

## **SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL**

### **Meeting of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: Thursday, 29th August, 2024**

**Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite**

**Present:** Councillor K Robinson (Chair)  
Councillors I Ferguson (Vice-Chair), Sam Allen, M Borton,  
J Courtenay, M Faulkner-Hatt, N Folkard, D Garston, R Longstaff,  
J McMahon, R McMullan, S Wakefield, N Ward and C Webster

(\*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30.)

**In Attendance:** Councillors D Cowan (Leader of the Council), L Burton, P Collins,  
M Dent, L Hyde (Cabinet Members) and S W Allen  
C Fozzard, S Newman, C Shuter and S Cox

**Start/End Time:** 6.30 - 8.18 pm

#### **14 Chair's Introduction & Apologies for Absence**

##### **(a) Chair's Introduction**

Prior to the consideration of the matters set out in the agenda, the Chair outlined their expectations of the standard of conduct and behaviour to be shown at the meeting.

The Chair advised that the agenda items for the meeting would be taken in a different order to that published in the agenda.

##### **(b) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Berry and Councillor D Nelson.

#### **15 Declarations of Interest**

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

- (a) Councillor M Borton – Minute No. 19 (Corporate Performance Report, Quarter 1) – Board Member of South Essex Homes and daughter works for Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT)
- (b) Councillor J McMahon – Minute No. 19 (Corporate Performance Report, Quarter 1) – regularly works with Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT) in the course of her employment and Minute No. 19 (Corporate Performance Report, Quarter 1) – has been involved in the planting of trees across the City.

- (c) Councillor K Robinson – Minute No. 19 (Corporate Performance Report, Quarter 1) – employee of Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT).
- (d) Councillor S Wakefield – Minute No. 16 (Questions from Members of the Public) – owner of a House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO).

## **16 Questions from Members of the Public**

The Committee noted the response of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Major Projects, which was presented by the Leader of the Council, to a question raised by Ms Mitchell.

The Committee noted the response of the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Corporate Strategy, to a question raised by Ms Cowdrey.

The Committee noted the response of the Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Business, to a question raised by Mr Webb.

## **17 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 11th July 2024**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

## **18 Southend-on-Sea City Council Annual Report 2023-24**

The Committee received a report by the Executive Director (Strategy and Change), which had been referred direct by Cabinet held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024, that provided an overview of the past year's successes and achievements and set out what activity had been delivered to progress the priorities and outcomes detailed in the Council's Corporate Plan.

The Committee discussed the report and asked a number of questions that were responded to by the Leader of the Council.

Councillor L Burton as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and SEND confirmed he would provide a written response to the Committee on the indicator CP02.011 'rate of children with a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 population' in regards to whether the indicator was correct as showing a downward trend in red.

Resolved:

That the report to Cabinet be noted.

Note: This is an Executive function  
Cabinet Member: Councillor D Cowan, (Leader of the Council)

## **19 Southend-on-Sea City Council Refreshed Corporate Plan 2024-2028**

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director (Strategy & Change), by way of pre-Cabinet Scrutiny, that that set out the principal corporate strategy of Southend-on-Sea City Council and detailed areas of focus in four overarching priorities.

The Committee discussed the report and asked questions that were responded to by the Leader of the Council, who confirmed that a progress report would be brought back to scrutiny on a quarterly basis. It was explained that a number of actions did not have target dates, however this would be rectified on the final version of the report being referred to Cabinet.

It was highlighted that a number of plans and strategies that fed into the Corporate Plan were in development, however there would be an opportunity for scrutiny to review these at the appropriate time.

The Leader of the Council reported that the Taxi Policy was currently out of consultation, however further detail could be provided outside of the meeting.

Resolved:

That the report to Cabinet be noted.

Note: This is an Executive function

Cabinet Member: Councillor D Cowan (Leader of the Council).

## **20 Corporate Performance Report Quarter 1**

The Committee received a report from the Executive Director (Strategy & Change), by way of pre-Cabinet scrutiny, that presented the Council's overall performance against the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan for Quarter 1 (April to June 2024).

The Leader of the Council explained that 12 targets were green (meeting target), 3 were amber (almost met) and 4 red (5% or more off target).

The Committee welcomed the report and were pleased about the progress made against some of the indicators.

The Committee briefly discussed 'tree net gain in the City' and asked questions which were responded to by the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Waste, key highlights included:

- How 'tree net gain' was measured, as the indicator was different from the previous year in order to provide a more accurate measure for how successful the tree planting programme had been at the end of the season.
- The measures in place to water newly planted whips and saplings, to ensure the success of the tree planting programme; to which the Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Waste confirmed that she would circulate a written response regarding the tree planting programme and responsibilities for care and maintenance.

- The importance of combining tree planning with street paving repair works, where possible during tree planting season.

Resolved:

That the report to Cabinet be noted.

Note: This is an Executive function

Cabinet Member: Councillor D Cowan (Leader of the Council).

## **21 Treasury Management Report - Quarter 1 2024/25**

The Committee received a report by the Executive Director (Finance & Resources), by way of pre-cabinet scrutiny, that presented the treasury management activity for the period from April to June 2024.

The Committee discussed the importance of ethical investments and making investments that align with the Council's Corporate Plan and the organisations vision, as a result some Members felt that it was inappropriate to invest with banks in countries that have poor human rights records.

The Cabinet Member recognised the Committees concerns and felt that the matter of ethical investments should also be raised at the Assets and Treasury Management working party.

Officers provided an update on the liquidation of the Lothbury Property Trust.

Resolved:

That the report to Cabinet be noted.

Note: This is an Executive function

Cabinet Member: Councillor P Collins (Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Investments).

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_