



Council Offices, Kiln Road,
Thundersley, Benfleet,
Essex SS7 1TF.
Tel. No: 01268 882200
Fax No: 01268 882455



David Marchant LLB (Hons) BSc (Hons) CEng FICE FCMI
Chief Executive

CABINET AGENDA

Date: **Wednesday 19th March 2014**

Time: **7.00pm – N.B. TIME**

Venue: **Council Chamber**

This meeting will be webcast live on the internet.

Membership:

Councillor Mrs Challis OBE (Chairman)	Leader of the Council
Councillor Stanley (Vice Chairman)	Deputy Leader of the Council Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance
Councillor Burch	Leisure
Councillor Dick	Responding to Challenge
Councillor Mrs B. Egan	Homes and Customer Engagement
Councillor Mrs Goodwin	Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Howard	Waste Floods and Water Management
Councillor G. Isaacs	Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities
Councillor Riley	Environment and Street Scene
Councillor Smith	Economic Development & Business Liaison

Cabinet Enquiries:	John Riley, ext. 2417
Reference:	8/2013/2014
Publication Date:	Tuesday 11th March 2014

**AGENDA
PART I
(Business to be taken in public)**

1. Apologies

2. Members' Interests

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th February 2014.

4. Forward Plan

To review the Forward Plan - *(Report of the Leader of the Council)*

5. Environment - Civic Pride

5(a) Flooding Update

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Floods Waste and Water Management)

5(b) Leisure Update

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Leisure)

6. Regeneration and Homes

6(a) John H Burrows Park

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Business Liaison)

7. Improving the Council

7 (a) Equality Scheme Review

The Cabinet will be asked to approve the revised scheme.

(Report of the Cabinet Member Homes and Customer Engagement)

8. Community Safety

8(a) Update on Safer Communities Initiatives

The Cabinet will be asked to consider a report.

(Report of the Cabinet Member Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities)

9. Matters to be referred from /to Policy & Scrutiny Committees

10. Matters to be referred from /to the Statutory Committees



CABINET



26TH FEBRUARY 2014

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs Challis OBE,	Leader of the Council
Chairman	
Councillor Stanley	Corporate Policy, Resources and Performance
Councillor Burch	Leisure
Councillor Dick	Responding to Challenge
Councillor Mrs Goodwin	Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Howard	Waste, Floods and Water Management
Councillor Isaacs	Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities
Councillor Riley	Environment and Street Scene
Councillor Smith	Economic Development & Business Liaison

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mrs Egan.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Anderson, S Cole, E.Egan, Mrs Govier, Hart, Mrs Iles, Ladzrie and Sharp.

The Leader of the Council announced that the Schools Adjudicator had made a determination upholding the appeal against the decision to discontinue the Deanes School. The Leader and Cabinet members expressed their ongoing support for the viability of the school. The Leader of the Council also stated that she would take up with the Essex County Council Leader the proposal for the Glenwood School to achieve academy status.

85. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Isaacs disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7(b), Policy Framework and Budget Setting for 2014/15, as a member of the Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Howard disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7(b), Policy Framework and Budget Setting for 2014/15, as a member of Essex County Council and Canvey Island Town Council.

86. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 15.1.2014 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

87. FORWARD PLAN

To comply with regulations under the Localism Act 2011, the Leader of the Council presented the Forward Plan to the meeting which outlined key decisions likely to be taken within the next quarter 2013/14. The plan was reviewed each month.

Under this item Councillor Howard gave an update on measures taken by the Council and Essex County Council to address the flooding problem. He requested that this was included on the Forward Plan as a standing item so that Cabinet could monitor progress at each meeting.

In response to a question, the Leader of the Council stated that it was the Council's intention to involve Members more inclusively in the final decision on John H Burrows Park.

Resolved – To note and approve the Forward Plan as amended.

88. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) – 2014/15 RENT LEVELS, REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLAN FOR 2014/15 AND 2013/14 REVISED

The Cabinet received a report on rent levels for Council dwellings and garages for 2014/15; the HRA Revenue budget for 2013/14 (revised) and 2014/15 and the HRA Capital Plan for 2013/14 (revised) and 2014/15.

Councillor Stanley responded to a question concerning planned repair and maintenance of properties in the Church Parade/Dinant Avenue area of Canvey Island.

Resolved:

1. That dwelling rents are increased by an average of £3.81 per week.
2. That garage rents are increased by £1 per week.
3. That the draft revised HRA revenue estimates for 2013/14 and the draft HRA revenue estimates for 2014/15, as set out in Annexe A, are approved.
4. That the draft revised HRA capital plan for 2013/14 and the draft HRA capital plan for 2014/15, as set out in Annexe B, are approved.

89. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF – BUSINESS RATES

The Cabinet received a report on changes to the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy which had been updated to reflect Government proposals on granting relief of up to £1,000 to all occupied retail properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in each of the years 2014-15 and 2015-16.

The Cabinet also considered a supplementary report on a Government initiative for a new 50 per cent business rates relief for 18 months – between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2016 – for businesses that moved into retail premises that had been empty for a year or more. Recent advice stated that this should be incorporated into the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

Resolved: -

1. To note the content of the report and approve the proposed changes to the existing Discretionary Rate Relief Policy, which incorporates the new retail relief scheme.
2. To note and approve the additional amendment to the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy set out in section 5 of the supplementary report.

90. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET SETTING FOR 2014/15

The Cabinet considered proposals and recommendations for the Council's Policy Framework and Budget Setting for 2014/15.

Resolved: -

1. That the Cabinet note the cashable savings summarised in table 4.1.
2. That the Cabinet approves the continued funding of priority projects and other items of discretionary expenditure, as set out in table 9.1.
3. That the Cabinet notes the cost pressures and other budget increases as set out in table 9.2, including the establishment of two new earmarked reserves.
4. That subject to recommendations 1 to 3 above, the revenue spending plans for 2013/14 (revised) and 2014/15, set out in section 9, tables 9.3 (summary) and 9.4 (net services expenditure) of the accompanying report, are approved.
5. That the capital spending plan described in section 10 of the accompanying report (tables 10.2 and 10.3) is approved in respect of 2013/14 (revised) and 2014/15.
6. That it is noted that as stated in paragraph 24 of section 10 of the accompanying report, and based on current plans and proposals, gross external borrowing is not expected to exceed the capital financing requirement in the current or forthcoming two financial years.
7. That as set out in paragraphs 48 and 49 of section 10 of the accompanying report, the £1.5m limit previously approved for affordable housing projects to be expended by the end of March 2017 be re-confirmed.
8. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2014/15 as set out in section 11 of the accompanying report is approved.

9. That as required by section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, the following Prudential Indicators are approved as set out in the appropriate sections of the accompanying report:

Prudential Indicator	Reference to sections 10, 11 and 12 of accompanying report
Capital expenditure	Tables 10.2 and 10.3
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	Table 10.4
Capital financing requirement	Table 10.5
Authorised limit for external debt	Table 10.6
Operational boundary for external debt	Table 10.7
Incremental impact of capital investment	Table 10.8
Housing Revenue Account limit on indebtedness	Section 10 para 36
Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing - upper and lower limits	Table 11.2
Upper limits of fixed and variable interest rate exposures	Table 11.3
Maximum period and counterparty limits for specific and non-specific investments	Tables 12.1 and 12.2

10. That the Statement of Minimum Revenue Provision for 2014/15, as stated in paragraphs 37 to 39 of section 10 of the accompanying report is approved.
11. That no new capital proposals are allowed until:
- the proposal has been evaluated in accordance with all relevant evaluation criteria;
 - the Cabinet has confirmed affordability and compliance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
 - the Cabinet has considered and approved details of the proposal.
12. That the Investment Strategy for 2014/15 as set out in section 12 of the accompanying report is approved.
13. That the Pay Policy as set out in section 13 of the accompanying report is approved.
14. That as required by section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the report of the Head of Resources set out in section 15 of the accompanying report in respect of robustness of the estimates is noted.

15. That as required by section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the report of the Head of Resources set out in section 8 of the accompanying report in respect of the adequacy of proposed financial reserves is noted.
16. That as set out in section 5 of the accompanying report it is noted that acting under delegated authority and in consultation with the Cabinet Member responsible for Resources, Policy and Performance the Head of Resources has calculated
 - a) a tax base for the Borough of Castle Point of 28,734 being the amount T required by section 31B of the Act; and
 - b) a tax base for Canvey Island to which a Town Council precept applies as 10,977.
17. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2014/15 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

Ref	Amount £	Item
(a)	60,442,416	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish (Town) Councils.
(b)	53,489,838	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
(c)	6,952,578	being the amount by which the aggregate at 20(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 20(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the act)
(d)	241.96	being the amount at 20(c) above (item R), divided by item T (19(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish (Town) precepts.
(e)	226,236	being the aggregate amount of the (Parish (Town) precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
(f)	234.09	being the amount at 20(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 20(e) above by item T (19(a) above), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.

18. That the Cabinet recommends that Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2013/14 for each part of its area and for each category of dwelling. This information is included within section 17 of the accompanying report:

Castle Point Borough Council Tax 2014/15, including and excluding Town Council precept, for each of the following categories of dwelling:

Band	Council Tax Including Town Council £	Council Tax Excluding Town Council £
A	169.80	156.06
B	198.10	182.07
C	226.40	208.08
D	254.70	234.09
E	311.30	286.11
F	367.90	338.13
G	424.50	390.15
H	509.40	468.18

19. To note that the County Council, the Policy Authority and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area, as indicated in the table below:

Band	Castle Point Borough Council £	Essex County Council £	Essex Fire Authority £	PCC for Essex £	Total Excluding Town Council £	Canvey Island Town Council £	Total Including Town Council £
A	156.06	724.50	44.28	96.18	1,021.02	13.74	1,034.76
B	182.07	845.25	51.66	112.21	1,191.19	16.03	1,207.22
C	208.08	966.00	59.04	128.24	1,361.36	18.32	1,379.68
D	234.09	1,086.75	66.42	144.27	1,531.53	20.61	1,552.14
E	286.11	1,328.25	81.18	176.33	1,871.87	25.19	1,897.06
F	338.13	1,569.75	95.94	208.39	2,212.21	29.77	2,241.98
G	390.15	1,811.25	110.70	240.45	2,552.55	34.35	2,586.90
H	468.18	2,173.50	132.84	288.54	3,063.06	41.22	3,104.28

Note: Information shown in the table above for the PCC is subject to confirmation on the 20th February.

20. To note that, in accordance with the requirements of section 52ZC of the Act the Council has determined whether its Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2014/15 is excessive, as follows:

Ref	Amount £	Item
(a)	234.09	being the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2013/14, excluding local precepts.
(b)	2.0%	being the percentage increase above which the Secretary of State has determined the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2014/15 would be excessive.
(c)	238.77	being the amount above which the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2014/15, excluding local precepts, would be excessive (rounded down to the nearest penny).
(d)	234.09	being the Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2014/15, excluding local precepts.

The Relevant Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2014/15 is therefore, not excessive and the duty to make substitute calculations and hold a referendum does not apply (Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Act).

91. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE SCORECARD QUARTER 3 2013/14

The Cabinet considered a report on the cumulative performance figures for the Corporate Performance Scorecard for Quarter 3, 1 October 2013 to 31 December 2013.

Cabinet members responded to a range of questions and statements.

Resolved: To consider the performance issues set out in section 5 of the report and direct officers accordingly.

92. UPDATE ON SAFER COMMUNITIES INITIATIVES

The Cabinet considered an update report on the position concerning neighbourhood and safer community matters.

Councillor Isaacs responded to questions and statements about crime figures.

Resolved:

To note the activities regarding neighbourhoods and safer community matters from the previous month as set out in the report.

93. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM/TO POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no matters.

94. MATTERS TO BE REFERRED FROM/TO THE STATUTORY COMMITTEES

There were no matters.

Chairman



Castle Point Borough Council

Forward Plan

MARCH 2014

CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

MARCH 2014

This document gives details of the key decisions that are likely to be taken. A key decision is defined as a decision which is likely:-

- (a) Subject of course to compliance with the financial regulations, to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates subject to a threshold of £100,000; or
- (b) To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards in the area of the local authority.

The Forward Plan is a working document which is updated continually.

Date	<u>Item</u>	Council Priority	Decision by Council/ Cabinet	Lead Member	Lead Officer(s)
March 2014	<u>Community Safety Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Safer Communities	Head of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
March 2014	<u>Regeneration Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Leader Economic Development	Head of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
March 2014	<u>John H.Burrows Park</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Economic Development & Business Liaison	Strategic Director Corporate Services
March 2014	<u>New Corporate Plan</u>	All	Council	Leader	Head of Performance & Service Support

Date	<u>Item</u>	Council Priority	Decision by Council/ Cabinet	Lead Member	Lead Officer(s)
March 2014	<u>New Local Plan Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Leader	Head of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration
March 2014	<u>Financial Update</u>	All	Cabinet	Deputy Leader of the Council	Head of Resources
April 2014	<u>Disabled Facility Grant policy</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Health & Wellbeing	Head of Environment
March 2014	<u>Equality Scheme Approval</u>	All	Cabinet Council /Dec	Homes & Customer Engagement	Head of Law
April 2014	<u>Resources Strategies : To note revisions</u>	Improving the Council	Council	Deputy Leader	Head of Resources
April 2014	<u>Housing Progress Update</u>	Regeneration & Homes	Cabinet	Homes & Customer Engagement	Head of Housing & Communities
April 2014	<u>Leisure and Recreation Strategy</u>	Environment Civic Pride	Cabinet	Environment & Street Scene	Head of Environment

CABINET

19th March 2014

Subject: Surface Water Flooding Update

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ray Howard – Waste, Floods and Water Management

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a surface water flooding update following the prolonged periods of wet weather this winter.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

Environment – Civic Pride.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet notes the content of this report.

4. Background

Torrential rain caused severe flooding across much of South Essex on Saturday 24 August 2013 with Canvey Island and Benfleet being amongst the worst hit areas within the borough of Castle Point.

Following on from this extreme weather event, this winter has been one of the wettest on record; the ground has been completely saturated and surface water has been unable to drain away for much of the time. Whilst Essex has not been as badly affected as other parts of the country, some householders have unfortunately suffered the devastating impact of their properties being flooded internally.

The various agencies in Essex who have flood risk management responsibilities have met on several occasions since the heavy rainfall on August 24th and have been working together to minimise the impact of the exceptional rainfall experienced then and throughout this winter.

All the flood risk management authorities attended a very successful Surface Water Flood Engagement Day held on 10 December. This gave residents the opportunity to

discuss issues specific to their property with the representatives from the relevant agencies.

ECC has embarked on a highway gully cleansing programme targeting known problem areas and in response to the extreme weather conditions the Country has encountered this winter has made an additional £1m fund available with immediate effect to deal with highway related flooding in Essex. Borough/District Councils were invited to identify the top five locations within their area that would benefit from an intense period of action. We were given just one week to put forward our suggestions and the Cabinet member with responsibility for Waste, Floods and Water Management, the Chief Executive and the Head of Environment met late at the end of that week to consider and collate the suggestions that had been received from elected members and staff.

The five top locations within Castle Point were identified as:

1. Canvey Seafront area – including Western Esplanade/Furtherwick Road and Eastern Esplanade/Monico junctions; Also including Roggel Road, Sprundell Road and the sewer at the rear of gardens on the east side of Lottem Road.
2. North Avenue area, Canvey Island. There would appear to be a distinct lack of maintenance in North Avenue, Western Crescent, Eastern Crescent and Thameside Crescent; all gullies, laterals and sewer runs need looking at.
3. Canvey Island Town Centre including Knightswick Road, Foksville, High Street and Oak Road. This area has poor drainage and would benefit from manhole/sewer location survey work plus cleaning of existing gullies/laterals and the main sewers once located. The connecting sewers from the Council owned Oak Road car park are poor. A survey of the area is needed followed up by necessary cleansing and repair works.
4. The Avenue/ The Crescent/Meadow Road/Bilton Road, Hadleigh – recurrent internal flooding problems caused by lack of maintenance by various agencies and riparian owners.
5. Benfleet area – Rayleigh Road (Vic House Roundabout end) and also Kiln Road, surface water opposite Badgers Hall Avenue overflows through the factory premises and floods properties in Carlton Drive.

We also took the opportunity to identify other areas known to us which we believe would benefit from further investigation and action.

In providing details of these locations we made the following points;

- Area investigations will be required rather than treating isolated problems.
- In many cases the drainage issues are likely to be inter related and solving one problem could well cause another. It is therefore important that there is some flexibility so that whole system solutions can be achieved. This may mean that locations not specifically named below may require some form of intervention.
- Surface water drainage on Canvey Island is somewhat unique and there are serious capacity issues even where robust highway maintenance regimes are in place; indeed we have already been working with partner agencies on these issues following the flooding that occurred on 24 August.

- Ongoing suitable and sufficient highway maintenance regimes will be required to avoid future highway flooding problems as are intensive education campaigns raising awareness of riparian owner responsibilities.
- In addition to these known recurring problems within the Borough our residents and visitors to the borough suffer significant travel delays as a consequence of the drainage issues at the nearby Fair Glen interchange and Rayleigh Weir.

David Wilson Homes Site

In January this year the Environmental Health team received a complaint alleging that the David Wilson Homes site was causing flooding to a number of premises in Queensmere and Kingsmere. Their investigations concluded that surface water from the site was indeed being allowed to runoff into the wooded area. Although it is impossible to state categorically that the development site was solely responsible for the flooding, it was certainly exacerbating the problem.

In accordance with the Environmental Health team's requirements David Wilson Homes constructed a length of bunding along the perimeter with the woods to contain the surface water on the site. Subsequent checks with Anglian Water established that no consent had been given for water to be discharged into the surface water sewer which discharges into Prittle Brook, so the water must either be contained within the development site or removed by tankers.

Environmental Health is continuing to monitor the site to ensure that there are no further contraventions.

Bilton Road/ The Avenue/The Crescent/Meadow Road, Hadleigh

ECC are continuing with assessments and studies at this problem watercourse (open and piped parts).

This Council via the Council's surveyor has supplied various details and proposals that may help to improve the situation and ECC's Flood & Water Management Team are reviewing these along with their own proposals.

ECC have delivered letters to around 50 households in Bilton Road, The Avenue and The Crescent outlining their intention to carry out manhole location and CCTV works to piped parts of this sewer. This work is likely to commence week commencing 17 March 2014.

This CCTV work will help to:

- Identify the precise position of the pipe runs (and manholes thereon);
- Ascertain condition of pipes;
- Ascertain any potential spots where blockages may occur or where there are currently partial blockages: and
- Identify what other sewers (be they Anglian Water, highway or local land drains) that enter this main pipe run.

This CCTV work will enable ECC officers to gain a better understanding of the drainage problems in this area and how best they can be resolved.

5. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

There is no doubt that the heavy rainfall and subsequent flooding has had a significant impact on local residents and businesses although it is not possible to put a cost on the damage caused. The provision of suitable and well maintained infra structure is essential to minimise the impact on local communities of extreme weather conditions.

(b) Legal Implications

The Flood and Waste Management Act 2010 seeks to ensure a joined up approach to flood and water management. The Act requires ECC to fulfil the role of the Lead Local Flood Authority and the various risk management agencies e.g. Highways Authorities, water companies, Environment Agency and District Councils have a duty to cooperate with the Lead Local Flood Authority.

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

Human Resources

None associated with this report.

Equality Implications

None associated with this report.

6. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

Any recommendations of the Lead Local Flood Authority will be reported to Cabinet in due course.

Background Papers

None

Report Author: Trudie Bragg, Head of Environment

CABINET

19th March 2014

Subject: Leisure and Community Halls Update

Cabinet Member: Councillor Peter Burch - Leisure

1. Purpose of Report

To advise the Cabinet of performance in Leisure Services and Community Halls since completion of recent refurbishment and improvement projects.

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

'Improving the Council' – The Council is committed to investment in sports and community facilities and contributing towards reducing health inequalities in the Borough.

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet note the information contained within this report.

4. Background

There has been extensive investment in Leisure and recreation provision since 2010. Runnymede swimming pool underwent a £930,000 refurbishment reopening in May 2011 and Waterside Farm underwent a £5.4m refurbishment starting in May 2012 and finishing with the grand reopening in Aug 2013.

The investment in leisure provision also including the Borough wide playground renewal programme and the halls refurbishments demonstrates the Council's commitment to work to provide good quality facilities and to work towards increasing participation in sport and physical activity and to improve the health and well being of Borough residents

5. Usage and memberships

Leisure memberships were reviewed during the refurbishment period and the revised packages were simplified to peak and off peak membership options. Users were offered introductory rate memberships if they joined prior to the Waterside Farm Leisure Centre re-opening. This initiative meant we had a live membership base on the re-opening but since August there has been a 44% increase in these

membership numbers. Memberships at the leisure centres are now at the highest recorded membership levels and are in excess of 2,500.

The facilities at the Leisure Centres include swimming pools, sports hall, spin studio, squash courts, fitness suite, fitness studios, combat room, 3G football centre and café. Since August 2013 there have been on average 22,000 visitors per month and a 30% overall increase in attendance figures at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre.

In addition to reviewing memberships the programme of group exercise classes has been reviewed and increased. Since 2013 there has been a 300% increase in group exercise class attendance and income has increased as a result. Other new initiatives include the delivery of personal training, which has doubled from the same period last year, and swimming lessons have been transferred to the STA swim academy scheme which begins in late March 2014, and offers an exciting, progressive awards programme that engages children at every stage of their development.

The brand new 3G football centre continues to see high usage. Whilst the recent spate of bad weather has impacted and meant we have had some additional bookings due to pitch conditions elsewhere, the centre has nonetheless seen a 75% increase in use since September 2013.

The Council run community halls continue to see good levels of usage with Runnymede and the Paddocks currently booked to 70% of capacity.

6. Marketing:

360° virtual tours:

Continuing to increase usage and promote the facilities is a key priority for the delivery of leisure services. Customers can now view both leisure centres and the Community Halls at Runnymede and the Paddocks, on line with the new 360° virtual tours. The tours promote the facilities on offer, showcase the halls when they are set up as wedding venues and allow customers to wander remotely through the centres and experience the wonderful new facilities on offer.

Wedding and Events Fair:

The Council ran its second hugely successful Wedding and Events Fair at Runnymede Hall on Sunday 9th March. The halls team secured free features in various magazines and wedding websites to promote the event. An advertisement was also placed in 'Essex Wedding' magazine with a small editorial to reach as wide an audience as possible. With over 30 exhibitors displaying accessories and bridal wear to sweets, buffets and catering and bands the Fair was another opportunity to promote the venues for hire and an opportunity for local businesses to promote their services to the many visitors who came to enjoy the event.

7. Partnership working

Active Castle Point and Rochford:

Castle Point Borough Council is a member of the Active Rochford and Active Castle Point network. The network engages voluntary, private and public sector

bodies who work together to achieve a coordinated approach to creating, developing, and promoting opportunities for the whole community to take part in sport, physical activity and volunteering and lead a healthy lifestyle. Part of the work they do includes hosting Annual Sports Awards to recognise sporting achievements of athletes, sportspeople, clubs and coaches in the Borough. This year the joint event will be held for the first time in Castle Point. The date for this year's Sports Awards is Thursday 6th November and the event will be held at Runnymede Hall, Kiln Road, Benfleet.

Working with the Active Network, Leisure Services have been able to achieve Sportivate funding to deliver heavily subsidised badminton sessions for children as well as Clubs "n" Hub funding which has enabled the introduction of the hugely popular Get Back to Netball sessions aimed at women 16yrs+ not engaged in physical activity. Average attendance is currently at over 40 participants per week.

Seevic College:

Seevic College are now regular hirers of Waterside Farm Leisure Centre to assist them in delivery of sports related activities, currently over 14 hours a week of use. Waterside Farm Leisure Centre will also be home to the Further Education Games between Chelmsford College, Palmers College and Seevic College in May 2014. Leisure Services are also hopeful of entering into further partnership arrangements such as a new apprenticeship scheme called "Sports Development Coaching and Fitness – passport to leisure employment" which will see students based at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre for part of their course to both study and gain real time work experience. Discussions are ongoing.

Southend United Community and Education Trust:

The trust is now working at Waterside Farm to deliver free weekly multi-sport activities. The primary aim is to encourage children in areas of deprivation to engage in physical activity.

8. Sports Development:

Promotion and development of sports in the Borough continues throughout 2014. Some of the initiatives on offer include;

- Commonwealth Games are Go! Starting with free taster sessions at the Castle Point Show and Waterside Farm in July and August, the celebrations continue with the main event on August 10th at Waterside Farm Leisure Centre. Lots of free sessions will be on offer including Swimming, Basketball, Fencing, Badminton, Street Dance, Sitting Volleyball and Boccia.
- Essex Disability Games which delivers free taster sessions at Waterside Farm in Table Cricket, Sitting Volleyball and Boccia with a link to the Lions Essex Games event at the King John School on June 10th 2014.
- New Running Programme. A new beginners running programme in conjunction with Benfleet Running Club and England Athletics for summer 2014.
- Workplace Challenge: A national programme which aims to engage workplaces in sport and physical activity is in full swing across Essex. Offering free sports sessions for Schools within the Castle Point BC and

Rochford DC areas, additionally a Corporate Games event will be held in the summer / autumn 2014.

9. Conclusion:

The significant investment in the Council's Leisure Facilities is paying dividends and we are now seeing record levels of usage. The service is forging significant new partnership initiatives to increase and enhance sports delivery. Funding streams continue to be explored to open up access to sport and recreation for as wide a group of the community as possible and up to date marketing techniques are being utilised to promote the wonderful facilities on offer.

Report Author: Trudie Bragg – Head of Environment

CABINET

19th March 2014

Subject: John H Burrows Park

Cabinet Member: Councillor Norman Smith - Economic Development & Business Liaison

1. Purpose of Report

To inform Cabinet regarding the outcomes from the recent consultation in relation to the existing condition of the existing council owned building and other facilities at John H Burrows Park in Hadleigh.

2. Links to Council Priorities and Objectives

**Environment – Civic Pride
Regeneration and Homes**

3. Recommendations

- 1) That the Cabinet considers the results from consultation and other comments and views which have been received by the Council (including the petition received from the Solby Residents Association) as shown in this report.**
 - 2) That any changes to the future use of John H Burrows Park should be considered as part of the ongoing preparation and development of the Council's leisure strategy for the parks, recreation grounds and sports and leisure services which are maintained by the Council.**
 - 3) That the Council should continue to make application for third party funding and private sector investment to maximise the various leisure opportunities which are available to residents in the Castle Point area.**
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4. Background

- 4.1 A Planning Brief for the site has previously been agreed by Members and the Cabinet requested the Castle Point Regeneration Partnership to seek commercial interest in the site to assist the Council to provide new facilities and services at the Park for the benefit of local residents and visitors to the area.**

- 4.2 Expressions of interest were received from local voluntary organisations and national companies and following a market appraisal the Partnership recommended that the Council should pursue an offer to provide new facilities at the site including the opening of a new restaurant/hostelry premises.
- 4.3 The proposal was considered by Cabinet in September 2013 and it was agreed that the offer provided a possible long term answer to create new facilities for public use at John H Burrows Park.
- 4.4 The Cabinet requested that the community should be consulted on this solution and that a further report should be submitted to Cabinet following this consultation.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 A design statement for a new restaurant/hostelry premises to replace the present building and provide other leisure and recreation facilities at John H Burrows Park has been shared with all stakeholder groups and the wider community.
- 5.2 Any disposal of the land and financial consideration would be subject to and dependant upon an independent valuation report and the Council would not agree a sum which was insufficient to finance any improvements which are necessary at the site.
- 5.3 The proposal for the restaurant / hostelry has generated a significant number of objections from local residents and the Council is also in receipt of a petition of over 1000 names against the establishment of a restaurant/ hostelry at this location.
- 5.4 As requested by Cabinet a design statement was distributed to local householders for the purposes of community consultation. All appropriate public places were also supplied with design material and posters to increase community awareness and the focal point for the consultation was the Hadleigh Regeneration shop which had extended opening hours to allow residents to view storyboards providing information about the establishment of the new restaurant / hostelry and other leisure facilities.
- 5.5 The comments received during this further consultation have all been collected and assessed. There have been more comments in favour during the consultation phase than against. Although householders adjacent to the Park remain largely against the opening of a restaurant / hostelry at the site the wider community appear to be mainly supportive regarding a reuse of part of the site for a family orientated food and beverage outlet.
- 5.6 The Project Team also undertook a user consultation exercise with existing stakeholder groups. The views of the various stakeholders have become more accepting towards a different use of part of the site for a food premises and they now appear content to work with the Council to deliver a shared approach to achieve mutual benefits for all concerned. Indeed discussions have commenced with the Cricket Club in respect of their involvement in managing and controlling any new facilities.

- 5.7 A Public Notice under Section 123 (2A) Local Govt Act 1972 was also published on 13 and 20 February 2014 inviting seeking views in relation to any disposal of the land or buildings forming part of the site.

6. Corporate Implications

a) Financial Implications

- 6.1 Precise financial costings will be provided regarding any future expenditure arising from any changes that are proposed at the site as a result of the preparation and publication of the leisure strategy by the Council.

b) Legal Implications

- 6.2 The Council will abide by any restrictions which apply to the public open space and the rights enjoyed by other occupiers/users of buildings and land at John H Burrows Park and will strictly comply with any rules relating to the disposal of council owned land.

c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

6.3 Human Resources

The further preparation of the leisure strategy will be undertaken by the Head of Environment and other council staff responsible for the management of the leisure facilities and open spaces on behalf of the Council in conjunction with assistance from the Regeneration Delivery team with respect to any possible private sector involvement or contribution

6.4 Equality Implications

The impact of the recommendations in this report cannot be categorised until the leisure strategy is developed but do not currently create any equality implications.

d) IT and Asset Management Implications

- 6.5 An independent valuation report will need to be obtained if any disposal of council owned property at the site is to be considered as part of the action following the publication of the leisure strategy. Any financial benefit accruing from the disposal of any landholding would be reinvested in new facilities for community use .

7. Timescale for Implementation and Risk Factors

- 7.1 If the Council is unable to develop and agree a leisure strategy which provides a new future for John H Burrows Park the Council will have to determine another alternative to address the condition of the existing building and other facilities which are presently available at the site

8. Background Papers:

Cabinet on 15th January 2014 (Agenda item 6(c)); Cabinet on 18th September 2014 (Agenda item No 6 (c)); Cabinet on 18th January 2012 (Agenda item No 6 (c)) and the report presented to the Policy and Performance PDG on 19th March 2012 (Agenda item No 3); Cabinet on 20th June 2012 (Agenda item No 5a; item 3 Place & Communities PSC on 17th July 2012 and 7th October 2013; Agenda item 6 (e) Report and Supplementary Report to Cabinet 17th October 2012; Report to Cabinet on 15 January 2014 (Agenda Item No 6 (c); Member Brief – 27th February 2014

Report Author: Andrew Roby Smith – Project Lead x2433

CABINET

19th March 2014

Subject: Equality Scheme Review

Cabinet Member: Councillor Mrs Egan – Homes and Customer Engagement

1. Purpose of Report

This Report seeks Cabinet approval to the Council's revised Five Year Equality Scheme

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

Improving the Council – The Council is committed to equality for all and to address inequalities in the Borough

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Cabinet approves the Five Year Equality Scheme

4. Background

The Equality Act 2010 ("the Act") received Royal Assent on the 8th April 2010.

Although public authorities have been under a general duty to promote race equality since April 2001, it has only been more recently with the introduction of the disability equality duty in December 2006 and gender equality in April 2007 that these general duties have begun to occupy significant amounts of court time with judicial review challenges to public authority funding decisions and service reconfigurations becoming increasingly common.

The principal aims of the Act were to harmonise and bring together in one place the disparate strands of discrimination law previously to be found across nine main pieces of legislation, dating from 1970 to 2007 and to strengthen the law to promote progress on equality, bringing within the scope of the Public Sector Equality Duty ("PSED") discrimination on the grounds of age, gender reassignment, sexual orientation and religion or belief.

The Council has a general duty in that it must in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

This general duty in S149 is backed up by the particular duties imposed by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 which set out the timescales within which public authorities must demonstrate compliance with the S149 duty, via the publication of certain information.

Public authorities must publish one or more specific and measurable equality objectives at least every four years.

The broad purpose of the equality duty is to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the day to day business of public authorities. The general equality duty therefore requires public authorities to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies, including internal policies, and the delivery of services and for these issues to be kept under review.

The duty applies when a public authority exercises any of its functions that may impact upon those with protected characteristics. Those protected characteristics are:

Age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

To meet its Equality objectives the Council adopted its First Single Equality Scheme in 2010.

5. PSED Review

The PSED has been the subject of a review by an Independent Steering Group set up by the Government. The report was published on the 6th September 2012 and its recommendations accepted by Government which wants to see them implemented in full.

The Steering Group concluded that it was “too early to make a final judgement about the impact of the PSED....and the evidence, particularly in relation to associated costs and benefits is inconclusive.” They also felt that uncertainty around demonstrating that one had had “due regard” had “led to public bodies adopting an overly risk averse approach to managing legal risk in order to rule out every conceivable risk”.

The Steering Group recommended for public bodies that they:

- Adopt a proportionate approach to PSED and not seek to “gold plate” compliance;

- In connection with procuring services, reducing the burden on small employers by not imposing burdensome requirements on contractors to deliver equality data about their workforce and service users

The Government intends a full evaluation be undertaken in 2016 when the PSED will have been in force for five years.

6. Proposals

Public authorities must be transparent about their objectives and performance on equality and it is vital that the specific duties support this aim.

It is recommended that the Council having undertaken a review of its First Single Equality Scheme adopts a revised Equality Scheme for a five year period 2014 to 2019.

The Council's Equality Scheme 2014-2019 is available for inspection by Members in the Members Room as are the consultation responses.

7. Consultation

Consultation on the draft Equality Scheme took place during February 2014.

In excess of 424 groups and organisations were consulted including: Groups for the disabled, schools, voluntary/charitable groups, Active Castle Point & Rochford members, Waterside Members, Council employees.

60 responses were received of which 20 have a protected characteristic, 47 said that they do not consider there to be any barriers preventing them accessing Council services. Those that felt there were barriers referred to their lack of IT skills and requiring easy to read documents. 32 agreed & 2 strongly agreed 15 neither agreed or disagreed with the remainder strongly disagreeing or disagreeing that the Council's current priorities reflect the diverse needs of our community.

8. Corporate Implications

Equality objectives that form the Equality Scheme have been taken from service plans and therefore to monitor performance should not provide an onerous task for service areas. It is proposed that monitoring of the Equality Scheme be undertaken annually with an annual report to Cabinet.

a. Financial implications

Defending a legal challenge is time consuming and costly should the Council find itself in a position of having failed to have fully appreciated the impact its policies and decisions may have on those with protected characteristics

b. Legal implications

Failure to fully consider the impact of policies and decision making may have on those with protected characteristics will put the Council at risk of legal challenge or the Equality and Human Rights Commission who is responsible for enforcing the PSED taking enforcement action against the Council.

c. Human resources and equality

The public authority should have in place a means to ensure it can evidence how when developing policies or making decisions it has taken into consideration the impact such policies and decisions may have on those with protected characteristics. Whilst public authorities do not have to undertake Equality Impact Assessments (“EQIAs”) when developing policies or within the decision making process, EQIAs do provide a useful tool to consider and address the relevant issues and also provides an evidence base in the event of legal challenge.

8. Background Papers:

Equality Scheme 2014-2019
Consultation Responses

Report Author: Fiona Wilson Head of Law & Deputy Monitoring Officer

CABINET

19th MARCH 2014

Subject: Update on Safer Communities Initiatives

**Cabinet Member: Councillor G Isaacs
Neighbourhoods and Safer Communities**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report is to update the Cabinet on the position with neighbourhood and safer community matters.

2. Links to Council's priorities and objectives

2.1 The initiatives described in this report are directly linked to the Council's Community Safety priority – reducing levels of crime by working with the police and other parties – and the Improving the Council priority by engaging the community in local decision-making.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That the Cabinet notes the activities regarding neighbourhoods and safer community matters as set out in the report.

4. Background

4.1 The Council is an integral partner in a number of key partnerships across the Borough.

4.2 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Castle Point and Rochford works as an overarching strategic body ensuring the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy. In particular the "Feeling Safer" ambition involves the police, probation officers and other partners.

4.3 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a statutory partnership established by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It is a partnership between the police, local authorities, the probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector, local residents and businesses. The Council is a leading partner in the Castle Point and Rochford CSP.

5. Progress and activities

5.1 The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) will be holding one formal public meeting in each district / borough in 2014/15. The meeting in Castle Point will be

held on Thursday 11th September 2014. It will be held in Benfleet and the venue and time will be confirmed and advertised widely.

- 5.2 Groundwork Essex, an environmental charity, is offering a Community Safety Partnership funded gardening scheme. It provides support to vulnerable elderly people across the Borough with a one off free visit to clear overgrown and uncared for gardens. This improvement is aimed at deterring burglary and other crimes as well as reducing health and safety risks for the resident. More information is available from Groundwork Essex and referrals can be directed to Ginette.braithwaite@groundwork.org.uk
- 5.3 Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) continues to develop their Befriending Scheme in the Borough. They have an increased demand in Castle Point and are actively recruiting volunteers to give an hour a week to provide companionship to isolated residents.
- 5.4 The Essex County Fire and Rescue Service monthly campaign for March is reminding residents to test their smoke alarms when they put their clocks forward on 30th March. Free Home Fire Safety Visits are also still available.

6. Corporate Implications

a. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

b. Legal implications

- 6.2 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

c. Human resources and equality implications

- 6.3 There are no human resource or equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

d. Timescale for implementation and risk factors

- 6.4 The projects described in this report are on-going matters.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 The Council continues to carry out regular engagement on a variety of matters to ensure the safety of communities in Castle Point.

Background Papers: None

Report Author: Melanie Harris - Head of Partnerships and Safer Places