



Essex County Council

Corporate Policy and Scrutiny

13:00	Tuesday, 26 February 2019	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
--------------	--------------------------------------	--

For information about the meeting please ask for:

Richard Buttress, Member Enquiries Manager

Telephone: 07809 314835

Email: democratic.services@essex.gov.uk

		Pages
1	Membership, Apologies and Declarations To be reported by the Democratic Services Manager.	4 - 4
2	Minutes of previous meeting To note and approve the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 29 January 2019.	5 - 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	Equalities To note report CPSC/05/19.	10 - 14
5	Joint Task and Finish Group - Ringway Jacobs The committee to receive an update on the progress being made by the joint Task and Finish Group.	

- | | | |
|----------|---|----------------|
| 6 | Work Programme
To note the current position as regards the committee's Work Programme. | 15 - 19 |
| 7 | Date of Next Meeting
To note that the next meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 26 March 2019. | |
| 8 | 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.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 9 | Urgent Exempt Business
To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency. |
|----------|---|

Essex County Council and Committees Information

All Council and Committee Meetings are held in public unless the business is exempt in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972. If there is exempted business, it will be clearly marked as an Exempt Item on the agenda and

members of the public and any representatives of the media will be asked to leave the meeting room for that item.

The agenda is available on the 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

Councillor M Garnett – substituted by Councillor J Aldridge

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Tuesday 29 January 2019

Present

Cllr M Mackrory (Chairman)
Cllr J Abbott
Cllr J Aldridge (substitute)
Cllr T Ball
Cllr M Buckley
Cllr P Channer (substitute)

Cllr M Durham (substitute)
Cllr I Grundy (substitute)
Cllr I Henderson
Cllr V Metcalfe
Cllr J Moran
Cllr R Pratt

Apologies

Cllr J Beavis
Cllr M Garnett
Cllr M Hardware

Cllr W Schmitt
Cllr M Steptoe
Cllr A Turrell

Richard Buttress, Member Enquiries Manager was supporting the meeting.

1. Membership, apologies and declarations

Apologies were received from Cllr J Beavis, Cllr M Garnett, Cllr M Hardware, Cllr W Schmitt, Cllr M Steptoe and Cllr A Turrell.

Cllr J Aldridge substituted for Cllr M Garnett.
Cllr I Grundy substituted for Cllr J Beavis.
Cllr P Channer substituted for Cllr W Schmitt.
Cllr M Durham substituted for Cllr M Steptoe.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Pending a few alterations to the minutes of November's meeting, they were agreed and signed as an accurate record.

3. Questions from the public

There were none.

4. Joint Task and Finish Group – Ringway Jacobs

The report CPSC/01/19 was introduced by Cllr T Ball, who is chair of the Task and Finish Group:

- The group is looking at whether changes should be made to current contract arrangements in respect of highway maintenance
- The review will be comprehensive and in depth with additional meetings being planned
- The final report, with recommendations, will be presented to the Cabinet Member in April 2019.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Infrastructure was welcomed to the meeting and offered his views on the Task and Finish Group:

- Welcomes the work being undertaken by the Task and Finish Group
- Has also set up his own inquiry which is being led by one of his Deputy Cabinet Members Cllr Lesley Wagland
- Is pleased to see the level of repairs has increased since May 2018
- Changes in the reporting system within the contract have been made
- RAC were complimentary of Essex County Council
- Is happy for himself, his deputies and relevant officers to be called upon to assist with the Task and Finish Group
- Gauges perception on the amount of emails in his inbox
- Top 20 defects programme working well and are looking to do something similar with footpaths.

I.T integration with ECC systems is integral and geo-imaging is being looked into currently.

The online reporting form needs to be improved – more simple and cost effective to reduce email correspondence.

The wording of the contract will be changed, with KPI's and technology also reviewed.

The direct delivery service which supports Local Highways Panel's is looking at being extended. This could be something that the Place Services and Economic Growth Committee assist with.

Improving the relationship between Essex County Council and district councils in terms of planning and the impact on roads will be pursued.

A request has been made that County Councillors are made aware of press releases/statements before they are published.

The Casualty Reduction team do not link in with Local Highways Panel's currently.

In terms of planning applications, ECC are only asked for their views on certain issues and does not take into consideration the impact on surrounding areas.

There is a difference between a make safe and permanent repair – perception is sometimes that make safe repairs are permanent ones.

ECC's planning team are looking into casualty reduction in terms of future developments. It was noted that the incidents are not always caused by the design of the road – sometimes it is as a result of driver behaviour.

The relationship between the Casualty Reduction team and Essex Police will be looked into by Cllr Bentley however; this is not related to Ringway Jacobs or the contract.

Other factors in terms of the contract extension are being looked into, such as method, cost, quality and value for money.

Actions

- 1) Pedestrian crossings in Witham are not being implemented due to a lack of funding from Section 106, Local Highways Panels and ECC. This is to be reviewed by Cllr Bentley.
- 2) Improvements to the relationship between the Casualty Reduction team and Essex Police. This is to be investigated by Cllr Bentley.
- 3) Work at Benfleet Station commencing on 1 February 2019 – Cllr Sheldon did not receive any pre-warning of these works. Process to be reviewed.

5. Essex County Council Reserves

The report CPSC/02/19 was introduced by Tina French, Head of Strategic Finance and Insight:

- The report covers details of all the reserves held by ECC and how they are used

The A130 PFI contract for the A130 uses credits from central government that make payments later in the contract.

Payments to the contractor for the A130 are based on traffic flows.

A sum of £12m will be paid in 2019/20 to support the A130 PFI contract.

Reserves are misinterpreted by the media – it was suggested a press release is produced to explain the reserves in more detail.

A substantial amount of funds are held in overnight investments, meaning quick access can be obtained if need be.

ECC's treasury management policy has worked but is being reviewed again this year.

Actions

- 1) More detail to be provided on how the A130 PFI reserve works and the impact on the revenue budget.
- 2) Details/lists on grant equalisation to be provided.

6. Provisional Settlement

The report CPSC/03/19 was introduced by Nicole Wood, Director for Finance and Procurement:

- ECC was disappointed to not be a pilot for the Business Rate Retention (BRR) scheme
- It would have bought £15m into Essex as a whole
- Still unclear as to the reasons why ECC was unsuccessful
- The settlement was in line with the four year deal for the Revenue Support Grant (RSG)
- This is the penultimate year for the RSG
- A number of one-off grants were announced in the settlement for highways and social care
- The consultation on Fair Funding closes in March 2019

- ECC is waiting to see what the framework for business rate reform is from central government.

The total retain share for BRR is £200m, the majority of which will come to ECC – roughly 80/20 split. Nothing has been confirmed on what the split is likely to be between upper and lower tier authorities.

Actions

- 1) To confirm the amount of money set aside for the impact of Brexit
- 2) Further details on the proposed prosperity fund to be provided
- 3) The outcome of the Fair Funding consultation to be provided, possibly at a future committee meeting.
- 4) Graph detailing the precise figures with regard to ECC's proportion of tax

7. 2018/19 Financial Overview as at the Third Quarter Stage

The report CPSC/04/19 was introduced by Tina French, Head of Strategic Finance and Insight:

- This includes the provisional winter measures mentioned back in October/November 2018.

The Leaders budget refers to underspend as a result of vacancies in digital services.

The service has been through the organisational redesign process and as a result, has led to these posts becoming vacant. Recruitment is currently ongoing.

Three properties within the Property Investment Portfolio are making the financial returns expected.

Due to broader risk, the decision has been taken to not approve any further funds to this programme at the moment.

Assets have been obtained for the long-term which accounts for volatility in the market. No indications in the material value, asset value or the yield.

There is a reserve in place to cover repairs to properties when they are being sold.

One of ECC's properties into its portfolio is in retail. An independent view was obtained from advisors who advise ECC's Pension Fund.

A proportion of the £50m property portfolio has been set aside to cover the expenditure in the revenue stream. The property investment balance is within report CPSC/02/19.

Savings were noted from voluntary organisations. There is a savings plan in this area which is driving overspends rather than there being a reduction in these grants.

The carry forward of underspends are only allowed in certain portfolios/services.

Generic carry forward of budgets is not supported.

Actions

- 1) Is there a plan in place to reduce the number of vacancies within I.T under the Leader's portfolio?

8. Work Programme

The updated work programme was noted by the committee.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 26 February 2019 at 1:00pm.

10. Urgent Business

An urgent item was taken as a result of the paper being submitted late – 'Organisation Plan and Budget 2019/20'.

This paper was submitted the meeting of the Cabinet on Tuesday 22 January 2019 and was for noting by the committee.

The cost of debt for 2019/20 is £54m, increasing to £60m for 2021/22.

The budget pressures over the next two years are accumulative – it is not £72m in 2020/21 and then a further £100m in 2021/22.

11. Urgent exempt business

None received.

The meeting closed at 1:05pm.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 4
		CPSC/05/19
Committee:	Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	Tuesday 26 February 2019	
Enquiries to:	Name: Shammi Jalota Designation: Head of Profession, Equalities and Partnerships Contact details: shammi.jalota@essex.gov.uk	

Equalities as a 'Golden Thread' at Essex County Council

Summary/Purpose:

To highlight the progress made in embedding equalities across the organisation, setting out the process for Essex County Council (ECC) to seek reaccreditation under the LGA's Equality Framework for Local Government in June 2019.

Current status/current issues

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, and other public bodies, to pay due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations with different groups in the exercising its functions. It acts as a reminder that there can be no fair society if some groups and communities remain disadvantaged because of their legally protected characteristics.¹

The Duty requires public services, including ECC, to publish at least one equality objective every four years. ECC refreshed and published its equality objectives in February 2018, after a period of internal and public consultation from October 2017 to January 2018. The equality objectives set out below and are aligned to the strategic aims set out within the Organisation Strategy 2017-2021:

¹ These are: age, sex, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership and religion/belief.

No	Strategic Aims (SA)	Strategic Priorities (SP)	Equality Objectives (EO)
1	Enable inclusive economic growth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help people in Essex prosper by increasing their skills 2. Enable Essex to attract and grow large firms in high growth industries 3. Target economic development to areas of opportunity 	We will tackle the causes of disadvantage, ensuring that all Essex residents can access good jobs and an excellent education, regardless of their background.
2	Help people get the best start and age well	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help keep vulnerable children safe and enable them to fulfil their potential 2. Enable more vulnerable adults to live more independent of Social Care 3. Improve the health of the people of Essex 	We will remove the obstacles that hold Essex residents back, tackling inequalities between children and supporting older people to live independently with dignity.
3	Help create great places for people to grow up, live & work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help secure stronger, safer and more neighbourly communities 2. Help secure sustainable development and protect the environment 3. Facilitate growing communities and new homes 	We will help people to travel across Essex, bringing communities together and connecting them to services, employment and learning opportunities.
4	Transform the council to achieve more with less	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limit cost and drive growth in revenue 2. Develop the capability, performance and engagement of our people 3. Re-imagine how residents' needs can be met in a digital world 	We will employ a diverse workforce, drawing on the different values and experiences that reflect the communities we serve.

This approach has meant that, whilst ECC no longer has a separate equalities strategy, equalities activities are aligned to respective functional business plans. However, further work is ongoing to ensure that the 'golden thread' is fully embedded in terms of key deliverables, performance and monitoring reporting arrangements linked to these activities at organisational, functional and service level.

For 2018/19, the Equalities & Partnerships Team have led on the work to achieve, or are on track to achieve, a number of outcomes including:

- Launched the first Essex Hate Crime strategy with partners to ensure a coordinated response to victims and families across the County (SA/EO 3, SP 3.1)
- Created an accessible community hub for citizens with learning, physical and sensory disabilities on the ground floor library area at County Hall (SA/EO 3, SP 3.1)

- Assessed as a Disability Confident Leader (SA/EO 4, SP 4.2)
- Strengthened the relationship between faith-based organisations and public services within the Faith Covenant areas (SA/EO 3, SP 3.1).

Currently, looking across the whole organisation at a functional level, the following activities also demonstrate how our equalities objectives are being delivered:

- Delivered seamless social work to disabled children and young people by moving social workers into teams that offer a service from birth to 25 years old (SP/EO 2, SP 2.1)
- Launched an Inclusion Statement for Essex schools to support the SEND reforms (SP/EO 2, SP 2.1)
- Created 38 new homes through Essex Housing, including 15 independent living homes for people with learning disabilities (SP/EO 3, SP 3.3)
- Developed and launched the Workforce Strategy (People Plan) (SP/EO 4, SP 4.2)
- Published the updated Essex Design Guide online, including new content on digital, the ageing population and Garden Communities to improve new housing developments (SP/EO 3, SP 3.3)
- Delivered the Joint Health and Well Being Strategy for Essex, with a focus on Improving mental health and wellbeing, health inequalities and enabling and supporting people with long-term conditions and disabilities (SP/EO 2, SP 2.3)
- Developed new accommodation and employment pathways for people with mental health problems (SP/EO2, SP 2.2).

However, we know there is still more to do, and during 2019/20 the Equalities & Partnerships Team will continue to build on the above, and in addition will focus on:

- Working with Essex Partners to address challenges faced by our communities, such as deprivation (The IMD shows that deprivation has increased in all of our district areas, with the most affluent areas suffering the worst increase) and social mobility (research by the Social Mobility Foundation shows that social mobility is poor in some of our communities, particularly in coastal areas)
- Continuing to deliver the ambitions set out within the Vision for Essex
- Creating a 'centre of excellence' for equalities and partnerships in the UK to drive whole system transformation so we can exemplify best practice in this area, providing peer to peer support to partners both regionally and nationally
- Launching an improved equality impact assessment framework for the organisation that will help understand cumulative impact and better inform our decision-making processes in view of the continuing budget challenges
- Looking to retain our 'excellent status' of the Equalities Framework for Local Government, issued by the LGA.

In addition, for 2019/20, the following activities demonstrate how our equalities objectives will be delivered across the organisation:

- Increase the number of apprenticeships delivered through Adult Community Learning (SA/EO 1, SP 1.1)
- Implement a strategy to tackle teenage pregnancy (SA/EO 2, SP 2.1)
- Create 40 new homes through Essex Housing, including 8 Independent Living homes for people with learning disabilities (SA/EO 3, SP 3.3)
- Support partners to explore establishing a Muslim Council for Essex (SA/EO 3, SP 3.1)
- Progress the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot to improve physical activity in the population for older people, those with mental health needs and families in disadvantaged areas (SP/EO 2, SP 2.3)
- Lead work with Essex Partners to develop options for addressing homelessness issues across the County (SA/EO 3, SP 3.1)
- Deliver a refreshed evidence base in support of delivering a new Essex Skills Strategy (SA/EO 1, SP 1.1).

LGA Equalities Framework for Local Government

On the above final point, ECC was reaccredited as 'excellent' for its equalities work by the LGA in 2016. The award is made for a period of three years and the LGA has been invited back for a site visit on 26-27 June 2019 as part of the reaccreditation process. The LGA will want to meet a cross section of officers, elected members and wider stakeholders to understand how equalities and inclusion are embedded within the Organisation. ECC is also required to complete a detailed self-assessment against the five performance areas:

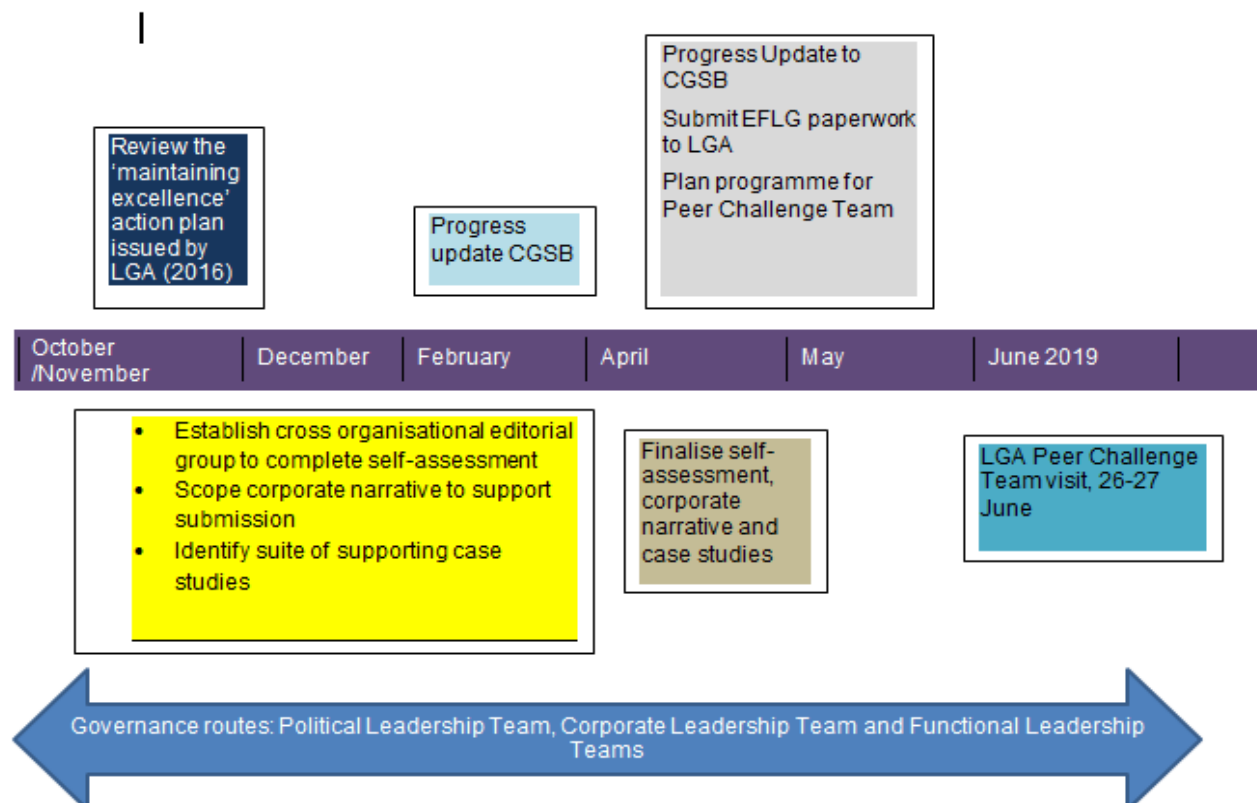
- Knowing your communities
- Leadership, Partnership and Organisational Commitment
- Involving your Communities
- Responsive Services and Customer Care
- Skilled and Committed Workforce.

A detailed narrative that outlines ECC's 'equalities journey' since 2016 will be developed and will be submitted as part of the required wider evidence base. The context for the narrative will be based around how ongoing consideration to equalities is firmly rooted in both policy and practice. It will also set out a detailed account of the organisation's equality achievements and outcomes. This will be complemented by a suite of evidence, including case studies, which will aim to demonstrate how the 'excellent' level criteria of the EFLG have been met. The topics that case studies will focus on have yet to be determined but will cover all five performance areas.

In 2016, a Cross Organisational Editorial Group was set up to assist in the coordination of the self-assessment and to be the main point of contact for the development of the supporting case studies and the link back to their respective functional areas. For the 2019 assessment, it is proposed that we use the membership of the Equalities Coordinators Network to take on this role. They will act as a conduit back to their FLT on progress towards accreditation and develop potential case studies for inclusion in the final submission.

Appendix 1

High-level Timetable for Reaccreditation



		AGENDA ITEM 6
		CPSC/06/19
Committee:	Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	26 February 2019	
Enquiries to:	Name: Richard Buttress Designation: Member Enquiries Manager Contact details: richard.buttress3@essex.gov.uk	

Work Programme

To note the current position as regards work planning and programming.

CORPORATE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20 – (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
February 2019				
February 2019	Equalities	Highlight the progress made in embedding equalities across the organisation	Presentation by Cabinet Member/Relevant Officers	
February 2019	Procurement – renewal of Ringway Jacobs contract	Joint committee work with Place Services and Economic Growth Committee	Update on Task and Finish Group progress to be reported	
March 2019				
March 2019	Procurement – renewal of Ringway Jacobs contract	Joint committee work with Place Services and Economic Growth Committee	Update on Task and Finish Group progress to be reported	
March 2019	Emerging Savings	Opportunity for the committee to conduct proactive scrutiny work	Presentation by relevant Director	
March 2019	Delivery assurance of savings	Opportunity for the committee to conduct proactive scrutiny work	Presentation by relevant Director	
April 2019				
April 2019	Procurement – renewal of Ringway Jacobs contract	Joint committee work with Place Services and Economic Growth Committee	Update on Task and Finish Group progress to be reported	

May 2019				
May 2019	Emerging organisation strategies	Mid-point update on the Organisation Strategy	Presentation by Cabinet Member and Chief Executive	
May 2019	Brexit	To receive an update on the impact Brexit will have on ECC	Presentation by the Chief Executive	
May/June 2019	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be half-yearly 2. Cabinet Member and/or relevant officer to present 3. To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis 	
October 2019				
October 2019	Budget Out-turn	Regular half-yearly updates after Cabinet	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be half-yearly 2. Cabinet Member and/or relevant officer to present 3. To identify any particular issues for further 'dive' on an ongoing basis 	
Topics suggested being pursued				
Autumn 2019	Property Investment Portfolio	To receive an in-depth update on the latest position on ECC's property investment programme	Presentation by relevant Cabinet Member, Director and Officers	
Autumn 2019	Property portfolio	Value of ECC Estate and disposal strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The current value of ECC's property estate 2) Breakdown of ECC property estate and 	

			their values 3) Details of ECC's disposal strategy	
Ongoing	Budget 2020/21	Committee looking to undertake a pre-scrutiny exercise on ECC's budget for 2020/21	Involvement from Cabinet Member and relevant officers	
TBC	ECC Organisation Redesign/Transformation update	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Fair Funding Review	Three key areas: i) Tax burden in London and unitary authorities ii) Disposable income iii) Projectory	To be determined	
Topics suggested to be pursued				
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	Overall strategic direction	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	I.T – update on 'Azure' system	To be determined	To be determined	
TBC	Social Care Providers	Review ECC's process of dealing with providers who are in a difficult financial position – possible Task and Finish Group	To be determined	