

# Cabinet

Wednesday, 07 June 2023

**Attendees:** Councillor Michelle Burrows, Councillor Mark Cory, Councillor Martin Goss, Councillor Alison Jay, Councillor David King , Councillor Andrea Luxford Vaughan, Councillor Paul Smith, Councillor Natalie Sommers

## **No. Publication and Call In Arrangements**

Date Published 8 June 2023

Date when decisions may be implemented: (unless 'called in') 5pm 15 June 2023.

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 15 June 2023.

## **751 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

*RESOLVED* that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **752 Have Your Say! (Hybrid Cabinet Meetings)**

Sir Bob Russell attended and addressed Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). He believed that the current Cabinet had no moral legitimacy, as the Liberal Democrat Group had less than a third of the seats on Council. This was contrary to the traditional Liberal Democrat values of fairness and its support for proportional representation. The administration should reflect the reality that each of the main parties held approximately a third of seats on Council. Joint administrations of the three main parties had worked in Colchester when the Cabinet system was first introduced. In addition, the Cabinet was too large and should be reduced to five posts, with the resulting saving being passed on to Colchester Citizens advice Bureau.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, thanked Sir Bob for his comments and noted that it was the High Steward's role to advise. Under the Cabinet system, an administration had to be formed to run the Council. No alternative proposal had been put forward. It was supported by other groups and

could command support in the Chamber. It therefore had legitimacy. Its legitimacy also come from its approach which would be inclusive and collaborative. This was demonstrated by the way Committee Chair positions were held by members of other groups.

Linda Gaine and Louse Davey attended and addressed Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to ask Cabinet to provide more urgency to the repairs to netball courts at Highwoods. This had been an ongoing issue since 2018 with issues relating to the floodlights and the surface of the courts. The courts were used by women and children of all ages, providing physical and mental health benefits and helping develop inter-generational relationships. They contributed to the Strategic Plan priority of Creating Safe, Healthy and Happy Communities. There was no other suitable facility in the city and it was disappointing that when the Northern Gateway Sports Park had been developed, no provision for netball had been made., which was a further example of women's sport not being prioritised. Officers should be encouraged to prioritise the work so the necessary improvements could be completed by the end of August.

Councillor Burrows, Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and Heritage, undertook to actively champion this issue and would respond fully after raising it with relevant officers. It was understood that the works were scheduled for August, subject to the views of the Gilberd school.

Piter Vera attended and addressed Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1). He was seeking help from the Council to help find a location for the development of a pilot for his project, Change Recycling, which created bricks from waste plastic and sand. This helped deal with waste plastics and created a valuable resource with many potential uses.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, explained that the Council had limited assets with which to help. However, the Climate Alliance or Colbea may be able to help and if further details were provided he would be willing to share his proposals to see what assistance could be provided.

Councillor Warnes attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed the Cabinet, to request that the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Waste arrange a meeting with representatives of the Police and the Neighbourhoods Team so there was clarity on how to report instances of graffiti. Dealing with graffiti took up valuable neighbourhood and ward councillor resource. It would be helpful if the Police and the Neighbourhoods Team could meet so it was clear what information was needed to make a report which the police could take action on, to break the logjam on this issue. Whilst the difficulties of bringing criminal prosecutions were understood, more could be done to tackle the issue through the Council's powers to deal with anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Goss, Portfolio for Neighbourhoods and Waste, undertook to arrange such a meeting. Graffiti was an issue across the city, and the Neighbourhoods Team had a full time officer dedicated to dealing with it. It was difficult to take action unless the perpetrator was caught in the act and the Crown Prosecution Service would only prosecute in the most serious cases.

**Garden Waste Collection Service**

The Group Manager, Neighbourhoods, submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The following members attended and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed Cabinet and raised the following issues:-

Councillor Harris (attended remotely):

- The proposals were being brought forward because of the Council's serious financial position. This needed to be better understood by residents and there should be a communication campaign to raise awareness.
- An incentive for those who had wheeled bins but did not wish to participate in the scheme should be considered. This would enable these bins to be reused and reduce the number of new bins that would be needed.
- There should be a communications campaign and signage to address potential increases in flytipping.

Councillor Bickersteth (attended remotely):

- The move to wheeled bins for garden waste would have health benefits for collection staff.
- How would the Council ensure the scheme was equitable in terms of costs. Highwoods was not a wheeled bin area so residents would be charged for the provision of a bin on top of the costs of the service. This would have a disproportionate impact on low income families which may deter them from taking up the service.
- The Council should look at the recycling of bins that would no longer be used to reduce costs.

Councillor Scordis (attended remotely):

- The Council was effectively selling a product so needed to maximise take up. Launching the service in January when demand would be low may lead to a low take up of the service.
- The cost of the service may also deter take up.
- Residents would not understand the logic of a system based on financial years, and an initial 18 month offer would be more attractive.
- The compost schemes were welcome and there may be opportunities to link up with allotment groups who may welcome additional garden waste for composting purposes.

Councillor Lissimore

- The Government's draft Environment Bill had included provisions imposing a statutory duty on local authorities to collect garden waste, which would completely undermine the principle of the scheme.

- Home composting was not as straightforward as the report suggested.
- The suggestion that garden waste could be taken to the recycling centre was simply to transfer the problem to Essex County Council to resolve and would result in additional vehicle journeys.
- Some residents would not have the space to store a wheeled bin or the capacity to move a bin, particularly when full. A white sack option should be retained.
- There were too many unknown factors to enable the Council to be confident the scheme would be cost effective.
- No refund would be provided to those who died during the scheme.
- There would be an increase of garden waste being put in black refuse sacks, which needed additional cost and resources to collect and these had not been quantified.
- Key Performance Indicator targets were being reduced as a consequence of the scheme.

Councillor Pearson:

- Further consideration needed to be given to the equity of the charges, given that parts of the city had already received a wheeled bin without charge.
  - The encouragement of home composting was welcomed although the detail of the schemes that were being promoted needed to be looked at.
  - The fleet transport plan was three years old and may need reviewing. There may be opportunities to use alternative fuel options.
  - Central government funding decisions had forced this on the Council.
- However, the Council needed to ensure the implementation of the scheme was fair.

Councillor Willetts

- The increase in recycling rates was one of the clear achievements of the Council in recent years. This had been driven by increases in food and garden waste collections. This scheme would undermine this achievement.
- The Council's financial position was a consequence of trying to prioritise too many services.
- The collection and recycling of waste was a core service that should be covered by council tax.
- The Scrutiny Panel had looked at the impact that scheme would have on Key Performance Indicator targets. It would result in more waste to landfill and a reduction in the amount of household waste recycled.
- The scheme did not take the opportunity to introduce electric waste collection vehicles.

Councillor Naylor:

- She had approached the issue from first principles as both a resident and a representative of residents of Lexden and Braiswick.
- Residents expected a reliable waste and recycling service would be provided and funded as part of the core council service and that this would include the collection of garden waste.
- The consultation referred to in the report highlighted the importance of environmental issues to residents.

- However, when the data beneath the consultation was analysed it revealed that the consultation was based on a sample size of 0.6% of the population. The discussion group referred to in paragraph 9.3 of the report consisted of only 16 people who, the report stated, had not had time to discuss the issue in further detail.
- The conclusion of the consultation report was that the Council needed to talk and listen to residents more and that residents felt they were not listened to. This conclusion was supported by the representations of other Councillors that residents felt this was being imposed on them and was based on unreliable data.
- The consultation could not be relied upon as evidence that the scheme was supported by residents. This was not a fair representation. Residents felt “blindsided” by the proposals and that they were being imposed without proper consultation and therefore should be subject to further consultation.

Councillor Hagon:

- The views of residents in Stanway were clear on this issue, Concerns had been raised about the impact of additional charges in a cost of living crisis, effectively double charging for a service, the impact on flytipping, lack of space for wheeled bins, the lack of alternatives for those who did not own a car and that the scheme was not cost effective for those who generated a small amount of garden waste.
- The service should be put out to tender as a private operator may be able to offer a better value service.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, emphasised that the scheme was being introduced in response to the serious financial position facing the Council, which resulted from decisions by central government. The administration would look to adjust the scheme where it could, but the financial position had to be addressed. Whilst there would be some small adjustments to Key Performance Indicator targets, these remained ahead of other comparable authorities and should be seen in the context of a high performing Council. The Council had received a letter of thanks from the Leader of Essex County Council for its work on recycling and the Waste Strategy. Further consideration would be given to the issues raised about the consultation.

Councillor Goss, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Waste, introduced the report and responded to the questions of members.

On the question of electric vehicles, technology did not yet support this. Experience at another authority, and when the council had trialled an electric vehicle, demonstrated that there were issues with range and capacity of electric waste collection vehicles. There were also growing issues relating to battery production which was restricting the development of the electric vehicle market in the United Kingdom and the cost effectiveness of electric vehicles. Alternative fuels were also not cost effective.

Whilst the government had indicated in the draft Environment Bill that it was considering requiring local authorities to collect garden waste without charge, this had provoked a significant backlash, as 65% of authorities charged for its collection. It was understood that the government was no longer intending to proceed in this way.

The Council was faced with £10 million in additional costs. This could not be met through raising council tax. The small proportion of council tax received by the Council also needed to be borne in mind. The Council had to be responsible and deliver a balanced budget, which meant taking difficult and unpopular decisions. The Council needed to ensure that was understood by residents.

The scheme would be made as flexible and affordable as possible. The Council had undertaken considerable benchmarking and looked at the experience of other authorities who introduced a similar scheme. This included looking at the impact on flytipping and how discounts could be applied. There was flexibility to allow the scheme to be refined and the representations made at the meeting would be considered.

The service would be an opt in service. There would be an opportunity to share a bin with neighbours. There would be the option of a smaller wheeled bin for those with limited space or with mobility problems. The Council would also continue to offer an assisted service. Composting schemes were being encouraged and links to allotment groups were being pursued. Residents who did not take up the service would also have the option of using a private waste contractor. Essex County Council had been fully consulted on the proposals and the Council was continuing to work with them on the Waste Strategy. Flytipping was reducing by 20% annually and the Council continued to work with WISE on strategies to reduce it further.

12,700 properties in the City already had wheeled bins. Whilst the arguments about the equity of the scheme were understood, it was not considered fair to charge for these retrospectively, as the Council had received funding for them. A charge needed to be made for those receiving a wheeled bin in this scheme, as it would not be viable to provide them without charge.

The scheme would also deliver improvements in staff welfare. Wheeled bins would reduce muscular-skeletal injuries and therefore reduce sickness rates. No white sack option would remain. In-cab technology would prevent fraud and stop the scheme being abused. There would be considerable promotion of the scheme and offers to encourage take up. Further details of the scheme would be referred to the Scrutiny Panel in due course, but this would look at the details of the scheme within the agreed budget.

Cabinet members also highlighted the need for responsible financial decisions in the current climate with examples of other local authorities declaring bankruptcy, the benefits to the welfare of the waste operatives, who were also residents of the city, and the other options for residents such as composting.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (a) The arrangements for the opt-in paid for Garden Waste service which will replace the existing service with effect from January 2024 be approved.
- (b) The capital funding and procurement of replacement vehicles as detailed in the report be approved.

(c) Authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Waste to adjust the scheme as may be needed, taking account of early take up and experience, to include discounts and promotions.

### *REASONS*

To deliver the budget income previously approved by Full Council and in doing so ensure a balanced budget for 2023/2024.

### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

Several alternative budget savings were considered through the formation of the budget in 2022/2023. To deliver this scale of saving, alternative options such as closing leisure centres would be required. Any alternative option would need to deliver an equivalent budget saving of £600K. One related alternative would be to cease the existing free garden waste collection service, dispose of vehicles and redeploy or make staff redundancies.

## **754 Acquisition of Seven New Build Homes from a Developer as Part of the Council's Housebuilding Programme**

The Client and Business Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Rippingale attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet to seek clarification as to whether the homes would be acquired as freehold or leasehold. There was risk that tenants would be at risk of increasing ground rent charges if they were leasehold. Colchester Borough Homes were concerned about the costs of retrofitting acquisitions to their high standards, which was approximately £30,000. Consideration should be given to reviewing the acquisitions programme and looking at whether land acquisition would be a more cost effective policy. An aggressive approach to looking at sites vacated by developers should be pursued. As Shadow Portfolio Holder for Housing she looked forward to working collaboratively with the Portfolio Holder to improve the housing stock and the standard of living for residents.

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Housing, confirmed that the properties would be acquired on a freehold basis. The full cost of acquisitions did need to be considered, including the costs of bringing them up to standard,. The balance between land and property acquisition was a difficult one and the need to use receipts before they were due to be returned to central government gave opportunities for acquisitions.

*RESOLVED* that:-

(a) The Council pursue this opportunity as set out in the Client and Business Manager's report and proceed with the offer, as outlined in the report on Part B of the agenda, for the 7 units.

(b) Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to agree to and negotiate any subsequent purchases of homes closer to completion, subject to normal viability and valuation considerations.

(c) Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to approve the exchange of conditional contracts to acquire the units, and any other related matters, to complete the purchase when all conditions are satisfied.

(d) Colchester Borough Homes be appointed as a “clerk of works” or “employers agent” to supervise the quality of the construction of the homes to be acquired.

## **REASONS**

There are approximately 2,590 households on the Council's Housing Register seeking social housing and approximately 285 households in temporary accommodation. It is a priority of the Council, as shown by its New Housebuilding Programme, to try and find new ways to provide more homes in response to this need.

The Council is delivering affordable homes, but it is still continually seeking new and innovative ways to increase the supply of affordable housing and provide good quality, affordable and secure homes for Colchester's residents who are in housing need.

Although there is a supply of new affordable housing through Section 106 provision via Registered providers, alongside Council led projects, supply is not meeting the need. The Covid impacts have slowed affordable housing delivery in the market, and for the first year the Council delivered more affordable homes through its delivery Programme (including the Acquisition Programme/100 Homes) than all other Registered Providers combined; which evidences the importance of the Council's role.

These acquisitions will increase the Council's housing stock and diversifies the methods to bring forward additional affordable housing. This will also strengthen the Council's investment partner status with Homes England and will provide more opportunities to bid for Affordable Housing Grant within the 2021/26 affordable homes programme.

In Colchester, within the priority Bands A-C, there are approximately 535 applicants on the Housing register with a need for a 3+ bed property. This makes up for 21% of the housing register need. There is an average waiting time of 16.5 months for a 3+ bed property for applicants in bands B and C (Average waiting time of 6.5 months for applicants in Band A).

There are approximately 90 families in temporary accommodation within Colchester with a 3+ bed need. Residing in temporary accommodation, over a prolonged period, may have a negative impact on the families and their support network, as well as placing the council's allocated budget under significant pressure.

There are currently 32 families, in priority bands, with a need of a 3+ bed property in the Mile End Ward alone.



Proceeding with this opportunity and other similar opportunities, to work with developers to acquire units as part of their development, will help to alleviate pressure on the housing register, temporary accommodation and relevant budgets as well as allowing developers to continue to develop within the Colchester area.

It is estimated that these units will be available between August 2023 and October 2023, providing much needed homes within a short timeframe.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

The Council could do nothing, but this will mean the Council will miss out on opportunities to maximise the delivery of newbuild social rent housing in Colchester and it will mean that households on the housing register and in temporary accommodation will wait longer for a secure affordable home.

### **755 New Scheme of Delegation to Officers**

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

*RESOLVED* that:-

- (a) The new Scheme of Delegation to Officers from the Leader attached to the Monitoring Officer's report be approved and come into immediate effect.
- (b) Authority to make any subsequent or consequential amendments be delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

#### *REASONS*

The Scheme of Delegation to Officers from the Leader is required to be updated following the completion of the review of the Senior Leadership Team and appointment of Heads of Service.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

No alternative options were presented to Cabinet.

### **756 Appointments to External Organisations and Council Groups**

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

*RESOLVED* that:-

- (a) The representatives to the various external organisations and Council groups listed in Appendix A to the Democratic Services Manager's report be appointed for the 2023-24 municipal year, with such appointments to cease if representatives cease to be members of the Council during the municipal year.
- (b) The Leader of the Council be authorised to make a determination, where a nomination is deemed to be in dispute, if a vacancy occurs or if an appointment needs to be made to a new organisation during the municipal year.
- (c) Councillor King be appointed as the Council's Armed Forces Champion.
- (d) The reports about the work undertaken by appointees to external organisations in 2022-23, as set out in Appendix B to the Democratic Services Manager's report be noted.

### **REASONS**

It is important for the Council to continue to make formal appointments to certain organisations and council groups such as those with statutory functions, our key strategic and community partners and groups with joint working arrangements. These groups have been identified in Appendix A to the Democratic Services Manager's report.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

No alternative options are proposed. It is proposed to authorise the Leader of the Council to make a determination where a nomination is deemed to be in dispute or if an appointment needs to be made if a vacancy occurs or an appointment needs to be made to a new organisation in the course of the municipal year.

**757**

### **Renewal Ballot for Colchester City Centre Business Improvement District**

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

Councillor Bloomfield attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet to stress the valuable work undertaken by charities in the city centre in the cost of living crisis. In this context, why were charities being asked to pay more towards the BID than other types of business, as this may dent their ability to provide these essential services?

Councillor Pearson attended with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet to welcome the report and strategic pillars identified in the BID Business Plan. However, there was some concern about the proposal in paragraph 7.2 of the Monitoring Officer's report where it was proposed that the levy on charitable organisations would be increased by a larger proportion than other businesses. This was inappropriate in the current circumstances.

Sam Good, BID Manager, attended and addressed Cabinet pursuant to the provisions of Meetings General Procedure Rule 5(1) to express his thanks to Cabinet and officers of the Council for their support. The core focus of the BID had been to strengthen partnership working in the city centre between businesses, local authorities and stakeholders for the greater good of the Colchester. As a critical friend it provided a tool for the voice of business to be represented and he thanked the current and previous leaders for their engagement. The BID had supported the city centre through some of its toughest times such as the Covid 19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis. It had enabled investment of £2.5 million in the city centre through the BID levy and £865,000 of additional funding. It also helped secure funding through the Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund. It was continuing to function as a core business representative body. The new direction for the BID was set out in the Business Plan, which set out an ambitious and bold vision for the city centre.

In terms of the concerns raised about the levy for charitable organisations, the new Business Plan and regulations had been subject to considerable consultation. In April 2023 there was a national revaluation of business rates. This had seen a 66% reduction in rateable values across the city centre. Therefore, the changes in the rules and levies would see most businesses paying less. Charitable organisations were seeing on average a 3% drop in rateable value. Charities also received other benefits such as reductions in business rates. Most charities paid no business rates and therefore no levy. The BID had its own Create Fund was used to support charitable works and had also just launched its Colchester Community Fund which had funded three charities in the city centre in the past week.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, thanked Sam Good for his comments which he hoped addressed the concerns raised. The support for charities by the BID was not well understood and there was a need for some Communications work to highlight this.

Cabinet members stressed the valuable work of the BID in supporting the city centre such as filling vacant units, attracting major brands and improving relationships with the business community.

*RESOLVED* that:-

- (a) The Council as Billing Authority was satisfied with Our Colchester Limited's Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal Proposal for Colchester City Centre for 2023 to 2028.
- (b) The ballot of non-domestic ratepayers within the BID area be agreed.
- (c) The BID levy be collected in line with charges set out in section 8.2 of the Monitoring Officer's report.
- (d) The Chief Operating Officer be instructed to vote "Yes" in the renewal ballot on behalf of the Council in relation to its non-domestic rate-paying Council properties located within the BID area.

*REASONS*

To enable the Council to formally endorse the BID renewal proposal for Colchester City Centre and proceed to the ballot of businesses in accordance with the relevant Regulations.

As the owner of 13 properties (hereditaments) in the BID area, the Council will have the opportunity to vote in the BID ballot.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

The Council could vote “No” in the BID renewal ballot. The Council is one of over 456 businesses who are eligible to vote in the BID ballot and the result will be determined by a majority vote (numeric and rateable value). The Council has demonstrated its support for the BID through its funding, member and officer time and its formal endorsement at this meeting and other alternative options are not being suggested.

### **758 Corporate Key Performance Indicator Targets for 2023-2024**

The Chief Operating Officer submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member together with the recommendation from the Scrutiny Panel meeting of 6 June 2023.

Councillor Jay, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Transformation and Performance, introduced the report. There had been a robust but constructive discussion at Scrutiny Panel and the recommendations arising were welcomed. There was a need to set realistic targets and there were sound reasons why some of the targets were being scaled back. In future the reporting would contain slightly more detail and context and set out benchmarking with comparable authorities, where appropriate.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, highlighted that several environmental KPI targets had been included for the first time, reflecting the Council’s commitment to the Climate Emergency declaration. These included targets on tree planting, increasing biodiversity and achieving the pathway to net zero. Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, highlighted that the revised KPIs were a response to the LGA Peer Review’s recommendation that the Council needed to look at the Strategic Plan and linkages to delivery.

*RESOLVED* that:-

(a) The Corporate KPI Targets for 2023-2024 be set as proposed in the Chief Operating Officer’s report.

(b) The recommendations made by the Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 6 June 2023 be accepted.

*REASONS*

To ensure there is a robust corporate performance monitoring framework.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

To consider alternative KPI Targets than those proposed in the Chief Operating Officer's report.

### **759 Member Development Group Annual Report 2022-23**

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Rippingale attended and with the consent of the Chair, addressed Cabinet. It was noted that despite the underspend on the Member Development budget, no member had attended Leadership Academy and no general invitation had been offered to members. Two places at Leadership Academy should be funded and these should be advertised more widely amongst Councillors.

Councillor King, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, acknowledged the need to share information about opportunities widely across all Councillors. If there was a demand for increased access to Leadership Academy this would be considered.

Councillor Cory, Portfolio Holder for Resources, stressed the value of attendance at Leadership Academy and thanked the Democratic Services team for their work supporting the Member Development Group and delivering the member development programme.

*RESOLVED* that the report of the Member Development Group on the work of the Group in the 2022-23 municipal year be received and noted.

#### *REASONS*

The Member Development Group is required to report to Cabinet on an annual basis. This provides Cabinet with an opportunity to review the work of the Group and the provision of member development.

#### *ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

No alternative options were presented to Cabinet.

### **760 Councillor Personal Development Plan Proposal**

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Councillor Harris attended and with the consent of the Chair addressed Cabinet to support the proposal for the introduction of Personal Development Plans for Councillors and urged Group Leaders to support and implement within their Groups. Residents deserved the best Councillors and Councillors had an obligation to undertake development to represent them effectively.

Councillor Jay, Portfolio Holder for Economy, Transformation and Performance, introduced the report and endorsed the proposals. As a recently elected Councillor she had benefitted from the induction programme and the programme of Chief Executive briefings, and Councillors should undergo ongoing development.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed Personal Development Scheme set out in the Democratic Services Manager's report be implemented.

### **REASONS**

The introduction of system of Personal Development Plans would help support Councillors and enable them to fulfil their duties and responsibilities effectively. It would help Councillors identify areas where training and development was required and provide a process where it is easier for those needs to be met.

Colchester City Council recently retained its Councillor Development Charter Status, and the Member Development Group has indicated that it wishes to apply for Charter Plus status, which requires the implementation of a Councillor Personal Development Plan.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

No alternative options were proposed to Cabinet.

## **761 Minutes - Approval of not for publication extract**

- This report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (financial / business affairs of a particular person, including the authority holding information).

## **762 Acquisition of Seven New Build Homes from a Developer as Part of the Council's New Housebuilding Programme - Part B**

**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 Client and Business Manager submitted a report a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

*RESOLVED* that:-

(a) Council shall pursue this opportunity as set out in the Client and Business Manager's report and proceed with the offer set out in the not for publication report, for the 7 units with the ability to negotiate any subsequent sells closer to completion, subject to viability and valuations.

(b) Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to approve the exchange of conditional contracts to acquire the units, and any other related matters, to complete the purchase when all conditions are satisfied.

*REASONS*

As set out in minute 754.

*ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS*

As set out in minute 754.