

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on TUESDAY, 16 APRIL
2024 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor N Gregory (Chair)
Councillors M Ahmed, G Bagnall, C Criscione, B Donald,
R Gooding, R Haynes, S Luck, A Reeve, and G Sell

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Director of Corporate Services), B Brown (Director of Environmental Services), C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer), D Hermitage (Strategic Director of Planning), P Holt (Chief Executive), V Reed (Climate Change, Lead Officer) and S Russell (Interim Director - Housing, Health and Communities).

Also present: Councillor A Coote (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities), J Evans (Portfolio Holder for Planning), P Lees (Leader of the Council) and N Reeve (Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change).

Public Speaker: S Hayden

SC45 PUBLIC SPEAKING

Sue Hayden addressed the meeting as Chair of the Uttlesford branch of Unison; a copy of her statement has been appended to the minutes.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities thanked Ms Hayden for the points she had made and said they would be considered. He said:-

- The first priority was to protect the workforce and provide value for money to residents.
- The Council would work alongside Unison and staff to deliver the service.

The Chair asked that the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities provided a detailed reply to Ms Hayden in writing in due course.

SC46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest received.

SC47 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Scrutiny meeting held on 13th February 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

The minutes of the Task and Finish Group held on 2nd April 2024 were approved as an accurate record by the membership.

SC48 **CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Cabinet forward plan was noted.

The Chair drew the meetings attention to the following items:-

- Blueprint Uttlesford update.
- The Procurement of Housing Repairs, Maintenance and Capital Improvements provision from 2025.
- An update on the car park charges. He said that there had been some public concern expressed due to a lack of information about the changes.

The Chair said that these items were going to Cabinet on Thursday 18th April 2024.

SC49 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Work Programme was noted and had been completed for this year.

The Director of Corporate Services said that an initial draft for 2024/25 would be circulated shortly and would be discussed at the next Scrutiny Committee in June.

SC50 **WALDEN PLACE FEEDBACK**

The Chair said that this agenda item related to concerns raised at a Full Council meeting regarding arrangements at Walden Place, and in particular refurbishment works that were being carried out. This had been referred to Scrutiny by Councillor Coote.

Councillor Donald gave an update to the meeting following her visit to Walden Place in February. She said that during her visit she had spoken to residents and the Construction Site Manager and could find no reason for the complaint. She said that the residents spoke highly of the Contractor and said that they had been kept informed and were looking forward to the benefits of the refurbishment.

Councillor Coote said that the complainant did not live at Walden Place. He said that the public speaking protocol needed to be investigated as he could have answered the concerns on the evening of the meeting. He said that it had been a waste of time to involve the Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair said that if the public speaking protocol needed to be changed within the constitution, then that would need to be taken up with the Chair of Full Council.

In response to a question from a Member, Councillor Donald said that the complaint had been answered and the resident offered a visit to Walden Place, which was declined.

She said that there was no need for any follow-up.

The Chair said that this item was closed and would not be referred back to Council.

SC51 **OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT**

Councillor Criscione and Donald introduced the report.

Councillor Criscione said that the Council had accepted that mistakes had been made and had apologised to residents and businesses. He said that the aim of the Task and Finish Group was to investigate the issues and bring forward a plan for the future. This had been done and the recommendations were set out in the report. He said that this was not an exercise in apportioning blame.

Councillors Criscione and Donald thanked everyone who had taken part in the Task and Finish Group and in the compilation of the report, including the other Members of the Task and Finish Group, (Councillors Driscoll and Sell), and to Officers and the Chief Executive.

The Chair added his thanks and said that the report was a comprehensive document that was open and transparent.

Councillor Sell as a Member of the Task and Finish Group added some comments, he made the following points:-

- He remained an advocate for the use of an independent person to provide an overview of the process.
- The Task and Finish Group was set up to find potential solutions and he was pleased that the risk register now had clear accountability through the Chief Executive.
- Care should be given to the language within the report to ensure it did not contain Council jargon, which would not help with transparency.
- He suggested a Cabinet question time item be considered for future meetings.
- There had been a degree of complacency, but he was pleased that Portfolio Holders were becoming more engaged with Officers.

The Chair said that for the record Councillor Sell had raised concerns about the Waste Service in October last year.

Councillor Criscione said that there was an independent element, as one of the neighbouring Councils was involved in supporting the wider operational resilience work.

Councillor Bagnall said that there should be a second person with the relevant training and qualifications within the department. He said that this would significantly reduce the risk as the license could be transferred immediately into their name. He said it also gave the benefit of training to in-house staff and took

away the added risk of being unable to hire a temporary member of staff with the relevant qualification.

Councillor Donald replied and said that:-

- There was an action within the report that stated the need for alternative secondary provision.
- The secondary provision could be using temporary staff with the relevant qualifications.
- The Waste Service would be undergoing a broader organisational review and this would be considered in more detail.
- This action was high on the recommendation list and would be followed up.

There was further discussion on this topic and the following points were made:-

- The risk could only be minimised and not eliminated.
- The recommendation for a secondary person would be noted but was an operational decision.
- There was a period of grace provided to change the licensee.
- A temporary member of staff could have been employed on day one but the pragmatic and financial decision had been that this was not necessary.
- How staff were employed was important, especially the job description and notice period required.

Members made the following comments:-

- There were political consequences when operational issues occurred.
- The Task and Finish Group had been mature when seeking a solution rather than making accusations.
- The care taken in staff selection was appreciated.

In response to questions from Members the following points were made:-

- The Task and Finish Group had clear terms of reference and these did not include operational issues.
- The Task and Finish Group did look very closely at the timeline and events running up to the license being revoked and focused on lessons to be learnt.
- There had been a lack of communication between the service and senior management around the risk management process which needed to be more robust, regularly checked and should be a two-way process.

The Chief Executive added the following points:-

- It was not the role of the Corporate Management Team to collectively manage a particular service issue.
- It was the responsibility of the direct Line Manager and in this case the Chief Executive was the Line Manager for the Director in question.
- Conversations had taken place with the Director and with the leaving member of staff and the Chief Executive had been aware of the 6 months period to replace the licensee.
- He apologised again on behalf of Officers and himself and said that it was an operational issue and that the Members did not have a role.

- It was not an individual failure but a systemic failure.

The Leader said that it had not been a comfortable time and thanked the Task and Finish Group for their professionalism. She said that the report was written for the Council in order for improvements to be made and to work better in the future.

The Chair said that there had been a time constraint on this item and applauded everyone involved in getting such a detailed report completed in a very tight timeframe.

Councillor Criscione said that the Task and Finish Group would continue in a few months' time and said that it should be noted that Directors had little or no executive supportive.

The Chair proposed and received consent from the meeting that the Task and Finish group were reappointed and remained:-
Councillors Criscione and Donald – Joint Chair
Councillor Driscoll and Sell – Members

The on-going remit of the group would be to take forward the work on the recommendations in appendix G and in due course to look at the wider resilience work that was continuing. He said that there would be revised terms of reference which would be circulated outside of the meeting.

The report was accepted unanimously by the Committee and was remitted to Full Council.

The Chair extended thanks to all the Officers and said that this would be formally recorded by the Scrutiny Committee, in order to recognise all the hard work that had gone into remedying and explaining why the set of events had happened.

AGREED: The report was remitted to Full Council.

SC52 **CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN**

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change introduced the report.

He asked that the Committee:-

- Noted the progress of the 2023/24 action plan.
- Noted the action plan for 2024/25.
- Provided comment on the Climate Action plan to pass onto Cabinet.

He thanked the Climate Change Lead Officer and the team for their work on the report.

He said that the overall Climate Change Strategy had not changed but the action plan for this year had been given a clearer, simplified structure and each action had been given a smart target.

Members commended the action plan and were pleased with the progress that had been made.

In response to questions from Members the following points were made:-

- All Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Air Quality grant funding for the anti-idling action had been withdrawn, this funding would have made it possible to extend the project throughout the district. It was currently uncertain as to how and when this could now happen.
- There were currently no stipulations on where solar panels were sourced from within the Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme. Due diligence is the responsibility of the grant beneficiary. However, this could be investigated if there was an issue of slave labour being used to make a large proportion of panels coming from China.
- The current Home Upgrade Grant Scheme would be completed over a 2 year period and finished in March 2025. The Council was part of a consortium delivering the grant scheme, and the Council's responsibility was to promote the grant scheme to residents and encourage uptake. There had been delays and the portal for referrals had opened much later than originally proposed. Currently there were 55 referrals and of those 7 households were in the process of having measures installed to improve energy efficiency in their homes. The data from the referrals was being looked at to see if the Council could help increase the number of referrals receiving retrofit installations, for example, residents needed to provide evidence on their household income which could be a barrier to proceeding further with the grant process, as this required a level of trust. It was a complicated grant process and a member of the Environmental Services Team was now helping to support residents by visiting households to undertake evidence checks on household income.
- The Carbon Management Plan was a top priority within the action plan. It would be taken forward with the best available advice from representatives of Essex County Council and other external partners.

The Chair raised a concern in relation to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and the costs of on-going maintenance to heat pumps and the potential skills shortage.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities and the Leader made the following points:-

- Although heat pumps were part of the works being carried out, the retrofit process needed to be considered as a whole. The aim was to bring down energy costs for residents.
- A guarantee was made that the costs of resident's bills would be reduced through this process.
- The Housing Team had the expertise to ensure that this was successful.
- The heat pumps would come with guarantees.

Councillor Gooding offered his expertise to look over the technical details of the scheme. He said to be cautious of guarantees because they were invalid if the equipment was not maintained.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change said that residents were offered the option to accept these works, or not.

The Committee agreed unanimously to remit the report to Cabinet.

AGREED: To remit the report to Cabinet.

SC53 LOCAL PLAN WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Planning introduced the report and said the purpose of the report was to:-

- Provide Scrutiny with an update.
- Provide a timetable for the process going forward and details of the plan's progress towards regulation 19.
- To bring the attention of the meeting to the report from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), and to note the risks identified to the timetable which was very challenging.
- To note that the report from PAS indicated that the Council was on course for regulation 19, subject to approval through Cabinet and Council.

He said the timetable was in the report under appendix 3. A clearer printable version of the timetable would be produced.

The Chair said that Scrutiny's role was to be a guardian of the process, which had been delegated to the Committee by Full Council. He said that the report from PAS was outstanding and was a testament to the professionalism of the team working on the Local Plan. He said that for good governance and transparency there needed to be clear written documentation produced for the Local Plan Panel (LPP) and this had not been the case for the most recent meeting.

The Chair received permission from the meeting to continue over the two-hour threshold.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and the Strategic Director of Planning made the following points in response to questions from Members:-

- The last LPP had received a presentation from consultants which focused on Climate Change and therefore paperwork beforehand had not been possible. The meeting had been supplemented by written material following on from the discussion and matters raised.
- It was the intention to provide written paperwork in advance of meetings going forward.
- Topics would be revisited to allow for any feedback received to be considered and updated.
- The Regulation 19 Consultation would be extended to 8 weeks in recognition of it taking place partially within the summer holiday, unfortunately there was no scope within the timetable to move it out of the holidays completely.
- Third party meetings and the duty to co-operate would be documented.
- Draft responses were being collated on the 1742 comments received, this required time and testing of ideas that could not be carried out in a public meeting forum.
- All the comments made further to the Regulation 18 consultation had been published, the responses would be provided with the plan papers for governance in June.

- The Parish workshop was only for those larger villages that had a small housing allocation to offer them the chance to take responsibility along with Planning to plan for their allocations.
- By the summer it was hoped that there would be a regulation 19 plan in place which would begin to gain weight in decision making and with that plan a four year housing supply would also be released as part of the new arrangements put forward within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- Housing requirements between April 2023 and April 2024 could be shared with the LPP but not published until June along with the Local Plan.
- Highway data would be one of the last pieces of evidence completed as it would depend on site selection.
- Provisional strategic sites would be taken to the LPP in May but could not be published to avoid developers and land promoters who did not have sites within the plan from putting in speculative planning applications before the Regulation 19 stage was completed in June.
- It would be investigated whether Takeley Parish Council could be part of the Highways and Essex Education Duty to Co-operate meetings, however precedence and risks would need to be checked.
- Time and diary dependent a meeting with Takeley Parish Council could be arranged.
- The Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) had not been referenced within the plan and there had been a lot of comments made in the consultation that it should be. A session would take place with the LPP on the responses and the options around CPZ issues.
- An all Member briefing would be organised when there were some milestone markers laid.

Following concerns raised by a Member about the timetable and the lack of evidence provided to the wider public, the Strategic Director said:-

The requirements for engagement with the public through the Local Plan Process under statute was for two, six week consultations, one at Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages. It was not possible to involve the public at all times as Officers were reviewing the documentation and drafting responses to the feedback from the Regulation 18 stage. There was, however, engagement on a monthly basis through the LPP meetings and this would continue with more documentation being made available to these meetings in May and June.

The Chair said that he understood the concerns raised but drew the meetings attention to the PAS report and their conclusions which stated that they were comfortable with the timescales and the current process. He said that there would be documents to read towards the end of June and said that the documentation provided was robust.

Members made the following points:-

- Concerns were raised around new sites coming through after the Regulation 18 consultation and the possibility of significant differences between the two documents. It was important to be as clear as possible to residents what changes had been made.

- Concern about a large amount of documentation relating to the Local Plan being published without enough time being given for it to be read and considered before a formal meeting.
- The LPP and Scrutiny meetings needed to be cross referenced so that the Local Plan detail that came to the Scrutiny Committee were also easily available through the Local Plan documentation or the LPP.
- A suggestion was made that the Local Plan timetable should be affixed to each LPP agenda in future to ensure that if there was any slippage it would be picked up.

The Director of Corporate Services agreed to refresh and circulate terms of reference for both the LPP and Scrutiny meetings after concerns were raised that there needed to be more clarity in each meetings role to avoid either gaps or duplication.

The meeting agreed unanimously to the recommendation within the report,

AGREED: That the Committee notes the conclusions of the report on risk and project management; the implications of possible timetable slippage; and provides its views on the matters covered in the report’.

SC54 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Chair proposed the exclusion of the public and press and to move into Part II. The meeting agreed unanimously.

AGREED: that that under section 1001 of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

SC55 **PROCUREMENT OF HOUSING REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROVISION FROM 2025**

The Interim Director of Housing, Health and Communities introduced the report and the additional document that had been circulated before the meeting and was appended to the minutes.

She said that at the Cabinet meeting held on the 9th January 2024 approval had been granted to progress with the termination of the joint venture, Uttlesford Norse Services Limited (UNSL) and to put in place a new operating model.

She said that the preferred option was a mixed economy model which consisted of one contractor who would look after repairs, voids, planned maintenance and asbestos and individual contractors for the specialist services which included electrical, gas, fire and lift safety and water hygiene.

She said that the additional document provided gave a summary of the discussion and recommendations made at a recent cross party Members workshop and a tenants and residents panel meeting.

In response to Members questions the Interim Director of Housing, Health and Communities made the following comments:-

- The majority of the Tenant Panel had selected the mixed economy model as the preferred option going forward. They expected to be involved in the process of procuring contractors, which included the contract specification and meeting potential contractors in advance of the selection process. Members would also be invited to this meeting.
- There would be a self-serve option online for residents to order a repair and book an appointment.
- TUPE regulations would be obeyed and this would be discussed with each member of UNSL.
- In the mixed model the contact centre would be in-house.
- The Contractors would be procured for the full term of any agreement.
- Sub Contractors currently used by UNSL would be considered as one of the options.
- In the mixed economy model, contractors would employ their own staff and the Council would have a contract management team to manage the contract.
- There would be provision in the contract for apprenticeships.

There was discussion around the various elements of the mixed economy model and the other options following the additional scoring matrix document that had been produced.

The following points were made:-

- The options were complex and it was difficult to compare and rank them without some elements being subject to professional judgement.
- The two elements of cost both start-up costs and ongoing costs had not been split out but had been considered.
- All eleven options had not been market tested as this would not be feasible.
- The budget for the contract was £9m and approximately £450k would be spent on the management team function which had been missing from the UNSL contract.
- Delivering value for money to residents did not just mean accepting the cheapest option, there were other important factors.
- The availability of shared services had been tested.
- There would be a discussion of the process at the next Local Joint Panel.
- There was a clear idea of what each operating model would cost, however actual costs would not be known until the contract was out for tender.
- The Cabinet meeting later this week would reduce the operating models from nine to one.
- In June the specification would be compiled along with the beginning of the market testing process.

The Scrutiny Committee unanimously agreed with the Cabinet recommendations which were set out in the report.

AGREED: The recommendations as set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 22.16.

SC45 Public Speaking

Chairman and Councillors thank you for allowing me the opportunity to address you. My name is Sue Hayden, and I am here in my position as Chair of Uttlesford branch of UNISON.

Under Part 11, which will exclude members of the public, you will be presented with options moving forward with the repair's arrangement for Uttlesford following the decision to terminate the Uttlesford Norse joint venture which will be discussed, and a decision made at Cabinet on Thursday. UNISON and staff have yet to see the options being presented.

However, UNISON has met with the Chief Executive and made its position clear that it wants all elements relating to the property management service, including repairs, returned in-house. We have also met with our members and staff working from the Newport Depot and they have clearly stated that their preferred option is to return to working for Uttlesford District Council. At present there is a two-tier workforce, with staff carrying out the same job under less favourable terms and conditions under the Uttlesford Norse arrangement. Staff TUPE transferred from Uttlesford District Council have better sick leave, pension scheme, and are under National Joint Council pay arrangements. A two-tier workforce is what happens when people are transferred to private companies, services become about making profit, not about providing a good service for residents.

Mr Holt made a self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing after falling behind with maintenance checks on its stock of 3,000 homes as he wasn't satisfied that the necessary paperwork was in place, or checks carried out mainly in relation to electrical wiring. I am sure this was one of the reasons why Councillors decided to withdraw from the contract with Uttlesford Norse despite the compliance position now being better than it has been for many years and the regulator deciding not to take further action. If the

service was brought back in-house, we would have total control over this.

The Council has also had to employ a client-side team in the last 12 months to oversee the contract at extra cost. A joined-up approach from the start underpinned by a robust service agreement and strategic approach would have largely negated the need for this.

As the contract is already 50% owned by Uttlesford District Council, and a framework is in place, an in-house option would be less problematic. If the Council has to start from scratch procuring a new contract, this will take considerable time to both procure and mobilise and significant legal fees. We cannot have another failed contract; it needs to be done right. UNISON would like to see how the options have been costed and decisions made.

UNISON recognises that if/when the service is brought back in-house there needs to be changes. Our policies and processes need to be looked at and strengthened, the right people need to be in place to ensure the service delivers for residents.

UNISON also makes a plea that councillors and senior officers work with the branch and staff working from the Newport Depot to ensure everyone is engaged in the process every step of the way, as they have been promised they would. When people are unsure of their future or don't feel they are part of that decision making, they will leave, and it is usually the best staff who walk first, this will be of detriment to any potential contract and service provision.

Uttlesford District Council should be rightly proud that it still has its housing stock so why would we not want to be in control of the high standard of repairs service for our residents. Why would we put this out to the private sector who are more about profit than performance? Why would we think that another partnership would succeed when Uttlesford Norse has apparently failed?

Thank you

SC55 PROCUREMENT OF HOUSING REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROVISION FROM 2025.
OPTION APPRAISAL SCORING MATRIX

Option	Time to Procure (1-5)	Risk (1-5)	Market Appetite (1-5)	Intelligence (1-5)	Flexibility (1-5)	Cost (1-5)	Service Quality (1-5)	Control (1-5)	Cumulative Score	RAG
1. Continue with UNSL joint venture to 2030	5	2	2	4	2	3	2	2	22	Red
2. Continue with UNSL joint venture, new Service Agreement	4	2	3	4	2	3	3	2	23	Red
3. End UNSL, replace with Single Integrated Contract	3	4	4	3	2	4	3	2	25	Yellow
4. End UNSL, replace with Dynamic Purchasing System	2	3	4	2	4	3	3	3	24	Red
5. End UNSL, replace with Joint /Shared Service	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	21	Red
6. End UNSL, replace with Direct Labour Organisation	1	2	3	2	2	2	4	4	20	Red
7. End UNSL, replace with new Joint Venture	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	20	Red
8. End UNSL, replace with Wholly Owned Subsidiary	1	2	3	2	2	2	4	4	20	Red
9. End UNSL, replace with Multiple Individual Contracts	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	27	Yellow
10. End UNSL, acquire and operate UNSL without Norse	1	2	3	2	2	2	4	4	20	Red
11. End UNSL, replace with Mixed Economy	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	32	Green

Below is an explanation of the criteria review and the logic relating to the scoring.

Time to Procure: This evaluates the duration required to implement each option. Options with shorter procurement timelines receive higher scores, while those necessitating longer setup periods score lower.

- Options 1 and 2 (continuing with the existing joint venture) would require the least time to procure, hence scored 5 and 4, respectively.
- Options involving setting up new in-house capabilities (6, 8, 10) would require the most time, hence scored 1.
- Other options were scored based on the estimated procurement time required.

Risk: Risk assessment involves considering the potential uncertainties and challenges associated with each option. Options entailing significant changes or requiring the establishment of new capabilities are deemed riskier and receive lower scores. Conversely, options offering continuity with existing ventures are perceived as less risky and score higher.

- Options involving significant changes or setting up new in-house capabilities (3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11) were scored lower on risk (4 or less) due to the higher risk associated with these options.
- Options involving continuity with the existing joint venture (1, 2) were scored higher on risk (2) due to the lower risk associated with these options.

Market Appetite: Market appetite refers to the anticipated interest from external stakeholders, such as potential service providers or partners. Options expected to garner substantial interest from the market receive higher scores, while those likely to encounter limited market interest score lower.

- Options involving outsourcing to the market (3, 4, 9, 11) were scored higher on market appetite (4) due to the expected interest from the market. This being derived from market intelligence and soft market testing.
- Options involving in-house capabilities (6, 8, 10) were scored lower on market appetite (3) due to the limited market interest for these options.

Intelligence: This evaluates the extent to which each option leverages existing knowledge or specialised expertise. Options benefiting from pre-existing intelligence, such as continuing with established ventures, score higher. Conversely, options necessitating the development of intelligence from scratch receive lower scores.

- Option 11 (mixed economy with different providers) was scored highest on intelligence (4) due to the ability to leverage specialised knowledge from different providers.
- Options involving continuity with the existing joint venture (1, 2) were also scored higher on intelligence (4) due to the existing knowledge and intelligence available. However, it should be noted that performance to-date is poor and a notice has already been served
- Options involving setting up new in-house capabilities (6, 8, 10) were scored lower on intelligence (2) due to the need to build intelligence from scratch.

SC55 PROCUREMENT OF HOUSING REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROVISION FROM 2025.
OPTION APPRAISAL SCORING MATRIX

Flexibility: Flexibility assesses the adaptability of each option to changing circumstances or requirements. Options offering greater flexibility, such as those involving multiple providers or contracts, score higher. Conversely, options characterized by rigid structures or reliance on single providers score lower.

- This assesses how flexible each option is in adapting to changing requirements or circumstances. Options involving multiple providers or contracts (4, 9, 11) are scored higher, while options with a single provider or in-house solutions (1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10) are scored lower.

Cost: Cost evaluation involves assessing the potential financial implications of each option. Options deemed cost-effective, such as outsourcing to the market, receive higher scores. Conversely, options expected to incur higher setup and operational costs, such as in-house solutions, score lower.

- This evaluates the potential cost implications of each option. Options involving outsourcing to the market (3, 4, 9, 11) are generally scored higher, while in-house solutions (6, 8, 10) are scored lower due to the potential for higher setup and operational costs.

Service Quality: This criterion considers the potential of each option to deliver high-quality services. Options enabling better control over service delivery or leveraging specialised providers score higher. Conversely, options with potential limitations on service quality, such as reliance on single providers, score lower.

- This assesses the potential for each option to deliver high-quality services. In-house solutions (6, 8, 10) and the mixed economy option (11) are scored higher, as they allow for better control and specialised providers, respectively. Options involving a single provider (1, 2, 3) are scored lower due to potential limitations.

Control: This assesses the level of control the council would have over service delivery under each option. Options affording greater control, such as in-house solutions or mixed economy approaches, score higher. Conversely, options with reduced control, such as outsourcing to single providers, score lower.

- In-house solutions (6, 8, 10) and the mixed economy option (11) are scored higher, as they provide more direct control. Options involving outsourcing to a single provider (1, 2, 3) are scored lower due to reduced control.

The "Cumulative Score" column is the sum of the scores across all criteria, providing an overall assessment of each option's strengths and weaknesses. As you will see Option 11, Replace with Mixed Economy scores the highest in the evaluation and is the preferred option to move forward with.