

Cabinet

Wednesday, 01 September 2021

Attendees: Councillor Simon Crow, Councillor Paul Dundas, Councillor Andrew Ellis, Councillor Darius Laws, Councillor Sue Lissimore, Councillor Beverley Oxford

Also in attendance: : Councillors Cory*, Goss*, Fox, Goacher, Harris*, McCarthy, Pearson*, Willetts, T. Young

*Attended remotely

No. Publication and Call in Arrangements

Date Published 2 September 2021

Date when decisions may be implemented (unless 'called in') 5pm 9 September 2021

NB All decisions except urgent decisions, those subject to pre-scrutiny and those recommended to Council may be subject to the Call-in Procedure.

Requests for the scrutiny of relevant decisions by the Scrutiny Panel must be signed by at least ONE Councillor AND FOUR other Councillors to countersign the call-in form OR to indicate support by e-mail. All such requests must be delivered to the Proper Officer by no later than 5pm on 9 September 2021.

584 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

585 Have Your Say! (Hybrid meetings)

Sir Bob Russell addressed the Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 5(1) of the Meetings General Procedure Rules to express his concern that the Friends of Colchester Museum had not been consulted about the formation of Colchester Museum Development Foundation. The Friends of Colchester Museum was a long established group, which was passionate about Colchester's heritage and museums, and was well informed. It had a large membership and its meetings were well attended. It should have been consulted about this significant development. It was noted that the Friends of Ipswich Museum had a trustee on the board of the new Development Foundation, but despite there being 12 Trustees, no comparative arrangement had been made for the Friends of Colchester Museum.

Councillor Laws, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Business and Heritage, explained that he believed that there was capacity for a number of vehicles to channel support for the Museum Service and it was right that the Council should have a vehicle under its control to secure corporate support and funding. He would look at the issues raised about the governance of the Foundation

Councillor T. Young attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet to express his concern about the impact of the proposed cut to Universal Credit. 1613 tenants of Colchester Borough Homes claimed Universal Credit, 475 of which lived in Greenstead. The withdrawal of the £20 uplift proposed for October 2021 meant this group would lose in total £1.68 million per annum. Many residents relied on this for essentials such as food and rent, and it would have an impact on rent collection rates. Nearly 40% of Universal Credit claimants were in work. Further information would be sent to the Leader of the Council and the administration should call on the government to abandon the withdrawal of the £20 uplift.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that he understood the impact of withdrawal of the £20 uplift and he would look at the further information provided. Cabinet would be considering a request from the Policy Panel to consider the implications of the end of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit later in the meeting.

Councillor Harris attend and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet. He supported the comments made by Councillor T. Young in respect of Universal Credit. Following the discussion at Council on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, arrangements were being made in Monkwick to use its Annual Fun Day to mark the Platinum Jubilee. However, where communities did not have annual events such as this to build on, they needed to be given the necessary support to ensure that celebrations could take place, as such events strengthened communities. For example, it should be made easy and inexpensive to apply for road closures.

Councillor Laws, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Business and Leisure, responded to emphasise that he understood the importance of communities coming together to celebrate such events and that the processes to set up such events should be straightforward. He would look at the issue.

Councillor Fox attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet on the impact of recent events in Afghanistan. There had been considerable concern in local communities. Locally based soldiers had played an important role in the evacuation, and the community had also responded by welcoming those seeking refuge and providing charitable donations. The recent letter to Group Leaders was welcomed, and it was important to recognise locally all those service personnel who had served in Afghanistan over the past twenty years. What support was being provided to those arriving from Afghanistan, and was the support provided by the government to the Council adequate? If not, a strong message needed to be sent to government,

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy supported Councillor Fox's comments in respect of support for service personnel. As a garrison town it was appropriate that there was some form of civic recognition. Colchester had

been one of the first authorities to offer to help with and to receive refugees. At present the Home Office were providing wrap around care for the refugees but the Council would begin to get involved in supporting them as time went on as they would require long term support. The Council was receiving significant financial support from the government.

Councillor Pearson attended and with the consent of the Chairman, addressed the Cabinet in support of the recommendations in respect of the Policy Panel work programme. When the Leader of the Council had attended the first meeting of the Panel this municipal year he had been open minded about requests from the Panel to look at issues, despite the limited terms of reference. Councillor T. Young had highlighted the importance of the issues around Universal Credit. Whilst it was two years since the Council had declared a climate emergency, planning policy did not fully reflect issues around sustainability. It was hoped that the Cabinet would look at the request positively.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, indicated that this issue would be discussed in detail later in the meeting. Whilst he was open minded about the requests from the Policy Panel, he was not convinced that the Policy Panel was the right forum for consideration of planning policy and, as the Monitoring Officer had advised, these issues would be best addressed by the Local Plan Committee. Councillor Ellis, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, indicated he was grateful to the Policy Panel for highlighting the issue, but that this was a matter for the Local Plan Committee.

Councillor Goss attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet. He had not received the written response he had been promised at the last Cabinet meeting in respect of issues on grass cutting and the Fixing the Link project. Issues around the quality of grass cutting remained and the situation did not appear to be improving. Concerns were also expressed about green algae on the River Colne, about the security of sites at Northern Gateway to prevent unauthorised encampments from Travellers and broken paving on the High Street.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, indicated that officers were closely managing the situation in respect of grass cutting and he believed the situation was improving. Consideration was being given to asking the Policy Panel to look at issues relating to the future of the Grounds Maintenance contract. Councillor B. Oxford indicated that a written response would be sent in respect of the Fixing the Link project. Councillor Crow, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability, indicated that issues in respect of algae were being looked at. It was understood that in previous years, algae had been physically collected and removed from the river and he had asked officer to examine this option.

Councillor Cory attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet and expressed his support for the comments by Councillor T. Young in respect of Universal Credit. He also endorsed the comments made in respect of Afghan refugees and that Colchester would welcome and support them as it had Syrian refugees in the past. However, concern was expressed about the communications with the public on the issue. There needed to be more communications to thank service personnel who had served in recent operations in Afghanistan. When he had been

Leader and there had been issues of such significance he had communicated with residents directly through the website and ensured the website gave residents and business the information they needed. The Council was not communicating effectively on the Afghan situation and was not providing information about how residents could help by providing charitable donations. The Council had an important role to play in coordinating the community response.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, confirmed that communications was within his Portfolio and that the website contained considerable information on how residents could help. He would discuss with Communications Team if more could be done. However, the Home Office had asked for details about the resettlement of refugees to be kept confidential so full details could not be given. Councillor Laws, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Business and Heritage, stressed the need to consider the need to provide empathy and support for residents of Colchester who had relatives in Afghanistan. Councillor Lissimore, Portfolio Holder for Resources, highlighted that the administration had done several media interviews locally and nationally on the issue and it was notable that media outlets had approached Colchester on the issue. This demonstrated that the administration had been communicating effectively.

Councillor Scordis attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet to ask what the strategy was to tackle those residents who refused to recycle and what was being done to reduce the amount of litter in the borough. Councillor Crow, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability indicated that he would send a written answer on the recycling issue. Councillor B. Oxford, Portfolio Holder for Communities, expressed her strong dislike of litter and that she would be looking for strong enforcement action.

586 Year End April 2020 to March 2021 Performance Report - 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Action Plan

The Assistant Director, Corporate and Improvement Services, submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with draft minute 306 of the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 20 July 2021.

RESOLVED that

- (a) There has been satisfactory delivery against the Strategic Plan Action Plan and that the Council has made satisfactory progress in meeting its strategic goals.
- (b) The profile of communications on environment and sustainability issues be raised.

REASONS

To ensure the Council has robust performance management of delivery against key strategic goals.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to Cabinet.

587 Year End April 2020 – March 2021 Performance Report Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Other Performance News

which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the performance against Key Performance Indicators over the period April 2020 – March 2021 be noted and it be noted that where Key Performance Indicators have not been met that appropriate corrective action has been taken.

REASONS

To review year end performance for 2020 – 2021 and ensure robust performance management of key Council services.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

588 Policy Panel recommendations on options for Covid-19 Commemorations

Cabinet considered the recommendations made by the Policy Panel at its meeting of 4 August 2021 in respect of options for Covid 19 commemorations, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, and Councillor B. Oxford, Portfolio Holder for Communities, thanked the Policy Panel for the recommendations. It was important to commemorate those whose lives had been lost or affected by the pandemic and to thank those who had helped and supported the community. There was slight concern about the sensitivity of some of the language used and whilst the spirit of the recommendations was welcomed it was proposed to slightly alter the wording

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The Council supports with guidance and logistical provision including free hire of venue the plans for a service of remembrance being developed by the High Steward of Colchester, the Mayor's Office and any other agencies who may wish to be involved such as the emergency services.
- (b) The Council puts together a package of support for local community groups including Town and Parish Councils in the Borough who wish to bring about their own memorials or events.
- (c) A design for a memorial bench and wording for the plaque be drawn up;
- (d) The Assistant Director Environment and the Corporate Governance Manager

set up a small working group of relevant officers and representatives of other organisations, such as One Colchester and the BID, to ensure that Covid commemorative activities are coordinated throughout the Borough and not all actions remain the responsibility of the Council.

REASONS

It was important to commemorate those whose lives had been lost or affected by the pandemic and to thank for those who had helped and supported the community. Cabinet considered that the wording of the word two recommendations should be amended to ensure it was sensitive to those whose lives had been impacted by Covid 19.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to the Cabinet not to agree the recommendations from the Policy Panel.

589 Unlocking the Potential of Colchester's High Street and Town Centre

Cabinet considered the motion submitted to Council at its meeting on 14 July 2021 and which stood referred direct to Cabinet. A copy of the motion had been circulated to each member.

Councillor Fox attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet and expressed his regret that the motion had not been debated at Council where all members could have given their views. The Covid 19 pandemic had revealed some structural issues in the town centre that needed to be addressed. The town centre had several strengths that could be built on. It was a centre for retail, social and cultural life. It was also a forum for community action and the centre of Colchester's civic life. However, it had lost a number of significant retail units: both large chains such as Debenhams and independents such as Jacks. Outcomes from the motion would include increased transparency and knowledge of who owned the High Street. Where vacancies came up there was a role for the Council and the BID to make it known to the community that opportunities were available. This would facilitate new business and community groups. There would be increased residential provision in the town centre and more attention should be paid to those communities who lived on the edge of the town centre. There needed to be more use of the sustainable travel options into the town centre to reduce the impact of car use. In the wake of Covid the tax system needed to be reformed so it stopped penalising local shops. The unfairness of this and impact on Colchester needed to be highlighted to government. Devolved funding was also important. When the government made funding available through initiatives such as the Town Deal, decisions on how this should be used should be taken locally.

Councillor Goss attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet as joint sponsor of the motion. This was a make or break year for many businesses in the town centre, following the impact of the pandemic. Many businesses welcomed the support provided by the Council. The proposals in the motion would help ensure continued long-term support for businesses and the town centre and would command

cross party support. Business rates reform would help level the playing field with online businesses and would help increase town centre footfall.

Councillor Laws, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Business and Heritage, thanked Councillor Fox for the motion. It was also important to take account of those small business operating outside of the town centre. The importance of public realm in the town centre was also now accepted across all political groups and the support for section 215 planning enforcement powers was welcomed. The work by partners such as the BID and Lion Walk in improving the town centre, such as the improved signage, also needed to be acknowledged.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, broadly welcomed the motion. However, a consultation on a review of business rates had already taken place and to approve a motion calling for such a review was unnecessary and would make the Council appear that it was unaware of a significant national consultation. The interim report published on the issue suggested that some small businesses felt that a reform of business rates would not significantly help them as the main motivation of buying online was convenience and choice rather than price. If the Council disagreed with the final conclusions of the review, that would be the appropriate time to write to the government on the issue. Whilst he was supportive of the principle of making information available on ownership of high street properties this needed to take account of GDPR issues.

Councillor Lissimore, Portfolio Holder for Resources, stressed that the administration could explore the creation of Community Improvement Districts. The BID was already working with town centre communities to improve their situation. It would be useful to explore whether Community Improvement Districts could be used to support local shopping centres such as Prettygate and Shrub End. In respect of making information available on ownership of high street properties, this should not compel the release of commercially sensitive information and the wording of the motion needed to be amended to reflect that. The use of planning enforcement powers was welcomed and this was already done to secure the use of vacant premises by arts groups.

It was proposed that the motion be approved subject to the deletion of the first resolution in respect of business rates and the amendment of the third resolution so it read:

- Make public data held by the Council on the ownership of high street properties accessible so that community groups seeking to buy empty shops through a community share offer have the information they need to do so.

RESOLVED that the motion be approved and adopted subject to the deletion of the first resolution in respect of business rates and the amendment of the third resolution so it read:

- Make public data held by the Council on the ownership of high street properties accessible so that community groups seeking to buy empty shops through a community share offer have the information they need to do so.

REASONS

Cabinet was generally supportive of the motion but considered that the first resolution was unnecessary because the government had already consulted on the review of business rates. The resolution on the ownership of high street properties needed to be amended to take account of GDPR concerns and to prevent the release of commercially sensitive information.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to the Cabinet not to approve and adopt the motion.

590

Colchester Town Deal

Cabinet considered the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel in respect of Colchester Town Deal at its meeting on 17 August 2021. A copy of the recommendations had been circulated to each member.

Councillor Cory, as Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet in support of the recommendations. The Council held the Town Deal funds and was ultimately accountable for the funding so it was right that the Scrutiny Panel take on the role of scrutinising the Council's role and actions as the Accountable Body and look at issues such as risk management. The Scrutiny Panel had discussed the merits of the Youth Zone and there was cross party support for the concept. The Panel's recommendation was to ensure that the Youth Zone was treated as a priority and to ensure that funding was set aside so that the opportunity to create a Youth Zone was not lost.

Councillor Willetts attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet. It had been an excellent piece of scrutiny and had identified the respective responsibilities of the Council and the Town Deal Board and had clarified the governance arrangements. There was widespread political support for the provision of a Youth Zone in Colchester. However, there was a shortfall of £1.1 million of capital funding plus the recurring revenue funding which would need to be found elsewhere. The Council was not the statutory provider of youth services but the Council could seek to use its general powers of competence to pursue the provision of a Youth Zone. However, match funding would normally be provided to the statutory authority so it may be difficult to attract external funding. Also no site was yet identified. It was also arguable as to how far the Youth Zone met the intervention points for funding through the Town Deal. The Panel was supportive of asking Cabinet to look at ways of increasing funding for the Youth Zone. It was clear that the Council would need to find an additional £800,000 from its budget to bridge the funding gap and commensurate savings would need to be made from service budgets. As the Youth Zone had all party support, an all-party group should be asked to recommend to Cabinet how these savings could be made.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, stressed that it was important that there was oversight by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council's

role as Accountable Body for the Town Deal. Whilst he was supportive of the Youth Zone, the revenue costs were a huge challenge. If the Council failed to get the support of Essex County Council as the statutory provider, there could be difficulties to securing match funding and therefore the revenue costs could increase up to £1.3 million per annum. This would need complete political support from all groups as to how the savings needed should be secured to achieve a balanced budget. It was proposed that suggestions as to how these savings could be achieved should be considered at the forthcoming budget workshops.

In view of this it was proposed that the recommendation (b) be amended to read as follows:-

“Cabinet includes investigation into funding of Youth Zone as part of ongoing budget setting process and works with Members and Budget Workshops to identify estimated £400,000 to £1.3m annual revenue costs necessary, suitable site and capital funding, alongside the Town Deal allocation of funding for youth services provision, mindful of the legal requirement to deliver a balanced revenue budget. “

RESOLVED that:-

(a) The Scrutiny Panel takes on the role of scrutinising the Council’s role and actions as Accountable Body for Colchester’s Town Deal programme, including oversight of Risk Management and scrutiny of financial decisions;

(b) Cabinet includes investigation into funding of Youth Zone as part of ongoing budget setting process and works with Members and Budget Workshops to identify estimated £400,000 to £1.3m annual revenue costs necessary, suitable site and capital funding, alongside the Town Deal allocation of funding for youth services provision, mindful of the legal requirement to deliver a balanced revenue budget.

REASONS

Cabinet considered that it was important that there was oversight by the Scrutiny Panel of the Council’s role as Accountable Body for the Town Deal. In view of the potential revenue costs of a Youth Zone there needed to be complete political support from all groups as to how the savings needed should be secured to achieve a balanced budget. It was proposed that suggestions as to how these savings could be achieved should be considered at the forthcoming budget workshops.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to the Cabinet not to agree the recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel.

591

External funding from North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (NEECCG) and East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation NHS Trust (ESNEFT)

The Assistant Director Communities submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the Council accept the funding from the NEECCG and ESNEFT set out in the Assistant Director's report on behalf of the Health Alliance and distribute it as per the Health Alliance agreement.

REASONS

This significant amount of funding was very welcome. It provides the means to address key strategic priorities for the Council and wider partners, through the delivery of tangible workstreams. This vital funding is critical to addressing the existing health inequalities, exacerbated by Covid and adding much needed capacity to the charity and voluntary sector in Colchester and North East Essex, and, ultimately delivering improved outcomes in health and wellbeing for residents while tackling deep-rooted inequalities.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

To reject the offer of additional funding from health system partners or ask them to seek an alternative mechanism of distribution.

592 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review Letter 2021

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that the contents of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter for 2021 be noted.

REASONS

To inform the Cabinet of the contents of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter relating to Colchester Borough Council for 2021.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternatives were presented to the Cabinet.

593 Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd: recommendation from Governance and Audit Committee

Cabinet considered draft minute 268 of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 27 July 2021, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Willetts, as Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee, attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet. The Governance and Audit Committee was the shareholder Committee for CCHL and it received regular reports on the performance of the company and its subsidiaries. It had delivered a dividend of

£500,000 in the last financial year. However, it had no financial reserves of its own and was entirely dependent on the Council for funding. Therefore, it had no financial independence and was not able to develop further businesses. It was acknowledged that there were risks in giving local authority owned commercial companies too much independence, but it was the Committee's view that the potential for increased financial flexibility with an acceptable level of risk should be explored. This could allow it to develop its balance sheet strength and be more financially independent and provide the potential to deliver an increased dividend to the Council.

Councillor Lissimore, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained that there was a balance between CCHL being backed by the Council and answerable to it, and giving it some free rein to operate independently. At this stage what was proposed a report to look the issues and she was confident the Committee would look at both the short-term and long-term implications of any subsequent report.

Councillor Ellis, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Planning, supported the recommendation. CCHL had been operating successfully for several years and it was a good idea to explore the issue of greater freedoms and the necessary checks and balances further. There was no risk to the Council at this stage.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, stressed that the proposal had cross-party support and this could be compromised if the Cabinet began to amend the proposal.

RESOLVED that CCHL be commissioned to provide a detailed report examining the best method to develop Balance Sheet strength so CCHL can be more financially independent, while operating under the Governance and Management Agreement framework which governs the operation of the companies.

REASONS

As set out in draft minute 268 from the Governance and Audit Committee.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

No alternative options were presented to the Cabinet.

594 Policy Panel recommendations on the Panel's future Work Programme

Cabinet considered by the recommendations made by the Policy Panel at its meeting of 4 August 2021 in respect of its future work programme, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor McCarthy, Chair of the Policy Panel, attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the Cabinet. As well as seeking approval for the recommendations he was seeking mutual agreement on the Panel's Terms of Reference. The Panel enjoyed effective cross party working for the good of the borough. In previous years, Councillors and members of the public could bring ideas to the Panel and if the Panel considered it would be of benefit to the borough, it would request approval from

Cabinet. It's role should not be simply to rubber stamp Cabinet ideas or be drip fed work that Cabinet considered was not important enough for it to do. It should work alongside Cabinet to improve the borough. The Leader had attended the first meeting in June and had acknowledged the need for Panel members to put forward their own initiatives to Cabinet. The terms of reference for the Panel should be amended to restore the following:

"To proactively identify issues and legislative changes that may require review and improvement and to seek Cabinet's agreement as to whether and how they should be examined."

If the proposals for the work programme were not agreed, Cabinet should give its reasons and also consider whether they could be dealt with elsewhere. One of the proposals had been suggested by a senior officer. The Panel had a talented pool of members and there had never been an occasion where its debate had not been worthwhile. It was always open to Cabinet not to agree its recommendations, but it seemed counter productive not to allow those discussions to take place.

Councillor Goacher attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet in support of the recommendations for its work programme. He shared the concerns expressed by Councillor McCarthy on the role of the Panel. In respect of the recommendation on planning policies, the Council had declared a climate emergency in 2019 but policies in respect of sustainability were not yet in place. This meant that issues relating to sustainability could not be fully addressed at Planning Committee, which was a source of frustration to residents. If the issue was to be considered by the Local Plan Committee instead, this needed to be done urgently.

Councillor Cory attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet. As a previous Leader he understood the need to streamline processes and the difficulty that conflicting advice from a Panel could cause. However, the changes to the terms of reference of the Policy Panel had gone too far and there was cross party concern on the Panel about their role. Cabinet should accept the proposed change in the terms of reference which was reasonable and would allow the Panel to put forward its own ideas for its work programme. Cabinet would only benefit from a greater diversity of ideas.

Councillor Dundas, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, explained that he considered that more collaboration and better communication between Cabinet and the Policy Panel would address the issues raised and he was not minded to change the Panel's Terms of Reference. Regular meetings between the Chair of Cabinet and the Chair of the Policy Panel should be set up. In terms of the recommendations, he was concerned by the recommendation in respect of planning policies. The Monitoring Officer had advised that was a matter for the Local Plan Committee, and his advice should be taken seriously. The other recommendations were supported and it was also suggested that the Panel look at issues relating to the Ground Maintenance Contract.

Councillor Crow, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability indicated he would support the recommendation in respect of the River Strategy, and that this could look at issues relating to algae. It could also examine issues relating to how the

river could be used to support health lifestyles and related issues on access to the river.

RESOLVED that approval be given to the Policy Panel to add the following items to its work programme: -

- (a) Consideration of the implications associated with the end of the £20 uplift to Universal Credit, and what local support the Council can potentially give to those on low incomes and to address financial inequality within the Borough;
- (b) Review of, and recommendations relating to, proposed Neighbourhood Services Policies (Litter Strategy, Rubbish Bin Policy, Graffiti Policy, Drone Policy);
- (c) River Strategy Development.
- (d) The future of the Grounds Maintenance contract.
- (e) Regular meetings between the Chair of Cabinet and the Chair of the Policy Panel be scheduled.

REASONS

The recommendation in respect of Planning Policies was not agreed as this was a matter for the Local Plan Committee.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

It was open to the Cabinet not to agree the recommendations from the Policy Panel or to agree to them subject to amendment.

595 The Operational Model for the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) Fibre Networks

The Cabinet resolved under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

The Assistant Director, Place and Client Services, submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) The operating model of the LFFN network as outlined in the Assistant Director's

report via a Concession Agreement granted to CATL be agreed

(b) Authority to agree any other resultant matters relating to the detailed terms of the concession agreement, as described in the Assistant Director's report, be delegated to the Assistant Director for Place and Client Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

REASONS

As set out in the Assistant Director's report.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

As set out in the Assistant Director's report.