



Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee

10:30	Tuesday, 25 September 2018	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

Richard Buttress, Member Enquiries Manager

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Pages

Private Pre-Meeting: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee Members Only

To be held at 9:30am in Committee Room 1, County Hall.

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| 1 | Membership, Apologies and Declarations
To be reported by the Member Enquiries Manager. | 5 - 5 |
| 2 | Minutes of previous meeting
To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 31 July 2018. | 6 - 9 |
| 3 | Questions from the Public

A period of up to 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make representations on any item on the agenda for this meeting.

On arrival, and before the start of the meeting, please register with the Committee Officer. | |
| 4 | Your Voice Focus Groups - initial findings
A verbal will be provided to the committee detailing the initial findings from the recent Your Voice Focus Groups. | |

5 Summary of Committee activity since September 2017 10 - 12

A summary of the activities undertaken by the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee in the last year are detailed in report CSC/32/18.

6 Work Programme - September 2018 13 - 14

To note the current position with regard to the committee's Work Programme.

Please note that upon conclusion of the formal meeting, time will be set aside for the committee to have a further discussion around future work programme topics.

7 Dates of future meetings: 2018 - 2019

To note that future meetings of the committee will take place on the following dates:

2018

Tuesday 30 October

Tuesday 27 November

2019

Tuesday 29 January

Tuesday 26 February

Tuesday 26 March

Tuesday 30 April

Tuesday 28 May

Tuesday 25 June

Tuesday 30 July

Tuesday 24 September

Tuesday 29 October

Tuesday 26 November

8 Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee will be held on Tuesday 30 October 2018.

9 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.

10 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.

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.

Essex County Council and Committees Information

All Council and Committee Meetings are held in public unless the business is exempt in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972. If there is exempted business, it will be clearly marked as an Exempt Item on the agenda and members of the public and any representatives of the media will be asked to leave the meeting room for that item.

The agenda is available on the Essex County Council website, <https://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.

Attendance at meetings

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](#)

Access to the meeting and reasonable adjustments

County Hall is accessible via ramped access to the building for people with physical disabilities.

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

Induction loop facilities are available in most Meeting Rooms. Specialist headsets are available from Reception.

With sufficient notice, documents can be made available in alternative formats, for further information about this or about the meeting in general please contact the named officer on the agenda pack or email democratic.services@essex.gov.uk

Audio recording of meetings

Please note that in the interests of improving access to the Council's meetings, a sound recording is made of the public parts of many of the Council's Committees. The Chairman will make an announcement at the start of the meeting if it is being recorded.

If you are unable to attend and wish to see if the recording is available you can visit this link <https://cmis.essexcc.gov.uk/Essexcmis5/CalendarofMeetings> any time after the meeting starts. Any audio available can be accessed via the 'On air now!' box in the centre of the page, or the links immediately below it.

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

Committee: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Enquiries to: Richard Buttress, Member Enquiries Manager

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

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

Membership

(Quorum 4)

Councillor M Mackrory (Chairman)
Councillor I Henderson (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor V Metcalfe (Vice-Chair)
Councillor J Abbott
Councillor J Beavis
Councillor M Buckley
Councillor M Garnett
Councillor M Hardware
Councillor J Moran
Councillor R Pratt
Councillor W Schmitt
Councillor A Sheldon
Councillor M Steptoe
Councillor A Turrell

Apologies

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Tuesday 31 July 2018

Present

Cllr M Mackrory (Chairman)
Cllr M Buckley
Cllr I Grundy (substitute for Cllr I Grundy)
Cllr R Pratt
Cllr A Turrell
Cllr M Steptoe
Cllr J Aldridge (substitute for Cllr V Metcalfe)
Cllr M Garnett
Cllr M Hardware
Cllr J Moran
Cllr W Schmitt

Apologies

Cllr J Beavis
Cllr I Henderson
Cllr V Metcalfe
Cllr J Abbott

Richard Buttress, Member Enquiries Manager was in support of the meeting.

1. Membership, apologies and declarations

Apologies were received from Cllr J Beavis, Cllr I Henderson, Cllr V Metcalfe and Cllr J Abbott.

No declarations of interest were received.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 June 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Minutes of the call-in meeting held on 10.07.2018

The notes from the informal call-in meeting were noted by the committee.

4. Questions from the public

None received.

5. Borrowing

Members received report CSC/31/18, which outlined Essex County Council's (ECC) approach to borrowing.

Cllr M Mackrory welcomed the following officers to the meeting:

- Nicole Wood, Director, Finance and Procurement

- Christine Golding, Chief Accountant
- Rob Manning, Head of Finance, Commercial Insight

Christine Golding introduced the item and made the following comments:

- ECC are able to borrow money for any purpose that is deemed prudent although it is predominately used to manage and fund its capital programme
- Complies with CIPFA financial code
- ECC puts together an annual strategy which demonstrates that borrowing is prudent, affordable and sustainable
- Borrowing cannot exceed the measure set out in the capital financing requirement
- At 31 March 2018, Capital financing requirement amounted to £845m with external debt amounting £515m
- Future projections indicate that capital financing requirement will increase to £1.1bn and external debt will increase to £760m.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, Members made various contributions and received responses:

- ECC borrow mainly from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) and receive fairly preferential rates, credit rating dependent
- ECC can only borrow in sterling (£)
- Borrowing is not limited to just this organisation – borrowing has been obtained previously through the money markets
- Officers are always looking for the best deal for ECC
- Borrowing is only undertaken when required
- PWLB are flexible in terms of length of borrowing (1 – 50 years)
- No more than £15m of debt matures in any one year
- Legislation permits authorities the freedom to borrow, as long as the authority understands the implications
- £27m of the £50m agreed by Cabinet has been spent on property investment
- ECC's property investment fund is agnostic to place. Opportunities in Essex have been explored but they did not meet the criteria approved by Cabinet
- Essex is only 5% of the UK's geography
- Graph 4.7 shows the level of expenditure to be incurred based on the capital programme. It shows capital expenditure over three years which has derived from borrowing
- Graph 4.13 shows capital financial requirement is increasing
- All debt is secured against a fixed rate of interest
- Revenue borrowing currently stands at £45m.

6. Fees and Charges

Members received report CSC/32/18, which detailed ECC's income from fees and charges.

Cllr M Mackrory welcomed the following officers to the meeting:

- Nicole Wood, Director, Finance and Procurement
- Rob Manning, Head of Finance, Commercial Insight

Rob Manning introduced the item and made the following comments:

- Service areas should be looking to obtain full cost recovery on discretionary services which should include everything (overheads etc)
- Some charges are set centrally by the Government which do not always obtain full cost recovery
- Fees and charges operated through a private company are permitted to make greater than full cost recovery
- At the beginning of each cycle, officers will look at charges against the policy and to ascertain if anything else can be charged for
- Should always aim for an Retail Price Index (RPI) uplift
- Of the £133m received, £90m related to Adult Social Care.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, Members made various contributions and received responses:

- Full cost recovery is not always possible due to restraints on certain charges, nor is a service able to cross-subsidise from another service area
- Significant over-achieving of fees and charges for commercial services
- Need greater transparency on the charges for Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO)
- Schedule of charges is published annually on ECC's website
- Income from TRO's is received by ECC, not Ringway Jacobs
- A Parish Council who currently hire a building from ECC were informed that they would no longer receive payment in advance, which contradicts ECC's policy of requesting payment from organisations up front.

7. Statutory Consultations

Members received a presentation on Statutory Consultations, presented by Duncan Taylor, Head of Profession Research and Citizen Insight.

Upon conclusion of the presentation, Members made various contributions and received responses:

- The delivery of the consultation process is mainly completed in-house, depending on the capacity of the service area. External companies are commissioned if required
- If external companies are used, the Research Framework is used which lists pre-approved companies, speeding up the procurement process
- For more area specific consultations, the local Member should be informed before the process begins rather than during and/or after
- Early engagement with the Scrutiny Board is something that should happen and will be addressed going forward
- Surveys are sent to a random sample of Essex addresses, ensuring enough households are included in order to capture the relevant geography. If responses are not received, reminder letters are sent

- The aim of a consultation is to ensure that a robust sample of results are received, which are statistically significant
- Advice is sought on how to reach those groups who do not use I.T
- The consultation is reviewed before it is distributed to make sure there no leading/loading questions
- Traditional methods of telephone calls and door knocking are still used where appropriate
- The consultation tracker be made available to the relevant local Member to keep them abreast of consultations in their local area.

8. Work Programme

An update on the work programme, including future agenda items, was provided to the committee.

9. Date of next meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee will take place on Tuesday 25 September 2018 at 10:30am.

10. Urgent business

None received.

11. Urgent exempt business

None received.

The meeting closed at midday.

Chairman

Report title: Summary of Committee activity since September 2017	
Report to: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Report author: Richard Buttress, Member Enquiries Manager	
Date: September 2018	For: Information
Enquiries to: Richard Buttress (richard.buttress3@essex.gov.uk)	

Remit

As defined in Essex County Council's (ECC) Constitution, the Committee has a scrutiny oversight role for the following:

- The overall strategic direction, policies and priorities of the Cabinet and of Council
- The Council's financial position and management of the council's finances and budgets (revenue and capital)
- Corporate policies
- Internal and external communications
- Customer Contact Centre
- Registrations of births, deaths and marriages
- Coroners
- Matters relating to the activities of support services including:
 - Commercial/Procurement
 - Property and Facilities management
 - Legal Services
 - Performance and Organisational Intelligence
 - Transformation
 - Internal Audit
 - Risk and Insurance
 - Health and Safety
 - I.T
 - Human Resources
 - Business Support
 - Democratic Services
- The Council's role as an employer
- Services which operate via a trading account
- Essex companies and other legal entities (and ECC's shareholder role)
- Democratic engagement and representation.

Leadership

The Chairman has established the following to assist work planning:

- Monthly Chairman and Vice-Chairman meetings

- Committee pre-meet ahead of the full meeting to identify key lines of enquiry/questions for the officers presenting at the meeting.

Scrutiny Format

To date, all scrutiny work has been undertaken in full committee, which has been held at County Hall.

Workload Analysis

Over the last 12 months, the committee has looked at the topics listed in the table below. In summary, the committee has held:

- 10 formal committee meetings
- 1 private committee meeting
- 1 formal call-in meeting
- 1 Task and Finish Group.

The committee has:

- Investigated and derived its own work programme
- Established and completed one Task and Finish Group review
- Considered 18 substantive formal items of business (plus the report back from the Task and Finish Group)
- Considered one call-in at full committee. The majority of the committee supported the Cabinet decision.
- A further call-in was withdrawn at the informal stage following a meeting with the relevant Cabinet Member.

The Task and Finish Group made 6 formal recommendations around the procurement of ECC's resourcing services.

Considerations for future planning

The committee may wish to consider the following:

- Consider the current processes for developing the work programme and what works well and what can be improved?
- Consider if there are areas that need greater attention in the year ahead or which have not been looked at yet which should
- Consider how potential outcomes from a session are created. What actions can arise from an item other than just asking for a future update?

Work undertaken since September 2017

Topic	
Conclusion of the Member Enquiries Task and Finish Group (initially commenced January 2017)	Committee received an update on the recommendations put forward by the Task and Finish Group. Future updates were given at two further meetings
Coroner's Service	Committee received an update on the number of referrals made to the

	service
Commercial Property Fund	Committee received a briefing on the implementation of ECC's Commercial Property Fund, particularly around the criteria
Parking Partnerships	Committee received a briefing from Essex Highways officers
Procurement	Committee received a briefing from officers on the current position of ECC's procurement service. A Task & Finish Group was set up as a result of this briefing
Budget 2019/20: Pre-scrutiny	Committee received information on the budget setting process, how the budget is set, the type of influence the committee can have on this and timescales
2017/18 Financial Provisional Out-turn	This is a standing item on the work programme. The committee received an update on the 2017/18 financial position
Grants Update and Criteria	Committee received an up to date position on the ECC Grants
Borrowing	Information on ECC's borrowing position was presented to the committee
Fees and Charges	Information on the fees and charges ECC receive was presented to the committee
Statutory Consultations	Committee received an update on ECC's process for undertaking public consultations

Scrutiny Survey

Members may wish to note that witnesses attending scrutiny sessions will be invited to complete a Scrutiny Survey on their experience, taking in questions on how they were briefed and general preparation for the item, as well as the scrutiny session itself.

Survey results and feedback are considered by the Scrutiny Board twice a year. Any significant issues about the operation of this committee would be picked up the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, who is a member of the Scrutiny Board.

CORPORATE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19 – (ADOPTED BY SEPTEMBER 2018 COMMITTEE MEETING)

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

Date/Timing	Issue/Topics	Focus/other comments	Approach	RAG
September 2018	Staff Survey Results	Initial findings of the Your Voice Survey Focus Groups to be presented	i) Director and relevant officer(s) to present	
September/October 2018	Pre-scrutiny on budget 2019/20	Committee to provide feedback on the proposed 2019/20 budget	i) Director and relevant officer(s) to present	
October 2018	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	i) To be half-yearly ii) Cabinet Member and/or relevant officer to present iii) To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis	
October 2018	Task and Finish Group – ECC Resourcing Contract	Response to recommendations to be presented to the committee	i) Director and relevant officer(s) to present	
May/June 2019	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	i) To be half-yearly ii) Cabinet Member and/or relevant officer to present iii) To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis	
October 2019	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	i) To be half-yearly ii) Cabinet Member	

			iii) and/or relevant officer to present To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis	
Topics suggested to be pursued				
TBC	Essex Pay Implementation	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Property portfolio	Value of ECC Estate and disposal strategy	To be determined	
TBC	Customer Contact Centres	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Essex Legal Services – update on external service charging	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	ECC Organisation Redesign/Transformation update	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Overall strategic direction	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	I.T – update on 'Azure' system	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Emerging organisation strategies	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Business Rates Retention	Learn more about Local Government funding distribution and any future piloting of national plans	Dependent on national plans and any local pilot areas.	