



Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16 October 2024 when there were present:-

Chair: Cllr D Blackwell

Cllr W Gibson
Cllr B Palmer
Cllr M Fuller
Cllr T Gibson

Cllr R Lillis
Cllr S Mountford
Cllr R Savage

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllr N Benson, Cllr A Edwards, Cllr D Jones and Cllr G Watson.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Hutchings	- Chief Executive
M Harwood-White	- Director, Commercial & Assets
A Law	- Assistant Director, Legal & Democratic Services (MO)
L Wosko	- Assistant Director, Finance & Procurement (S151)
A Parrott	- Assistant Director, Climate & Growth
M Simmonds	- Senior Economic Development Officer
H Boyd	- Democratic Services Officer

125 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

126 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

127 CANVEY ISLAND TOWN CENTRE MARKET REPORT AND PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director, Climate & Growth which sought agreement from Cabinet to implement the Canvey Island Town Market action plan.

Officers noted that an “option 4” had been omitted during the report’s publication process. An error was identified in paragraph 7.4, where the recommendation stated the opposite of the intent; rather than doing the minimum, the report emphasised a commitment to doing more. The correct text for option 4 was circulated to Members and reads:

“Option 4: **Do More**. Use UKSPF to deliver a programme of capital improvements set out in appendix 2 to improve the existing Thursday market and introduce a new market on Saturdays from the spring of 2025. Improvements will also be made to the promotion and marketing of both the Thursday and new Saturday market in line with the recommendations and conclusions contained in the Study report.”

Despite the error, the recommendation and the overall report remained unaffected. The report author apologised for the error.

The report focused on the Canvey Island Town Market and proposed next steps and sought Cabinet approval to take forward a range of improvements and expenditures. This initiative linked to priority area 1 of the corporate plan for 2021-24: Economy and Growth as well as the objectives for productivity and business growth and contributed to the regeneration of town centres.

The need for a market was established in 2018 and approved by Cabinet in September 2018. The new market had been launched in 2020 but faced challenges post-COVID, resulting in a decrease in both stalls and visitors. The UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) had offered a chance to reassess the market’s situation, revealing a clear demand for a quality market.

There was universal support from all respondents for trading on both Thursdays and Saturdays. Only a minority of consumers utilised the market; by increasing the market’s appeal more visitors could be attracted to the town centre. Marketing and promotion were identified as particular weaknesses, with a noticeable lack of branding. The market and its traders were now featured on a separate section of the Castle Point Choose Local website, with additional support being developed for new traders.

It was confirmed that existing funding would not cover all proposed enhancements, preventing full implementation of the recommendations. The Council committed to continuing its efforts to secure additional funding streams and planned to conduct a further review once the Government budget was announced.

It was confirmed that the recommended option was option 4.

A motion moved by Cllr D Blackwell and seconded by Cllr W Gibson that the recommendations set out at paragraph 3.1 of the report be approved was agreed unanimously on a show of hands.

Resolved

- (1) To note the draft report submitted by the Retail Group Limited, which provided a detailed analysis of Canvey Island Town Market following extensive consultation with residents, businesses, traders, and stakeholders, and includes conclusions and a future strategy with recommendations in the form of an action plan, as set out in Appendix 1.
- (2) To note the budget plan to address some of the priority actions set out in the report recommendations, and which can be funded using the existing UKSPF allocation of £50,000, as set out in Appendix 2.
- (3) To authorise officers to implement the plan based on the ability to deliver near term benefits delivered in small packages procured in accordance with current procurement regulations before 31 March 2025.

128 ESSEX LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4

Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director, Climate & Growth which provided details of the proposed Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and the potential implications for Castle Point.

During the summer, Essex County Council (ECC) conducted an initial consultation on LTP4 outlining the framework for the transport plan in Essex. The report presented a high level overview, focusing on several key themes:

- Supporting people, health, wellbeing and independence
- Creating sustainable places and communities
- Connecting people, places and businesses

Due to the limited time available for feedback, a response from the Portfolio Holder (PFH) was submitted on 23 September 2024. It was noted that the plan lacked ambition and forward thinking elements. The PFH response emphasised the need for congestion relief at key junctions and improved access to Canvey for better job opportunities.

The proposal also included a new classification system for roads, addressing the interaction between cars and pedestrians. The PFH response made clear that highway maintenance could not be compromised under this new classification.

Additionally, it was acknowledged that transport issues were a significant concern for residents. Ideally, Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee should have been included in the discussions. Consequently, Recommendation 2 asked that the Cabinet request ECC to fully involve the Council in the future development of LTP4, including the development of the

area based plan relevant to the borough to better represent the interests of Castle Point residents.

A motion was moved by Cllr D Blackwell and seconded by Cllr M Fuller that recommendation 2 set out at paragraph 3 of the report be approved and this was agreed unanimously on a show of hands.

Resolved

- (1) That Cabinet notes the Portfolio Holder decision setting out a response to the consultation on the Essex Transport Strategy Part 1 consultation.
- (2) That Cabinet requests that the County Council fully involves Members at Castle Point Borough Council in the development of the Essex Transport Strategy including the area based plan that covers Castle Point.

129 PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

Cabinet considered the report of the Assistant Director, Climate & Growth which provided details of the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the planning system. This report aimed to ensure that Cabinet was informed about the reforms to the NPPF, which would have local implications for plan-making and decisions on planning applications.

Since its introduction in 2012, the NPPF has served as the national policy foundation for local plans and has been a significant material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The last update occurred in December 2023.

The consultation on the NPPF took place in the summer, from 30 July to 24 September, allowing limited time for responses. Consequently, a response from the Portfolio Holder (PFH) was submitted on 20 September 2024.

It was noted that these proposals remained subject to change, and until the final version was published at the end of the year, the potential impacts and any amendments would be unknown. Once published, a comprehensive risk assessment would be conducted to understand the implications for the Council.

Resolved

That Cabinet notes the Portfolio Holder decision setting out a response to the consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy framework and other changes to the planning system.

130 MATTERS REFERRED FROM CLIMATE POLICY & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

Cabinet considered the report of the Climate Policy & Scrutiny Sub-Committee which recommended a response to the Essex County Council (ECC) consultation on a draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

During the Climate Policy & Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting on 17 September 2024, Sub-Committee Members reviewed the draft response to the ECC's LNRS, which aimed to identify strategic nature areas in the borough, increase their size and connect wildlife corridors to enhance biodiversity and achieve net biodiversity gains. They discussed the need for planning considerations as development would be steered away from these strategic areas, which would have an impact on future planning policy, once adopted.

The suggested response, detailed in appendix 2 with track changes, included requests for more detailed mapping to ensure accurate representation and clarification of boundaries, particularly between coastal and land areas. The Sub-Committee sought the inclusion of additional areas around Daws Heath, Thundersley Glen and Thundersley Common, as well as the land between Benfleet and Thundersley water towers, to create better connections among these regions. They also proposed the inclusion of Felstead Road wood and the land north of Church Road.

Concerns were raised regarding the viability of marine habitats near Canvey oil and gas terminals, given the heavy traffic in those areas. The Sub-Committee questioned whether this area should be a focus for conservation efforts. Additionally, they enquired about the land south of Glyders, doubting its classification as marine habitat. The Sub-Committee Members requested that all wildlife sites currently included in the Castle Point Plan be considered to ensure no previously recognised sites were omitted.

Members took this opportunity to emphasise the importance of the work done by the Sub-Committee, especially as the borough aimed to enhance its green credentials. They noted the necessity of seizing opportunities to improve natural resources and affirmed that the Sub-Committee's work would contribute to the effective implementation of the strategy in Castle Point. They welcomed the proposed changes.

A motion was moved by Cllr D Blackwell and seconded by Cllr W Gibson that recommendation 1 set out at paragraph 4.1 of the report be approved and this was agreed unanimously on a show of hands.

Resolved

- (1) To agree to respond to the consultation with the response set out in Appendix 2.

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

Chair

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, Braille or another language please contact 0207 520 1431 or email translations@languageline.co.uk.