

## The Executive – 7 March 2023

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Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **7 March 2023** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr S E Wootton  
Vice Chairman: Cllr Mrs C E Roe

Cllr Mrs D L Belton  
Cllr D S Efde  
Cllr D J Sperring

Cllr I H Ward  
Cllr A L Williams

### OFFICERS PRESENT

J Stephenson	- Chief Executive
E Yule	- Strategic Director
P Barnes	- Director of Assets & Investment
G Campbell	- Director of Policy & Delivery
P Drane	- Director of Place
A Hunkin	- Interim Director of People & Governance
S Worthington	- Principal Officer, Democratic & Corporate Services
D Goodman	- Team Leader, Strategic Planning & Economic Development
J Jakes	- Corporate Services Officer

### 63 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 64 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE AND REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

#### **Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 23 February 2023 – Mill Arts & Events Centre – Outcome of the Community Expression of Interest Process and Future Operating Costs**

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee advised that recommendation 1 set out on page 6.1.1 of the report was a standalone recommendation which was formulated as a result of evidence received from the community groups who had attended the meeting on 23 February who felt that there was a lack of clarity around what was expected of them.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets responded by highlighting the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.8 of the report and emphasising that that the operation of the Mill Arts & Events Centre was an executive function, other than for any decisions that might fall outside of the budget framework. Members expressed support for this recommendation.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, with reference to recommendation 2, stressed that the Mill Arts & Events Centre was now a standalone operation, rather than part of the Council's asset disposal policy. The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets advised that he could not

support the recommendation as there wasn't such a policy; there was an asset disposal framework which was an overarching Council strategy which could not be rejected. The Portfolio Holder for Environment added that the framework applied to the whole of the Council's estate and was not restricted to simply disposing of assets, but rather included a variety of other options, e.g., repurposing assets; community use, etc., and made reference to current arrangements for two of the Council's pavilions. He also emphasised that the Mill Arts & Events Centre had been removed from the Asset Delivery Programme.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee advised that recommendation 3 was connected to paragraph 4.2 of the report with the intention of a cross party working group exploring high level objectives. The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets advised that there was an ongoing process for determining the future of the Mill Arts & Events Centre; the report to the Committee was to ensure transparency of that process. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy & Climate was supportive of a cross party working group to get the outcomes that the community wants.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee confirmed that recommendation 4 was in reference to paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of the report and was aimed at gaining clarity of vision and around what was required of those groups who had made expressions of interest.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets drew attention to paragraph 2.5 of the report and advised that this recommendation was unnecessary and would be better incorporated into the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.5.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee advised that recommendation 5 had been formulated in response to the fact that those community groups who had attended the meeting on 23 February had indicated that they were able to apply for other external sources of funding.

In response the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets advised that it was too early to know what operating proposals or governance arrangements might be appropriate; however, all available funding streams would be fully explored. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy & Climate was supportive of the recommendation and felt it appropriate that the Council worked in partnership to explore more funding opportunities. She emphasised that the UK Prosperity Fund and Community Investment Fund also offered the potential for funding.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in respect of recommendation 6, advised that the Committee believed that the expression of interest process should be started again, given the perceived lack of clarity around the process by the community groups in attendance on 23 February.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets advised that he could not

support this recommendation as the process was not yet complete. The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Housing & Health added that the preferred parties had put a lot of time and resource into the process; it was therefore inappropriate to stop progress on an ongoing process although clarity was absolutely essential.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee cross referenced recommendation 7 with paragraph 2.6 of the report and observed that the community groups wanted to be engaged in the procurement process, media facilities and in the final product delivered.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets queried whether the Committee were advocating a collaborative, multi-agency bid model for the Mill Arts & Events Centre and advised that this could potentially be considered as one of the potential procurement models. He emphasised, however, that it was too early in the process to look at different procurement models and governance processes. The Strategic Director agreed with this; until the governance process required for the final model was understood it wasn't possible to consider different types of procurement process.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee commented, in respect of recommendation 8, that the timing of this might not be viable, given that the commencement of the pre-election period was imminent.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets emphasised that the Executive had already delayed the decision-making on this, given that the report had been deferred once by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The priority was to ensure that the Mill Arts & Events Centre was operational on a day to day basis. Recommendation 1 already ensured debate at Full Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy & Climate commented that this would jeopardise keeping the Mill Arts & Events Centre operational in the interim. This report was not looking at the long term future of the building but rather looking at what was needed in order to keep the building open until a future operating model could be finalised.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee concluded by saying that when the report was initially published it contained a recommendation that had been included in error which had been lost on a vote at the meeting on 23 February. The Leader emphasised that there was no intention to demolish the building; the intention was to keep it open for the benefit of residents.

The Executive discussed the recommendations set out at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.8 of the report. The following points were noted:-

- Recommendation 2.1 – insert 'Mill' before 'hall'.
- Recommendation 2.2 – insert 'up to' before £248,950'. The figures in Appendix 2 were only acceptable in the context of this being an interim,

short term arrangement to keep the Mill Arts & Events Centre open while work was undertaken on finalising an operating model and governance process.

- Recommendation 2.3 – Assurance had been given that the building was structurally sound. Table 6 referred to essential repairs, e.g., leaking roof, fire alarms, as identified in the condition survey.
- Recommendation 2.4 – Amend figure to '£45,000.' Insert 'in' between investment and furniture. Furniture that wasn't needed in future should be repurposed or donated to the community, etc.
- Recommendation 2.5 should be blended with recommendation 4.
- Recommendation 2.8 – replace 'Overview & Scrutiny Committee' with 'Full Council.'

A Motion moved by Cllr I H Ward and seconded by Cllr D J Sperring that the following recommendations be approved was carried unanimously on a show of hands:-

### **Resolved**

- (1) Upon recruitment of staff to operate the Mill Hall, notice to be served to Fusion Lifestyle (Fusion) to remove the Mill Arts & Events Centre from the existing leisure contract and to vary the contract accordingly and for the Council to undertake the operational management of the building thereafter.
- (2) Additional revenue budget of up to £248,950 to be added to the medium term financial strategy to ensure the building can remain operational whilst the longer term vision and sustainability of the Mill Arts & Events Centre is developed and presented to Members at a future meeting. Detail of the additional budget request can be found in Appendix 2.
- (3) Additional capital budget of up to £185,000 to fund required works at the Mill Arts & Events Centre, as identified within the building condition survey and capital improvement works for 2023/24, as set out in table 6 of Appendix 2. The future capital requirement works, as set out in table 5 within the appendix, will be reviewed within the future vision for the Mill Arts & Events Centre and proposed alongside the update.
- (4) Additional capital budget of up to £45,000 to fund required investment in furniture within the building for supporting events.
- (5) That a budget is allocated of £25,000 to support the resources required to develop a full business case for approval on the future vision for the Mill Arts & Events Centre. This allocation of budget will look to focus on resident assessment needs, engaging with all stakeholders and

undertaking meaningful market research to collate all data to formulate a proposed investment design and business case to demonstrate the investment required for the building to ensure it is financially sustainable for the future. Funds within this allocated budget will only be drawn down after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy & Climate, the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets, the Leader and the Interim Director of Resources.

- (6) That the progress of the community expression of interest process and the outcome following this process be noted.
- (7) That the objectives outlined in section 4 are the objectives that underpin any future business case for the Mill Arts & Events Centre.
- (8) That a report be taken back to Full Council to review the current performance of the Mill Arts & Events Centre and to scrutinise the proposals for the future of the Mill Arts & Events Centre following the engagement process and action plan outlined within the report with a full financial business case outlining the investment proposals and long term operating model. This element will address financial sustainability, as well as environmental ambitions for the asset.
- (9) That any future model for the Mill Hall Arts & Events Centre is clear and be brought to Full Council for discussion.
- (10) That a cross party working group is set up to support the process.
- (11) That during the process external funding options are investigated either by RDC or a partner for the works needed. (DAI)

### **Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 1 March 2023 – OneTeam Transformation Programme – Strategic Partnership with Brentwood Borough Council Quarter 4 Update**

The Executive considered the report on the OneTeam Transformation Programme.

#### **Resolved**

That the progress of the OneTeam Transformation Programme be noted. (DPD)

## **65 QUARTER 3 2022/23 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT**

The Executive considered the report of the Interim Director of Resources setting out the Quarter 3 2022/23 revenue budget and capital position set out in Sections 3 and 4 of the report and detailed in Appendices 1 to 4.

It was noted that this report had been delayed for a month due to work associated with budget-setting for 2023/24. A small underspend was noted in

general fund expenditure, as detailed in paragraph 3.1.

### **Resolved**

To note the Quarter 3 2022/23 revenue budget and capital position set out in Sections 3 and 4 of the report and detailed in Appendices 1 to 4. (IDR)

## **66 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND: PROCESS FOR DISTRIBUTING FUTURE FUNDING**

The Executive considered the report of the Strategic Director and Director of Place setting out the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2023/24 allocations for Members' consideration.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning & Assets commended this initiative which was important for the District's towns and villages.

Cllr Mrs D L Belton moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr D S Efde, to approve the recommendations set out at paragraphs 1.1 to 1.3 of the report and this was approved unanimously.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director and Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy and Climate, to operate a grant programme to distribute up to 70% of the Council's 2023-24 UKSPF allocation, in line with the principles set out in this report.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director and Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy and Climate, to utilise the remaining proportion of the Council's 2023-24 UKSPF allocation to directly commission eligible projects, in line with the principles set out in this report.
- (3) That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director and Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Economy and Climate, to make minor changes to the principles set out in this report where necessary to enable the most beneficial use of the funding or ensure compliance with Government requirements. (SD/DP)

## **67 YEAR IN REVIEW UPDATE**

The Executive received a presentation detailing progress against the Council's Business Plan.

The Leader extended thanks to Members and officers for all that had been achieved.

A copy of the presentation is appended to the Minutes.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

CONFIRMED

If you would like these minutes in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.





# Year in Review

## 2022/23

The Executive – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023

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# Our Key Priorities



## Financially Sustainable

We are continuing our transformation into a modern, accessible and financially sustainable council



## Early Intervention

We are working with partners through early intervention; we are facilitating safe, healthy and active communities



## Maximise our Assets

We are playing our part to develop a thriving economy, enhancing skills and employment opportunities and maximising use of the Council's own assets



## Enable Communities

We are working with communities to protect, enhance and promote our district

# Transformation, People Services, HR and Strategic Partnerships

Cllr S Wootton & Cllr Mrs C Roe



**Tier 1,2 & 3**  
Recruitment

Strengthened **ASELA**  
partnership



**New Leadership Team**

Launched **Aspiring  
Managers Programme** to  
'grow our own' talent



With ASELA, CityFibre is  
installing £25m **full fibre-  
enabled internet services**



4 major **Connect** Invest to  
Save projects driving Business  
Transformation progressed and  
set to deliver in 2023



Delivered a **balanced  
budget**

**One Team** partnership  
with Brentwood Borough  
Council



# Finance, Economy & Climate

Cllr Danielle Belton



Supported 9 **local businesses** with 1-to-1 packages



Two Rochford **Business Breakfasts** attracted over 60 attendees



**Sustainability Surveys** undertaken – over 2,000 responses



New **Climate Sub-Committee** established



Held first Rochford **Business Awards**

**Business Awards 2023**



7.7% growth in **Tell Me More** business bulletin subscribers



**Sustainability Strategy** approved

Launched **REBA** – 150+ businesses signed up



**UKSPF** award of £1m over 3-years



# Customer Services, Legal, IT, Leisure & Tourism

Cllr D Efde

£10k UKSPF  
investment in  
tourism



4,400 subscribers to  
resident **e-newsletter**



15% increase in Social  
Media followers



Communications &  
Leisure **Survey**

90,000+ phone calls to  
Customer Service



£106 money  
invested in **2 AGP  
football pitches**



New **website**

Rochford District Matters  
distributed to **35,600**  
households



4 **Cyber  
Roadshows**  
delivered by Essex  
Police to RDC staff  
and Cllrs



£75,000 received  
in Local Digital  
Fund Grant



3,500 Social Media posts



Gov **wi-fi**  
launched



Introduction of **self-serve  
kiosks** in Reception



c.3,000 visitors to  
**Rayleigh Windmill**



Customer  
Services  
in **Mill Hall**



70 new **online forms**  
launched

c.350,000 participants at  
**Leisure Centres**



9,000 live chats



# Environment

Cllr D Sperring



**£2.2m** investment in new refuse vehicles



£50k project to improve **biodiversity and water quality** in Cherry Orchard County Park



**Parks for Nature** scheme – 3,000 trees planted

70 trees planted in the **Avenue of Trees** for Queens Jubilee



Rochford **Norse** JV for Street Cleansing & Waste Collection set up



**£100k** of investment in Hockley Wood's play space



Supported local economy with **free parking** on Saturdays leading up to Christmas



# Communities, Housing & Health

## CLr A Williams



**Crucial Crew**  
delivered to **15**  
primary schools,  
including **550** Year  
6 pupils



**Cost of Living**  
Whole system  
approach

#ByYourSide

**£20k+** grants  
awarded for  
Queens Jubilee  
celebrations



**£10k** grants to  
Parish Councils  
for Kings  
Coronation

112 new **affordable  
rented properties**  
completed



**Environmental Health**  
inspected and advised  
on food allergens to  
**190** food premises



80 households  
**prevented from  
homelessness**



B&B accommodation  
not needed to be  
used for **6 out  
of 12** months



82 households  
**temporary  
accommodated**



1,520 **housing  
advice** approaches



**30** victims of DV  
rehoused



257 **lettings**  
into affordable  
housing



**Community  
Safety** over **£4000**  
awarded to Parish  
Councils



# Communities, Housing & Health

## Cllr A Williams

### Citizens Advice Quarter 1-3

**2,804** contacts with residents  
**296** supported with housing advice  
**242** given self-help debt information  
**257** advised on debt issues  
**70** advised on fuel poverty issues

### Health and Wellbeing Board

2022-25 Strategy and action plan published and implemented  
Over 50 system wider partners working collectively and in subgroups to deliver actions



### Warm Hubs

**10** Warm hubs funded by RDC  
**23** Delivered across the district supported by RRAVS

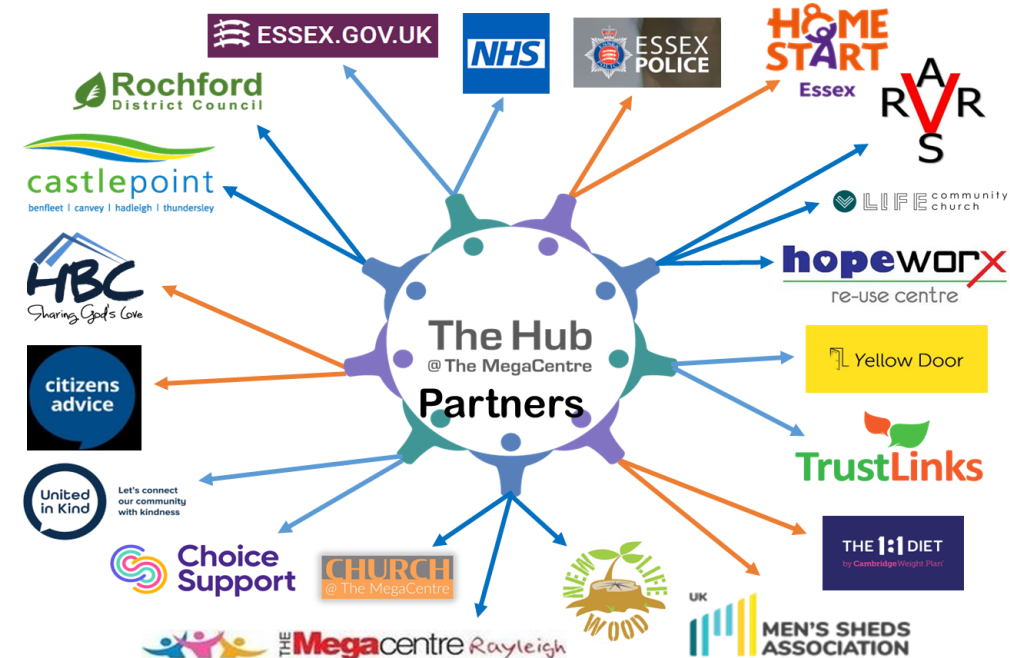
### SE Alliance

RDC is a member on the partnership board, taking part in key developments of the alliance plans and strategy, the PCN Strategy development and the Health Inequalities work



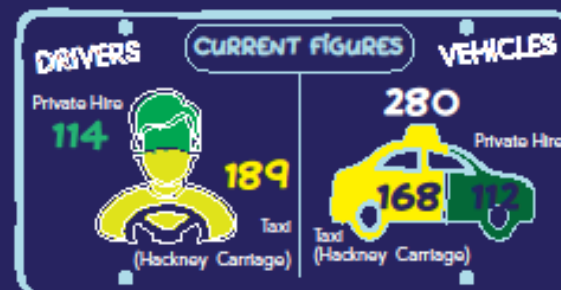
### TheHub@The Megacentre

The hub has grown to include over **20** partners  
**578** Resident attendances for use of the hub  
Weekly support for Ukraine visitors and hosts with  
**140** registered for support





## Taxi Licensing



**13**  
NEW APPLICANTS  
BEING PROCESSED

**Earn  
as you  
Learn**

**47**  
DRIVERS WORKING  
AS EARN AS YOU LEARN

**2021 FIGURES**  
308 VEHICLES  
231 HC DRIVERS  
103 PH DRIVERS  
Based on  
Department of Transport  
Statistics

**8**  
DRIVERS COMPLETED  
THE PROCESS

## Alcohol Licensing

**199** Predicted 208  
PREMISES LICENCE  
RENEWALS

**196** Predicted 107  
TEMPORARY  
EVENT NOTICES

**7**

ANIMAL  
LICENCE  
INSPECTIONS

**30**

LOTTERY  
LICENCE  
APPLICATIONS

**7**

PAVEMENT  
PERMISSION  
PERMITS

### IMPLEMENTED:



- TAXI FARE INCREASE
- NEW HMRC TAX REQUIREMENTS
- PLATINUM JUBILEE CLOSURES
- INTRODUCE EARN AS YOU LEARN
- TAXI MARSHALS (NOV & DEC)
- WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN (PUBS)

**Performance Report  
2022 - 2023**

## Other Licensing

# Strategic Planning & Assets

Cllr I Ward



78% of planning applications **approved**



456 new **homes** delivered (2021/22)



Major employment growth approved for **Ipeco and Arterial Park**



**£100k** Hockley Woods Car Park Investment

c.1,030 **planning applications** determined



**Mill Hall** reopened



**£1m** investment in Clements Hall and Rayleigh Leisure Centre.



**Civic Suite** closure relocating Citizens Advice and RDC Reception to Mill Hall



**£675k committed from the** Community Investment Plan approved to support regeneration

