

Report title: Appointment of Independent Chair of Essex Climate Action Commission	
Report to: Cllr David Finch, Leader of the Council	
Report author: Mark Carroll, Executive Director, Place and Public Health	
Date: 11 February 2020	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Mark Carroll, Executive Director, Place and Public Health	
County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Paragraph 16.6.1 of the Council's Constitution permits the Leader to appoint representatives to key external bodies.
- 1.2 The report asks the Leader to appoint the Right Honourable Lord Randall of Uxbridge as Independent Chair of the Essex Climate Action Commission.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That with immediate effect, Lord Randall of Uxbridge is appointed as the Independent Chair of the Essex Climate Action Commission

3. Summary of issue

Appointments to bodies

- 3.1 The Council is asked to make a number of appointments to external (or independent) bodies. This is either a legal requirement, set out in the constitution of the relevant body or at the request of the organisation concerned.

The Essex Climate Action Commission

- 3.2 Creation of The Essex Climate Action Commission was announced by the Leader at Essex County Council (ECC) Full Council in October 2019. At that meeting, the Leader confirmed that the Commission would be independent, cross-party and made up of experts in relevant fields. He also announced that the Commission would have an initial budget of £250,000.
- 3.3 Since then, the organisation has conducted a search for a high-profile Independent Chair with significant experience and strong connections, which will help give the Commission national recognition.

Lord Randall of Uxbridge

- 3.4 Lord Randall was identified for his significant experience in both national government and the private sector. He is now a life peer in the House of Lords.

As well as being Special Advisor on the Environment to the former Prime Minister, Theresa May, Lord Randall has also served as a trustee of the RSPB, special envoy on modern slavery to the Mayor of London and was a member of the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee.

- 3.5 Although Lord Randall is a former Conservative politician, as Chair, he will remain independent. The Leaders of the opposition parties at ECC have been consulted on this appointment and support Lord Randall, acknowledging his credentials and reputation as a strong cross-party collaborator.
- 3.6 The decision to appoint is being taken by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change Action following a vetting process, led by Mark Carroll, Executive Director for Place and Public Health. Lord Randall will not be accepting any payment for his participation in the Essex Climate Change Commission, only reimbursement for any expenses incurred. ECC's Chief Executive Gavin Jones has a familial connection to Lord Randall: his daughter is married to Lord Randall's son, and he has therefore declared a potential interest and excused himself from the process and advice on the appointment of the Chair of the Commission.

Further Commission Membership

- 3.7 The Terms of Reference for the Commission, which will include a membership list, will be finalised with the Independent Chair before being formally approved at the first meeting of the Commission.
- 3.8 Six ECC Members will sit on the commission: three from the Conservative Group (including the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action) and one from each of the three opposition groups. The Leaders of each political group have been asked to nominate representatives.
- 3.9 Two co-chairs representing young people will also sit on the commission. These co-chairs have been selected by the Young Essex Assembly via a democratic process.
- 3.10 Subject matter experts from partners, organisations, businesses and academic institutions will be approached to join the Commission by the Leader and the appointed Chair. A full list of members will be announced ahead of the first meeting.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Expenses incurred throughout Lord Randall's commission will be funded from the Essex Climate and Change Commission as referred to in section 3.2.
- 4.2 Since the provision of £250,000 in October 2019, the Leader has announced an additional £5,000,000 for projects endorsed by the commission over the next 3 years.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 Lord Randall will be contracted on an expenses only basis. This will be reflected in a letter of engagement which sets out his role and confirms that he is not an employee of the Council.

6. Equality and Diversity implications

- 6.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful.
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 6.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 6.3 In making this appointment, the Leader will want to appoint the best person for the job whilst looking to appointments that reflect as far as possible the diversity of Essex.

7. List of Appendices

None

8. List of background papers

None

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date
Councillor David Finch, Leader of the Council	10 February 2020
In consultation with:	

Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action Councillor Simon Walsh	10 February 2020
Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer) Paul Turner	18 December 2019
Executive Director, Finance and Technology (section 151 Officer) Nicole Wood	26 January 2020