understanding of the changes that have taken place.</p> <p>The Council has various statutory and permissive powers bestowed upon it that it may take to prevent and manage flooding. With particular reference to third party responsibilities, it may take similar action using various legislation to enforce necessary works that prevent or mitigate flooding. Given the opportunities that are now available to the Council to exercise its community leadership role around this topic, it is important to ensure that it is making effective, consistent and transparent use of those powers.</p>

	<p>At present the County Council has not developed its policies or protocol with regard to using its powers or enforcing third party responsibilities associated with flooding or drainage. Given the nature of the topic and public interest (and indeed potentially competing interests of rural/urban landowners and residents) a scrutiny review could provide a vehicle for raising awareness, as well as a forum for the consideration of a policy and resources required where the Council may set a precedent for a more transparent and effective use of the range of enforcement powers that it may exercise.</p>
<p>Key Lines of Enquiry</p>	<p>What are the County Council's overall roles and responsibilities in relation to flood management?</p> <p>What measures does it have at its disposal to prevent and manage flooding with particular reference to its powers on public and private land? When do which enforcement powers apply, and what options are available to the County Council where there are third party responsibilities?</p> <p>How many flooding cases are referred to the Council where it has potential to take enforcement action upon third parties to effect improvements or prevent flooding?</p> <p>What resources and experience are available across the Council to exercise effective enforcement in relation to flood management?</p> <p>How can the Council embed effective enforcement action and promote good practice to prevent flooding in Essex using the powers available to it?</p> <p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of using the various powers available? What are the barriers to the effective use of those powers?</p> <p>How can the Council make effective use of its communications resources to inform the public on enforcement and preventative action that may be taken to alleviate flooding?</p>
<p>Other Work Being Undertaken</p>	<p>Changes in national legislation mean that flood management is evolving as a new area of activity for County Councils, and there is a lot of national and local activity taking place in relation to those changes as well as addressing the effects of major flooding that has taken place in recent years across the whole country. Consequently there is an increasing amount of information being gathered at the same time as pressure to address local issues and improvements in the way flooding is managed.</p>

What resources are required for this review?	<p><i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i></p>
Indicators of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and consistent policy for ECC regarding cross-service flooding and drainage enforcement matters and third party responsibilities • Improvements in decision making process and service delivery • Reduced expectation on ECC to undertake works which are a third party responsibility. • Reduction in the number of flooding cases referred where third party responsibilities have not been fulfilled
Notes	<p>Proposed inclusion in work programme beginning July 2014</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic	Jobs, welfare and skills: scrutiny of national programmes in Essex
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	<p>The review is proposing to analyse and scrutinise a number of national programmes linked to jobs, welfare and skills. These National Programmes are commissioned by Departments such as Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) (via the Skills Funding Agency (SFA)), Department of Education (DfE) (via the Education Funding Agency (EFA)) and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do national programmes, aimed at getting people into employment and equipping them with the right skills to progress into gainful employment, deliver effective results for the people and employers of Essex? • What examples of good practice can be seen locally and nationally? • How can the Council and its key partners engage more effectively with the development and delivery of national programmes, to help address some of the issues affecting Essex?
Relevant Corporate Links	<p>Economic growth of Essex</p> <p>Jobs and skills are vital to the economic growth of Essex. Currently there are multiple national programmes operating locally, including the <i>Youth Contract</i>, the <i>Work Programme</i> and <i>Help to Work</i>, that should be contributing to the wider economic growth ambitions of Essex.</p> <p>Skills are an essential part of economic growth, facilitating progression in the workplace as well as boosting higher level skills, which are attractive to business. This draws in SFA provision which is delivered through colleges, training providers and national programmes.</p> <p>Everyone in Essex should be prepared to participate in contributing to the health of the economy. For some people, low skills impede their life chances which leave them stuck in the revolving door between low-paid work and periods of unemployment.</p> <p>Ensuring that skills and welfare to work services deliver in a coherent and effective way is a key ambition of ECC. This ambition is reflected in the development of the Economic Plan for Essex and the Strategic Economic Plan and EU Structural and Investment Fund Plan for the South East LEP. These documents went to Cabinet in Spring 2014.</p>

	<p>Programmes commissioned by BIS/ SFA, DfE/ EFA and DWP contribute to the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentage of working age people in employment• Percentage of young people aged 16-19 not in education, employment & training• Percentage of Essex businesses who think they can recruit suitable people <p>It is also believed that by making education, skills and welfare to work support more responsive to the market by being more business-led, they can contribute to delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job growth in key locations and key sectors <p>These feature in three of the seven outcomes in the Corporate Outcomes Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing• People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong-learning• Sustainable economic growth for Essex communities and businesses <p>ECC is also in the process of developing a Child Poverty Strategy for Essex. The provisional research for this strategy has highlighted that the majority of children in poverty are in households with at least one worker. Hence there may be a connection between low-paid, low-skilled work and child poverty. Whilst this review is not intending to look at any measures to address child poverty directly, any improvements to employment, skills and welfare to work provision in Essex are likely to have an impact on child poverty rates.</p> <p>Current work plan of committee A review of the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee’s work plan is currently taking place.</p>										
Timescales	<table><tr><td colspan="2"><i>To be confirmed –treat as guideline only at this stage</i></td></tr><tr><td>July 2014</td><td>Planning Initial research and background. Invitations sent to agencies and partners. Confirmation of work timetable.</td></tr><tr><td>September/ October 2014</td><td>Partners invited meetings Further research identified. Site visits, if necessary.</td></tr><tr><td>November 2014</td><td>Final draft of report</td></tr><tr><td>December 2014</td><td>Final report for committee</td></tr></table>	<i>To be confirmed –treat as guideline only at this stage</i>		July 2014	Planning Initial research and background. Invitations sent to agencies and partners. Confirmation of work timetable.	September/ October 2014	Partners invited meetings Further research identified. Site visits, if necessary.	November 2014	Final draft of report	December 2014	Final report for committee
<i>To be confirmed –treat as guideline only at this stage</i>											
July 2014	Planning Initial research and background. Invitations sent to agencies and partners. Confirmation of work timetable.										
September/ October 2014	Partners invited meetings Further research identified. Site visits, if necessary.										
November 2014	Final draft of report										
December 2014	Final report for committee										
Rationale for the Review	<p>The purpose of the review is to challenge the performance of national skills and welfare to work programmes operating in Essex with a view to improving outcomes for people and businesses. Additionally, the review would also enable a spotlight to be shone on areas of good</p>										

	<p>practice and highlight where things are working well.</p> <p>Skills and employment are issues of strategic importance for Essex in its pursuit of economic growth.</p> <p>Having previously contributed a significant body of local evidence and lobbying on these issues through the All Party Parliamentary Group, Local Growth and Skills and the Whole Essex Community Budget. Currently, Essex County Council is working with the Local Government Association and the County Council Network to influence Central Government to decentralise decision making and delivery of employment, skills and welfare to work provision to enable it to be more responsive to the needs of local businesses and more accountable to local people.</p> <p>The review would give Members sight of an area of policy that impacts directly on residents in Essex. Members would attempt to understand better the delivery, performance and barriers and, where necessary, hold to account, providers that seek to address issues on employment, skills and helping people back to work. The Committee would provide a valuable public arena to scrutinise issues of significance for Essex residents and strengthen the way that council engages at a national level. Members have a significant role to play in achieving ECC's strategic goal of local determination of this policy area.</p> <p>DWP's welfare to work provision (i.e. the Work Programme) is due to be re-let in 2016. This review is timely as it will contribute to ECC's strategic influence over this currently disjointed and poorly performing policy area potentially offering greater leverage to local communities.</p> <p>This direction of travel is consistent with the Whole Essex Community Budget programme, the Economic Plan for Essex (EPfE) and the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).</p> <p>Background to the review</p> <p>Descriptions of the programmes that this review is likely to focus on are below. Further details on the background and emerging issues are found in the Appendix at the end of this document.</p> <p>The Work Programme and Help to Work The Work Programme is commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Help to Work began in April 2014 as a new set of intensive measures to help the long-term employed back into work.</p> <p>Youth Contract The Youth Contract pledged by Government is national programme containing three main elements. The first is additional support for unemployed 18-24 year olds (delivered by DWP). The second is subsidies for small businesses taking on an apprentice aged 16-24</p>
--	---

	<p>(delivered by BIS). The third is a programme of additional support aimed at 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (delivered by DfE).</p> <p>Post-16 skills provision Post 16 education and skills funding comes through the Department for Education (DfE) for young people aged 16-18, and through Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) for those aged 19 and above. Whilst BIS is responsible for skills policy, the SFA is an administrative agency of BIS. The National Apprenticeship Service is a division of the SFA.</p> <p>To keep the scope of the review meaningful and manageable, this review is not intending to consider the mainstream education and training funding for 16-18 year olds that comes through the DfE.</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the programmes, including national performance data for comparison • Performance monitoring – is information available, reliable and accessible to enable us to monitor performance? • How does the programme work in Essex? • What is our relationship with the local providers? • How are they performing? • What mechanisms are in place to respond to local needs, including the need of businesses? • What recommendations would we make to Government Departments to improve the programme nationally and locally? • What can we do to improve local performance?
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>The review would need to engage with the Employment and Skills Board, Employability and Skills Unit, work on welfare reform and responsible officers (as stated in scoping document), as part of planning for scrutiny.</p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</p> <p>From June 2014, the strategy function can offer support, including research, to enable scrutiny of these important issues.</p>

Indicators of Success	<p>Of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of how all parties can work together to improve outcomes • An action plan that all parties can agree to adopt to deliver outcomes • An understanding of the impact on outcomes for Essex residents <p>Of the expected overall outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in length of time people are unemployed • More people into gainful work and reduced benefit churn • Reduction in skills deficits in Essex businesses that impinges of growth • Reduction in child poverty/ in work poverty
Notes	<p>Proposed inclusion in work programme beginning July 2014</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	COMAH / Communications Protocol
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	To undertake further monitoring of the outcomes of the recommendations made to the Council's Cabinet arising from the Scrutiny Report on Off Site Emergency Planning Requirements around COMAH Sites in Essex approved in February 2013, with particular reference to recommendation 4: <i>'That, in view of the importance of community resilience and the County Council's statutory duties, it be recommended to the Cabinet Members for Communities and Planning, the Leader, and Finance and Transformation Programme, that a protocol be developed to ensure that the services provided by the corporate Communications and IS Teams to the ECPEM Team are modern up to date, effective, and user friendly in the support and delivery of public information on emergency planning in Essex taking into account the needs of individual residents.'</i>
Relevant Corporate Links	This project centres upon monitoring the outcomes of recommendations already submitted to the Council's Executive.
Type of Review	Completion of monitoring review of outcomes of scrutiny activity to be undertaken by a Task and Finish Group as agreed by the Committee (Minute 5/ September 2013)
Timescales	Autumn 2014 – aim to complete
Rationale for the Review	<p>An in depth investigation on this topic was conducted and a scrutiny report was agreed by the former Economic Development, Environment and Highways Policy and Scrutiny Committee (EDEHPSC) in February 2013 (Minute 4).</p> <p>The Scrutiny Report has attracted wider attention, and the monitoring of its outcomes will assist in identifying the contribution that the investigation made towards promoting/ improving the issues investigated.</p> <p>At the Committee's September meeting the Cabinet Member's response to Scrutiny Report recommendations were reported. While the Report had been well received, full feedback on recommendation 4 proposing a communications protocol was incomplete. Consequently it was agreed that a Task and Finish Group be formed to investigate in more detail the Executive response to that recommendation.</p>

Scope of the Topic	The monitoring exercise will focus specifically upon the outcomes achieved or otherwise from the recommendations set out in the scrutiny report, and no new issues will be introduced for review as part of this exercise.
Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>To cross examine the evidence and witnesses on the response and outcomes of recommendation 4 as set out in the scrutiny report. The key lines of enquiry that will be along the lines:</p> <p>In term of the proposal for the development of a Communications Protocol to address the concerns set out in the Scrutiny Report –</p> <p>What existing processes and procedures are in place both internally with the Council's own services and externally with partners? Are there any protocols in place? Are there any proposals to introduce a protocol as set out in the recommendation?</p> <p>What evidence is there to demonstrate that the concerns set out in the scrutiny report are being addressed together with any relevant data? (It would be helpful for the TFG to be shown actual materials/ technology used)</p> <p>With regard to website, the TFG would like to be shown examples on how its content has been improved and the steps that a member of the public could obtain information from the Council's own website in an emergency situation.</p> <p>What literature has been produced for vulnerable members of the community, and those without electronic means to access information?</p> <p>What is 'social media'? What proof is that that it is an effective means of promoting understanding about services as opposed to alerting the public about incidents?</p>
Other Work Being Undertaken	Seek advice from officers./ Various innuendos about upgrading IS/ communication mechanisms but what in practice is currently taking place, and timelines.
What resources are required for this review?	<i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i>

Notes	<p>Inclusion in the work programme beginning in July and completion no later than October 2014</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>
--------------	--

Review Topic (Name of review)	Future of the Recycling Centres for Household Waste (RCHW) Service
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (PSEGSC)
Terms of Reference	To contribute to the development of a longer term vision for the operation of the Recycling Centres for Household Waste (RCHW) Service in Essex.
Relevant Corporate Links	
Timescales	In the autumn it is proposed that subject to other group activity being concluded that a new in depth review of the opportunities to develop the Recycling Centres for Household Waste Service be initiated. The review will be introduced by way of a briefing following the recently concluded customer survey, which will be incorporated as a part of a site visit to the new waste facility at Courtauld Road, Basildon. Again the timing of the review is proposed so that it may inform the way that a modern service could be developed in the future, and its role in terms of the provision of broader recycling facilities.
Rationale for the Review	<p>The former Economic Development, Environment and Highways Policy and Scrutiny Committee (EDEHPSC) approved an interim scrutiny report on the RCHW Service in January 2013 (Minute 5), and recommended that an in depth review be conducted on the future of the Service. The PSEGSC received a briefing in January 2014 on a survey that was due to be launched on public use of the Centres that will be used to inform the development of future proposals.</p> <p>The evidence collated as part of this review and conclusions reached will be forwarded to the Cabinet Member to contribute to the way that options and proposals are developed and, inter alia, the formulation of future decisions in relation to the Council's future recycling facilities.</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>The EDEHPSC proposal for this review proposed that account be taken of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the implementation of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy affect the role of the RCHW Service in practice? For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How has the development of kerbside collections affected the volume and type of material deposited at recycling centres, and what changes are envisaged in the future?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How will the operation of the Courtauld Road facility impact upon the RCHW Service? • Given the changing role of recycling centres: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What type of modern facilities will be required in the future? ○ How many centres in total may be necessary and where should they be located? ○ What are the key factors that should be considered in developing the future design of the service • What is the impact upon the type and frequency of visits to recycling centres given the variation in kerbside collections operated by WCAs, which may be impacting the ability of ECC to deliver an effective RCHW service, and how can those variations be addressed effectively? • What other recycling collection models exist across the country and what has been their impact upon the associated RCHW Services? • Across Essex how can the recycling of commercial waste be improved, whilst ensuring the RCHW service does not become overburdened?
Other Work Being Undertaken	The Council has conducted a survey on current public use and expectations of the RCHW Service, which would be taken into consideration as part of any review.
What resources are required for this review?	<i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i>
Notes	<p>Proposed inclusion in the work programme Autumn 2014</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Developing a Better Public Transport Network for Essex
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	<p>Briefing :</p> <p>To understand the legal basis for the provision of bus services in England.</p> <p>To understand the role and responsibilities of the County Council in regard to the provision of passenger transport services</p> <p>To consider whether there are any further opportunities within that legislative framework that might merit consideration for all or part of the County, the most obvious being Quality Bus Partnerships and/or Quality Bus Contracts</p> <p>To assist the Committee in any future consideration of public transport related issues.</p>
Relevant Corporate Links	<p>All of the corporate outcomes rely on the residents of Essex being able to access the services or amenities through which they will be realised. Local transport services play a key role in enabling this access and underlie and support all these outcomes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Children in Essex get the best start in life. By providing access to schools, colleges, training, work, health and leisure services. B. People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing. By providing access to health services, shopping, leisure activities, employment, reducing isolation and increasing independence. C. People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and lifelong-learning. By providing access to learning and training opportunities, supplier workforce training and apprenticeships. D. People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm. By providing access to care services and providing safe transport for access to health, education, work and leisure services, reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs). E. Sustainable economic growth for Essex communities and businesses. By attracting inward investment by offering improved connectivity, access to work and leisure opportunities and reducing congestion. F. People in Essex experience a high quality and

	<p>sustainable environment. By reducing congestion and CO₂ emissions.</p> <p>G. People in Essex can live independently and exercise control over their lives. By enabling access to key services and improving community involvement and buy in to decisions regarding transport provision.</p>
Timescales	<p>The briefing is proposed for the June 2014 meeting so that Members have a greater understanding of the topic.</p> <p>Briefing the June Committee meeting on the statutory framework with further briefings may be planned later in the year in parallel with the development of any proposals.</p>
Rationale for the Review	<p>The purpose of the review is to consider the strategic approach the County Council should adopt in developing any revised policy toward the provision of Public Transport services in light of the Council's legislative duties, its corporate outcomes and the need to get the most effective use out of its investment in transport services. In particular the committee is invited to consider the merits of other opportunities within the legislative framework, in particular the introduction of quality bus partnerships and/ or quality bus contracts..</p> <p>Essex CC currently spends some £64.2m annually on transport services across its functions carrying over 17.7 m passenger journeys each year (including local bus, schools, social care, community transport-for split, please see attached document). In addition the NHS spends an estimated £10m on non-urgent patient transport.</p> <p>The commercial local bus network carries around 38 million passengers a year.</p> <p>Given this level of expenditure, the underlying importance of transport to achieving the County Corporate Outcomes and the cross functional nature of the county's involvement, a cross functional review of its strategy towards the provision of public transport could offer a significant opportunity both to improve the overall service on offer to Essex residents and to obtain best value for the investment made.</p> <p>Consequently it is important that the Committee's membership is well informed on the relevant statutory framework and local circumstances to provide a foundation for developing any future scrutiny work on the topic. The breadth of the topic also opens up opportunity to consider revised regulatory framework for the provision of both contracted and commercial services, in the form of enhanced quality bus partnerships or quality bus contracts.</p>

Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>Specify the key lines of enquiry that will underpin the initial planning of the review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the legal basis for the provision of bus services in England. • To understand the role and responsibilities of the County Council in regard to the provision of passenger transport services • To consider the merits of other options within the legislative framework, most notably Quality Bus Partnerships and/or of Quality Bus Contracts
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>What other work is currently being undertaken in relation to this topic that may have a bearing upon its conduct, and any appropriate timescales and deadlines for that work.</p> <p>The Director for Commissioning, Transport and Infrastructure is working with other Place and People Commissioners to consider a revised policy and strategy for developing an improved public transport network.</p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p><i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i></p> <p>Officer and Member time</p>
Notes	<p>Briefing 26 June 2014</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Essex County Council's Local Transport Plan (2015 – 2021) Strategy and Priority Projects for Stimulating Economic Growth
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	To receive a briefing to investigate the links between employment and growth and the highways infrastructure, which will contribute to identifying a scrutiny role in the future development of any proposed activity.
Relevant Corporate Links	<p>It is a cross cutting topic that draws in various highways infrastructure and economic growth strategies and plans, as well as joint working with other organisations such as the SELEP. An overview of those links is attached at the Appendix.</p> <p>Cabinet approval of Strategy Minute 6/ February 2014</p>
Timescales	Two stages: Briefing followed next year by longer term in depth review
Rationale for the Review	<p>Since 2012 the Council has adopted a number of strategies to promote Economic Growth In terms of Transport there is the Local Transport Plan, but in the wider context there is the Integrated County Strategy, the Economic Growth Strategy and more recently the Essex Plan for Growth and the Strategic Economic Plan that will support and stimulate the delivery of economic development across the county. All stimulate the economy vis transport infrastructure proposals or in the case of the LTP policy lines to promote growth and prosperity.</p> <p>Given the significance of the topic it is important to raise awareness and understanding of the issues, and encourage support across the whole community at the same time as managing those expectations.</p> <p>Members have shown an interest in in undertaking a scrutiny review that links economic growth and transport infrastructure issues given the need to provide good infrastructure and transport networks to support access to businesses and jobs.</p> <p>To assist the Committee to direct its attention onto narrower significant issues it is suggested that a review could usefully examine how growth as identified by District Council Local Plans affects the need for new infrastructure; how such infrastructure is required both close to sites earmarked in Local Plans and wider strategic Transport networks; the prioritisation of such projects in strategic documents and how all projects are to be funded.</p>

Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>Given the breadth of the topic, any investigation could be broken down into parts that build up relevant knowledge to achieve the overall aims of the review.</p> <p>What are the various strategies and plans relating to the county's infrastructure that have been adopted to stimulate economic growth, and what is their significance?</p> <p>Who are the Council's partners in the delivery of the strategies?</p> <p>What do we mean by economic growth?</p> <p>How does transport drive/inhibit economic growth.</p> <p>The assessment of economic impact.</p> <p>The affect a focus on economic growth has on the type and location of programmed schemes.</p>
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>Cabinet approval of Strategy Minute 6/ February 2014</p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p><i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i></p>
Notes	<p><i>This proposal also links in with points made by Cllr Henderson, and some discussion at December 2013 briefing on Economic Growth Strategy.</i></p> <p><i>Cabinet Minute 6/ February 2014</i></p> <p><i>Incorporate briefing July 2014</i></p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Waste Energy Strategy
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	To receive a seminar on the operation of the new Courtauld Road waste facility, and consider the longer term options for Refuse Derived Fuel.
Relevant Corporate Links	The solutions being explored are driven and determined by the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Essex which has been adopted by the County Council and 11 of the 12 Essex District Councils.
Timescales	Briefing to be held at the Courtauld Road facility on 25 September 2014.
Rationale for the Review	As part of the wider Energy Commissioning Strategy, the long term options for use of the fuel produced by the Residual Waste Treatment Plant were discussed at PLT on 14 th April, and the Cabinet Member has suggested that this is an area where the Committee's comments would be welcome.
Scope of the Topic	<p>The County Council, as Waste Disposal Authority, currently sends 377,000 tons of municipal waste to landfill. When the Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) facility in Basildon starts to become operational in the late summer of 2014 the volumes of waste going to landfill will eventually reduce to zero.</p> <p>The MBT plant will produce circa 177,000 tons of Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) which can be used to generate power. Cabinet have already agreed to the procurement, which will commence in April 2014, of a short term off-take arrangement for this material. It should be noted that RDF legally remains classified as a waste and:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracts a cost to dispose of. This cost is, however, anticipated to be lower than landfilling the material; • Needs to be processed in a facility subject to the Waste Incineration Directive. <p>At the end of the commissioning period (Summer 2015), the plant is targeted to produce a higher quality Solid Recovered Fuel (SRF), meeting predefined guaranteed standards relating to composition, moisture content and calorific content, which should have reduced disposal costs. The longer term arrangements for SRF need to be</p>

	<p>determined and could include:-</p> <p>Option A Continuing with short term spot-market off-take contracts;</p> <p>Option B Enter into long term off-take arrangements;</p> <p>Option C Enter into some form of partnership with a high energy user to construct new energy generation facilities;</p> <p>Option D The County Council building its own SRF power station (the capital investment required to deliver such a facility would be circa £120 - £150m – although this could be project funded).</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptability of the high level options identified above • The ongoing role of scrutiny throughout the life-cycle of this project.
Other Work Being Undertaken	Scrutiny examination of the long term strategy for Recycling Centres for Household Waste.
What resources are required for this review?	<i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i>
Notes	<p>Arising from the seminar a report will be prepared setting out the Committee's conclusions.</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Highways Maintenance and Potholes
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	To promote a seminar designed to provide Members with a better understanding of how highways maintenance including the repair of potholes is managed and the choices made. It will contribute to any future scrutiny role in the consideration of related issues.
Relevant Corporate Links	By its nature the topic is underpinned by corporate policies and framework for highways maintenance, and has significant budgetary implications.
Timescales	A seminar will be arranged in Autumn 2014
Rationale for the Review	<p>Highways maintenance and potholes are probably two of the most popular topics referred by residents to councillors. While they are often raised for discussion at meetings, Members continue to express concerns about their own lack of knowledge on how maintenance is undertaken, and the choices made. In fact the Council's management of pothole repairs and highways maintenance is well documented on its website, albeit some of the literature is technical in nature and designed for operational purposes.</p> <p>In the longer term it has been identified that at a national level the Government is planning changes to future highways maintenance strategies, and at that time the Council will review its own strategies in the light of any national changes. It is anticipated that this activity will take place in 2015/2016, and nearer the time the Scrutiny Committee can consider how to influence any new strategies.</p> <p>In the meantime Members continue to demand to be given a better understanding of highways maintenance and pothole control. In the short term it is proposed to design a briefing(s) to enhance Members' understanding of the County Council's responsibilities, its maintenance management, the national/ local context, and local operational issues. A seminar would be a means of building the foundation for more informed debate in the future and a more in depth scrutiny review once there is greater clarity on any changes to national strategies.</p>

Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>The aims of a briefing would be to develop a better understanding of the topic –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially from a strategic rather than parochial point of view, its background from a technical perspective, processes and procedures, financial context, communications and publicity, and national context. <p>Consideration of the topic also raises questions around the need to develop the Committee's understanding of the way that those services within its remit are funded and how budgetary considerations affect the way that decisions relating to the allocation of funds for highways maintenance are made in practice. Rather than solely focussing on the bigger picture it would also be useful to break down some of the costs so that they may be considered in terms of cost per head of population in Essex, and proportion of council tax funding.</p>
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>Various Central Government initiatives are anticipated that will have an impact upon what the Highways Authority may or may not do in relation to this topic. This will be an important factor in the timing of Committee engagement in the longer run.</p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p><i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i></p>
Indicators of Success	<p>The Committee will be better informed about the strategic issues associated with the topic, which will support a more objective approach to the planning of any future in depth related scrutiny. The conclusions of the seminar will be set out in a report.</p>
Notes	<p>Topic raised at Council, and request from Cllr Kendall to review topics. Outline above takes these points into consideration.</p> <p>Proposed that the seminar be held on the Committee's scheduled activity day on 23 October 2014.</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Ringway Jacobs Contract
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	<p>To promote a seminar designed to promote a better understanding of the management of the Ringway Jacobs Contract and the governance arrangements. It will contribute to the development of any future scrutiny in the consideration of related issues.</p> <p>The conclusions of the seminar will be set out in a report.</p>
Relevant Corporate Links	By its nature the topic is underpinned by the corporate framework and policies, and has significant budgetary implications.
Timescales	In the shorter term an in depth briefing be organised to encourage better Member understanding of the Ringway Jacobs Contract.
Rationale for the Review	Given the significance of the Ringway Jacobs Contract in the way that highways services are provided in Essex, it is important that Members understand how it works in practice. A briefing will also assist in the identification of more specific related issues where the Committee could perform a beneficial scrutiny role.
Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>The aims of a briefing(s) would be to develop a better understanding of the topic –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical context, and identify the original objectives of the Contract. • What is the relationship between the County Council, Ringway Jacobs, and sub-contractors? • How is the Contract managed and how is work co-ordinated between the respective parties? • What are the governance arrangements and how are decisions made? • How is performance measured, and what lessons have been learned so far and improvements made? • financial context, • communications and publicity.

	As part of the briefing it would be helpful to promote understanding by incorporating some case studies to illustrate how the Contract works in practice, eg the various stages of a capital project, routine maintenance, and how complaints are addressed.
Other Work Being Undertaken	The Performance Framework is under review currently.
What resources are required for this review?	<i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i>
Notes	<p>To be scheduled into the work programme when an opportunity arises, and resource is available.</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Local Highways Panels
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	The overall objective of the review could be around whether or not the Local Highways Panels (LHPs) have achieved their original objective, and what lessons have been learned to inform more effective working in the future?
Relevant Corporate Links	LHPs are part of the Council's evolving localism framework, and underpin prioritisation of highways capital projects
Timescales	Suggested that any review of this topic be programmed in the longer term ie 2015/2016 as the Panels would have been operational for 3 complete years, and so more experience will be available to inform an investigation and produce more effective outcomes.
Rationale for the Review	<p>The LHPs were first introduced in 2012 and are devised on localities based on District boundaries with a mixture of County and District Council representation. They are an example of putting a mechanism into place to promote localism. Given the variety of practice that they have shown, it would be pertinent for an impartial review of what may or may not have worked well, to compare their operation, and address criticisms in order to identify good practice.</p> <p>They are still relatively new in their workings, and a scrutiny review after three years of operation would enable enough time to elapse to be able to review their development and the implementation of projects in practice. It is too early in their operation to make a proper assessment of their success or otherwise. As each Panel has approached its objectives based upon local preferences, a review would enable the Committee to investigate and compare best practice with a view to improving their overall performance across the county.</p> <p>Given the nature of the partnership working it would also be preferable to give advance warning to all the LHPs of plans to scrutinise their activities following this financial year, and the success or otherwise of their planned work programmes. The Cabinet Member has attended Committee meetings and advised on his proposals to enhance LHP working, and action is underway to underpin more effective working in the coming months.</p>

	<p>Although Members have been advised about the operation of the LHPs, individuals Members have continued to express concerns about their individual local Panels. It would be preferable that the planning of any review should be based upon a better understanding of the strategic objectives to enable a more holistic approach to be taken into the investigation of their development across Essex, and likelihood of the Committee reaching more informed conclusions in order to promote tangible improvements to their future operation.</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>Knowledge required:</p> <p>What were the original objectives for setting up the LHPs?</p> <p>What are the current role and responsibilities of the LHPs? How have they been set up including their governance arrangements?</p> <p>Operation:</p> <p>How do the twelve LHP s operate in practice, and how do they differ in practice?</p> <p>How have they allocated the funding that is available to them?</p> <p>What lessons of good practice have been learned?</p> <p><i>It would be necessary for a review to develop a framework of relevant common questions to address to every LHP to establish experience, allocation of funds, and priorities.</i></p>
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>The LHPs are still in the process of developing their activity, and the Cabinet Member has been reviewing their operation and introduced some changes since last year to improve their effectiveness, which he has advised the Committee upon.</p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p><i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i></p>
Notes	<p>Topic has been referred to the Committee in the past as as call in, and it has been the subject of briefing</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Economic Growth and Partnership Working
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	To identify the different forms of place-related partnerships that exist currently in Essex, and consider the most effective form of partnership working to support economic growth
Relevant Corporate Links	The issue of partnership working around economic growth does not feature in the corporate plan, but it is critical to the successful delivery of the Economic Plan for Essex, the work previously commissioned through the Economic Growth Strategy and the South East LEP's Strategic Economic Plan, for which all of our work is a key contributor.
Timescales	<i>To be considered in the future</i>
Rationale for the Review	Following on from the briefing planned on the Economic Growth Strategy the Committee undertake an in depth review on partnership working associated with economic growth in Essex. There are a variety of formal and informal models such a SELEP, Haven Gateway, Thames Gateway South Essex, West Essex Alliance, Heart of Essex and local sector based or business groupings all with an interest in the economic growth agenda. A number of Members have asked for more background on existing partnerships and their governance arrangements. Given that partnerships are being set up as a popular means of promoting change, the Committee will scrutinise the effectiveness of different approaches to partnership working, and raise awareness of their activities.
Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>What is the role of local authorities in terms of the economic growth agenda?</p> <p>What partnerships exist currently in Essex to promote economic growth?</p> <p>What are the objectives of the various Partnerships and are those objectives being achieved, and are benefits been delivered across the community in Essex?</p> <p>How are the governance arrangements of the partnerships eg set up, support arrangements, sources of funding, decision making framework, accountabilities?</p> <p>What makes a successful partnership and how can good practice be shared and implemented?</p>

Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>ECC are currently doing a piece of work around broader partnership support and engagement which is directly relevant.</p> <p>Additionally, the South East LEP has recently submitted its Strategic Economic Plan, which relies heavily on the success of local delivery partnerships – including the Greater Essex Business Board.</p>
What resources are required for this review?	
Notes	<p>Not to be prioritised at this time but to be considered as a topic for inclusion in a future work programme.</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Parking Partnerships
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	Are the original objectives of the Parking Partnerships being delivered, and what lessons have been learned to inform more effective partnership working in the future?
Relevant Corporate Links	While the County Council remains the Highways Authority a review of the Parking Partnerships entails the scrutiny of externally managed bodies.
Timescales	The Committee received a briefing on this topic in Autumn 2013. Any further review will be considered for selection in a future work programme.
Rationale for the Review	<p>The Parking Partnership is a relatively new organisation based on partnership working which, from 1 April 2011, brought together all street-based parking services in Essex. The service is council-run and is a partnership between Essex County Council and two lead councils underpinned by formal agreements: It is in two areas; the North Partnership is led by Colchester Council and the South Partnership by Chelmsford Council.</p> <p>The aim is to run parking enforcement to a fair and consistent standard in order to provide the same level of service but in a more efficient way. The two Partnerships are responsible in each area for the on-street Civil Enforcement Officers; the parking enforcement process together with challenges to, and payments of, parking penalties plus administration of the parking restrictions and the management of the scheme.</p> <p>A review of the Parking Partnership was identified for inclusion in a scrutiny committee work programme once sufficient time had elapsed for scrutineers to be able to investigate the effectiveness of its operation.</p> <p>NB The Parking Partnerships form a discreet area of traffic management activity based upon formal agreements and working practices, and are in fact joint committees subject to statutory considerations. They are distinct in nature from other bodies such as the Local Highways Panels.</p>

Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>The County Council established the Parking Partnership with the formal agreement of all Essex Borough, City and District Councils.</p> <p>What were the original objectives for setting up the Parking Partnerships? What were the issues that the local authorities were aiming to resolve?</p> <p>How have the Parking Partnerships been formally set up including the governance arrangements?</p> <p>How are the Parking Partnerships intended to operate, and how do they differ in practice? What lessons of good practice have been learned?</p>
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>Necessary to liaise with the Partnerships nearer the time that the Committee may decide to undertake a review to ascertain if any individual districts are conducting any work into the operation of the Partnerships.</p> <p><i>It is also noted that the County Council Cabinet Member will be reviewing the Partnerships later this year.</i></p>
What resources are required for this review?	<p>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</p>
Notes	<p>As part of the topic selection process to prioritise topics and allocate resources, it is not proposed to include a review of parking partnerships at this time in the work programme. However, it will be kept in the list of potential items for the future.</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

Review Topic (Name of review)	Cressing Temple Barns
Committee	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
Terms of Reference	ie the overall objective of the review
Relevant Corporate Links	Member request relates to operational issues at Cressing Temple
Timescales	
Rationale for the Review	<p>Councillor Kendall has requested a review for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about the loss of experienced full and part time staff • The budget available for maintenance • The ongoing viability of the Brans and gardens and their historic importance to Essex County Council <p>He cites that 'The Friends of Cressing Temple Gardens' have serious concerns about the changes being made at Cressing Temple. In terms of staffing cuts, maintenance of the buildings and gardens and the long term viability of the site.</p>
Key Lines of Enquiry	<p>Specify the key lines of enquiry that will underpin the initial planning of the review</p> <p>What are the operational changes being made at Cressing Temple? How will those changes affect the future of the historical site?</p>
Other Work Being Undertaken	<p>What other work is currently being undertaken in relation to this topic that may have a bearing upon its conduct, and any appropriate timescales and deadlines for that work.</p>

What resources are required for this review?	<p><i>In planning the review it is necessary to identify what resources are required to undertake the review, and any costs associated with the committee's activity. Given that the resource available is finite, it will be necessary to consider carefully the timing of the review within the Committee's overall work programme.</i></p>
Indicators of Success	<p>Councillor Kendall cites the desired outcome of a review to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the staffing numbers are fully reviewed to ensure Cressing Temple remains viable. • There is a sensible budget in place for maintenance • County Members have a far better understanding of what is happening.
Notes	<p>Cressing Temple was referred to as part of a Committee briefing in December 2013, and the changes that were being made both at that site and across the Country Parks Service.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Cabinet Member will provide an update on the topic when he is invited to address the Committee on his portfolio as part of scheduled activity.</p> <p><i>This document dated June 2014</i></p>

		AGENDA ITEM 7
		PSEG/20/14
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 June 2014	
PART NIGHT LIGHTING SCRUTINY REVIEW (Minute 10/ January 2014)		
Enquiries to:	Christine Sharland, Scrutiny Officer 01245 430450 Christine.sharland@essex.gov.uk	

At its meeting in September 2013 (Minute 7) the Committee agreed that a Task and Finish Group ('the Group') be set up to consider Part Night Lighting with the following terms of reference for the scrutiny review:

‘To examine the process of the current consultation on Part night Lighting, and review the findings of the former Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee set out in its Scrutiny Report dated 2010 in the context of the current situation including the application of new technology.’

The Group comprises Councillors Chris Pond (Lead Member), Tony Hedley, Roger Hirst, Mike Danvers, Stephen Robinson, and Andy Wood. Councillor Simon Walsh is an ex officio member.

The Group has now concluded the review, and is seeking the Committee's endorsement of its final draft scrutiny report, which sets out the conclusions and recommendations it has reached.

The Group's final draft scrutiny report dated June 2014 is attached at the Appendix to this report. Please note that the final report will be formatted and the Executive Summary completed once the Committee's endorsement has been given, and before it is forwarded to the Cabinet Member.

Action required by the Committee:

The Committee is requested to endorse the attached scrutiny report

containing the following recommendations of the Task and Finish Group:

Recommended to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation:

Recommendation 1

That the lessons learned from the feedback on the way that the roll out of PNL across Essex was communicated to the public and local councils be taken into consideration to improve the way that projects are launched in the future.

Recommendation 2

That any potential changes to metered energy supply be kept under constant review, and implemented when it becomes permissible and when clear savings would result.

Recommendation 3

That a formal procedure be adopted for the consideration of requests for the variation of PNL scheme at specific locations.

Recommendation 4

That the exception criteria be amended so that the provisions are more transparent, and reflect variations that may have become permissible by virtue of variations allowed during the course of the recent roll out of PNL across Essex.

Recommendation 5

That the costs and benefits of LED lighting should be kept under constant review, and particularly its application in new lighting installed as a part of any new development.

Recommendation 6

That the County Council implement a mechanism by 31 December 2014 whereby it provides a means for others to be recharged where there is a local wish for more variations to PNL that did not co-incide with exception criteria including a recharge for the extra cost of energy, and agency arrangements.

Recommendation 7

That a protocol for limited area switch on at the request of the Emergency Services be developed urgently and no later than 31 December 2014, and a separate one for wide-area emergencies such as floods and high winds. Furthermore it is requested that those protocols be submitted to the Committee for its consideration.

Recommendation 8

That the Cabinet Members for Waste and Recycling, and Highways and Transportation take positive action to launch a major publicity campaign to persuade local councils, public service providers and private firms to review their current levels of street and premises lighting in order to encourage them to support the County Council in reducing the carbon footprint and cost of lighting overall.

Recommendation 9

That in respect of the all the above recommendations the Cabinet Members, as identified, be requested to provide an indication when action will be implemented and details of the action proposed at an early stage, or alternatively a clear indication why a recommendation will not be acceded to.

Appendix

Draft Part Night Lighting Scrutiny Report

Dated June 2014

Index and glossary

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Background
- General Considerations
- Analysis
- Conclusions and Recommendations

Glossary

CMS	Central Management System
ECC	Essex County Council
LED	Light Emitting Diode
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PNL	Part Night Lighting
PSEGSC	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee
SSCPSC	Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Executive Summary

To be written and finalised once the scrutiny report has been endorsed by the Committee and before it is forwarded to the Cabinet Member.

From the scrutiny investigation it was proposed by a Task and Finish Group that the following recommendations be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for his consideration, and in turn his response to the Committee's recommendations would be reported back in due course.

Recommended to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation:

Recommendation 1

That the lessons learned from the feedback on the way that the roll out of PNL across Essex was communicated to the public and local councils be taken into consideration to improve the way that projects are launched in the future.

Recommendation 2

That any potential changes to metered energy supply be kept under constant review, and implemented when it becomes permissible and when clear savings would result.

Recommendation 3

That a formal procedure be adopted for the consideration of requests for the variation of PNL scheme at specific locations.

Recommendation 4

That the exception criteria be amended so that the provisions are more transparent, and reflect variations that may have become permissible by virtue of variations allowed during the course of the recent roll out of PNL across Essex.

Recommendation 5

That the costs and benefits of LED lighting should be kept under constant review, and particularly its application when new lighting is installed as part of any new development.

Recommendation 6

That the County Council implement a mechanism by 31 December 2014 whereby it provides a means for others to be recharged where there is a local wish for more variations to PNL that did not co-incide with exception criteria including a recharge for the extra cost of energy, and agency arrangements.

Recommendation 7

That a protocol for limited area switch on at the request of the Emergency Services be developed urgently and no later than 31 December 2014, and a separate one for wide-area emergencies such as floods and high winds. Furthermore it is requested that those protocols be submitted to the Committee for its consideration.

Recommendation 8

That the Cabinet Members for Waste and Recycling, and Highways and Transportation take positive action to launch a major publicity campaign to persuade local councils, public service providers and private firms to review their current levels of street and premises lighting in order to encourage them to support the County Council in reducing the carbon footprint and cost of lighting overall.

Recommendation 9

That in respect of the all the above recommendations the Cabinet Members, as identified, be requested to provide an indication when action will be implemented and details of the action proposed at an early stage, or alternatively a clear indication why a recommendation will not be acceded to. A full Cabinet Member response to the Scrutiny Report would be sought for the Committee in Autumn 2014.

Introduction

In September 2013 (Minute 7) the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (PSEGSC) decided to set up a Task and Finish Group ('the Group') with the following terms of reference:

'To examine the process of the current consultation on Part Night Lighting, and review the findings of the former Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee set out in its Scrutiny Report dated 2010 in the context of the current situation including the application of new technology.'

The Group comprises Councillors Chris Pond (Lead Member), Mike Danvers, Roger Hirst, Tony Hedley, Stephen Robinson, Andy Wood, and Simon Walsh (ex officio). Originally Councillor Kerry Smith was appointed as a member of the Group but did not participate in the review.

This scrutiny report sets out the Group's findings and conclusions, and a number of recommendations addressed to the Cabinet Member (subject to the Committee's endorsement)

Background

During 2006 Essex County Council (ECC) developed proposals to introduce part night lighting (PNL) across the whole county having taken into account experience in West Sussex where it has been in operation since the energy crisis of the 1970s.

In 2007 ECC introduced PNL in the district areas of Maldon and Uttlesford as a pilot scheme to save money and reduce its carbon emissions and light pollution. In effect street lighting is switched off between 12 midnight and 5 am with some exceptions such as town centres, key road junctions, and accident cluster sites. This has not resulted in any increase in recorded crime or road collisions in those districts, and has delivered energy savings of 20% (approximately £70,000 per annum).

The former Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee (SSCPSC) played a role in reviewing the pilot scheme before the Council reached any decisions on how to proceed countywide. It produced a scrutiny report entitled 'Street Lighting at Night' dated July 2010, which set out its conclusions and a number of recommendations. It was clear to that Committee that views on the subject were strongly held and that there was no right or wrong answer to satisfy all shades of opinion. Nevertheless the County Council, as the Lighting Authority, had to take the lead role in the county and whilst consultation with other parties would be important, the final decisions had to rest with it. The Council had a clear view on handling

environmental concerns, and the Committee reiterated the Council's policy that cutting emissions should be taken onto account. It specifically rejected the view that nothing should be done. The advice that the Committee decided to offer the Cabinet Member was based on the principle that the level of lighting in the county should be reduced, and that wherever possible, new technology should be the means of achieving targets in this field.

The Cabinet Member's response to the SSCPSC recommendations was reviewed in July 2010, and published as part of its scrutiny report. The Cabinet Member at that time confirmed that he accepted the recommendations, and explained how he proposed to roll out a Central Management System (CMS) for the control of street lighting throughout Essex. A full business case was being prepared as an 'invest to save scheme' by the Council. At that time the implementation of the project was based upon a start date of April 2011 with a caveat being the availability of funding.

In fact the Cabinet approved formally the purchase of a system for the central management of all ECC street lights following vigorous tendering procedures in June 2011. The business case highlighted that the following benefits would accrue from the implementation of a CMS and PNL:

Financial savings – revenue savings of around £1 million per annum as a result of reduced energy consumption.

Environmental benefits – Significant carbon and light pollution or 'sky glow' reductions across Essex. If the target of switching 70% of street lights to part night lighting is achieved, it is estimated that it will reduce carbon emissions by 8,000 tonnes per annum.

Operational benefits – The installation of CMS would provide notification of street lighting failure enabling a responsive maintenance service across Essex, and increased equipment lifespan. In addition the CMS will allow street lights to come on/off with greater accuracy in relation to natural light levels and lead to more intelligent overall management of street lights. These operational improvements would serve to improve the public perception of street lighting maintenance as a result.

The CMS would be installed on all street lighting columns across Essex namely in the region of 128,000 fixtures. Cabinet report CAB/17/11 provides a fuller explanation of the implications of acquiring the new technology.

With the implementation of the CMS the programme for the roll out of PNL across the whole county on a district by district basis could gain momentum, as lighting columns were fitted the relevant equipment.

Aside from the principle of PNL having been established as ECC policy, the application of exception criteria is an important feature of the Essex project throughout its development. This means that street lights in certain locations meeting the criteria set out below will continue to be lit through the night.

--

Exception Criteria

- Major lit inter-urban dual carriageway traffic routes.
- Sites where there are a large number of conflicting traffic movements (eg roundabouts) which are on significant routes (generally those lit by columns greater than 6 metres high).
- Sites where street lights installed as a result of accident remedial measures.
- Town Centre type areas where there is one or more of the following features:
 - Public CCTV
 - High proportion of high security premises (eg banks, jewellers); areas of high crime risk high crime risk;
 - High concentration of people at night such as transport interchanges, nightclubs etc.
- Main approaches to town centre areas defined in the section above, where there is a mix of development between residential and commercial/ industrial i.e. not exclusively residential.
- Sites where the police can demonstrate that there will be an increase in crime if the lights are switched off during part of the night (or that there will be a decrease in crime if the lights are switched back on).
- Remote footpaths and alleys linking residential streets.
- Where there is a statutory requirement to provide lighting.

In areas meeting the above criteria, where there are more than adequate numbers of lighting columns, the County Council will consider switching off some of the lights between midnight and 5 am.

The roll out of PNL across Essex has encountered criticism, and was an underlying reason for the setting up of the Task and Finish Group. While the consultation undertaken is explored in more depth in the analysis section of this report, it is important to put it into the overall context of the PNL roll out.

While the principle of PNL has been adopted by ECC for several years, more recently it has sought feedback on its proposals for the application of the exception criteria in individual districts. It is noted that the Council has published ongoing press releases providing updates on the scheme throughout the PNL project.

Consultation in the summer of 2012 began on the implementation of PNL in Braintree and Chelmsford with the local councils, the Police, Fire and Ambulance

Services, and other stakeholders. This was an opportunity for stakeholders to identify any sites that they wanted to be considered as an exception for lights to remain lit through the night. The Cabinet Member's decision to implement PNL in the two districts was published in August 2013, and was subsequently called in. Following an informal meeting the call in was withdrawn on the basis that the PSEGSC receive a briefing on PNL and, in turn, the Committee established this Group to consider certain aspects of the project.

In September 2013 further consultation was initiated to complete the implementation of PNL across Essex on a district by district basis. Gradually the Cabinet Member published individual district decisions. All but two were called in, and their consideration is recorded in the Minutes of PSEGSC meetings between September 2013 and February 2014.

The focus of the consultation was upon the application of the proposed exception criteria, and maps were produced to show the position of individual lighting columns as well as identifying those columns proposed to be switched to PNL.

General Considerations

ECC is the third largest lighting authority in the country. There are in the region of 160,000 lighting columns in the county of which 128,000 are controlled by the County Council as Highways Authority. Other lighting may be provided for amenity purposes by other local councils and housing authorities.

If all street lights in Essex remain on throughout the night, the total annual bill for street lighting is estimated at £4.9 million. Once PNL is fully rolled out across the county that bill is estimated to fall to £3.7 million.

The annual cost energy cost of a typical light for instance outside County Hall (Column 3 Market Street) per annum is estimated at £120. If that light was fitted with a LED lantern then the energy cost per annum is estimated at £76. The cost of changing the lantern to LED would be £580.

The Group received the following advice from Officers upon the responsibilities of a Highways Authority:

Highways Act 1980 – Section 97

The law about street lighting is set out in section 97 of the Highways Act 1980 which is set out below:

Section “97 — Lighting of highways.

(1) The Minister and every local highway authority **may** provide lighting for the purposes of any highway or proposed highway for which they are or will be the highway authority, and may for that purpose—

(a) contract with any persons for the supply of gas, electricity or other means of lighting; and

(b) construct and maintain such lamps, posts and other works as they consider necessary.

(2) A highway authority may alter or remove any works constructed by them under this section or vested in them under Part III of the Local Government Act 1966 or section 270 below.

(3) A highway authority shall pay compensation to any person who sustains damage by reason of the execution of works under this section.

(4) Section 45 of the Public Health Act 1961 (attachment of street lamps to buildings) and section 81 of that Act (summary recovery of damages for negligence) apply to a highway authority who are not a council of a kind therein mentioned as they apply to such a council."

The key word is 'may' in sub-section (1) which makes it clear that there is never a duty to light.

In 2006 the case of Cartwright v Derbyshire County Council was decided in the Mansfield County Court. Mrs Cartwright tripped over a kerb in a poorly lit street (in fact the street light nearest to the house she had left was unlit). The Court made it clear that the Council had no duty to light the highway and no duty that it did not.

Sub-sections (3) and (4) are solely concerned with people who suffer damage to their property caused by physical works of putting up street lights or, it could be supposed, if a badly maintained streetlight fell on a pedestrian. They are not relevant to people suffering a loss as a result of there being no lights. Although this is only a County Court decision, it has been reported informally by legal publishers considered.

There is an exception to this which is that specific road features (such as traffic calming road humps and central refuges) which are required to be lit and Essex County Council does ensure that these features continue to be supplied with all night lighting.

Although PNL is not a new concept, its adoption across the country has gradually been expanding recently for example in Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Dorset, and Bath, and a number of local authorities are in the process of introducing it including Kent. Experience and public reaction to the switching of street lights has varied where PNL has been rolled out being affected by the way it has been planned, managed, and extent of the proposals. Information about the individual schemes can be found on council websites, including some scrutiny investigations, as well as reviews conducted by Police organisations on road safety and crime issues.

Analysis

- **Central Management System**

The CMS has been an important milestone in the development not only of PNL in Essex, but also as a street lighting management tool for repair and maintenance. Consequently the Group considered that it would be helpful to gain a better understanding of its operation and took the opportunity to invite Will Gibson, the Managing Director of Telensa, a local company based at Great Chesterford, to give evidence.

At the outset Mr Gibson confirmed that the CMS is applying new technology to street lighting management. His company currently has 50% of the world market, and Essex has the largest deployment of the wireless technology in the world. He gave the Group a comprehensive overview of the technology, its operation and capabilities, and answered the Group's questions.

The CMS is based upon wireless communications technology and Essex is at the forefront of its development for the management of street lighting. It is a tool to:

- communicate with individual street lights,
- control the lights,
- monitor lights to detect faults for repair and maintenance,
- measure energy consumption, and
- assist in the management of the street lighting asset and deliver a better service.

In Essex there are a variety of lighting columns in existence and each one has been retrofitted with appropriate telecell equipment so that they can communicate with a base station network.

The CMS features and benefits include:

- Full control of the ECC lighting network (on/off/ override).
- Fully interoperable with ECC's asset management system (eg Mayrise).
- It provides comprehensive monitoring and reporting information that can be produced in a variety of formats using different parameters, and can be programmed according to requirements. Historical data will be captured through event logging.
- The CMS is operated remotely via the internet.
- "Trimming" the time at which lights were switched on, which could save energy costs in the expensive evening period.

It was confirmed that as the CMS is capable of measuring energy consumption, it can be used to inform a more accurate assessment for invoicing purposes. In the future if street lighting consumption becomes metered across the country then the CMS could assist in that process. However, the Group was cautioned that metering has not been accepted by the energy companies and other local authorities, and in practice there is not the equipment in place for consumption to be widely metered.

The Group asked a range of questions in order to form a better understanding of street lighting matters, and how the CMS had affected the roll out of PNL. It was reassured that the CMS was resilient in a number of ways: In the event of a base station failure, lighting columns would communicate with the centre through an alternative base station. Servers were backed up. Radio communication and the

server are not critical to the switch on of street lighting, as each column is programmed to turn on according to its daylight profile management. Risk management provision was also addressed.

In terms being able to respond to new lighting technology such as LED, it was confirmed that there is scope for the CMS to be upgraded and therefore the Council's current investment would not become redundant. By way of example ECC street lighting does not have a dimmer facility installed, but if it becomes a feasible option in the future then there would be an incremental cost rather than full cost associated adjustments to the CMS.

Given the CMS versatility, the Group questioned its viability as a charging mechanism that would enable members of the public to switch on and pay for individual lighting columns. Mr Gibson referred to publicity that had been given to a project in Germany a few years ago whereby it was proposed that individuals could subscribe for lighting by text. However, such a system has not been developed. There would be difficulties associated with giving control to different parties and managing the lighting system overall. In practice the consequences of variable lighting patterns could be detrimental to highway safety.

Other local authorities have acquired Telensa CMS technology including Suffolk County Council.

- **Street Lighting Technology**

The terms of reference for the Group's investigation refer to the application of new technology associated with PNL, and arose in part from the belief of some Members that alternative technology could provide an alternative to switching off street lights during the night. During the investigation witnesses asserted that some of the new technologies are still evolving and have not proven effective in terms of the financial investment that was envisaged in terms of converting the County Council's sizeable stock of lighting columns. Nevertheless the Group learned that ECC has been at the forefront in the installation of the CMS, which is using new technology and will be capable of adaptation in the future if and when more efficient changes to street lighting provision may be made.

While PNL and the type of street lighting equipment are not mutually exclusive issues, they are separate in that PNL has been agreed and is based upon the principle of switching off lights during the night regardless of the technology used. The recent consultation and implementation of PNL across Essex was focussed upon the verification of lights to be switched on/ off, not the options for street lighting apparatus.

During the investigation the Group was shown several different types of lamp head including two LED examples. It was confirmed that the adaptation of an existing lighting column to LED lighting is not simply a task of changing a light bulb, and the ability to adapt existing columns to support LED lighting will rely on the compatibility of the existing equipment to support any new lighting apparatus. Given the number and range of columns throughout Essex, not all columns will be capable of supporting LED technology for instance each column would have to be structurally

tested to assess if the heavier weight of the LED equipment could be safely supported. The costs associated with fitting LED lighting are also higher, and where existing lighting may be converted the whole lamp head would have to be replaced.

It is a fact that LED technology is still evolving albeit its associated costs are gradually being reduced, and may become a more viable option in the future. Aside from costs, there are also technical issues for instance LED lighting has no adjustable optics, and so consideration must be given to the practical impact on the area to be actually lit.

The Group also noted that despite the reduced energy consumption of LED lights, an LED light switched off part night still consumes less energy than one left on all night.

Highways Lighting Officers advised the Group that the Council actively monitors developments in lighting technology, and that as the third largest lighting authority in the country suppliers tend to be proactive in supplying it with information about new products. There is also ongoing discussion with other UK lighting authorities. While the principle of PNL is established, the increasing costs of energy consumption will continue to receive attention, therefore the Council will develop business cases as appropriate once efficient technology emerges. However, any changes will be made as part of a managed programme for the adoption of new technology rather than adopting change without thorough consideration of the broader issues including the costs and consequences of updating existing equipment.

During the review attention was drawn to the fact that in February 2010 the County Council won a bid for a £164 million private finance initiative (PFI) project that would have included the costs of lighting column replacement and LED equipment across Essex. The scheme would have entailed huge expenditure from the Council itself aside from Government funding. However, the Government withdrew its funding in October 2010. Furthermore, it was confirmed to the Group that the PFI project would not have resulted in a change in the Council's stance on the principle of PNL.

The Group sought clarification on the costs associated with the installation of street lighting, and the following information was provided by the Highways Lighting Officers:

1. The capital cost of installing 50 lamp columns on a new estate under current policy using Essex Highways current contractual arrangements, would be £23,045. This does not include electrical connection costs. Actual developer's costs are unknown as this will be subject to their own commercial agreements
2. The capital cost of requiring those 50 columns to support LED technology from the outset using Essex Highways current contractual arrangements, would be £32,442. This does not include electrical connection costs. Actual developer's costs are unknown as this will be subject to their commercial agreements
3. The current benefits or otherwise of installing LED lighting in preference to more traditional street lighting include:

Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expected long life of LEDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively unproven technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEDs expected to last 20 years (no actual experience on site). However, associated equipment does not last as long e.g. drivers, photocells etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warranties normally involve LED lantern being returned to manufacturers with a set fee being paid to ECC. This fee is not expected to cover additional costs like traffic management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced energy consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to keep spare LED lantern in stock for particular sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better control of light footprint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vandalism and road traffic collisions still occur*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instantaneous lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Routine maintenance still needs to be carried out e.g. cleaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced energy consumption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Columns in Essex may not be suitable to have LED lanterns fitted due to bracket type, additional weight of lantern compared to traditional lighting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dimmable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public perception of white light
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constant light output 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public reaction of directional lighting being installed (existing areas not being lit, motorway lighting being installed etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light footprint can be tailored to suit individual locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High initial capital outlay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light output of the lantern is expected to drop by only 10% over the lifetime of the lantern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White light available using existing technology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental impact on flora and fauna is unknown*
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible health risk to humans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED lanterns are dearer than traditional lanterns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thermal management issues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts not interchangeable between manufacturers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light footprint not adjustable on site
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lantern replacement instead of retro

	fitting of lamp
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual design for the location and normally not interchangeable with other areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected life of LEDs are not generally covered by the manufacturers guarantee for the lantern

**The Group questioned the classification of these two points in the negative column.*

The lessons learned from pilots conducted in Essex using LED lighting include:

- Experienced failures when LED lanterns were initially installed
- LED technology has changed consistently over the years
- LED lantern design created public concern that they are were not working correctly
- Public comments on the “feel” of white lighting

- **Consultation**

In September 2013 when the Committee considered the roll out of PNL across the twelve remaining districts in Essex, arising from the call in of the decision to implement PNL in Braintree and Chelmsford, a key area of concern focussed upon Members’ differing expectations of the format of ‘consultation’. As the roll out continued it appeared that a different approach had been adopted in the way proposals were communicated for subsequent districts

The policy for rolling out PNL across Essex has been established for several years, and steps have been ongoing to install the chosen framework for its implementation such the CMS. Therefore the focus of more recent discussion with stakeholders has been upon the application of the exception criteria ie identifying those street lights that will remain lit through the night by virtue of the exception criteria.

While some lighting authorities like Hertfordshire County Council had chosen to roll out PNL across their areas as a whole and without extensive advance detailed consultation, ECC has rolled it out on a district by district basis during the autumn 2013/ winter 2014 months in line with the stated aims of the project. The acquisition of the CMS does enable the County Council to vary where lights may or may not be switched off rather than taking a blanket approach across the whole county, an approach that has been adopted by some other local authorities without that facility. It was estimated that 80% of County Council lighting columns would be switched off between midnight and 5 am, leaving 20% of its lighting remaining on throughout the night.

There was some criticism arising from an impression that a number of local councils had had only three weeks in September 2013 to respond to proposals for their areas

following correspondence sent to all County Councillors, Essex MPs, Leaders and Chief Executives of Borough and District, Town and Parish Councils, and the Emergency Services. In that letter the Cabinet Member confirmed that he would welcome any suggestions highlighting areas that were thought to meet the exception criteria, and those views would be used to inform his final decision. Plans would be published on the ECC website in advance of the switch over to PNL. Where people felt that street lights should be left on all night they were asked to email the address noting the location of the lights (including the street and settlement name) and reason why it was felt the light(s) met the exception criteria. However, parish councils have made their dissatisfaction known, in that they could read the exception criteria, but did not know how they would be applied (a layman would not necessarily understand or be able to distinguish what, for instance, was a remote alley linking residential areas, or a major transport hub?)

In response to criticism about the 'consultation process' Councillor Bass has emphasised that it has been well publicised for several years that ECC was taking steps to implement PNL. Indeed as an early pioneer in this matter Essex has attracted ongoing media attention not only locally but across the country with other councils now moving ahead more quickly in their introduction of similar schemes. During the intervening time this County Council has also been in ongoing discussion with interested stakeholders including local councils and the Police on related matters including the development of the exception criteria.

All Essex Councils have had opportunities over the longer term to come forward with locations where they wanted street lights to be exempt from PNL. The later three week consultations he saw as an additional 'check' opportunity, and it was possible that there had been acquiescence on the part of some Councils to address the roll out of PNL in their areas. Regardless of what publicity may have been given, public feedback had been received from residents suggesting some awareness of the proposals. It also appeared that there had been an ECC expectation that the borough, city and district councils would raise awareness with residents about the project locally, though the Group saw no evidence they had been asked to do this and few had done it. Most had simply been informed.

The Cabinet Member's published final decisions have included more detailed information on the individual districts, and feedback/ response to consultations. It was confirmed that feedback to consultation and application of exception criteria is evaluated by the professional lighting engineers taking into account technical and legal considerations, and consistency across county.

Aside from the experience gained from the introduction of PNL in Maldon and Uttlesford, the choice of continuing with the implementation of the project in Braintree and Chelmsford had been useful. Both those areas had provided pertinent information because they have a mixture of both large urban and rural communities, and variety of town centres. Councillor Bass said that consultation with those Councils had been going on for some time until the point had been reached when he felt it would be more beneficial to implement the PNL and to learn from practical experience given the flexibility provided by CMS to amend lighting at individual locations if deemed appropriate.

The purpose of the later stages of the consultation process was not to establish whether or not PNL should be implemented across individual areas, but rather to enable parties to come forward to identify particular additional locations where the exception criteria might apply for lighting to remain on throughout the night post implementation. Final decisions would be made on the basis of proven evidence rather than perception or hearsay. The control and flexibility provided by the CMS will enable the Council to amend lighting proposals at specified locations if deemed appropriate. However, some requests would not be acceded to where they fall outside the exception criteria for instance the lighting of estate roads and footway links.

As part of the PNL roll out in individual districts, maps had been intended to illustrate the ownership of individual street lights, and those ECC lights where the exception criteria had been applied. The timing and availability of those maps had been dependent on the volume of work entailed in their production, the timing of representations received and consequently the identification and plotting of any additional lights that would remain lit, as well as issues associated with having to produce multiple maps to be able to produce the relevant information. The maps were made available on the Council's website. While it was acknowledged that the publication of plans was close to the date for implementation, the value of the maps was drawn into question. While residents may be more interested in the locations of those lights being switched off, they did not necessarily require maps to understand information on those lights that may or may not be subject to PNL. On the other hand, parish and town councils would have found it easier to comment on the basis of exact information as to the intended status of particular streets, paths, or junctions, rather than against published criteria, whose effect was uncertain. It was only when the maps were published that one could see how the criteria were being applied.

- **The Group's consideration of the outcomes of the recommendations of the original Scrutiny Report**

The original scrutiny report produced by the SSCPSC contained thirteen recommendations that are set out below. Although the Cabinet Member's response was captured orally at that Committee's meeting in July 2010 the Group was mindful that things may have changed in the intervening years.

The recommendations are set out below together with an up to date comments in italics based up evidence received during this investigation.

- 1. The Council should aim to achieve savings of up to 70% of the current carbon emission footprint and thus of the lighting energy bill, principally through the use of new technology, the negotiation of contracts related to actual rather than unmetered usage, and also the turning off of any unnecessary street lights.** This should be set as a target to be achieved within a set timescale (possibly three years).

A key aim of the roll out of PNL across Essex remains to reduce energy consumption/ bills and carbon emissions as detailed elsewhere in this report.

With particular reference to the negotiation of contracts where the Council pays for metered energy consumption, the Group learned that it is likely for the foreseeable future that energy bills will continue to be calculated on a monthly basis. Aside from the fact that the use of metering is controlled by legislation, there has not been any impetus shown by energy companies or other local authorities nationally to move away from current assessment/ invoicing practice. It was confirmed that although the ECC CMS can be used to inform the energy consumption calculations, it is not a metering tool. There are a variety of different types of lighting column in Essex, which means that they have different ratings and consumption. Nevertheless it was acknowledged that if metering is introduced in the future, the CMS would be used to assist in that process.

- 2. The Council should implement the programme to reduce the emissions and cost of ECC and local council owned and operated street lighting across the whole county.**

The implementation of PNL across ECC controlled street lighting will be complete in Spring 2014, and has coincided with the installation of the CMS.

- 3. Any changes should be implemented across an agreed timescale. Given the location of the pilot areas, the Council might decide that a swathe across the centre of the county (to include, therefore, towns the size of Chelmsford and Braintree) should be the first area to be reviewed and converted to new technology, such that its operation in a range of settlements wider than that in the pilots could be monitored.**

This was done. Braintree and Chelmsford were chosen to be the first areas to be converted to the new technology since the original pilots in Maldon and Uttlesford. The lessons learned from the consultation in those districts were also used to inform the subsequent consultation and roll out of PNL to other districts.

The installation of the CMS has necessitated every lighting column (128,000 in total) being retrofitted with equipment capable of communicating with the central system. Therefore the timing of the PNL project has reflected the steps that have had to be taken to achieve its installation and operation.

- 4. Whilst a normal turn off time of midnight to 5 am GMT seemed reasonable, this might not be appropriate in all areas and the Council should therefore be willing to agree a level of flexibility to meet any clearly defined and specific local needs in relation to part night operation and/or dimming.**

In practice, the Cabinet Member has reiterated on a number of occasions that he has responded to Members as part of the call in of PNL decisions that the current roll out is only the first stage in the process, and its impact will be reviewed after it has been in operation for a while. A limited number of changes were agreed following the call-in process. A number of timing variations may be considered where there may be evidence to confirm that there is a local need.

- 5. Before any changes were proposed for a town or village, the parish or town council (District Council for unparished areas) should be invited to express its views on what lights it felt could appropriately be dimmed or turned off. The local Area Forum should also be consulted. The County Council would seek to further these views where possible, but the final decision should always rest with the County Council, as the lighting authority.**

This was done, though Area Forums were abolished in 2011. In practice, ECC has sought the views of local councils and other stakeholders on the application of the exception criteria, and the responses are set out in the reports accompanying the Cabinet Member decisions.

The notes of the informal meeting for the call in of the decisions for the implementation of PNL in Castle Point and Epping Forest districts confirm that 'The current roll out of the implementation of part night lighting is the first stage in the overall development of street lighting in Essex, and its consistent application would enable people to become accustomed to it in practice and potentially change attitudes in the longer term. Its impact will be kept under review and various street lighting trials will be conducted to assess how the service may be developed in the future eg new technology, lighting standards. Nevertheless Councillor Bass reiterated that in the first instance he intended that street lighting should be switched off between midnight and 5 am, and once implemented fully he would consider further flexibility in street lighting arrangements. However, any decisions on changes would have to be based on evidence.'

- 6. Once a level of lighting had been agreed by the County Council under (4) and (5) above, the local council (parish or town, but District for unparished areas) could determine that some lighting additional to the County Council decision was required, but it would be expected to reimburse to ECC the additional costs incurred. It is expected that this power would be used sparingly: ECC should be able to refuse patently unreasonable requests.**

The Cabinet Member has confirmed that the roll out of PNL is limited to ECC controlled street lighting.

When Councillor Pond had called in the Cabinet Member decision to implement PNL in Epping Forest District, he had challenged the lack of any mechanism for local bodies to pay for continued all night lighting, and at the meeting he asked why there was no provision to maintain lighting at Borough and District Council's own expense.

Councillor Bass had responded that 'Essex County Council has a statutory responsibility for highways street lights whilst amenity lighting came under the auspices of district and parish councils. Under these circumstances it was considered that it would become confusing if other bodies paid for lights they are not responsible for. Furthermore there are broader costs associated with street lights aside from energy costs, which would need to be paid for proportionately and could create more confusion in terms of accountability.'

Further Group discussion on this matter took place and is reflected in the Conclusions section of this report.

- 7. It was imperative that any changes proposed should be explained to local residents prior to implementation.**

ECC has released on an ongoing basis various press releases about PNL, which have been sent to Essex media, papers and broadcast, and Borough and District contacts among others. Information has also been published on the Council's website. Despite that fact there has been criticism about the lack of understanding across the community and other councils about the implementation of PNL, and its implications.

- 8. As a matter of policy, the Council should not seek to introduce street lighting in any area where it did not already exist in October 2009, with the exception of new estates and developments, where any lighting should be operated from the start as part of the central management system.**

It was confirmed that any new lighting, that the Council is aware of, has been installed as part of a new estate/development or major project. Where possible these lights have been installed with the correct CMS equipment. However, some schemes may not be covered as the supplier of the system was not known until the tender process had been completed.

- 9. The Council should review the level of lighting on all roads which were once bypasses, main routes, or ring roads but which themselves had now been bypassed or supplanted.**

It was confirmed that as part of the roll out of PNL across Essex all County Council owned street lights had been reviewed.

- 10. The Council should consider adding the following to the pilot area exception criteria: (i) pedestrian routes to and from transport facilities such as railway and Underground stations which have services arriving after midnight; (ii) Strategic Diversion Routes as nominated by the Highways Agency; and routes where no footpath exists on either side of the road.**

In practice, the exception criteria has been developed taking into account experience learned from implementing PNL elsewhere, coupled with consultation upon its application in Essex.

It was confirmed that the two situations set out in the recommendation have not been added formally to the exception criteria. However, where representations have been made they have been duly considered.

- 11. The Cabinet Member should prepare and submit to the Cabinet as soon as practicable a Business Case for the introduction of appropriate elements of the new technology into the county. This new**

technology would include a central computer managed, wirelessly-connected system which would allow for dimming during (variable) hours of low footfall rather than switch-off at a countywide fixed time, with immediate switch on by request of the emergency services, and should also include resident activated switch-on by PC or text when an event, for instance, was due to finish in dark or dimmed hours.

In practice, the Cabinet approved the acquisition of the CMS in 2011 based upon the Business Case that was produced and its installation will be completed in spring 2014. During its investigation the Cabinet Member has confirmed on various occasions that the roll out of PNL is the first stage of the project, and over time some modifications may be made if appropriate. However, any modifications would have to be compatible with the large number and variety of lighting fixtures in situ and the development of technology notwithstanding the suitability of proposals.

It was confirmed that the business case submitted and approved for the introduction of the central management system covered the matters set out in the recommendation. However, a resident activated switch is currently not commercially available.

- 12. If the trial of the new technology in Great Chesterford was deemed insufficient to prepare a viable business case, then the Council should consider implementing a wider trial of it in one or two larger population centres.**

The Great Chesterford trial had proven sufficient and a CMS purchased.

- 13. The Council should vigorously encourage local councils and privately owned retail and commercial outlets across the county to review their current levels of street and premises lighting and encourage them to support the County Council in reducing the carbon footprint and cost of lighting overall.**

It was confirmed that no action has been taken to encourage private businesses to review the levels of lighting on their premises as part of the street lighting project. However, the County Council through its 'Our Environmental Statement' commits ECC to 'Encourage other public sector partners, community groups and businesses in local environmental projects'. A report is submitted annually to the Department for Energy and Climate Change through the Corporate Green House Gas Report, of which ECC street lighting forms an element. Whilst carbon reduction can be evidenced it could never be measured as a reduction amongst local councils and privately owned retail and commercial outlets, hence the reason for the use of the wording 'encourage them to support...'

*Given the roll out of PNL has now taken place, the Group considered that it would be an opportunity to pursue the proposal set out in line with recommendation 13. The proposal has implications for more than one cabinet portfolio, namely those covering carbon reduction and highways. Therefore **it was recommended that** the Cabinet Members for Waste and Recycling, and Highways and Transportation take positive action to launch a major publicity campaign to persuade local councils and private*

firms to review their current levels of street and premises lighting in order to encourage them to support the County Council in reducing the carbon footprint and cost of lighting overall.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Group's terms of reference for this review were agreed at the outset by the PSEGSC, and are made up of two components namely the consultation process and how PNL has been implemented in the light of the findings of the original SSCPSC scrutiny report including the application of new technology.

- **Roll Out of PNL across Essex County Council**

The principle of PNL in Essex was first established with the successful pilot projects undertaken in Uttlesford and Maldon District, which were initiated in 2007, and was underpinned by the business case and purchase of the CMS in 2011. While acknowledging that the roll out of PNL throughout Essex by the County Council has been known about for some time, the Group felt that public awareness was probably quite low and should have been given greater priority to ensure that there was greater understanding of the forthcoming operational changes to street lighting arrangements across the whole county. It was also noted that in the intervening period since 2007, there have been changes in the elected membership of the County Council and other local authorities. Consequently it would have been beneficial to have ensured that successive councillors had also been provided with a better understanding of street lighting and proposals for PNL.

In conclusion the Group considered that in 2013 there had been an unmet need to take positive steps to re-launch the PNL policy, and in its view this should have been done by presenting the delivery scheme to this Committee, by briefing County Councillors more fully, and more effective consultation with partner authorities.

Recommendation 1

That the lessons learned from the feedback on the way that the roll out of PNL across Essex was communicated to the public and local councils be taken into consideration to improve the way that projects are launched in the future.

- **Energy Consumption**

A key aim of PNL is to reduce the costs of energy consumption and carbon emissions. With reference to the original Scrutiny Report the Group reviewed the current situation in respect of metered energy consumption, and learned that energy bills continue to be calculated on a monthly basis albeit the CMS will provide more accurate information upon the Council's street lighting stock.

In conclusion, the Group considered that this matter should be kept under ongoing review.

Recommendation 2

That any potential changes to metered energy supply be kept under constant review, and implemented when it becomes permissible and when clear savings would result.

- **Application of Exception Criteria**

The general presumption is that all ECC street lights will be subject to PNL unless covered by the exception criteria that have been established. A part of the criticism of the way that the roll out has been handled is the uncertainty around the application of the exception criteria and the definition of some of the provisions.

Throughout the roll out process it has been stressed that people could submit requests to the County Council for certain street lights to remain lit throughout the night, or for other operational variations. Although the Group acknowledged that this option existed, there was not a transparent procedure on how requests would be handled and what information was required to support requests. In some instances individuals had submitted requests that lighting columns remain lit throughout the night, and had not received any advice on how that information had been taken into account and/or experienced a delay in receiving a response.

The Group considered that a more effective and transparent approach should be adopted to the handling of requests for the application of any variations to PNL to specific street lights. This could be achieved by having a published procedure to:

1. Explain the provisions of the exception criteria, with clear explanation of the terminology used and how the criteria will be applied and a final decision made.
2. Explain what information should accompany any request for a variation of PNL in order for it to be considered in terms of the exception criteria.
3. Confirm the process and timescale for the consideration of requests.

The procedure should be communicated to all parishes, districts/borough/city councils and via print, broadcast and social media.

Recommendation 3

That a formal procedure be adopted for the consideration of requests for the variation of PNL scheme at specific locations.

With reference to the recommendation 10(i) of the original Scrutiny Report and the current exception criteria, the Group considered that there was some ambiguity around some of the provisions, which should be addressed. For instance the criteria should contain clarification of terms such as 'Remote footpaths and alleys linking residential streets', 'significant routes' and 'mix of development'. Furthermore the current exception criteria omits reference to variations that will be applied in the case of pedestrian routes to and from transport facilities such as railway and underground stations that have services after midnight.

Recommendation 4

That the exception criteria be amended so that the provisions are more transparent, and reflect variations that may have become permissible by virtue of variations allowed during the course of the recent roll out of PNL across Essex.

- **LED Technology**

The Group was mindful of the application of new technology associated with street lighting, and the significant benefits that could accrue as it is developed. Therefore Members wanted to reinforce the need for constant vigilance for improvements that could be achieved through the application of new technology.

Recommendation 5

That the costs and benefits of LED lighting should be kept under constant review, and particularly its application when new lighting is installed as a part of any new development.

- **Third Party Financial Contributions to the Costs of Street Lighting**

In the original Scrutiny Report recommendations were made in respect of third parties contributing to the costs of street lighting provision where there was local demand for additional lighting beyond that the County Council would support. However, that recommendation had not been acted upon.

While acknowledging the financial limitations upon all local council budgets, the Group nonetheless discussed the wishes of some districts to vary the implementation of PNL within their areas, and the variety of costs associated with street lighting aside from energy consumption itself including installation, repair and maintenance costs. With reference to past highways experience the Group discussed the possibility of whether agency arrangements could be introduced with local councils whereby those councils that wish street lights to remain lit throughout the night be empowered to manage and support that service.

The Group felt that there should be a means of creating a recharging formula based on the extra cost of energy between 2400-0500 hours with a component to recharge the additional costs of bulb replacement, in order that local councils who so desire could provide lighting outside the provisions of PNL.

Recommendation 6

That the County Council implement a mechanism by 31 December 2014 whereby it provides a means for others to be recharged where there is a local wish for more variations to PNL that did not co-incide with exception criteria including a recharge for the extra cost of energy, and agency arrangements.

- **Emergency Switch On Protocol**

During the course of the investigation attention was drawn to those situations where it might be appropriate for street lighting to be switched on at short notice in response to emergencies that might arise from time to time. For instance the bad weather and expected high tides experienced in November 2013, and a house gas explosion in Clacton.

The Cabinet Member has indicated that a protocol will be developed with the emergency services to address those situations where the CMS will be used to switch off PNL to accommodate local needs where emergencies have arisen. The Group was advised that protocols had been developed by some other lighting authorities.

Given the need for clear and consistent approaches to be adopted across the county, the Group considered that it was imperative that an Emergency Switch On Protocol be developed and adopted as soon as possible.

Recommendation 7

That a protocol for limited area switch on at the request of the Emergency Services be developed urgently and no later than 31 December 2014, and a separate one for wide-area emergencies such as floods and high winds. Furthermore it is requested that those protocols be submitted to the Committee for its consideration.

- **Reducing the Carbon Footprint**

A key tenet of the PNL project has been to reduce the effect of street lighting upon the Carbon Footprint across Essex, and the original scrutiny review proposed that the County Council should encourage local councils and privately owned retail and commercial outlets across the county to review their current levels of street and premises lighting to reduce the carbon footprint and cost of lighting overall. The Group considered that although no direct action has been taken to date as a result of the roll out of PNL, the proposal was still worthy of pursuit given its environmental implications.

Recommendation 8

That the Cabinet Members for Waste and Recycling, and Highways and Transportation take positive action to launch a major publicity campaign to persuade local councils, public service providers and private firms to review their current levels of street and premises lighting in order to encourage them to support the County Council in reducing the carbon footprint and cost of lighting overall.

- **Monitoring the outcomes of this scrutiny review**

It is proposed that the Cabinet Member responses to the above recommendations be reported to the Committee in Autumn 2014.

Recommendation 9

That in respect of the all the above recommendations the Cabinet Members, as identified, be requested to provide an indication when action will be implemented and details of the action proposed at an early stage, or alternatively a clear indication why a recommendation will not be acceded to. A full Cabinet Member response to the Scrutiny Report would be sought for the Committee in Autumn 2014.

		AGENDA ITEM 8
		PSEG/21/14
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 June 2014	
MONITORING OF SCRUTINY REPORT ON FINANCIAL INCLUSION		
Enquiries to:	Christine Sharland, Scrutiny Officer 01245 430450 Christine.sharland@essex.gov.uk	

An in depth investigation on Financial Inclusion was conducted during the second half of 2012 by a Task and Finish Group, and its scrutiny report was agreed by the former Economic Development, Environment and Highways Policy and Scrutiny Committee (EDEHPSC) in January 2013 (Minute 4). A copy of that report is published on the Council's website via the Committee Management Information System.

The Financial Inclusion project was a cross cutting scrutiny review with implications for a number of the Council's functions as well as taking account of services provided by other external organisations. The EDEHPSC forwarded seventeen recommendations to the Cabinet that have budgetary considerations, policy review and development implications. A response from the Cabinet was reported to this Committee in Minute 6/September 2013 when it was agreed that a Task and Finish Group should be reconvened to cross examine the Cabinet's response and what progress has been achieved through Council activity in the promotion of financial inclusion since the report was published.

The Task and Finish Group undertaking the monitoring of the original recommendations comprised four members: Councillors Ian Grundy (lead member), Tony Hedley, David Kendall, and Simon Walsh. The Group has now completed the task it was given, and its scrutiny report is attached at the Appendix to this report.

Action required by the Committee:

The Committee is requested to endorse the attached scrutiny report containing the following recommendations of the Task and Finish Group:

Based upon its consideration of the Cabinet responses to the original recommendations arising from the original Scrutiny Report, it is recommended that the Leader of the Cabinet be requested to provide a progress report in May 2015 on:

- (a) the effectiveness of the measures that have been proposed and implemented to promote financial inclusion, as referred to in this report, and to illustrate whether or not the Council is realising its financial inclusion objectives, and**
 - (b) the implementation of new initiatives in the Council's communication channels that can be demonstrated to have improved public access to information that promotes financial inclusion.**
-

Monitoring of outcomes of Scrutiny Report in Financial Inclusion

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to set out the Cabinet's full response and the action taken as a result of the recommendations of the scrutiny report on 'Financial Inclusion'.

What is 'Financial Inclusion'?

The concept of taking forward a scrutiny review on financial inclusion was considered originally, because of growing awareness and concern about the increased numbers of people facing financial/ debt difficulties during the recession. Changes to the welfare system also have the potential to increase the number of Essex residents experiencing financial difficulties – raising the profile of financial inclusion as being even more urgent.

The review offered those councillors engaged in overview and scrutiny an opportunity to influence policy and develop a longer term in-depth themed review with cross cutting implications for both the County Council and partner organisations. It provided Scrutiny Members with the opportunity to influence and place shape rather than focus on services provided exclusively by Essex County Council (ECC). Furthermore it was intended that the review should raise awareness of the subject across the whole community, its complexities, access to and quality of advice, and provision of support to individuals.

Financial Inclusion

'Financial inclusion seeks to combat the inability of individuals to access mainstream financial products and services – a social problem often expressed as financial exclusion. Financial exclusion, at root, is the result of the inability of individuals to access mainstream financial products and services.

This exclusion can present itself in many ways. Living in a village without access to a bank or ATM, relying on doorstep lending or loan sharks, lacking home insurance, being unable to obtain a mortgage, and making poor financial decisions because of insufficient understanding of the cost of financial services are all examples of financial exclusion.

Although people across society can be affected (poor financial literacy being perhaps the most widespread example), financial exclusion has, unsurprisingly, proven most problematic for those on lower incomes. In these groups it is exacerbated further because, those people who lack access to financial services are frequently also excluded in other ways - financial exclusion often reinforces, and is reinforced by, other aspects of social exclusion. The result can be viewed as part of a self-sustaining cycle of deprivation.

In recent years, the picture has become more nuanced. Financial exclusion is affecting people who do not readily fall into the traditional categories of being

financially excluded. Since 2006, three quarters of all Essex districts have seen a real terms decrease in average earnings. Disposable incomes have shrunk and family budgets have come under pressure.

Commentators have suggested that the country is witnessing an economic scenario where people on low to middle incomes – not society's poorest and residents overwhelmingly in work – have missed out on the twentieth century norm of growth and gain*.

The case for tackling financial exclusion and improving financial capability is clear: Currently, in the UK, around 1.5 million adults do not have access to a bank account; 7.8 million people are unable to access mainstream credit; and people on benefits borrow an estimated £330 million a year on home credit, paying £140 million in interest.**

* Resolution Foundation, Gaining from growth: The final report of the Commission on Living Standards, October 2012. Available online

at: http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/media/downloads/Gaining_from_growth_-_The_final_report_of_the_Commission_on_Living_Standards.pdf

** Statistics from Inside Government conference, 'Working in Partnership to Tackle Financial Exclusion and Improve Financial Capability', 2nd December 2010. See also Social Finance, A New Approach to Banking

Extracted from the original Financial Inclusion Scrutiny Report, dated January 2013

Background

An in depth investigation on Financial Inclusion was conducted during the second half of 2012 by a Task and Finish Group, and its scrutiny report was agreed by the former Economic Development, Environment and Highways Policy and Scrutiny Committee (EDEHPSC) in January 2013 (Minute 4).

A copy of the report is published on the Council's website as a public document in the Committee Management System.

Based upon the information gathered the Committee forwarded seventeen recommendations proposing action be taken to the Cabinet for its consideration.

In September 2013 (Minute 6) the Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (PSEGSC) considered the response received from the Cabinet to the Scrutiny Report, and decided to reconvene a Task and Finish Group to delve more deeply into the response received.

Minute 6/ September 2014 Monitoring Scrutiny Report on Financial Inclusion

The Committee considered report PSEG/05/13 setting out the Cabinet response to the recommendations reached in the scrutiny report on Financial Inclusion.

Councillor Grundy led the original Task and Finish Group that undertook the in depth investigation, and welcomed the detailed response received from the Cabinet. However, the review had tackled some difficult issues and given the range and detail of the original recommendations it was felt necessary that the original Task and Finish Group should be reconvened to cross examine the Cabinet response, and analyse what progress had been made since its publication to promote financial inclusion in Essex.

The Committee **agreed** that the original Task and Finish Group should be reconvened and the Chairman indicated that any other members who wished to join the investigation would be welcomed. Councillor Hedley indicated his interest.

The Task and Finish Group comprises Councillors Ian Grundy (Lead Member), Tony Hedley, David Kendall, and Simon Walsh.

When the Group met it decided to seek further clarification from the Cabinet on what action and progress had been made in respect of the recommendations, and wrote to the Leader setting out a list of questions.

At the Appendix to this report the original recommendations are set out together with the Cabinet responses received in September 2013 and March 2014, and it identifies the lead Cabinet Member for the issues covered by each recommendation.

In the intervening months an opportunity arose for the Group to attend a conference that promised to provide relevant information of how financial inclusion was being tackled nationally. Councillor Grundy has provided an overview of what was learned below.

The Personal Debt Conference

In January 2014 Councillors Grundy and Hedley attended the "The Personal Debt Conference" in London. It was well attended with over 150 delegates and a good spread of presenters including three MPs, a Bishop, a shadow Minister and many representatives from local government.

Step Change* was there in strength and made it very clear their desire to work closely with local government. The issues discussed were all very familiar but it was refreshing to hear that government is listening and in that context it was reported that Financial Planning will be part of the School Curriculum from this September.

There was welcome support for the work of the Credit Unions and Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and a realisation of the funding problems. The small size of many of these organisations made it difficult to approach local industry with any effectiveness but regardless we do need to engage with Industry and Commerce and the example of Wessex Water was highlighted. A six figure sum is donated to the CAB in Bristol and contributed to reducing the debt problems which would otherwise have been written off.

There was also recognition of the use of web sites and their importance in signposting, a recommendation made by the Task and Finish Group and hopefully part of the IT programme.

As a new member of the Task and Finish Group Councillor Hedley was struck by the fact that financial inclusion was a matter that could affect individuals across the whole community, rather than being confined to narrower groups of people. The Conference also illustrated how financial inclusion/ exclusion can manifest itself in practice, and how problems might be addressed. For instance it had been highlighted that although financial inclusion tends to be associated with lower income families, it is also pertinent to higher income families where the bread winner is made redundant and can have a devastating impact upon those families as they become financially excluded.

Councillor Ian Grundy

**Step Change is a Debt Charity that operates at a national level, and had contributed to the original scrutiny review.*

Analysis

Originally the proposal for a scrutiny review on financial inclusion was not necessarily a popular choice for Members as there was a lack of awareness of the topic itself, and its potential breadth was daunting. However, those Members who have taken part in its investigation have been left in no doubt as to its relevance to the wellbeing of the community as a whole as well as to individuals who find themselves in financial difficulties, and it provides an opportunity for the Council to perform its community leadership role by seeking to encourage greater co-ordination of the support provided by the various agencies that promote greater financial inclusion across Essex. Throughout the review the small Task and Finish Group has been very proactive in the way it has engaged in the project, and the personal input and commitment afforded by each Member.

While the initial response received from the Cabinet in September 2013 was positive overall, the Group wanted greater reassurance that its original report had raised awareness of the importance of financial inclusion in practice. Where recommendations had been accepted and action was proposed to be taken, Members sought further advice on the action proposed as well as indication of the timing of such action. The Appendix to this report collates that information.

The Scrutiny Report has attracted some wider attention and may have raised expectations of action to be taken by the Council, so the Group was mindful of the need to monitor how the outcomes of its recommendations would contribute to the longer term impact of measures taken to promote financial inclusion across Essex. From listening to the contributions given by people and organisations with practical experience of the topic Members had been struck by the various range of implications for those people who face financial difficulties.

Although it is popular to perceive financial inclusion as an individual issue, it is in fact a problem for the wider society and is not exclusive to those on lower income, for example pensioners who have been affected by lower interest rewards on their savings, those in employment but affected by declining incomes, those who are made redundant with financial commitments they can no longer continue to meet, and the implications of changes to the welfare system.

While many people may shy away from the topic through lack of understanding, the scrutiny investigation has revealed that although it is a complex topic there are ways and means of improving the way financial inclusion is tackled to reduce problems across the community in the future. Aside from those Services provided directly by the Council, it also grants some financial support to external agencies that promote greater financial inclusion, and therefore it needs to ensure that those projects are delivered in a way that maximises benefits eg through co-ordinated activity, and any duplication is reduced as far as possible.

Taking the headings used in the original Scrutiny Report the Group reached the following conclusions on those issues where it felt that some matters remained outstanding. In terms of a number of recommendations the Cabinet responses were acknowledged.

- **Finding a home for financial exclusion**

An overall conclusion of the original review was that the Council needed to establish a 'home for financial inclusion' and establish responsibility for the promotion and co-ordination of related policy development and implementation. Recommendations one to six focus upon this theme. Financial inclusion is a cross cutting issue across many of the Council's services rather than being a distinctive service, for instance financial literacy and schools, Village Agents project, advice provided for the community on the website, and Adult Social Care. The original review had concluded that the Equality and Diversity Board could take on board the strategic development of financial inclusion activity.

The Cabinet has responded positively to the recommendations. Its responses have provided an overview of how the Council is seeking to develop the way it promotes financial inclusion across its activities, and indeed the new Corporate Outcomes Framework will go some way to addressing concerns about the need to embed responsibility and accountability for its promotion across related activities. A list of examples of financial inclusion in the Framework is set out in the Appendix.

While it welcomed the positive response that the Financial Inclusion Scrutiny Report has received from the Cabinet, the Group felt that the Council's scrutiny function should continue to play a role to ensure that there is a spotlight on the topic notwithstanding the pressures upon the Committee's own resources. It was important that the Council should influence and implement more effective ways of combatting financial exclusion across Essex particularly as the actions proposed to be taken by Cabinet were intricately linked with new ways of working. Although financial inclusion is being mainstreamed in commissioning and the Corporate Outcomes Framework, the Group considered that further advice be sought from the

Leader in May 2015 on the effectiveness of the measures implemented and whether or not the Council is realising its financial inclusion objectives.

During the course of its original investigation the Group had interviewed a wide range of representatives from organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors, who contribute to the advice, guidance and services available to people experiencing financial problems. However, it was apparent that there is also undesirable fragmentation that needs to be addressed in a way that makes the most efficient use of the overall resources available.

The Group remains keen to ensure that the Council's mechanisms for providing the public and other bodies with information on the topic are effective, and that progress is made sooner rather than later. It was disappointed that the timing of improvements remain vague particularly in terms of the Council's website. Consequently as part of the further advice to be sought from the Leader, it was proposed that an update on communications improvements also be required.

- **Combatting financial exclusion**

The Group was mindful of the Cabinet advice on the support the Council continues to provide support to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Credit Unions (CU). Recommendations 7 to 14 refer. Although Members were aware that some concerns remained about the allocation of funding across the county, they remained hopeful that progress could be made in the development of joint working arrangements across agencies. Given the significance of the services provided it would be helpful for Members to understand how grants had been used by the recipients, and what advantages/ disadvantages had been achieved or otherwise. The work of the CABs and CUs was touched upon at the Conference attended by Members.

It was understood from the Cabinet response that work on combatting financial exclusion was ongoing, and that it was engaging with partners to assist Essex residents where assistance was needed.

- **Promoting Financial Literacy**

The original review took into account the importance of improved financial literacy as a way of assisting individual's to manage their personal budgets, and recommendations 15 and 16 refer.

Financial literacy has been attracting increased public attention, and is being promoted. Central Government has taken action to incorporate financial education in the draft National Curriculum from September 2014; and at the same time the County Council itself will be launching proposals to develop its own relevant courses so that financial is identified and addressed as part of learning plans. However, the Group noted that ultimately the Council may only seek to influence the way that schools develop pupils' financial skills.

Recommendation

Based upon its consideration of the Cabinet responses to the original recommendations arising from the original Scrutiny Report, it is recommended that the Leader of the Cabinet be requested to provide a progress report in May 2015 on:

- (a) the effectiveness of the measures that have been proposed and implemented to promote financial inclusion, as referred to in this report, and to illustrate whether or not the Council is realising its financial inclusion objectives, and**
 - (b) the implementation of new initiatives in the Council's communication channels that can be demonstrated to have improved public access to information that promotes financial inclusion.**
-

Appendix

Recommendations from the original Scrutiny Report, and Responses received from the Cabinet

Recommendation 1

That as part of its equality and diversity framework the County Council take into account financial inclusion both when assessing the potential effects of future policy development and when reviewing the impact of current policies, and the monitoring of financial inclusion issues across the Council be incorporated into the terms of reference for the Equality and Diversity Board.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

Agreed in principle and in part.

The proposal was tabled at the Diversity and Equality Board on 30 January 2013; a discussion took place on how the Board could promote financial inclusion along with equality issues. Board members felt that historically, the focus on financial inclusion has been looking at households that have been marginalised e.g. low income households and accepted the need to look at a wider population.

Various council functions are currently contributing to achieving financial inclusion outcomes, for example through Trading Standards, the Council tracks down loan sharks and also makes the public aware of the high interest rates charged on borrowing money. The Board agreed that the practical implementation of financial inclusion work should be implemented through the Council's commissioning function and agreed with the proposal of developing a strategic oversight of financial inclusion projects. The benefits of this approach would include the ability to develop a sophisticated understanding of financial inclusion issues.

The Board agreed that additional support would be required within the existing Diversity and Equality function initially to take on board the strategic development of financial inclusion activity. Financial inclusion considerations will be mainstreamed within tools for assessing equality impacts and will be embedded within D&E guidance for commissioners. Embedding financial inclusion considerations within the development of performance and outcome frameworks would also support a programme of relevant activities.

Following publication in June of the Council's new Vision document for 2013-17, the Council is now developing a new Corporate Outcomes Framework. Following the development of this framework (which will be for Cabinet and Council to approve), we will be clearer about where responsibility for financial inclusion sits.

Additional information sought by the Group:

What is the timeframe envisaged for the activities referred to in your reply?

In practice it would be helpful if the Cabinet could provide some examples of how it envisages financial inclusion will be mainstreamed in the context of commissioned services.

Has there been any progress in identifying where responsibility for financial inclusion sits as part of the Corporate Outcomes Framework and the Council's new Vision?

Cabinet Response March 2014:

All decisions relating to the exercise of public functions are considered in terms of complying with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This is currently achieved through the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment, which always includes consideration of the impact of the decision in terms of the socio-economic status of the individuals affected as well as the characteristics protected in law. We are willing to amend this to 'socio economic and financial inclusion impacts' if we wanted to make this clearer. This is something that will be picked up by the Head of Service when they are in post; the application stage of recruitment has closed for this and shortlisting is taking place.

Financial inclusion will be mainstreamed in commissioning as it is incorporated by numerous indicators in the Corporate Outcomes Framework, such as the number of children living in workless households, temporary accommodation, or fuel poverty (please see more below table).

The structure of the Framework means that responsibility for several different programmes of work will collectively contribute to a shared outcome that implicates financial inclusion. This means that responsibility and accountability are multiplied and embedded within our council and commissioning partners.

An example of this in practice is the new energy switching scheme. The Council has recently launched this initiative to help save people money. The scheme brings together large groups of residents who want to switch providers and pay less for their energy. Based on previous schemes, residents could save up to £133 by switching providers collectively.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 2

That the County Council undertake an in depth review of what the Council and other public agencies could do to promote skills and employment not only for young people but more generally for other residents in the context of financial inclusion.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We do not accept this recommendation as being required at this point in time, due to the reasons set out below.

As part of the Whole Essex Community Budgets (WECB) programme, Essex County Council has worked with partners to review the skills system.

We recognise that access to employment is the best way of preventing financial exclusion. From the very start of the Community Budget pilot work on skills, it was recognised that a crucial component of the proposal must be the establishment of an employer-led Employment and Skills Board (ESB) for Greater Essex to provide a platform from which employers can have a real voice in shaping skills provision so that it delivers economic growth and is attuned to the needs of employers.

Under the partnership work of the WECB programme we have taken steps to establish an Essex Employment and Skills Board. This is not a County Council board but rather a board that has representation from the County Council (Cllr Bentley), as well as from employers and from the Higher and Further Education sectors. The inaugural meeting of the Board, in shadow form, was held on the 30th July at Raytheon in Harlow and will meet properly for the first time on 25th September.

The Board's mission is to help create the most productive and responsive skills system in the country, ensuring businesses have a workforce with the skill sets they need to thrive and young people have the ambition and skills that will advantage them when competing in the labour market.

We do not therefore think that a further review is needed at this stage.

It is suggested that Cllr Bentley brings regular update reports on the work of the Employment and Skills Board to the scrutiny committee.

More widely in terms of promoting skills and employment for Essex residents, Essex County Council is very conscious of our own Adult Community Learning (ACL) offer, with over 33,000 learners per year who are being given a range of opportunities to improve their employment/career prospects through accessing new skills/qualifications. These include Apprenticeships, independent information, advice & guidance sessions to discuss learning/careers, Pathways to Employment for the unemployed, Skills for Life to give residents the basic literacy and numeracy skills required in most jobs, and craft skills that often people use to develop self-employment opportunities.

Following the first meeting of the Essex Employment and Skills Board on 25 September, is there any further information relating to financial inclusion that the Group could usefully take into account?

Cabinet Response March 2014:

The primary aim of the Employment and Skills Board is to work to place employers at the heart of the local skills system to ensure there is far better alignment between

what learners study and employment opportunities. The approaches the Board are taking to achieve this include:

- A Skills Portal for Employers to access local training provision to up-skill their existing workforce and take on new recruits;
- A Skills Investment Fund for employers;
- Setting the priorities for allocation of European Social Funding. This will be decided by the LEP from late 2014 and, with the Board's support, will target employer-led programmes to assist employability;
- Plans to pilot a number of smaller initiatives that will support young people with the study choices they make.

All of these approaches will provide opportunities and mechanisms for people to gain appropriate and higher level skills that will lead to real employment and progression within work. This work will also support the national and local drive to increase and improve apprenticeships.

As an example of the financial benefit to individuals of skills acquisition, BIS research demonstrates that an intermediate level apprenticeship will see financial returns to the individual of £61,356 based on higher earnings, hours worked and employment chances, and £39,512 to the Exchequer based on tax returns and reduced benefit claims. Furthermore, the most recent phase of the Essex Apprenticeship Programme has supported 995 new apprenticeships with a financial benefit of £14.3M. Advanced and higher apprenticeships and skills see an even greater return.

Over the coming months the Board will be setting out its implementation plan and as a result will be able to fully articulate its actions and benefits around skills and employment.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Kevin Bentley, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Infrastructure

Recommendation 3

That the Welfare Reform Working Group be urged to highlight the impact of the proposed welfare reforms upon policy development or service changes on the issue of financial inclusion, and that there is specific support in place to provide residents with suitable information, guidance and IT infrastructure through libraries and other local authority access points.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

Accepted and progress is listed below.

As part of the scope of the core project group for welfare reforms and referencing the wider Welfare Reform Working Group (WRWG), work has been carried out to measure and forecast potential impacts of the welfare reforms.

Initially focusing on how the reforms will affect Essex residents as well as modelling the potential impact to ECC services, work is now being scoped to review the specific impacts on some of the poorest households who find themselves trapped in poverty. In addition to this, a detailed risk analysis was carried out through the group and this highlighted the need to review existing ECC policies and guidance including the fairer charging policies and the leaving care financial handbook. These are now being reviewed.

The WRWG have also consulted with partner organisations and District authorities to review the support and advice that has been made available to the public. This has enabled the promotion of best practice and to better understand any gaps in provision that will need to be addressed and forging the links with those providing access points. Specifically, the WRWG have provided sessions to various groups including the Employee Engagement Panel and the Benefit Network Group as well as a Member session with accompanying Benefit booklet to ensure the correct information is available to pass on to residents.

The design of the Essential Living Fund recognised the need to ensure that specific support for those struggling to manage money is available. This has been assured through partnering with organisations that are best placed to provide the support and advice necessary with initial telephone interviews through Southend Borough Council and distribution of goods using our Citizen advice Bureaux. This partnership provides signposting for additional support available along with the ability to provide advice on a wide range of issues including budgeting and financial options.

In relation to IT infrastructure it is worth noting that the Council's network of public libraries have internet facilities that enable people without home internet to access information.

It is also worth noting that the Council is currently embarking (with BT) on the roll out of superfast broadband across Essex by 2016. This will transform and modernise the broadband infrastructure in Essex, helping to create a mobile internet infrastructure that enables more people to access fast broadband – whether that be at home or on their smart phones.

The Group did not raise any further issues on this response.

Lead Cabinet Members: Councillor David Finch, Leader; and Councillor John Jowers, Cabinet Member for Libraries, Communities and Planning

Recommendation 4

That based upon the positive feedback received of the Village Agent project, consideration be given as to how the project could be extended into urban areas eg 'Urban Agent' pilot, and to develop an additional focus, at least in part, on promoting financial inclusion.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

The recommendation that consideration be given to how this concept could be extended – or perhaps developed – is agreed.

The key issue that will need considering is source of funding. The Committee will be aware that Essex County Council faces reduced funding and needs to save over £215M by 2016/17. Financial resources in the council are therefore very constrained.

Nevertheless, Cabinet recognises that the Village Agent project has been successful and that it has great potential and believes that the Committee's recommendation is timely and is worth further consideration.

Cabinet also notes that this recommendation is in line with a key recommendation from the independent report from the Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett Commission on Health and Social Care in Essex about the need to build community resilience and resources and, in particular, his recommendation that there should be:

"The creation of an Essex-wide organisation embracing paid staff and volunteers so that every household has a team or individual charged with identifying early signs of difficulty, combining concepts such as Health Champions, Neighbourhood Watch, Village Agents, and the current Essex Fire Prevention initiative".

Cabinet also supports the point made by Essex Citizen Advice Bureau that the work of the Whole Essex Community Budget (WECB) has highlighted the need for services – including CAB services – to focus on the development of prevention and early intervention strategies which deliver both better outcomes for clients but also reduce demand on public services and thereby achieve savings.

As a key recommendation of the Health and Social Care Commission, ECC is keen to see this approach implemented, and will work with partners across the wider public and voluntary sectors to assess how best to achieve a wider 'Village Agent' type programme'. This work will need to consider how such an approach could be funded.

Please could you provide some timelines for the work proposed in your response?

Wherever possible it would also be helpful if you could provide some more detail on improvements made/ proposed.

Cabinet Response March 2014:

The proposal for extending the scope and coverage of the village agent scheme is still in scope for this strand of implementing 'Who Will Care?' The original project has been evaluated and proposals are currently being drawn up to consider rolling out 'community agents.' If agreed, the roll-out will begin later this year.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor John Jowers, Cabinet Member for Libraries, Communities and Planning

Recommendation 5

That steps be taken to raise the awareness of all County Councillors and staff of the financial exclusion that exists in Essex in a way that enables them to signpost those individuals in need to the relevant services at the earliest opportunity.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

This recommendation is accepted.

We will look at a number of means for doing this, including:

- Communications work to raise public and media awareness, highlighting the extent of the problem and the sources of help and support. This can explore use of social media, identify key timing during the year (for example, in advance of Christmas as people start thinking of large financial outlays), linking with other organisations/bodies calling for greater financial inclusion, and seek coverage with local media, targeting those areas in the county which have a higher need of credit unions
- Information on our website to provide information and signposts to help and advice
- The work of our Trading Standards team

Please could you provide some timelines for the work proposed in your response?

Wherever possible it would also be helpful if you could provide some more detail on improvements made/ proposed.

Cabinet Response March 2014:

Examples of communications work delivered in the past few months:

- A booklet on welfare reform changes including essential contact information (including credit unions and citizen advice) which was printed for all Essex County Councillors and presented to them at a familiarisation session covering welfare reforms and the alternative provision to the social fund 'The Essential Living Fund'.
- Media release/social media engagement on additional funding for Citizen's Advice Bureaux.
- Media release/social media engagement on Credit Union grant fund; media pick up included an interview on BBC Essex.
- Inclusion of references to CAB in all Trading Standards releases

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 6

That, as a primary source of information on the relevant services available across Essex, a prominent financial inclusion portal be developed on the ECC website providing residents with easily accessible advice and signposting for support.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

This is accepted and can form part of a wider refresh of the Council's website.

Please could you provide some timelines for the work proposed in your response?

Wherever possible it would also be helpful if you could provide some more detail on improvements made/ proposed.

Cabinet Response March 2014:

The Council is still in the process of refreshing the website.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 7

That the County Council review how it allocates funding to the twelve Essex Citizens Advice Bureau, which takes greater account of local need rather than being allocated according to population levels, and that clear objectives be established for the provision of that funding.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We agree that more work is needed and believe that this should form part of the County Council's budget planning process.

We agree that funding should follow need, rather than population and we agree with the response to the committee from the Citizen Advice Bureau that "areas of deprivation do not follow District boundaries" and particularly that "demand also comes from other vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities, mental ill health and the elderly."

Currently there is a core annual grant paid to Essex CAB Ltd and distributed by them as below. The funds are to enhance the access to, and provision of, high quality information and advice and assist and enable CABx users in Essex to improve on their quality of life by claiming their entitlements and rights

Name	Split
Basildon, Billericay and Wickford	£15,331.86
Braintree, Halstead and Witham	£12,423.25
Brentwood	£6,433.47
Castle Point	£8,146.59
Chelmsford	£14,764.93
Colchester	£14,641.68
Epping	£3,749.90
Harlow	£7,419.44
Loughton	£5,113.50
Maldon	£5,583.07
Rochford and Rayleigh	£7,382.46
Tendring	£13,027.15
Uttlesford	£6,482.77
Waltham Abbey	£2,499.93
TOTAL	£123,000.00

There is also a county wide contract with CAB (administered centrally by Brentwood BCAB) which supports benefit form filling via home visits from CAB for vulnerable citizens. These citizens are those who are being financial assessed in line with our charging for care processes and the contract supports our statutory duty under fairer as part of our duty under Fairer Charging. The contract has a maximum annual budget of up to £60K.

The Group will seek more information on these recommendations as part of the next stage of its investigation.

Cabinet Response March 2014:

We understand that your group will seek information at a later date on the recommendations that relate to Citizens Advice Bureaus (CABs). However, we are pleased to highlight our decision to maintain funding at its current level for CABs, whilst developing a review process that will more closely align the grant to local needs. We are supportive of CABs and the free, impartial advice they offer to all residents. For example, Councillor David Finch will meet with Brentwood's CAB on 12th March to discuss opportunities for joint-working. We recognise the vital role of CABs in assisting financial inclusion and individual resilience.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Ann Brown, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Recommendation 8

That the County Council consider how it may provide practical support for the CAB to reach out to potential community champions within the business sector who may be willing to help finance the work of their local CAB, including the option that it provide additional monies to finance the employment of a CAB fund-raiser tasked with reducing CAB reliance on

local authority grants.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

The Cabinet believes that there is potential for the Essex Funding Team to be utilised more effectively to support organisations such as CABs, Credit Unions and CVSs collectively.

The Essex Funding Team supports ECC and external organisations across Greater Essex to source and secure external funding (non-ECC funds).

The Funding Team can already point to some successful work supporting Essex Citizens Advice Bureau by supporting applications for a slice of the £65 million [Advice Services Transition Fund](#), launched in November 2012 by the Big Lottery Fund in partnership with the Cabinet Office.

Applications were submitted at the end of January 2013 and in total £1.8m was awarded to partnerships within Essex (£2.4m including Southend and Thurrock). This was a great success. Projects began this summer (various dates specific to each project) and will last for 2 years. The breakdown of funding awarded is set out below.

Advice Services Transition Fund Greater Essex

CAB	Submitted?	Success?	Amount
Basildon	Yes	Yes	£310,085
Braintree	Yes	Yes	£154,336
Brentwood	Yes	No	N/A
Chelmsford	Yes	Yes	£349,918
Colchester	Yes	Yes	£348,618
Epping Forest	Unknown	Unknown	N/A
Harlow	Yes	No	N/A
Maldon	No	N/A	N/A
Rochford & Castle Point (Joint bid)	Yes	Yes	£337,967
Tendring	Yes	Yes	£207,398
Uttlesford	Yes	Yes	£111,872
Southend	Yes	Yes	£301,000
Thurrock	Yes	Yes	£339,434

It may be that an additional and dedicated post could be recruited within the funding team and even that such a role could be financially supported by an external funder such as, the Essex Community Foundation via the Thriving Third Sector Fund, or via the Community Resilience Fund.

The Group will seek more information on these recommendations as part of the next stage of its investigation.

Cabinet Response March 2014:

We maintain our original response to these recommendations.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Ann Brown, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Recommendation 9

That the County Council consider the provision of funding to train four CAB Debt Advisors who will in turn each provide specialist debt training to five CAB volunteers providing face-to-face advice for clients across Essex.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

This is not accepted at this stage.

The Cabinet notes the submission from ECAB that debt is one of the biggest issues that CABs have to deal with but also that debt advice should not be considered in isolation.

As per recommendation 4, it is important that we look at how advice and support is made available to people across Essex in a way that can sign post them to help and advice when they need it.

Cabinet Response March 2014:

We maintain our original response to these recommendations.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor John Aldridge, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Recommendation 10

That the County Council raise awareness of the StepChange Debt Charity, and consider how it may engage with that Charity's activities alongside targeted CAB preventative work, to extend debt advice to Essex residents.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We accept this recommendation.

StepChange Debt Charity is the new name for the Consumer Credit Counselling Service. They provide free, impartial debt advice to those in debt.

The County Council will look to ensure that appropriate links are available to the charity's website via our own website.

However, it is important to note that Step Change is just one organisation and we would not give preference to working with any one organisation over any other.

See additional information below following recommendation 13.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 11

That the County Council explore the feasibility of providing deposits with, or the direct funding of, credit unions with a view to them securing critical mass thereby supporting their sustainability and the services that they provide.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We agree in principle to this recommendation.

Essex County Council has long supported the local credit union movement and we have backed this in principle support with financial backing too. We have a track record of working with not only Essex Savers but also the other credit unions in Essex – Holdfast, Colchester Credit Union, HarlowSave and the Basildon Credit Union.

Since 2009, we have provided financial and in-kind support to credit unions across Essex totalling more than £300,000.

Essex County Council is keen to see a vibrant, independent, sustainable credit union movement across the county and will continue to work with every Essex credit union as they look to develop a habit of thrift amongst their members, provide an alternative to more expensive forms of credit, and to teach simple financial skills.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has recently highlighted the good work of credit unions and this is something we endorse and recognise.

It is of course important that credit unions are financially sustainable and have business plans that enable them to thrive without complete dependence on Essex CC funding and the possible risk to tax payers money if any credit union were to prove unsustainable.

See additional information below following recommendation 13.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 12

That the County Council provide practical support and expertise in assisting Credit Unions to reach out to potential community champions within the business sector who may be willing to help finance the work of their local Credit Union to reduce reliance on local authority funding.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We accept this recommendation and can point to the financial support we have given credit unions in recent years, as well as the expertise that our External Funding Team has which could help them secure external funding sources.

However, the Cabinet notes the response from ECAB that their experience of raising funds from the business sector is poor.

See additional information below following recommendation 13.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 13

That the County Council take active steps to promote positively on its website and within the literature it produces, the existence and potential suitability of borrowing and/or depositing monies with credit unions, and that all such information should be easily accessible to all.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We agree with this recommendation.

We have done much already to promote credit unions, and have also supported them with funding.

We will continue to promote credit unions through our communications and information on our website.

We will look into payslip promotions but committee need to be aware that payslips are now accessed online by employees, rather than in paper form.

See additional information below following recommendation 13.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

With reference to recommendations 10, 11, 12 and 13 above the following additional issues were raised by the Group:

The Group would like some reassurance through evidence that the County Council is taking positive steps to 'promote' financial inclusion on its own website, as well as identifying other opportunities that may have arisen.

Credit Unions have been attracting increased media attention, and perhaps the County Council could also play assist in promoting enhanced public awareness of their services. For example following the Archbishop of Canterbury's endorsement of Credit Unions, would there be merit in the County Council approaching the Bishops of Bradwell and Chelmsford to do some joint public promotion.

Linked to the theme of trying to combat escalating debt and the County Council's contribution to that goal, has any consideration been given to joint working with other Essex Local Authorities to promote financial awareness? It is noted that some local authorities including Glasgow and Plymouth City Councils have taken steps to prohibit advertising on their websites and properties that would promote pay day loan companies.

Cabinet Response to recommendations 10-13 dated March 2014:

We have recommenced discussion on how to incorporate financial inclusion as we develop the ECC website. We have updated information on the ECC website on welfare reform changes, providing a link to the booklet distributed to county councillors. We are also looking to provide a workshop day for the public on debt management.

ECC agree in principal to the idea of jointly promoting credit unions with local Bishops and would support discussions on this with the Church. We are supportive of the Credit Union sector and we seek to promote all credit unions across Essex.

We have set up welfare reform groups with representatives from district and borough councils to discuss how welfare reforms will affect our residents and their demand for credit unions and pay-day lending. We warn of the risks of pay day loan companies in our welfare reform booklet that can be accessed through the ECC website.

Recommendation 14

That the County Council work with borough, city and district councils and housing authorities to encourage them to consider using credit unions to deliver social outcomes and to promote the use of credit unions on their website and within their literature, and to both staff and citizens.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

We welcome this recommendation and will table the item for discussion at a meeting of Essex Leaders and Chief Executives in October.

What were the outcomes of the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives meeting held in October in relation to this recommendation?

Cabinet Response March 2014:

Cllr David Finch took credit unions as an item to the Essex Leaders & Chief Executives meeting on 6th February. Cllr Finch reported on the development of a concordat to ensure that Credit Unions and the Citizen's Advice Bureaux were adequately funded to assist people in view of the current hardship being experienced by some residents of Essex.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor David Finch, Cabinet Leader

Recommendation 15

That the County Council engage with local schools and with other appropriate bodies with expertise in this field to promote the development and use of financial literacy courses for schoolchildren, so that training in financial literacy plays a greater role in the school curriculum. A financial incentive could be provided to promote intra-school competition, which could see individual schools and schoolchildren work to develop an appropriate financial literacy programmes for different school years.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

The Cabinet agrees that local schools have a hugely important role to play. We support the idea of promoting an intra-school competition.

The sentiment behind this recommendation has since been echoed by the Coalition Government. The recently published draft National Curriculum for England should see financial education embedded in mathematics and citizenship education from September 2014 onwards.

The national curriculum for citizenship aims to ensure that all pupils "are equipped with the financial skills to enable them to manage their money on a day-to-day basis, and plan for future financial needs."

It would include the following areas at key stage 3 and 4:

- **KS3** = the functions and uses of money, the importance of personal budgeting, and managing risk.
- **KS4** = income and expenditure, credit and debt, insurance, savings and pensions, as well as a range of other financial products and services.

The Government is also considering introducing financial literacy exams for 15-year-olds in England from 2015 to measure their "real-life" knowledge and financial

capability. These would be part of the OECD's PISA international testing. Essex is already keen to join PISA through their PISA for Schools Programme and will shortly be entering into discussion with DfE and OECD about how to do this in a way that secures both school and authority level data that is comparable internationally. From 2015 when financial literacy is included in PISA tests this will allow us to use the results to benchmark and drive further improvement.

See additional information below following recommendation 16.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

Recommendation 16

That the County Council offer a range of appropriate budget management and financial literacy courses both through its Adult Community Learning and Libraries services.

Cabinet Response September 2013:

Essex County Council provides functional skills Maths courses (free to those who do not have a Level 2 maths qualification) across the entire county in all 14 of our main centres as well as in outreach / community venues and in partnership with other organisations (e.g. JCP, Probation), schools (Family Learning) and the voluntary sector (e.g. Citizens Advice Bureau) to tackle the issues.

Following an initial screening process for all learners, tutors plan a programme of learning which is tailored to each individual learner depending on their level, circumstances and need including financial literacy needs. Through the relationship built with the tutor and initial and diagnostic testing financial literacy needs will be identified and addressed in the learning plan. Learners are also referred to us from agencies as well as our own advice and guidance staff who deal with the impact of financial literacy on individuals such as CAB and are advised of appropriate courses with ACL where these needs will be addressed. Such information would be shared with the tutor to enable them to plan an appropriate programme.

See additional information below.

Lead Cabinet Member: Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member for Education and Lifelong Learning

With reference to recommendations 15 and 16 above the following additional issues were raised by the Group:

Has any action been taken in relation to implementing the proposal for an intra-school competition to promote financial inclusion literacy?

Cabinet Response March 2014:

We are holding discussions with the Personal Finance Education Group (Pfeg) over working together to implement this proposal for a September launch across all age groups.

This is supported by our improved working relationship with Pfeg, who we have invited to be a keynote speaker at our schools/colleges Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) conference in May. We are looking at how their new framework ties in the national careers and work related learning one. We are aiming to raise an awareness of the Pfeg framework in schools and improve website resources, learning outcomes, knowledge, skills and attitudes to personal finance for age 7 to post-16 students.

General - Corporate Outcomes Framework

Some examples of Financial Inclusion in the Corporate Outcomes Framework

- Percentage of children living in non-working households
 - Percentage of families living in temporary accommodation
 - Percentage of working age people in employment
 - Percentage of Essex residents who consider themselves to be in good health
 - Percentage of families living in safe and suitable housing
 - Percentage of households living in fuel poverty
 - Life satisfaction rates (ONS condition of wellbeing)
 - Percentage of working age people in employment
 - Job growth in key locations and key sectors
 - Housing growth in key locations
 - Median earnings
 - Sustainable business start-up rates
 - Percentage of working age people in employment
 - Proportion of people who live independently
 - Number of people with personal budgets
-

		AGENDA ITEM 9
		PSEG/22/14
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 June 2014	
DEVELOPING A BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK FOR ESSEX		
Enquiries to:	Christine Sharland, Scrutiny Officer 01245 430450 Christine.sharland@essex.gov.uk	

Arrangements have been made for the Committee to receive a briefing at this meeting designed to inform Members' understanding of the legal basis for the provision of bus services in England, and the role and responsibilities of the County Council with regard of the provision of passenger transport services.

The briefing has been commissioned at this time as it will assist the Committee in the consideration of public transport related issues that may arise. Given the Committee's proposed schedule of activity over the next six months, which is already onerous, the opportunity has been taken to include an early briefing as part of today's agenda so that it may inform topic selection when the work programme is reviewed namely when projects identified to be undertaken during the Autumn may have concluded and resource released for new projects.

A briefing note in the form of a powerpoint presentation will be circulated to the Committee under separate cover prior to the meeting.

A scoping document has been drawn up to guide the focus of the briefing and is included in the item on the Work Programme elsewhere in this agenda.

Action required by the Committee:

The Committee will receive a briefing on developing a better public transport network for Essex to raise Members' awareness of the framework for its provision and the Council's role and responsibilities.

		AGENDA ITEM 10
		PSEG/23/14
Committee:	Place Services and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 June 2014	
COMMISSIONING STRATEGIES		
Enquiries to:	Christine Sharland, Scrutiny Officer 01245 430450 Christine.sharland@essex.gov.uk	

The purpose of this report is to confirm that in July the Committee will be considering Commissioning Strategies on two occasions.

On Tuesday 22 July arrangements are being made for the Committee to receive a briefing on the principles behind the Strategies and how Members might approach their consideration of the issues. Fuller details of the briefing will be sent out nearer the date.

At its formal meeting on 24 July the Committee will consider the following three strategies that are pertinent to its remit:

- People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm
- Sustainable economic growth for Essex communities and businesses
- People in Essex experience a high quality and sustainable environment

Details of the strategies will be circulated with the agenda that will be published in advance of that meeting that will be open to the public.

Action required by the Committee:

The information set out above to be noted.

