

The Executive – 19 March 2024

Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **19 March 2024** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr J E Cripps
Cllr A H Eves
Cllr Mrs J R Gooding
Cllr M Hoy
Cllr J E Newport

Cllr L J Newport
Cllr C M Stanley
Cllr A L Williams
Cllr Mrs V A Wilson

Please note that the full livestream of this meeting can be viewed at:
[The Executive \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

140 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

141 OFFICERS PRESENT

J Stephenson	- Chief Executive
E Yule	- Strategic Director
S Summers	- Strategic Director
P Barnes	- Director Assets and Investments
M Hotten	- Director Environment
G Campbell	- Director Policy and Delivery
N Mann	- Interim Director People
C Mayhew	- Interim Director Governance
T Willis	- Interim Director Resources
P Shepherd	- Corporate Manager, Revenue and Benefits
M Stickley	- Corporate Manager, Democratic Services
A Blatch	- Internal Communications Officer BBC & RDC
V Meanwell	- Democratic Services Officer

142 NON-MEMBERS ATTENDING

Cllr Mrs D Belton
Cllr A Cross
Cllr D Efde
Cllr J Gooding
Cllr Mrs SJ Page
Cllr Mrs J McPherson
Cllr G Myers
Cllr D Sperring
Cllr M Steptoe

143 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

144 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

145 QUESTION ON NOTICE FROM COUNCILLORS

1. Agenda Item 7: Rochford District Council Office Accommodation

From Cllr Daniel Efde to Cllr John Mason, Leader of the Council.

“The item 7, 2.16 states that there will still be a council presence/reception in Rochford town in part of the library in Rochford town centre, but it does not state for how long. Will the leader of the council commit to there being an official Council presence/reception in Rochford town centre indefinitely?”

The Leader responded as follows:

“Paragraph 2.19 of the report states that Essex County Council is offering Rochford District Council a 5-year Licence with appropriate break clauses. I am not able to give assurances about the of use of the library for longer than that 5-year period as there would need to be a review of the arrangements and negotiations between ourselves and Essex CC at the end of the lease.

In my view, it would be inappropriate for this Council to make an *indefinite* decision about our reception provision. The needs and requirements of our customers and the public will without a doubt change over the next five years and we need to be able to adapt and respond to those changing needs. What I can commit to is that we will continue to keep our front-facing presence under review so that we are able to continue to meet the needs of our residents and provide the highest quality services”.

2. Agenda Item 7: Rochford District Council Office Accommodation

From Cllr Mike Steptoe to Cllr John Mason, Leader of the Council

“Has consideration been given to using Number 19 South Street Rochford as a unit for homeless in the same way as other units nearby in Rochford instead of paying substantial costs for bed and breakfast in hotels in a lot of cases outside of the district and enabling families to stay in the district and schools that children are used to attending”?

The Leader responded as follows:

“At this stage the Executive is not considering the options for the future use of 19 South Street. An options appraisal looking at all possible opportunities will be brought to Full Council early in the new Municipal Year as part of the business cases for the future use of each of our assets. This will be informed by the public engagement on the regeneration of Rochford, which we have recently agreed to fund in the budget”.

3. Agenda Item 13: Mill Arts and Events Centre Update

From Cllr Mrs Jo McPherson to Cllr Mrs Vilma Wilson, Lead Member for Public Spaces and Assets

In response to my question at Full Council on 20 February during the budget debate, the leader replied:

Until meaningful market research has been undertaken those monies will not be spent. Only the vital amounts that ‘need’ to be spent on the building will be spent on the building until it’s future is understood and can be commended on a sustainable basis.

“My question to the leader is: page 13.6 – 4.5 The current capital programme for the Mill Hall is £267,275 with a further £845,000 allocated for 2024/25 – reflecting on your answer on the 20 February: how much of the £845,000 would be considered ‘vital’ amounts that need to be spent of the building”?

Cllr Mrs V A Wilson responded as follows:

Your question asks how much of the £845,000 would be considered ‘vital’ amounts that need to be spent on Mill Hall Arts and Events Centre for year 24/25. I can assure you that the total amount is allocated for this reason. The entire sum is for essential works for current operation of the building to keep the building compliant and to replace only necessary items as they come to end of life.

The latest condition report in in Exempt and there Members can find recommendations on the necessary compliance work and end of life replacements or repairs and suggested timescales.

Thank you for your question.

Supplementary question from Cllr Mrs Jo McPherson to Cllr Mrs Vilma Wilson, Lead Member for Public Spaces and Assets.

“Bearing in mind the impact of these costs on the budget process have any services delivered by this council in 2023/24 been cut this coming municipal year”?

The Leader responded as follows:

“After taking advice from the Monitoring Officer that question cannot be answered as Cllr Mrs Wilson is not the Lead Member for the subject matter. I recommend the Lead Member for Finance provides a written answer after the meeting”.

Cllr M Hoy confirmed he would provide a written response.

145 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE AND REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Report of the Climate Emergency Committee – 3G Pitches Position Statement

The Executive considered the report which had been referred from the Climate Emergency Committee recommending a draft position statement as set out in the report was adopted.

Cllr M Hoy put forward an amendment to remove the word draft from the recommendation, seconded by Cllr Mrs J R Gooding, and proposed this be approved. This was approved unanimously.

Report of the Climate Emergency Committee – Financial Appraisal of RDC 2030 Net Zero Carbon Target

The Executive considered the report which had been referred from the Climate Emergency Committee setting out the proposed financial appraisal of the pathway for the Council to deliver on its Net Zero 2030 Net Zero Carbon Emission target.

After a full discussion Cllr A H Eves suggested an amendment to recommendations R2 & R3, seconded by Cllr C M Stanley. The word ‘future’ be placed prior to the word allocation.

Cllr M Hoy moved a Motion that recommendation R1 and the amended recommendations R2 and R3, seconded by Cllr A H Eves be approved.

Resolved

- (1) To explore a green/zero carbon electricity tariff for the Council corporate supplies. (DE)

(This was approved unanimously)

- (2) To consider the future allocation of an additional £84,000 revenue budget for the purchase of the procurement of green diesel (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) for the Council fleet, currently using mineral diesel. (DE)

(9 Members voted in favour, 0 against and 1 Member abstained)

- (3) To consider the future allocation of £750,973 of capital funding to deliver energy saving improvements to Council assets as set out in the report. (DE)
(9 Members voted in favour, 0 against and 1 Member abstained)

146 ROCHFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Public Spaces and Assets, Cllr Mrs V A Wilson, setting out options for temporary relocation of office-based staff at Rochford District Council.

After a full discussion the recommendations were considered for approval.

Cllr A H Eves moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr J E Newport that R1 be approved.

(8 Members approved the recommendation, 0 against, 2 Members abstained)

Cllr C M Stanley moved A Motion, seconded by Cllr J E Newport that R2 be approved.

(8 Members approved the recommendation, 0 against, 2 Members abstained)

Cllr A H Eves moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr J E Newport that R3 be approved.

This was approved unanimously.

Cllr J E Newport moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr J E Cripps that R4 be approved.

This was approved unanimously.

Cllr J E Newport moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr C M Stanley that R5 be approved.

(8 Members approved the recommendation, 0 against, 2 Members abstained)

Cllr J E Cripps moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr A H Eves that R6 be approved.

(8 Members approved the recommendation, 0 against, 2 Members abstained)

Cllr M Hoy moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr C M Stanley that R7 be approved.

(8 Members approved the recommendation, 0 against, 2 Members abstained)

Cllr M Hoy moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr C M Stanley that R8 be approved.

(8 Members approved the recommendation, 0 against, 2 Members abstained)

Resolved

- (1) That the Council back office be relocated to the LaunchPad, Airport Business Park, Cherry Orchard Way, Rochford for a maximum of 2 years.
- (2) That the Rochford Customer Reception be relocated to the Rochford Library.
- (3) That a new strategic Asset Management Strategy, coupled with full business cases are presented to a meeting of the Full Council to seek agreement on the next steps and timelines for
 - 3-15, 19 and 57 South Street, Rochford
 - the Civic Suite, Rayleigh and
 - the Freight House, Rochford.
 -
- (4) That a total of £94,050 be allocated from the Community Investment Plan (CIP) reserve to engage the external support required to develop business cases for the assets identified in R3.
- (5) That, subject to the approval of R1 and R2, a capital budget of £75,500 to be allocated from the 2024/25 capital programme for relocation from South Street Offices.
- (6) That the ongoing revenue costs of LaunchPad, reception and cash collection be funded from savings from vacating South Street
- (7) That the Council commits to holding it's future Council meetings at Civic Suite, Rayleigh and that £30,000 is allocated from the 2024/25 capital programme, to enable the required works to reopen the chamber only.
- (8) Subject to approval of R7, the ongoing revenue costs for operating meetings from the Council chamber at Civic Suite Rayleigh are to be funded from savings of vacating South Street. (DAI)

147 INTRODUCTION TO SEPARATE FOOD WASTE

The Executive considered the report of Executive Lead Member Environmental Services, Cllr C M Stanley setting out the introduction of a separate weekly food waste collection.

Cllr C M Stanley moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr J R F Mason that the recommendation R1 – R3 on page 8.2 of the report be approved. These were approved unanimously.

Resolved

- (1) That the Director of Environment Services secures external funding through Essex County Council and DEFRA to address the shortfall of revenue funding required.
- (2) To delegate to the Director of Environment Services and S.151 Officer in consultation with the Lead Member for Environmental Services/Leader of the Council (or Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Committee) authority to implement a separate weekly food waste collection once the necessary funding outlined in R1 has been addressed.
- (3) To delegate to the Director of Environment and S.151 Officer in consultation with the Lead Member for Environmental Services /Leader of the Council (or Chair of the Environment and Climate Change Committee) authority to award contracts for the purchase and delivery of food caddies once the necessary funding outlined in R1 has been addressed. (DE)

148DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF 2024/25

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member, Resources, Climate Change and Economy, Cllr M Hoy to amend the existing policy for the granting of Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief as a result of a change in legislation effective from 1 April 2024.

Cllr Hoy moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr A H Eves that the recommendation on page 9.1 be approved. This was approved unanimously. (DR)

Resolved

- (1) To approve the amendment to the existing policy for the granting of Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief. (DR)

148 IN-HOUSE LEISURE PROVISION

approved The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Leisure, Tourism and Wellbeing, Cllr Mrs J Gooding and recommendation from the Leisure Working Group to allocate a budget for the current leisure consultants SLC to review whether the Council should consider operating its leisure services in-house.

After full discussion Cllr Mrs J R Gooding moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr A L Williams that amended recommendation R1 and R2 be approved. This was unanimously.

Resolved

- (1) That the terms of reference of the Leisure Working Group be expanded to include reviewing an in-house leisure service in tandem with the current procurement process.
- (2) Following agreement of R1, that a budget of £6,175 is allocated from working balance to fund the in-house review by SLC. (DAI)

149 SWEYNE PARK BRIDLE LIGHTING

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Communities and Health, Cllr L J Newport seeking the Executive's agreement to allocate funds from the Community Safety Fund for the installation of lighting at Sweyne Park Bridle.

Cllr L J Newport moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr J E Newport that the recommendation on page 11.1 of the report be approved. This was approved unanimously.

Resolved

- (1) That the Executive agree to allocate up to £30,000 from the Community Safety Fund for the installation of lighting at Sweyne Park Bridle subject to final detailed design and costings. (DCH)

150 ECO4, GBIS AND HUG2 UPDATE

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Resources, Climate Change and Economy, Cllr M Hoy, providing an update on the progress made under the Energy Company Obligation 4 (ECO4), Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS), and the Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2).

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted.

151 MILL ARTS AND EVENTS CENTRE UPDATE

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Assets and Open Spaces, Cllr Mrs V A Wilson, updating the Executive on progress made to date of the resolutions made at Full Council.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted.

152 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cllr J R F Mason moved a Motion, seconded by Cllr A H Eves to agree that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed. This Motion was carried.

Cllr M Hoy left the meeting at 21.05 hours.

153 AWARD OF SWIMMING POOL FUND

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Leisure, Tourism and Wellbeing, Cllr Mrs J R Gooding, relating to the award of the Swimming Pool Fund.

This item is set out in the exempt appendix to the Minutes.

154 MATERIALS RECOVERY FACILITIES

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Environmental Services, Cllr C M Stanley relating to Materials Recovery Facilities Contract.

This item is set out in the exempt appendix to the Minutes.

155 WOODLAND DISPOSAL

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member Public Spaces and Assets, Cllr Mrs V A Wilson in relation to a decision regarding woodland disposal.

This item is set out in the exempt appendix to the Minutes.

The meeting closed at 21.50.

Chairman

Date

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