

COLCHESTER BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council Meeting

13 July 2022

Supplementary Information

Please note that the business will be subject to short breaks at approximately 90-minute intervals.

Apologies: Councillors Ellis, Hagon, Harris, G. Oxford

2. Have Your Say!

4. Minutes of Previous Meetings

A.... Motion that the minutes of the meeting on 25 May 2022 be confirmed as a correct record (see page 7 of the Council Summons) .

6. Items (if any) referred under the Call-in Procedure

None

7. Recommendations of the Cabinet, Panels and Committees

To consider the following recommendation:-

7(i) Colchester's New Housing Strategy 2022-27

B... Motion that the recommendation contained in draft minute 675 of the Cabinet meeting of 6 July 2002 be approved and adopted (see page 3 of this Supplementary Information).

8. Notices of Motion pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 11

None received

9. Questions to Cabinet Members and Chairmen pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10

Pre-notified questions:-

(i) Cllr Law to Cllr Nissen, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability

Tree planting is critical to tackling the climate emergency and is central to much of the council's environmental work, such as the woodland & biodiversity project. However, such activities need to be managed with a strategic and planned approach to maximise the full environmental benefits.

As the ward councillor for Highwoods, which also includes High Woods Country Park, can you outline the environmental justifications for the decision not to go ahead with tree planting on the meadow area in the country park? Can you provide details on the proposed scale of tree planting planned in the country park across the next year, and explain the rationale for a more strategic approach to tree planting, as opposed to simply increasing tree planting regardless of location?

(ii) Cllr McLean to Cllr Willetts, Chair of Scrutiny Panel

Recent released data shows 386 local people died last year waiting for NHS treatment. 1 person is too many but 386 people is a scandal. There are now nearly 70,000 people waiting for treatment at our local NHS hospital trust.

Would the Chair of Scrutiny agree to inviting our local health partners to a committee meeting so that they can explain the causes behind record NHS waiting lists?

(iii) Cllr McLean to Cllr J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities

Could the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities update me on the progress of new council homes being built on Military Road in New Town?

10. Schedule of Portfolio Holder Decisions

Council is invited to note the schedule of Portfolio Holder decisions covering the period 11 February 2022 – 2 July 2022 (see page 13 of the Council Summons).

12. Exclusion of the Public

In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public, including the press, from the meeting so that any items containing exempt information (for example confidential, personal, financial or legal advice) in Part B of this agenda (printed on yellow paper) may be decided. Exempt information is defined in Section 100(1) and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

Extract from the draft minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 6 July 2022

675. Colchester's New Housing Strategy 2022-27

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

Councillor J. Young, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, introduced the report. There had been wide consultation on the new Housing Strategy. It had been considered by both the Colchester Borough Homes Board and the Scrutiny Panel.

A Housing Strategy was a statutory requirement. The key priorities that the new Housing Strategy addressed were supply, sustainability, structure and preventing homelessness. Supply was vital as there were 3000 residents on the Housing Register. This was being addressed by a variety of sources such as planning gain and initiatives such as the 100 Homes project and the redevelopment of garage sites. Sustainability involved ensuring that people were supported to maintain their tenancies whilst structure involved ensure housing was of decent quality and was environmentally sustainable. A separate Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sat under the Housing Strategy.

Councillor Luxford Vaughan, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure, sought further information as when the Strategy would be reviewed and whether the likely impact of the Social Housing Reform Bill had been taken into account.

Councillor J. Young explained that officers were looking at the implications of the Bill and a briefing note would be prepared for Cabinet members. The Strategy would be reviewed if any legislation had a significant impact upon it.

RESOLVED that the new Housing Strategy 2022-27 for Colchester be approved.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that the Housing Strategy be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

REASONS

The Council has a statutory responsibility to produce and publish a Housing Strategy based on a review of housing in the borough.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

To not adopt the Housing Strategy. There are clear risks to not having a robust evidence based strategy in place such as not achieving local priorities, not being able to evidence and articulate Colchester Borough Council's wider vision for housing and not providing a strong focus to our partners about their contribution to meeting our priorities.