



Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: John Mitchell

Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 10 December 2015
Time: 19:00
Venue: Council Chamber
Address: Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Members: Councillors H Rolfe (Leader and Chairman), S Barker, S Howell, J Redfern and L Wells

Other attendees: Councillors A Dean (Liberal Democrat Group Leader and Chairman of Scrutiny Committee), J Lodge (Residents for Uttlesford Group Leader) and E Oliver (Chairman of Performance and Audit Committee)

Public Speaking

At the start of the meeting there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements subject to having given two working days' prior notice.

AGENDA PART 1

Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest**
To receive any apologies and declarations of interest

- 2 Minutes of previous meeting** 5 - 12
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2015

- 3 Matters Arising**
To consider matters arising from the minutes

- 4 Questions or statements from non executive members of the council**
To receive questions or statements from non-executive members on matters included on the agenda
- 5 Matters referred to the Executive (standing item)**
To consider matters referred to the Executive in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules
- 6 Reports from Performance and Audit and Scrutiny Committees (standing item)**
To consider any reports from Performance and Audit and Scrutiny Committee
- 7 Refugee Working Group**
To receive an update from the Refugee Working Group (standing item)
- 8 Budget Monitoring 2015-16 Quarter 2** 13 - 36
To consider the financial performance of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme and Treasury Management.
- 9 Treasury Management Benchmarking Exercise** 37 - 46
To consider a report on a quarterly benchmarking exercise which could assist the Council to compare its activities with the average treasury activities of councils across the country.
- 10 Autumn Statement - An overview of the key points** 47 - 50
To consider key points arising from the Autumn Statement as they affect the Council.
- 11 2016-17 Local Council Tax Support Scheme** 51 - 180
To consider the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/17.
- 12 Special Purpose Vehicle** 181 - 182
To consider in principle approval of setting up a Special Purpose Vehicle to develop commercial opportunities.

13	Use of Council Building for Weddings To consider an opportunity for the Council to promote the Council's offices as a wedding venue.	183 - 186
14	Transfer of land to Great Chesterford Parish Council To consider the transfer of council owned land	187 - 204
15	Sale of land at Wood Lane Birchanger To consider the sale of council owned land	205 - 208
16	Car Parking Review To consider recommendations and a work programme in relation to council owned car parks	209 - 224
17	Designation of Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan Area To consider the designation of the neighbourhood plan area	225 - 230
18	RNP1 trial at Stansted Airport To support the adoption of the airspace change proposal and the implementation of the RNP1 procedures	231 - 248
19	Assets of Community Value To include additional buildings on the list of Assets of Community Value	249 - 252
20	Chairman's urgent items To receive any matters that the Chairman considers to be urgent	

MEETINGS AND THE PUBLIC

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**CABINET MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 22 OCTOBER 2015 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Leader)
Councillor S Barker (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environmental Services)
Councillor S Howell (Cabinet Member for Finance and Administration)
Councillor J Redfern (Cabinet Member for Housing and Economic Development)
Councillor L Wells (Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships)

Also present: Councillors A Dean (Liberal Democrat Group Leader and Chair of Scrutiny Committee), J Lodge (Residents for Uttlesford Group Leader) Councillors J Davey and D Jones.

Officers in attendance: J Mitchell (Chief Executive), C Canbolat (Specialist Accountant), M Cox (Democratic Services Officer), R Harborough (Director of Public Services), A Knight (Assistant Director – Finance), M Perry (Assistant Chief Executive – Legal) and A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services).

CA40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no apologies for absence received.

Councillor Barker declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 - pooling of business rates as a member of Essex County Council.

CA41 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CA42 REPORT FROM THE REFUGEE WORKING GROUP

Councillor Redfern updated the Cabinet on developments around the refugee situation. Essex County Council was expecting to receive around 5 -10 households this side of Christmas and was asking districts to come forward with offers of accommodation. Uttlesford had identified a hard to let property in Saffron Walden, which would be passed to ECC to determine its suitability. In answer to a question, Councillor Redfern explained that ECC was looking for self - contained accommodation because the refugees were likely to be vulnerable families with particular needs where independent living would be more appropriate. However, officers had maintained a list of residents who

had offered accommodation within their homes in case there was a requirement for this in the future.

CA43

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Councillor Dean, as Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee made a statement following the committee's consideration of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review of the Local Plan process following the withdrawal of Uttlesford's Local Plan part way through the public examination. A full copy of the statement is attached to these minutes.

Councillor Dean highlighted the main points in the report. The purpose of the review was to understand the reasons for the Inspector's decision and to support the preparation of the new Plan by improving the process and identifying the key steps going forward.

The Scrutiny Committee had welcomed the document as a constructive report and noted that many of the recommendations had already been taken on board. However, these recommendations were not in a single place but scattered throughout the document. The Leader requested that a report be taken to the next Planning Policy Working Group setting out the recommendations in the report and the actions taken so far. This document could be used for future reference, to ensure that the process was kept on track.

The next stage of the Local Plan process was the Issues and Options Consultation, which was now underway. The Cabinet said it was important that all members of the council were fully aware of the process to enable them to properly inform the public.

In conclusion, the Cabinet agreed with the comments of the Scrutiny Committee that it welcomed the PAS report and thanked its representatives for their detailed work in identifying flaws in the past process and in making recommendations for improving the process used to produce the new local plan.

The Cabinet said that, working through the Planning Policy Working Group, it would take account of the findings of the report and the Scrutiny Committee's deliberations. The Leader agreed to provide regular updates to the Scrutiny Committee.

CA44

TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2014/15

Councillor Howell presented the report on the annual statement of the council's key treasury activity and outcomes during the year. This was part of the council's finance function, which managed its cash flows, bank accounts, deposits, investment and borrowing. The purpose of the statement was to ensure that risk was managed effectively to ensure security of funds, sufficient liquidity to enable commitments to be met and to generate income. He

highlighted that the position with regard to borrowing and investments was in line with the strategy and there had been no need to take out external borrowing to finance capital expenditure.

In relation to investments, the Leader asked officers to explore whether the list of UDC investments was typical for Essex authorities.

RESOLVED to approve the 2014/15 Treasury Management Outturn as set out in the report.

CA45

BUSINESS RATE POOLING

Councillor Howell presented a report, which considered whether the Council should join the Essex business rate pool for 2016/17.

He explained that under the system of local business rate retention some authorities collected more rates than the Government determined they needed to fund their activities, and they were required to pay over the excess to central government in the form of a tariff. This was the case for most Essex districts. Authorities that normally raised insufficient business rate income and got payments from central government were known as top up authorities. This was the case for most county councils.

The advantage from pooling was the inclusion of a large top up authority (ECC) in the levy calculation, which would reduce the rate and therefore the amount of levy to be paid to central government. The benefits would be shared across the pool and a greater proportion of business rate growth could be retained within the Essex Pool area.

In responding to Members questions, it was confirmed that officers had considered the risks and benefits of the proposal and concluded that under current arrangements the council could expect to benefit in the region of £0.32m by joining the pool. A formal commitment was being sought from each Essex authority with a view to submitting formal interest to the DCLG by 30 October 2015.

It was noted that with the recent announcements around business rates local authorities might retain 100% of the funds, the ability to pool business rates might be removed from the Autumn statement. However, Essex authorities agreed to proceed with establishing a 2016/17 pool.

RESOLVED to

- 1 Approve in principle to join the Essex Business Rates Pool administered by Essex County Council.
- 2 Approve that delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, for the pooling proposal and governance arrangements.

CA46

FRAUD AND COMPLIANCE

The Cabinet noted progress of the Essex wide council tax sharing agreement and the fraud compliance business case and other initiatives that had been implemented to reduce fraud. This included an empty homes and single person review, which had both generated significant results. Members said that this was important work to ensure that public money was directed properly to those who were entitled to receive it.

The report was noted.

CA47

CARNATION NURSERIES NEWPORT

Councillor Redfern reported an item from the Housing Board, where a request had been considered from a developer to gift the council three affordable homes on this site plus a cash payment, in lieu of transferring the eight affordable units to a Housing Association as provided for in the S106 agreement. The other five affordable housing plots would revert to being private sale.

The Cabinet agreed with the views of the Housing Board that the option, which would secure the maximum number of affordable homes, should be exercised, given the pressure on the housing waiting list and the uncertainty around proposed Government housing policies. At the present time it was felt that the situation was too uncertain for an informed decision to be made on the gifted units proposal, but this option should not be ruled out for consideration if circumstances changed in the future.

RESOLVED

- 1 Not to accept the offer of gifted units at the Carnation Nurseries site on the terms laid down in the report.
- 2 To consider all future offers of gifted units on a scheme by scheme basis.

CA48

GREAT DUNMOW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Cabinet considered the council's response to the consultation on the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Development Plan. The response suggested a number of changes to the policies and minor textural changes, which aimed to ensure that the plan was compliant and to inform the ongoing process.

The Cabinet said the preparation of a neighbourhood plan involved a tremendous amount of work and congratulated Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan Group for getting this far in the process.

RESOLVED to approve the council's consultation response to the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Development Plan pre-submission consultation document.

CA49 **ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

This item was deferred to a future meeting in order to consider a late objection to the proposed listing.

CA50 **DUNMOW DEPOT TRANSFER OF LAND**

Councillor Barker reported that following an accident to a property adjacent to the council's depot, it was proposed to transfer a small piece of land into the grounds of the house as part of a package of risk mitigation measures and to alleviate concern about a future reoccurrence of a similar incident.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the land be sold to the owners of 72A High Street Great Dunmow for 5,000 subject to a covenant restricting its use.
- 2 the legal costs and the cost of erecting the boundary wall will be met by the Council.

CA51 **ENFORCEMENT**

Councillor Howell spoke to an information report, which explained the work carried out by the enforcement team within the council. He said planning enforcement was an area of concern for many residents and highlighted concerns in a number of areas including the internal organisation of the service, the question of expediency and when enforcement action should be taken.

Councillor Jones felt the council should be doing more to take enforcement action in order to prevent the development of unsatisfactory situations. He looked forward to taking a more active role as the Portfolio Lead for this area.

Officers said there a common misunderstanding of the way that the service operated and the limitations of the law, but the council did have a robust enforcement service. Members could ask further questions during the forthcoming Scrutiny review of the service.

The meeting ended at 8.35pm

Appendix to Item 8 – Statement by Councillor A Dean

REPORT TO CABINET 22ND OCTOBER BY CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SUBJECT: LOCAL PLAN REVIEW BY PLANNING ADVISORY SERVICE

Introduction

Whilst members and officers present will be aware of the background to this report, for the benefit of anyone listening tonight I will set the context.

The council's former draft Local Plan was undergoing an examination in public last November and December. Part way through the exercise the examining Inspector decided to suspend the public sessions as he felt he could not conclude the examination satisfactorily.

At the start of this year the Council decided to withdraw the former plan and has subsequently begun creating a new Local Plan. The Council also decided to seek advice through a review by the national Planning Advisory Service into the Local Plan process that ran from 2006 to 19 December 2014.

The review would be expected to identify the key steps moving forward to provide assurance to the then new Planning Policy Working Group that it could improve on what had gone before and in the way the next Local Plan would be produced.

The Planning Advisory Service (PAS), as a national advisory service for local authorities, was chosen as it is competent on all aspects of planning. It is and would, therefore, be seen as independent from the Council; independent from those being reviewed - us.

I have no reason to believe that this is what has been delivered. I am satisfied that an objective report that is independent from internal influence has been delivered. The report is critical.

The PAS report and its contents

The structure of the PAS report is set out in the covering report to your agenda; this is a procedural report by Mr Adrian Webb. The cabinet has been provided with all seven sections of the report and these are available in your meeting pack and on the Council's website.

What I intend to do tonight is pull out some of the highlights from the report, mainly those raised at the Scrutiny Committee meeting in September. Cabinet Members have the minutes of that meeting in their document pack.

I will conclude by suggesting a way forward. The key fact is that the report contains a large number of recommendations (though not in tabular form) which I feel should be acted upon and the public should have a means to satisfy themselves that the extensive advice has been acted upon.

I will say at this point that it is my opinion that many of the recommendations are already being put into practice. The council has not sat around for the eight months waiting for better ideas to be despatched to it.

As a member of the new Planning Policy Working Group I can say personally that – apart from the odd wobble – I believe the council is on a better pathway second time round.

I started off the discussion at the September committee by saying that the meeting was an opportunity to question the authors about their report to ensure good understanding. I also said

that was not the night to put individual Members or Officers under the spotlight for their roles in what went wrong.

It is, however, my intention to talk in due course to a few select and remaining participants on a one-to-one basis to satisfy myself that everyone is now plugged in to the new way of producing a Local Plan.

Feedback

1. I will start with a reassurance. PAS considered there had been no impropriety during the years that led to the demise of the Local Plan;
2. They felt that there was insufficient narrative in the old plan for anyone not involved to work out how it had progressed from its inception in 2006 to its demise in 2014. I guess that means they couldn't work out how and why all the twists and turns on housing numbers and distribution strategies had come about. The solution to that is maximum transparency;
3. On lack of trust from the public and others, they advised explain it, explain it again and try to gain public buy-in;
4. The authors were quite clear that the Inspector had acted consistently and properly in the way he suspended the Examination in Public and identified the weaknesses in the plan;
5. The authors were concerned that there had been a deficit of formal review points during the long progress of the last plan to take account of major disagreements, of which we all know there were many. We need to be more sensitive to major disagreements, if there are any, this time round and ensure there are ways of addressing them that are evidence based and not founded in political ideology that cannot be justified; King Canute knew nine centuries ago that the tide will come in, whatever rules man may write!
6. There was major criticism of past sustainability assessments that had seemed more designed to provide a justification for suspect political decisions but were not based on well founded and, in part, statutory methodologies. It was said that the Council's new approach seemed encouraging and likely to avoid that trap in future;
7. They said that evidence and not electoral mandate must rule a Local Plan;
8. The report used the phrase "prevailing political desires", which the authors said referred to past attempts to reduce the housing numbers based on a political desire rather than on any objective evidence.
9. They also used the lovely term "dodgy assumptions" to describe past discussions by the old working group that migration of people into the district could be ignored when assessing one's local housing need. Obviously, this terminology will be unnecessary in future!
10. We were advised to develop a vision for Uttlesford to match our sense of place; I guess the first step will be to agree a common understanding of "sense of place"!

11. Discussion took place on how the Planning Policy Working Group and the Cabinet could ensure all Council Members knew what was going on at each stage to avoid unnecessary conflict and misunderstanding. Workshops! Focussed Member Briefings! Workshops! Bite sized Master Classes! Call them what you will.
12. Of course, we all know how difficult it is to get elected members to these sessions in high numbers. (And I hear there may have been a temporary wobble at last week's Council Meeting when I was away on holiday.) So other ways of informing people may be needed in future to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings.
13. PAS was asked for recommendations on achieving best community engagements. They suggested that the Council needs to remain clear and consistent in what we tell people; ensure that the public is allowed to add value where there are options and tell them clearly what can't change;
14. We were told to reassess the role of scrutiny in the process to maximise the value it adds to the process.

Those are what I feel were the highlights of the evening. The rest is in the report and its several sections.

Next Steps

I am sure that no one wants the report to be put on a shelf to gather dust. It was commissioned following what was probably the most traumatic event for the Council in my 28 years as a Member.

The report does not contain a single, simplistic action plan for the future. So I can't ask the Cabinet and its Planning Policy Working Group to go away to tick the boxes. The suggestions for "better behaviour" are scattered throughout the documents.

Last month the Scrutiny Committee welcomed the report and thanked the Planning Advisory Service people for their work. I hope that the Cabinet will do the same.

The Cabinet and its Planning Policy Working Group were asked to take account of the findings of the report and the Scrutiny Committee's deliberations.

At the meeting the Leader of the Council, you Mr Chairman, offered to provide feedback to my committee on what is done about it.

May I suggest that a way forward would be for an officers' high-level report on advice and recommendations that flow from the PAS report to be put to the next meeting of the Planning Policy Working Group. That this report is in some way contains an action plan of things to be done or that are already being done.

This will allow the Council to demonstrate to the public that lessons learned are indeed being taken seriously and that a new and better Local Plan regime is now in place and will continue to be followed.

Thank you for listening to me.

Alan Dean
Chair of Scrutiny
21st October 2015

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

8

Title: Budget Monitoring 2015/16 – Quarter 2

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Howell

Key Decision: No

Summary

1. This report details the financial performance relating to the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme and Treasury Management. It is based upon actual expenditure and income from April to October and predicts a forecast for the end of the financial year.
2. The General Fund is forecasting an underspend of £1,213,000. This is an increase in the underspend of £664,000 since last reported and is due mainly to the Business Rates income which has been realised as part of the Business Rates review of the scheme undertaken by Officers.
3. The Housing Revenue Account is forecasting a £598,000 underspend mainly due to the slippage in the Capital Programme and the associated financing funded by the HRA.
4. The Capital Programme is forecasting a £4,168,000 underspend. This comprises of £4,372,000 slippage and a net overspend on current capital projects of £204,000.
5. Treasury management activity has been routine and in accordance with policy.

Recommendations

6. The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - Note and approve this report.
 - Approve the transfer of £1.148m from the Business Rates Reserve to the Strategic Initiatives Fund Reserve as set out in point 10.
 - Approve the transfer of the General Fund Surplus of £1.213m to the Strategic Initiatives Fund.

Financial Implications

7. Any financial implications are included in the body of the report.

Background Papers

None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Budget holders have been consulted. Verbal update to be provided on CMT comments and feedback
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
None Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

General Fund

8. On the bottom line, a £1.213m underspend is forecasted. A summary of the budget by portfolio is shown below and this is set out in more detail in Appendix A.

£ '000	2014/15 Outturn	2015/16			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Communities & Partnerships	818	1,018	1,018	1,011	(7)
Environmental Services	1,549	2,075	2,142	2,163	21
Finance & Administration	4,542	5,254	5,281	4,781	(506)
Housing & Economic Development	1,298	1,253	1,303	1,268	(35)
Portfolio (Service) Budgets	8,207	9,600	9,750	9,223	(527)
Corporate Items	2,276	2,133	2,129	1,678	(450)
Total Net Budget Position	10,483	11,733	11,879	10,901	(977)
Funding	(5,638)	(6,234)	(6,234)	(7,792)	(1,558)
Net Operating Expenditure	4,845	5,499	5,645	3,109	(2,535)
Transfers to Reserves	(150)	(847)	(992)	331	1,323
Overall Net Position	4,695	4,653	4,653	3,440	(1,213)

9. The key variances greater than £10,000 within service budgets are detailed below and where the variance has moved the period 4 outturn will be shown in brackets for reference:

Overspends

- Waste and Recycling - £212k of which £194k relates to the revised arrangements for the contract for disposal of recyclable waste as reported in period 4. The £18k increase is the net effect of agency costs for sickness cover and reduction in disposal charges.
- Financial Services – £25k (new item), the Zurich insurance policy was renewed in October and there is a £17k inflationary increase on our policy. A further £10k is the net effect of staff vacancies and potential agency cover to back fill whilst recruitment takes place.
- Corporate Management - £19k (£22k) is the net cost relating to the costs associated with the recruitment of a new Chief Executive and the saving in salary due to the post being vacant for 3 months. We have also received a small repayment from a historical agreement with Improvement East.
- Offices - £30k is due to Essex County Council terminating the rental agreement of office space at UDC (6 month loss of income @ £30k).
- Homelessness - £15k (£24k), period 4 showed an underachievement of income due to a high level of voids in temporary accommodation. Quarter 2 now has full occupancy which has reduced the overspend.
- Museum – £21k reduction in the receipt of museum society funding and compensation for loss of rental income.

Underspends

- Non Domestic Rates - £166k is the discretionary rate relief budgeted for within revenue; this has been accounted for within the Collection fund and has no bottom line impact.
- Revenues Administration - £94k (£80k) relates to the Council Tax sharing agreement and transfer of fraud case work to the DWP. This has generated a chance to restructure staffing and there was a delayed start in the Fraud and Compliance posts for the Council Tax sharing agreement. The increase of £14k relates to a reduction in court fees.
- Benefits Administration - £83k – (new item), is the transfer of £50k of income from DCLG new burdens funding for the administration of LCTS from Local Council Tax Support, the corresponding entry is reflected in the variance below. The remaining variance is partly due to a staffing structure change and further reward funding via the Fraud and Error Reduction Incentive Scheme (FERIS) for the teams active work in identifying fraudulent activity.

- Local Council Tax Support - £67k (£112k) is made up of no requirement to fund the major preceptors £19k and a reduction of £11k in funding for Parishes relating to any financial impact of the Local Council Tax Scheme. The remaining £82k is increased income generated from the Essex Council Tax sharing agreement due to high performance in maximising the tax base. The decrease in the underspend since period 4 relates to £50k of income from the DCLG new burdens grant for the administration of LCTS which has been transferred to Benefits Admin where a corresponding entry can be seen.
- Community Safety - £80k relates in the main to the Police no longer needing the PCSO funding.
- Street Services Management and Admin - £43k net savings achieved from staffing restructure.
- Local Tax Collection - £40k change in process for bad debts which are now accounted for within the Collection fund and a reduction in the court costs for income recovery.
- Pest Control - £25k due to the cessation of service and customers are now redirected to the council's preferred supplier.
- Democratic Services - £17k (new item) relates to the reduction in members from 44 to 39.

Increased Income

- Public Health - £76k is due to changes in the legislation for the inspection of imported foods, green beans will be delisted and income ceased at the end of June. The legislation has introduced the inspection of imported peas until the 31st March 2015. Due to the impending changes to food inspections a prudent approach was taken when setting the original budget.
- Licensing - £46k is one off income arising from the changes to the Taxi licensing tariffs. The new fee structure comes in to force from the 1st October 2015.
- PFI - £20k is a one off receipt in respect of the profit share agreement.

Reduced Income

- Development Control - £50k reduction in income, is the net effect of £100k relating to a lower level of planning applications received and an increase of £50k in pre application enquiries.

10. The corporate items and funding variances on the General Fund are summarised below:

- Capital Financing - £296k underspend (£140k overspend) relates to the reduction in financing and revenue contributions due to various items of slippage and the re-profiling of the capital programme of works. The underspend movement is also related to the reduction in the current budget by £155k as per cabinet approval on the 17th September to remove Catons Lane Car Park from the capital programme. The key changes to the capital programme are detailed in point 16 and appendix D gives a summary of the whole capital programme. This has no bottom line impact as the decrease in financing requirement is matched by a decrease in the level of drawdown on reserves.
- HRA to GF recharges - £106k (£78k) increase in rechargeable income due to an increase in the HRA requirement for corporate support. The recharges relate directly to the HRA share of corporate and central costs within the GF.
- NNDR – £1.512m (£328k), increase in business rates income which is an overall increase since period 4 of £1.184m. A review of the business rates income has been carried out over the summer by officers, which included an assessment of the appeals risk and timing of settlements. This has a direct impact on the levy payment and the business rates reserve. The review also included identifying companies that generate renewable energy since business rates collected from these companies is retained at 100% by the council. The updated financial position has been based on this review; these assumptions are supported by our external consultants, Analyse Local, who are specialised in this field. Detailed explanations of each change to our financial predictions are shown below;
 - The levy payment has reduced from £1.223m to £531k, due to the delayed settlement of appeals and thus a reduction in the release of income to the general fund, means a reduced levy payment to central government.
 - Businesses that generate renewable energy based on the 100% retention have generated additional income of £170k.
 - The release of income from the Business Rates Reserve to the general fund has been increased from £2.172m to £3.150m since period 4. The business rates review has identified that this reserve is overstated based on current financial information. Due to the likelihood that the risk of appeals being settled is reduced this indicates that the collection fund will be in a surplus position rather than a deficit, therefore the requirement on this reserve is

significantly reduced. This reserve was set up as part of the 2013/14 closedown process and this was the first year of the Business Rates Retention Scheme and the council taking on the risk of business rates appeals. Due to the unknown risks associated with the appeals decisions the business rates reserve was set at a prudent level. The review has identified that the risks of future collection fund deficits are reduced and the reserve can be now be maintained at a lower level. The reserves summary shows a transfer of £1.148m from the Business Rates Reserve to the SIF which is subject to Cabinet approval as detailed above in the recommendations. The corresponding entry can be seen in the reserves section showing the transfer of this reserve going into the Strategic Initiatives Reserves.

- The original movements in the NNDR as per the period 4 cabinet report are due to the following items:
 - UDC share net of tariff has increased by £490k, the original budget of £1.303m was based on a prudent view of budgeting to the safety net level and under subsequent review it was deemed more realistic to increase our share of business rate income based on the current financial information.
 - Discretionary rate relief of £166k being added to reserves to offset the cost of these reliefs within the collection fund at year end (corresponding entry in the finance and admin service area).
 - S31 grant has been increased by £112k based on the most up to date financial position.

11. The net drawdown on reserves is predicted at £331k compared to the current budget of £992k. The current budget has been adjusted from £1.146m as shown in period 4 to reflect the removal of Catons Lane Car Park from the reserve drawdown of £155k. A table showing the reserves position is set out at Appendix B.

The changes from current budget to the forecast outturn position in the reserves net draw down is as follows:

- £200k from Access Reserve – Cycle Path is near completion on the Saffron Walden to Audley End Station and the reserve is now being drawn down to match expenditure. The expectation is that S106 payments will replenish this reserve.
- £16k (£84k) – The DWP Reserve drawdown requirement has been reduced by £100k based on the updated benefit audit position.
- £80k has been put back to the Planning Reserves as only £70k of the originally planned drawdown of £150k relating to Neighbourhood Planning and Cycleway Strategy is currently required.

- £986k is the net effect of the £1.148m restatement of the Business Rates Reserve to the Strategic Initiatives Fund as detailed in point 10 above and Catons Lane Car Park reserve allocation to go back into the SIF to align with this project being withdrawn from the Capital Programme.
- £600k for the Waste Depot Project as the project has been delayed and only £900k is required to be funded in 2015/16 and the remainder will be drawn down in 2016/17.

12. The outturn forecast is the most informed prediction we have at this point in time and there is an element of risk to some areas and these risks could impact on the final outturn position. Detailed below are the areas which are high risk and have the potential to affect our year-end financial position.

- Business Rates Retention - the total business rate income recognised in the Council's account is highly volatile due to the difficulty in estimating the year end business rate levy due to central government. The total business rate levy is linked to the net use of business rates appeals provision within the year. The Council is reliant on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) to release these figures and for UDC's consultants (Analyse Local) to assess the potential impact on the appeals provision at year end promptly. The actual position is not known until year end and it is difficult to estimate this accurately during the year.
- Housing Benefit Subsidy Income Claims – due to the complexity of the subsidy claim, a change in number of claimants throughout the year and the high financial value of the subsidy income a small % change can have a significant impact on the budget. For example a 1% change to caseload can increase or decrease the bottom line by approx. £68k.
- Council Tax Sharing Agreement – Uttlesford is part of an Essex Wide Agreement to improve collection performance and reduce fraud for Council Tax. The first quarter monitoring has shown a significant improvement in collection and this extra income has been reflected in the budget. This income source could fluctuate throughout the year.
- Income for food inspection – the income is assessed on a quarterly basis and this is reactive income and can go up or down in a short time scale.
- Waste Collection, specifically recycling disposal costs – although we now have a new disposal contract for the recyclable waste there remains a level of uncertainty due to potential changes that may occur when the new Waste Transfer Station opens.

Housing Revenue Account

13. The HRA is showing a projected forecast underspend of £598k, comprising of a £218k net operating surplus and £380k reduction in use of reserves and HRA funding for the Capital Programme. A summary is shown below and full details can be seen in Appendix C.

£000	2014/15	2015/16			
	Outturn	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Total Service Income	(15,539)	(15,695)	(15,695)	(15,728)	(33)
Total Service Expenditure	4,881	4,495	4,495	4,434	(61)
Total Corporate Items	7,285	7,702	7,702	7,579	(123)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	12,166	12,197	12,197	12,013	(184)
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,374)	(3,498)	(3,498)	(3,715)	(218)
Funding of Capital Programme from HRA	1,297	4,811	4,811	3,733	(1,078)
Total Use of Reserves/Funding	(237)	(1,313)	(1,313)	(615)	698
	1,060	3,498	3,498	3,118	(380)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(2,314)	(0)	(0)	(597)	(598)

14. The key variances are detailed below

Service Areas

- Contributions towards Expenditure – (New item) £41k insurance settlement received relating to claims in previous year.
- Business & Performance Management – (New item) £63k underspend relating to two vacant posts that will not be recruited in 2015/16.
- Rents, Rates and other Property Charges - £5k – £37k overspend was reported in period 4 and relates to charges for Council Tax in line with the council's Empty Homes Premium Policy and an increased cost of electricity and gas. The overspend has now been reduced by the historic credit in the All pay rent account which was identified in the 2014/15 closure of accounts and written back to the rent account.
- Housing Repairs - £20k overspend is the increased costs of the staffing restructure and subsequent training.
- Property Services - £45k (£55k) underspend relates to vacant posts and small underspend on the current business plan. The underspend has been reduced due to the cost of additional fire risk training for staff.

- Sheltered Housing - £24k (£38k) is an overspend on the staffing costs and the extra cost of a new lease/rental agreement for white goods. A one of reimbursement of £14k relating to the new lease agreement has been received reducing the impact of the additional lease costs for 2015/16.

Corporate Items

- HRA to GF recharges - £106k (£78k) is an increase in the HRA requirement for corporate support. The recharges relate directly to the HRA share of corporate and central costs within the GF and have been updated in line with the updated period 7 outturn.

15. The HRA reserves are summarised below.

Reserve £'000	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Transfers	Estimated
	Balance 1 April 15	transfer from HRA	transfer to HRA	between Reserves	Balance 31 March 16
RINGFENCED RESERVES					
Working Balance	463	73	0	0	536
	463	73	0	0	536
USABLE RESERVES					
Revenue Reserves					
Revenue Projects	60				60
Transformation Reserve	180	20			200
	240	20	0	0	260
Capital Reserves					
Capital Projects	3,537	597	(708)		3,426
Potential Projects Reserve	800		0		800
Sheltered Housing Projects Reserve	318		0		318
	4,655	597	(708)	0	4,544
TOTAL USABLE RESERVES	4,895	617	(708)	0	4,804
TOTAL RESERVES	5,358	690	(708)	0	5,340

Capital Programme

16. Forecasted capital expenditure is £10.946m against a budget of £15.104m, showing a reduction in capital spending of £4.168m. The underspend is made up of £4.372m requested slippage leaving an actual net overspend on current capital projects of £0.204m. The capital programme is set out in more detail in Appendix D which includes a separate table detailing the current level of S106 balances held. The main areas which contribute to the budget movements are detailed below.

Requested Slippage

- Vehicle replacement programme – (New item) £846k for replacement vehicles has been reprofiled as part of the 5 year rolling programme.
- Dunmow Depot – (New item) £600k – securing a suitable plot of land has delayed the project and the cost of the depot development has now been reprofiled to 2016/17.
- Catons Lane - (New item) £150k due to the updating of the timescale the final stages of the build to be completed in 2016/17.
- Reynolds Court (New item) £1.586m due to the updating of the timescales following the procurement process it is expected that this project phase will now not be completed in the current year.
- Mead Court – Phase 2 was delayed by 2 months and this has generated slippage in the required budget for 2015/16 of £505k.
- Hatherley Court – Work was originally planned to commence in November and has now been delayed until 2016/17 and increased the slippage from £265k to £565k.

The key net under/overspends are detailed below.

- Compulsory purchase order – no budget was set and a cost of £300k is expected, all of this cost is funded via external sources and thus has no bottom line impact.
- Saffron Walden Motte and Bailey Castle is underspent by £200k due to updating of the original estimates to match the actual expenditure.
- Housing Revenue Accounts programme of works for UPVC fascia's and guttering replacement is underspent by £175k due to the timing of the receipt of invoices , no bottom line impact as this is a rolling programme.

- The remaining £279k - net under/over spends of various minor items.

Treasury Management

17. Activity during the period 1 April to 31 October 2015 has been set out in Appendix E.

18. All deposits placed complied with the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. Balances as at the 31 October 2015 totalled £38.16 m and were held at an average interest rate of 0.33%.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Actual income and expenditure will vary from forecast, requiring adjustments to budget and/or service delivery. Detailed risks are detailed in point 12 in the main body of the report.	2 – some variability is inevitable	2 – budget will be closely monitored and prompt action taken to deal with variances	Budgetary control framework

APPENDIX A

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

£000	2014/15	April to October			2015/16			
	Outturn	Current Budget	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Portfolio budgets								
Communities & Partnerships	818	717	549	(168)	1,018	1,018	1,011	(7)
Environmental Services	1,549	867	543	(324)	2,075	2,142	2,163	21
Finance & Administration	4,542	3,047	2,947	(100)	5,254	5,287	4,781	(506)
Housing & Economic Development	1,298	691	595	(96)	1,253	1,303	1,268	(35)
Sub-total – Portfolio Budgets	8,207	5,322	4,634	(688)	9,600	9,750	9,223	(527)
Corporate Items								
Capital Financing Costs	2,527	210	213	3	3,454	3,449	3,153	(296)
Investment Income	(58)	(44)	(43)	1	(50)	(50)	(90)	(40)
New Homes Bonus - Community Projects 11/12	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pension Fund - Added Years	92	71	65	(6)	102	102	93	(9)
Pension Fund - Deficit	1,122	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge to HRA	(1,069)	0	0	0	(1,138)	(1,138)	(1,138)	0
HRA Share of Corporate Core	(353)	0	0	0	(234)	(234)	(340)	(106)
Sub total - Corporate Items	2,276	237	235	(2)	2,133	2,129	1,678	(450)
Sub total - Budget	10,483	5,559	4,869	(690)	11,733	11,879	10,901	(977)
Funding								
Council Tax - Collection Fund Balance	(257)	0	0	0	(89)	(89)	(89)	0
Council Tax - Freeze Grant 14/15	(51)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax - Freeze Grant 15/16	0	0	(36)	(36)	0	0	(51)	(51)
DCLG - Other Funding	(34)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus Grant	(2,877)	(2,703)	(2,703)	0	(3,598)	(3,598)	(3,598)	0
NNDR - UDC share (net of Tariff)	(1,990)	0	0	0	(1,303)	(1,303)	(1,793)	(490)
NNDR - Levy Payment/(Safety Net Reimbursement)	1,093	0	0	0	0	0	531	531
NNDR - Section 31 Funding	(538)	(268)	(333)	(65)	(459)	(459)	(571)	(112)
NNDR - Collection Fund Balance	1,275	0	0	0	3,148	3,148	2,338	(810)
NNDR - Renewable Energy Schemes	0	0	0	0	0	0	(170)	(170)
NNDR - Transfer to/(from) Ringfenced Reserve	(752)	0	0	0	(2,689)	(2,689)	(3,150)	(461)
Section 106 Funding - Transfers to/(from) S106 reserves	135	0	0	0	(10)	(10)	(5)	5
Settlement Funding	(1,643)	(860)	(860)	0	(1,234)	(1,234)	(1,234)	0
Sub-total – Funding	(5,638)	(3,831)	(3,932)	(101)	(6,234)	(6,234)	(7,792)	(1,558)
Sub-total – Net Operating Expenditure	4,845	1,728	937	(791)	5,499	5,645	3,109	(2,535)
Transfers to/from (-) Reserves								
Access Reserve	200	0	0	0	0	0	(200)	(200)
Budget Equalization Reserve	(1,416)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Budget Slippage Reserve	(28)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Change Management Reserve	(923)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Freeze Grant Reserve	(174)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DWP Reserve	259	0	0	0	(175)	(175)	(159)	16
Economic Development Reserve	24	0	0	0	(50)	(50)	(50)	0
Elections Reserve	28	0	0	0	(75)	(75)	(70)	5
Emergency Response Reserve	(100)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hardship Fund	(100)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homelessness Reserve	(61)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LGRR Contingency Reserve	(1,385)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Licensing Reserve	(15)	0	0	0	(22)	(22)	(15)	7
MTFS Reserve	1,000	0	0	0	(28)	(28)	0	28
Municipal Mutual Reserve	(51)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Front Runners Reserve	(57)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NHB Community Reserve	(15)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NHB Contingency Reserve	(790)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning Development Reserve	206	0	0	0	0	(150)	(78)	72
Strategic Initiatives Reserve	600	0	0	0	1,034	1,189	2,174	986
Transformation Reserve	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	(40)	(40)
Waste Depot Relocation Project	1,500	0	0	0	(1,500)	(1,500)	(900)	600
Waste Reserve	80	0	0	0	(30)	(180)	(249)	(69)
Working Balance	68	0	0	0	0	0	(82)	(82)
Sub-total - Movement in Earmarked Reserves	(150)	0	0	0	(847)	(992)	331	1,323
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT (BOTTOM LINE)	4,695	1,728	937	(791)	4,653	4,653	3,440	(1,213)
Council Tax (precept levied on Collection Fund)	(4,695)	0	0	0	(4,653)	(4,653)	(4,653)	0
OVERALL NET POSITION		0	0		0	0	(1,213)	(1,213)

APPENDIX A (continued)

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

£000	2014/15 Outturn	April to October			Full Year			
		Current Budget	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Assisted Travel	(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Information Centres	46	31	34	3	48	48	47	(1)
Community & Leisure Management	46	29	27	(2)	49	49	47	(2)
Day Centres	30	33	15	(18)	55	55	51	(4)
Emergency Planning	48	24	24	0	44	44	44	0
Grants & Contributions	351	362	301	(61)	377	377	377	0
Leisure & Administration	68	64	39	(25)	95	95	95	0
Leisure PFI	(77)	(6)	(64)	(58)	10	10	(10)	(20)
Museum Saffron Walden	159	99	104	5	167	167	189	22
New Homes Bonus	76	48	28	(20)	117	117	117	0
Renovation Grants	(1)	0	(1)	(1)	0	0	(1)	(1)
Sports Development	73	33	42	9	56	56	55	(1)
Portfolio Total	818	717	549	(168)	1,018	1,018	1,011	(7)

ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO

£000	2014/15 Outturn	April to October			Full Year			
		Current Budget	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Animal Warden	33	18	18	0	31	31	31	0
Car Parking	(646)	(301)	(405)	(104)	(618)	(618)	(603)	15
Community Safety	55	94	28	(66)	171	171	86	(85)
Depots	63	45	38	(7)	59	59	56	(3)
Development Management	(184)	(496)	(415)	81	(434)	(434)	(370)	64
Environmental Management & Admin	105	64	60	(4)	110	110	106	(4)
Grounds Maintenance	159	135	119	(16)	224	224	219	(5)
Highways	(16)	(1)	(4)	(3)	(13)	(13)	(12)	1
Housing Strategy	91	56	49	(7)	95	95	94	(1)
Licensing	(122)	(96)	(133)	(37)	(115)	(129)	(175)	(46)
Local Amenities	(88)	8	11	3	8	8	15	7
Pest Control	25	17	(1)	(18)	28	28	3	(25)
Planning Management & Admin	426	229	239	10	388	388	407	19
Planning Policy	337	200	119	(81)	244	344	333	(11)
Planning Specialists	211	129	115	(14)	219	219	224	5
Public Health	171	289	217	(72)	467	467	391	(76)
Street Cleansing	285	176	181	5	299	299	296	(3)
Street Services Management & Admin	253	175	142	(33)	319	300	257	(43)
Vehicle Management	357	218	198	(20)	372	372	372	0
Waste Management - Expenditure	2,182	1,185	1,228	43	2,291	2,291	2,503	212
Waste Management - Income	(2,148)	(1,277)	(1,261)	16	(2,070)	(2,070)	(2,070)	0
Portfolio Total	1,549	867	543	(324)	2,075	2,142	2,163	21

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION PORTFOLIO

£000	2014/15 Outturn	April to October			Full Year			
		Current Budget	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Benefit Administration	(265)	99	7	(92)	(202)	175	92	(83)
Business Improvement & Performance Team	76	45	44	(1)	78	78	70	(8)
Central Services	377	224	192	(32)	380	380	372	(8)
Conducting Elections	(7)	96	173	77	96	96	89	(7)
Conveniences	18	21	23	2	21	21	23	2
Corporate Management	722	363	356	(7)	657	657	637	(20)
Corporate Team	99	71	58	(13)	114	107	99	(8)
Council Tax Benefits	23	0	0	0	0	0	(14)	(14)
Electoral Registration	14	37	14	(23)	45	45	43	(2)
Enforcement	174	87	88	1	150	150	152	2
Financial Services	867	497	500	3	927	927	953	26
Housing Benefits	76	(266)	(167)	99	145	145	237	92
Human Resources	215	152	144	(8)	221	221	207	(14)
Information Technology	1,207	861	882	21	1,121	1,161	1,157	(4)
Internal Audit	110	68	64	(4)	115	115	110	(5)
Land Charges	(84)	(35)	(32)	3	(61)	(61)	(136)	(75)
Legal Services	(4)	59	(1)	(60)	99	99	55	(44)
Local Council Tax Support	40	88	83	(5)	91	91	24	(67)
Local Tax Collection	(193)	0	0	0	(50)	(50)	(90)	(40)
Non Domestic Rates	(152)	0	0	0	21	21	(145)	(166)
Offices	345	199	213	14	274	274	304	30
Office Cleaning	154	107	106	(1)	166	166	167	1
Revenues Administration	730	274	200	(74)	846	469	375	(94)
Portfolio Total	4,542	3,047	2,947	(100)	5,254	5,287	4,781	(506)

HOUSING PORTFOLIO

£000	2014/15 Outturn	April to October			Full Year			
		Current Budget	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
Building Surveying	(79)	(90)	(103)	(13)	(81)	(81)	(80)	1
Committee Administration	165	96	95	(1)	165	165	168	3
Communications	242	148	144	(4)	255	255	256	1
Customer Services Centre	332	205	194	(11)	351	351	340	(11)
Democratic Representation	353	208	191	(17)	336	336	319	(17)
Economic Development	136	90	75	(15)	135	135	139	4
Energy Efficiency	41	56	20	(36)	47	97	66	(31)
Homelessness	231	96	111	15	167	167	182	15
Housing Grants	10	0	0	0	10	10	10	0
Lifeline	(133)	(118)	(132)	(14)	(132)	(132)	(132)	0
Portfolio Total	1,298	691	595	(96)	1,253	1,303	1,268	(35)

GENERAL FUND RESERVES

Reserve	Actual Balance 1st April 2015	Forecast transfer from GF	Forecast transfer to GF	Transfers to / from Reserves	Estimated Balance 31st March 2016
£'000					
<u>RINGFENCED RESERVES</u>					
Business Rates	3,670	336	(2,338)	(1,148)	520
DWP Reserve	259	100	(259)		100
Licensing Reserve	31		(15)		16
Working Balance	1,282		(82)		1,200
	5,242	436	(2,694)	(1,148)	1,836
<u>USABLE RESERVES</u>					
<u>Financial Management Reserves</u>					
MTFS Reserve	1,000		0		1,000
Transformation Reserve	1,000		(40)		960
	2,000	0	(40)	0	1,960
<u>Contingency Reserves</u>					
Emergency Response	40				40
	40	0	0	0	40
<u>Service Reserves</u>					
Access Reserve	200		(200)		0
Economic Development	244		(50)		194
Elections	95	25	(95)		25
Homelessness	40				40
Neighbourhood Planning	139		(15)		124
Planning	1,002		(63)		939
Strategic Initiatives	600	2,293	(54)	1,148	3,987
Waste Depot Relocation Project	1,500		(900)		600
Waste Management	379		(249)		130
	4,199	2,318	(1,626)	1,148	6,039
TOTAL USABLE RESERVES	6,239	2,318	(1,666)	1,148	8,039
TOTAL RESERVES	11,481	2,754	(4,360)	0	9,875

APPENDIX C

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

£000	2014/15	2015/16						
	Outturn	April to October			Full Year			
		Current Budget	Actual to Date	Variance to Date	Original Budget	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
<u>Housing Revenue Account Income</u>								
Dwelling Rents	(14,522)	(8,559)	(7,260)	1,299	(14,672)	(14,672)	(14,672)	0
Garage Rents	(207)	(108)	(111)	(3)	(184)	(184)	(184)	0
Land Rents	(3)	(2)	(2)	(0)	(3)	(3)	(3)	0
Charges for Services & Facilities	(806)	(505)	(390)	115	(835)	(835)	(828)	7
Contributions towards Expenditure	(1)	0	(41)	(41)	0	0	(41)	(41)
Total Service Income	(15,539)	(9,173)	(7,804)	1,370	(15,695)	(15,695)	(15,728)	(33)
<u>Housing Finance & Business Management</u>								
Business & Performance Management	393	224	171	(53)	378	371	307	(63)
Rents, Rates & Other Property Charges	74	36	74	38	36	36	41	5
	467	260	245	(14)	414	407	348	(58)
<u>Housing Maintenance & Repairs Service</u>								
Common Service Flats	207	145	108	(37)	241	249	248	(1)
Estate Maintenance	144	171	57	(114)	293	293	293	0
Housing Repairs	2,621	1,278	1,314	36	2,190	2,190	2,207	16
Housing Sewerage	54	34	39	5	54	54	57	4
Newport Depot	51	9	8	(1)	11	11	11	0
Property Services	444	187	166	(21)	320	327	282	(45)
	3,521	1,824	1,692	(132)	3,109	3,124	3,099	(25)
<u>Housing Management & Homelessness</u>								
Housing Services	314	191	178	(13)	324	324	323	(1)
Sheltered Housing Services	519	343	296	(46)	595	587	611	24
Supporting People	59	31	7	(24)	53	53	53	0
	892	564	481	(83)	972	964	987	23
Total Service Expenditure	4,881	2,648	2,418	(229)	4,495	4,495	4,435	(61)
<u>Corporate Items</u>								
Bad Debt Provision	46	0	0	0	250	250	50	(200)
Depreciation - Dwellings (transfer to MRR)	3,136	0	0	0	3,209	3,209	3,209	0
Depreciation - Non-Dwellings (transfer to MRR)	131	0	0	0	146	146	146	0
Impairment - Non-Dwellings	(304)	0	0	0	100	100	100	0
Interest/Costs re HRA Loan	2,636	1,313	1,288	(24)	2,625	2,625	2,625	0
Investment Income	(23)	0	0	0	(21)	(21)	(39)	(19)
Recharge from General Fund	1,069	0	0	0	1,138	1,138	1,138	(0)
HRA Share of Corporate Core	353	0	0	0	234	234	340	106
Pension Fund - Added Years	19	0	0	0	20	20	19	(1)
Pension Fund - Deficit	236	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Right to Buy Admin Costs Allowance	(16)	0	0	0	0	0	(10)	(10)
Total Corporate Items	7,285	1,313	1,288	(24)	7,702	7,702	7,578	(123)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	12,166	3,960	3,707	(253)	12,197	12,197	12,013	(184)
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,374)	(5,213)	(4,097)	1,116	(3,498)	(3,498)	(3,715)	(218)
<u>Funding of Capital Programme from HRA</u>								
Funding of Action Plan Capital Items	443	0	0	0	3,745	3,745	3,655	(90)
Funding of Capital from Revenue	854	0	0	0	1,066	1,066	78	(988)
	1,297	0	0	0	4,811	4,811	3,733	(1,078)
<u>Transfers to/from (-) Reserves</u>								
Capital Projects Reserve	0	0	0	0	(514)	(514)	(708)	(194)
Change Management Reserve	(200)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Potential Developments	0	0	0	0	(620)	(620)	0	620
Sheltered Housing Reserve	0	0	0	0	(221)	(221)	0	221
Transformation Reserve	180	0	0	0	42	42	20	(22)
Working Balance	(217)	0	0	0	0	0	73	73
	(237)	0	0	0	(1,313)	(1,313)	(615)	698
Total Use of Reserves/Funding	1,060	0	0	0	3,498	3,498	3,118	(380)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(2,314)	(5,213)	(4,097)	1,116	(0)	(0)	(597)	(598)

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

£'000	Actuals	Original Budget 2015-16	Slippage from 2014-15	Budget adjustment as agreed by Cabinet	Current Budget 2015-16	Forecast Outturn	Forecast to Budget Variance	Requested Slippage
Community and Partnerships								
Community Project Grants	60	110	38	0	148	148	0	
S/W Motte & Bailey	66	195	205	0	400	200	(200)	
CCTV Stansted		0	21	0	21	5	(16)	0
CCTV Thaxted		0	35	0	35	0	(35)	35
Community and Partnerships	126	305	299	0	604	353	(251)	35
Environmental Services								
Vehicle Replacement Programme	0	660	186	0	846	0	(846)	846
Household Bins	40	30	0	0	30	70	40	
Kitchen Caddies	3	10	0	0	10	7	(3)	
Garden Waste Bins	0	20	0	0	20	6	(14)	
Trade Waste Bins	9	10	0	0	10	16	6	
Swan Meadow car park	19	0	13	0	13	13	0	
Catons Lane car park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Cycleways Grant	0	0	0	200	200	200	0	
Flood prevention work	0	0	30	0	30	30	0	
Repair and Renew - Flood Scheme	39	0	0	0	0	10	10	
Total Environmental Services	110	730	229	200	1,159	352	(817)	846
Finance & Administration								
IT Schemes								
New members IT Equip	18	18	0	0	18	18	0	
Minor Items IT	3	20	0	0	20	20	0	
Citrix Upgrade	7	0	8	0	8	8	0	
PSN CoCo Works	48	30	8	0	38	38	0	
Mobile working - Housing	5	0	35	0	35	35	0	
Mobile working - Planning & Env Health	0	25	44	0	69	69	0	
Video conferencing	0	25	0	0	25	100	75	
Revs & Bens Server	31	30	0	0	30	30	0	
PCI Compliance - Cash Receipting	0	35	0	0	35	35	0	
PCI Compliance - Direct Debits	0	20	0	0	20	20	0	
UPS Server	21	0	50	0	50	50	0	
UDC Asset work								
Council Offices Improvements								
- Building works	121	146	78	0	224	224	0	
- Heating System	0	26	0	0	26	26	0	
Hill St Conveniences	120	0	120	0	120	120	0	
Stansted Conveniences - Grant		0	30	0	30	30	0	
Museum Storage Facility	89	0	0	0	0	91	91	
Dunmow Depot	0	1,500	0	0	1,500	900	(600)	600
Solar Panels - Shire Hill	0	0	0	150	150	150	0	
Museum Buildings		80	0	0	80	80	0	
Mead Court temporary accommodation	21	0	0	0	0	21	21	
Day Centres Cyclical Improvements	4	20	0	0	20	20	0	
Total Finance & Administration	488	1,975	373	150	2,498	2,085	(413)	600

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

£'000	Actuals	Original Budget 2015-16	Slippage from 2014-15	Budget adjustment as agreed by Cabinet	Current Budget 2015-16	Forecast Outturn	Forecast to Budget Variance	Requested Slippage
Housing and Economic Development								
Disabled Facilities Grants	96	198	62	0	260	390	130	
Empty Dwellings	36	50	0	0	50	40	(10)	10
Private Sector Renewal Grants	5	30	0	0	30	5	(25)	25
Compulsory Purchase Order	0	0	0	0	0	300	300	
Superfast Broadband	0	0	100	0	100	50	(50)	50
Total Housing and Economic Development	137	278	162	0	440	785	345	85
Housing Revenue Account								
HRA Repairs	1,978	3,260	0	0	3,260	3,276	16	
UPVC Fascia's and Guttering	0	140	123	0	263	88	(175)	
Cash Incentive Scheme Grants	26	50	0	0	50	26	(24)	
Vehicle Purchase	19	0	0	0	0	22	22	
Business Plan Items								
Service Chg Planned Rep System - ICT Schemes	0	0	65	0	65	65	0	
Housing Contractors Portal & SAM	0	55			55	55	0	
Energy Efficiency Schemes	0	280	100	0	380	375	(5)	
Support unit for people with learning difficulties	0	0	100	0	100	0	(100)	
Internet Café's in Sheltered Hsg	17	25	0	0	25	25	0	
New Builds								
Unidentified	0	0	212	0	212	212	0	
Catons Lane	188	827	73	0	900	750	(150)	150
Mead court Phase 1	50	0	0	0	0	50	50	
Mead court Phase 2	423	0	1,768	0	1,768	1,263	(505)	505
Sheltered Schemes								
Reynolds Court	89	2,450	0	0	2,450	864	(1,586)	1,586
Hatherley Court	32	865	0	0	865	300	(565)	565
Walden Place	0	0	10	0	10	0	(10)	
Total HRA	2,822	7,952	2,451	0	10,403	7,371	(3,032)	2,806
Total General Fund ex S106	861	3,288	1,063	350	4,701	3,575	(1,136)	1,566
CAPITAL PROGRAMME TOTAL Excluding S106	3,683	11,240	3,514	350	15,104	10,946	(4,168)	4,372

Section 106 Balances

	31 March 2015 £'000	Income £'000	Interest £'000	Drawn Down £'000	Balance as at 31 October 2015 £'000
S106 Unapplied					
Dunmow Eastern Sector	18	-	-	-	18
Woodlands Park, Gt Dunmow	86	-	-	-	86
Friends School, Saffron Walden	29	-	-	-	29
Bell College, Saffron Walden	80	-	-	(65)	15
Priors Green, Takeley	8	-	-	-	8
Foresthall Park, Elsenham	30	-	-	-	30
Lt Walden Road/Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden	98	-	-	-	98
Oakwood Park, Takeley	5	-	-	-	5
Radwinter Mushroom Farm, Wimbish	-	75	-	-	75
Debden Road, Saffron Walden	100	-	-	-	100
Former Lodge Farm, Radwinter Road, Saffron Walden	-	395	-	-	395
SUB TOTAL	454	470	-	(65)	859

	31 March 2015 £'000	Income £'000	Repaid £'000	Drawn Down £'000	Balance as at 31 October 2015 £'000
S106 Receipts in Advance					
Priors Green, Takeley	155	22	-	(31)	146
Felsted	10	-	-	-	10
Oakwood Park Community Hall, Takeley	10	-	-	-	10
Rochford Nurseries/Foresthall Park, Elsenham	680	-	-	(16)	664
Manuden Village Hall and Sports Facilities	27	-	-	(27)	-
The Orchard, Elsenham	42	-	-	-	42
Wedow Road, Thaxted	54	-	-	-	54
Sector 4 Woodlands Park, Gt Dunmow	10	-	-	-	10
Keers Green Nurseries, Aythorpe Roding	120	-	-	-	120
SUB TOTAL	1,108	22	-	(74)	1,056

	31 March 2015 £'000	Income £'000	Repaid £'000	Drawn Down £'000	Balance as at 31 October 2015 £'000
S106 Receipts in Advance					
Sector 4 Woodlands Park (Helena Romanes School)	165	349	-	(349)	165
Rochford Nurseries/Foresthall Park, Elsenham	289	-	-	-	289
2 Lower St, Stansted	23	-	-	(23)	-
Land west of Braintree Road, Felsted	-	162	-	(162)	-
Brick Kiln Farm, Gt Dunmow	352	37	-	(389)	-
Land between 3 to 5b Hamilton Road, Little Canfield	-	37	-	(37)	-
North View and 3 The Warren, Little Canfield	276	2	-	(278)	-
Carnation Nurseries, Cambridge Road, Newport	-	175	-	(175)	-
Land north of 4 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield	46	-	-	-	46
Land adj Hailes Wood, Elsenham	-	155	-	(146)	9
Land adj Warwick Road, Priors Green	3	-	-	-	3
Land at Flitch Green, Felsted	50	-	-	-	50
Land at Ersamine, Dunmow Road, Little Canfield	-	49	-	(49)	-
Land at Windmill works, Keers Green, Aythorpe Roding	-	46	-	(46)	-
Land at Blossom Hill Farm, south of Chickney Road, Henham	-	80	-	(80)	-
Land at Maple Lane, Wimbish	-	41	-	(41)	-
Grants and Contributions to Other Bodies	1,204	1,133	-	(1,775)	562

TREASURY MANAGEMENT

DEPOSITS MADE 1 APRIL TO 31 OCTOBER 2015

Date of lending	Amount £m	Institution	Interest	Return Date
01-Apr-15	2.00	Nationwide BS	0.51%	09-Jul-15
07-Apr-15	2.00	Bank of Scotland	0.57%	15-Jul-15
07-Apr-15	4.00	DMO	0.25%	17-Apr-15
07-Apr-15	1.00	DMO	0.25%	23-Apr-15
07-Apr-15	4.00	DMO	0.25%	30-Apr-15
07-Apr-15	7.00	DMO	0.25%	19-May-15
07-Apr-15	7.00	DMO	0.25%	09-Apr-15
09-Apr-15	3.00	Cornwall Council	0.40%	28-Sep-15
09-Apr-15	3.00	DMO	0.25%	14-Apr-15
13-Apr-15	1.00	National Counties BS	0.56%	20-Jul-15
14-Apr-15	3.00	Guildford Borough Council	0.40%	21-Sep-15
15-Apr-15	3.00	DMO	0.25%	17-Jun-15
01-May-15	5.00	DMO	0.25%	21-May-15
15-May-15	3.00	Dumfries & Galloway	0.38%	12-Nov-15
21-May-15	3.00	Lancashire County Council	0.40%	18-Nov-15
21-May-15	2.50	DMO	0.25%	22-Jun-15
29-May-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	20-Jul-15
01-Jun-15	4.00	DMO	0.25%	17-Jul-15
12-Jun-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	19-Aug-15
15-Jun-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	22-Jun-15
01-Jul-15	6.00	DMO	0.25%	19-Aug-15
10-Jul-15	2.00	Nationwide BS	0.50%	16-Oct-15
10-Jul-15	1.00	DMO	0.25%	19-Sep-15
15-Jul-15	2.00	Bank of Scotland	0.50%	19-Oct-15
15-Jul-15	3.00	DMO	0.25%	17-Sep-15
03-Aug-15	2.00	Santander	0.60%	19-Jan-16
03-Aug-15	1.50	DMO	0.25%	19-Oct-15
14-Aug-15	1.00	DMO	0.25%	19-Oct-15
17-Aug-15	3.00	Salford City Council	0.30%	19-Nov-15
19-Aug-15	1.00	DMO	0.25%	19-Oct-15
01-Sep-15	5.00	DMO	0.25%	17-Dec-15
02-Sep-15	1.00	DMO	0.25%	23-Sep-15
11-Sep-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	21-Sep-15
15-Sep-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	21-Sep-15
21-Sep-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	21-Dec-15
21-Sep-15	3.00	West Dunbartonshire	0.45%	21-Mar-16
28-Sep-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	19-Oct-15
01-Oct-15	3.00	Cornwall Council	0.40%	30-Mar-16
01-Oct-15	1.00	Cumberland BS	0.54%	08-Jan-16
09-Oct-15	2.00	Glasgow City Council	0.40%	30-Mar-16
15-Oct-15	1.00	National Counties BS	0.56%	19-Jan-16
15-Oct-15	3.00	DMO	0.25%	23-Nov-15
16-Oct-15	2.00	Nationwide BS	0.60%	17-Mar-16
115.00		Average	0.33%	

APPENDIX E

DEPOSITED BALANCES AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2015

Date of lending	Amount £m	Institution	Interest	Return Date
30-Apr-15	3.00	Lancashire County Council	0.40%	18-Nov-15
12-May-15	3.00	Dumfries & Galloway	0.38%	12-Nov-15
03-Aug-15	2.00	Santander	0.60%	19-Jan-16
17-Aug-15	3.00	Salford City Council	0.30%	19-Nov-15
01-Sep-15	5.00	DMO	0.25%	17-Dec-15
21-Sep-15	3.00	West Dunbartonshire	0.45%	21-Mar-16
21-Sep-15	2.00	DMO	0.25%	21-Dec-15
01-Oct-15	3.00	Cornwall Council	0.40%	30-Mar-16
01-Oct-15	1.00	Cumberland BS	0.54%	08-Jan-16
09-Oct-15	2.00	Glasgow City Council	0.40%	30-Mar-16
15-Oct-15	1.00	National Counties BS	0.56%	19-Jan-16
15-Oct-15	3.00	DMO	0.25%	23-Nov-15
16-Oct-15	2.00	Nationwide BS	0.60%	17-Mar-16
Total	33.00		Average 0.41%	

APPENDIX E

BALANCES WITH ON CALL DEPOSIT & CURRENT ACCOUNTS
AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2015

Institution	Amount £m	Interest
Barclays StockBroker	1.00	0.38%
Barclays Bank FIBCA	1.00	0.45%
Bank of Scotland CA	1.00	0.40%
Money Market Fund - CCLA	1.00	0.35%
Barclays Consilidated Account *	1.16	1.50%
Total	5.16	0.39%

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

9

Title: Treasury Management Benchmarking

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Howell

Key decision: No

Summary

1. Treasury Management is the activity of the Council's finance function which manages cash flows, bank accounts, deposits, investments and borrowing. The objective is to manage risk effectively in order to ensure the security of funds, sufficient liquidity to enable commitments to be met, to generate income and minimise cost.
2. The Council has been extremely cautious with its lending policy over the last few years and consequently has had minimal investment return.
3. At the Cabinet Committee meeting on 22 October 2015 members requested a report comparing the treasury management activities of other Councils, in particular Councils within Essex. Due to difficulty in obtaining the latest treasury management activities of each authority within the region it was not possible to produce a detailed benchmarking exercise of authorities in Essex.
4. However the Council's treasury consultant, Arlingclose, produces a quarterly benchmarking exercise which could assist UDC to compare the Council's activities to the average treasury activities of Councils across the country.
5. The investment benchmarking exercise included in the body of this report is based on data supplied by clients of Arlingclose, which includes some Essex authorities but not all of them as they are not all Arlingclose clients.
6. The report covers all investments made for treasury purposes, including external funds, but excludes any investments made for service purposes. As part of this exercise it defines external funds as those pooled investment funds where the client has delegated investment decisions to a fund manager, other than instant access to Money Market Funds (MMF). All other investments are classed as internal investment. External funds include investments such as the Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) property fund which is utilised by Councils seeking a higher return compared to fixed term deposits if it was invested for more than a year.
 - MMF - are short term liquidity pooled fund investments. Each investor who invests in a money market fund is considered a shareholder of the investment pool, a part owner of the fund. The most important characteristic of a money market fund is the highly diversified and high credit quality investments within the fund.
 - CCLA - is a Public Sector Deposit Fund managing investments for charities, religious organisations and the public sector. The fund mainly invests in Fixed Terms Deposits and call accounts. Although the deposit fund invests in fixed term investments, due to the larger scale of these investments a higher rate of return is achieved and this is shared accordingly between all members.

7. The average authority invests more of its total investments in Money Market Funds and Call Accounts compared to UDC.
8. Furthermore the exercise does provide evidence that the Council can potentially increase its rate of return on investments without increasing its exposure of risk.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that the 2016/17 Treasury Management Strategy is prepared with the aim of ensuring an improved rate of return is achieved whilst acknowledging the risk appetite of the council.

Financial Implications

10. Included in the body of the report.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Background

11. Treasury management is defined as: “The management of the local authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

External Context

UK Economy:

12. **Credit outlook:** The varying fortunes of different parts of the global economy are reflected in market indicators of credit risk. UK Banks operating in the Far East and parts of mainland Europe have seen their perceived risk increase, while those with a more domestic focus continue to show improvement. The sale of most of the government’s stake in Lloyds and the first sale of its shares in RBS have generally been seen as credit positive.

13. Bail-in legislation, which ensures that large investors including local authorities will rescue failing banks instead of taxpayers in the future, has now been fully implemented in the UK, USA and Germany. The rest of the European Union will follow suit in January 2016, while Australia, Canada and Switzerland are well advanced with their own plans. Meanwhile, changes to the UK Financial Services Compensation Scheme and similar European schemes in July 2015 mean that most private sector investors are now partially or fully exempt from contributing to a bail-in. The credit risk associated with making unsecured bank deposits has therefore increased relative to the risk of other investment options available to the Authority; returns from cash deposits however remain stubbornly low.
14. **Interest rate forecast:** The Authority's treasury advisor Arlingclose projects the first 0.25% increase in UK Bank Rate in the third quarter of 2016, rising by 0.5% a year thereafter, finally settling between 2% and 3% in several years' time. Persistently low inflation, subdued global growth and potential concerns over the UK's position in Europe mean that the risks to this forecast are weighted towards the downside.

Investments

15. The latest approved counterparty category list for investment purposes in 2015/16 is summarised as follows and depending on which category the counterparty falls under it is subject to limits listed below and in addition is subject to limits set by Arlingclose.

General Counterparty list *	Credit Rating	Cash limit	Time limit
Banks and other organisations whose lowest published long-term credit rating from Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's is:	AAA	£2m	365 days
	AA+	£2m	365 days
	AA	£2m	365 days
	AA	£2m	365 days
	AA-	£2m	365 days
	A+	£2m	182 days
	A	£2m	182 days
	A-	£2m	182 days
	BBB+	£1m	100 days
Council's General bank account if it fails to meet the above criteria, excluding fixed term deposit accounts		£1.5m	next day
UK Central Government (irrespective of credit rating)	AA+	unlimited	50 years
UK Local Authorities including Fire and Police (irrespective of credit rating), per authority	N/A	£3m	182 days
UK Building Societies without credit ratings	N/A	£1m	100 days
Saffron Building Society	N/A	£0.5m	100 days
Money Market Funds, UK Domiciled per fund	AAA	£1m	next day

* This list is the maximum risk appetite the Council is willing to take and is within the limit set by Arlingclose Counterparty list. Furthermore UDC does not exceed the cash, credit rating and time limit set by Arlingclose in their regularly updated counterparty report

16. In 2014/15 the Council, with a similar counterparty list as above, achieved an average return of 0.32% (£80,700 in income) for its investments.

UDC performance in the first 6 months of 2015/16 compared to the average Arlingclose client

17. The charts in the Appendices A-E are a snapshot of investments held on the last working day of the quarter for clients of Arlingclose and compares UDC performance against other authorities.
18. The reported levels of risk and return will differ according to clients' average risk and return for the quarter. The September 2015 benchmarking covers data from 123 local authority clients of Arlingclose but for some charts it only compares UDC's performance against similar authorities.

19. Rate of Return on Total Investment Portfolio (Appendix A):

The chart in Appendix A highlights that most of the Arlingclose clients (123) receive an investment rate of return much higher than Uttlesford DC. There are at least 28 authorities who receive an average rate of return above 1% and more than 70% of the clients receive a rate of return above 0.50% which highlights that there is some scope for UDC to investigate ways to improve the rate of return achieved.

20. Average Rate vs Credit Risk (Appendix B)

The chart in Appendix B compares UDC to the average English Non-Metropolitan Districts (approx. 50) and compares the risk appetite against the average rate of return. The top left corner in the chart indicates a good performance. The chart indicates that UDC has a lower risk appetite and subsequently achieves a low rate of return. The Council could assess whether to increase its risk appetite and potentially receive a rate of return between 0.5% and 1%.

21. Investment Instruments – Variance to Average (Appendix C)

According to data provided within the investment instrument chart, Appendix C, UDC lends more in fixed term deposits than the average authority reviewed within this exercise. The average authority lends up to 15% to 20% more in Call Accounts and Money Market Funds compared with UDC.

Fixed term deposits are seen increasingly as more risky as a result of Bail-In risk legislation (see point 13 above).

22. Country of Investment – Variance to Average (Appendix D)

As part of this exercise Money Market Funds are recognised as sovereign portfolio and as shown in Appendix D a large part of the average authority investments are in Money Markey Funds (MMF). The chart displays that the average authority invests around 20% more in MMF than UDC. The average authority invests in more counterparties outside of the UK than UDC.

23. Counterparty of Investments – Variance to average (Appendix E)

The final chart in Appendix E highlights that the average authority invests more in percentage with Santander UK, Standard Chartered, Close Brothers, HSBC, Leeds Building Society and various other banks / building societies including foreign banks compared with UDC. Counterparties like HSBC and Standard Chartered are

reportedly reluctant to borrow from UDC due to the limitations within our current strategy in the value of cash we can lend and the time limits.

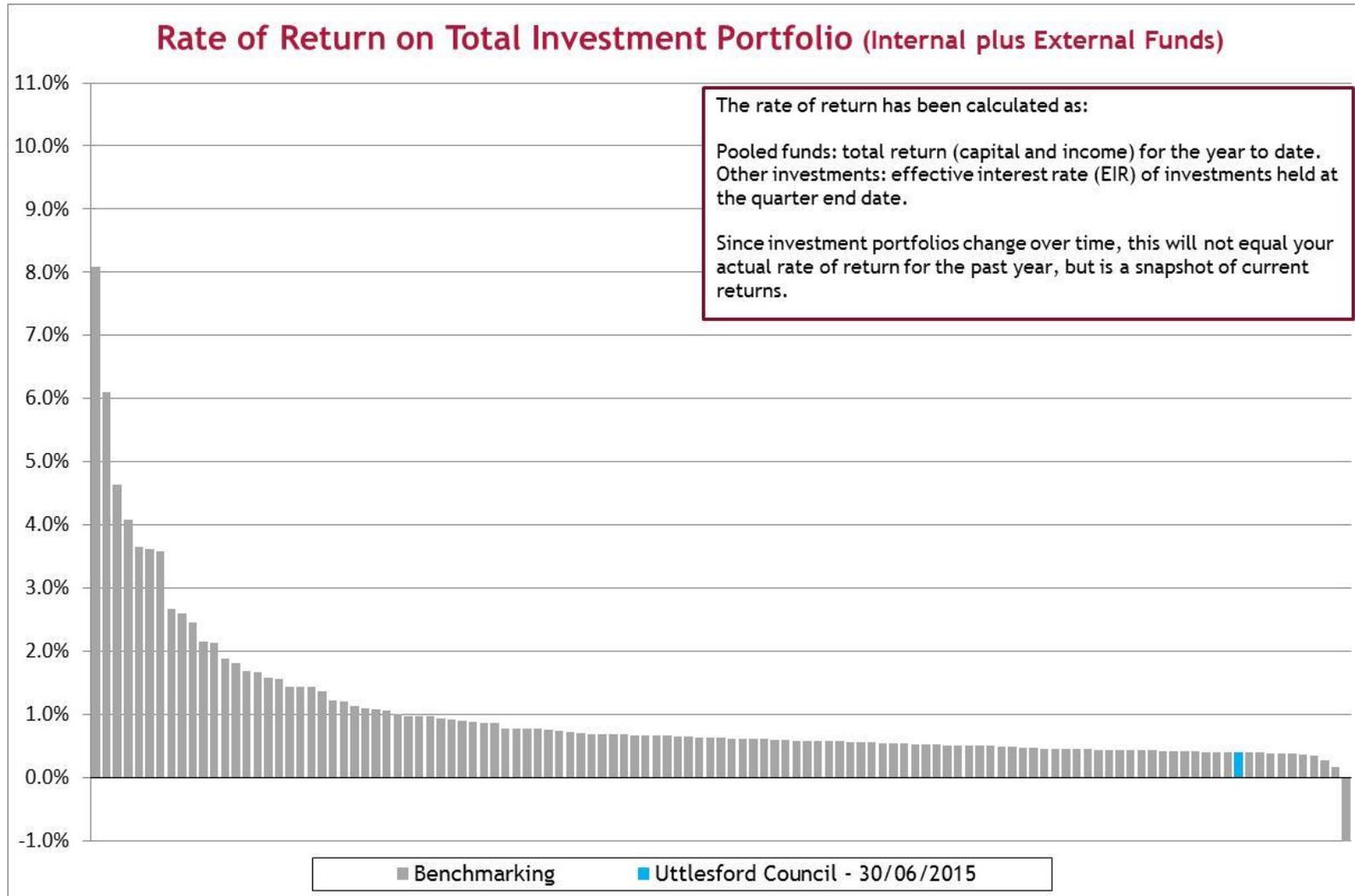
Conclusion

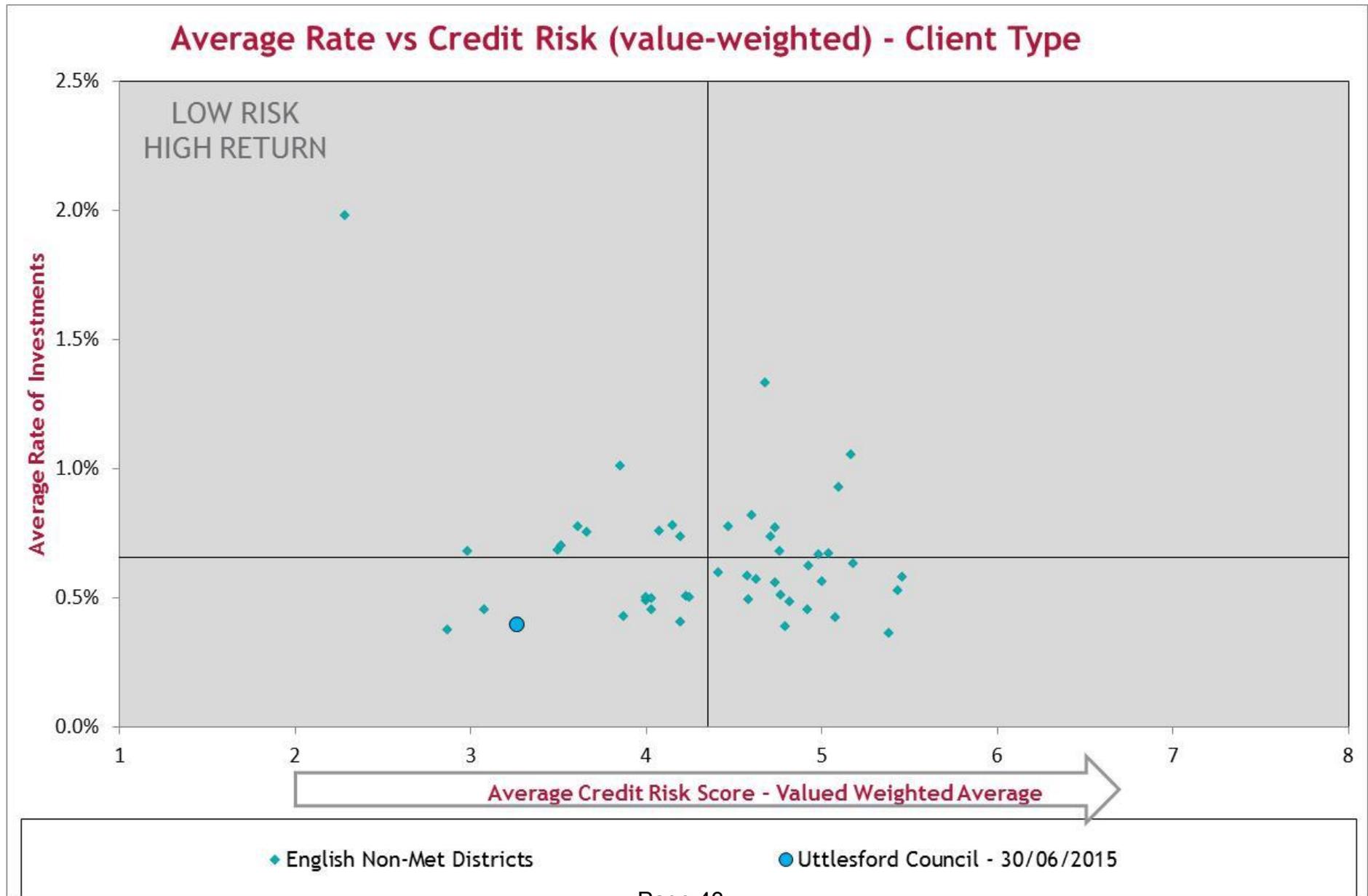
24. The data provided by the Council's Treasury consultants shows that UDC's current strategy is more risk averse than the average authority. The treasury management strategy of UDC limits the Council from receiving higher returns and its performance with regards to rate of return is low when compared with other authorities.
25. The Council invests more in fixed term deposits than the average authority. Whereas the average authority has more funds placed with Money Market Funds and Call-Accounts. The average authority has more counterparties which they invest with compared to UDC, as listed in Appendix E.

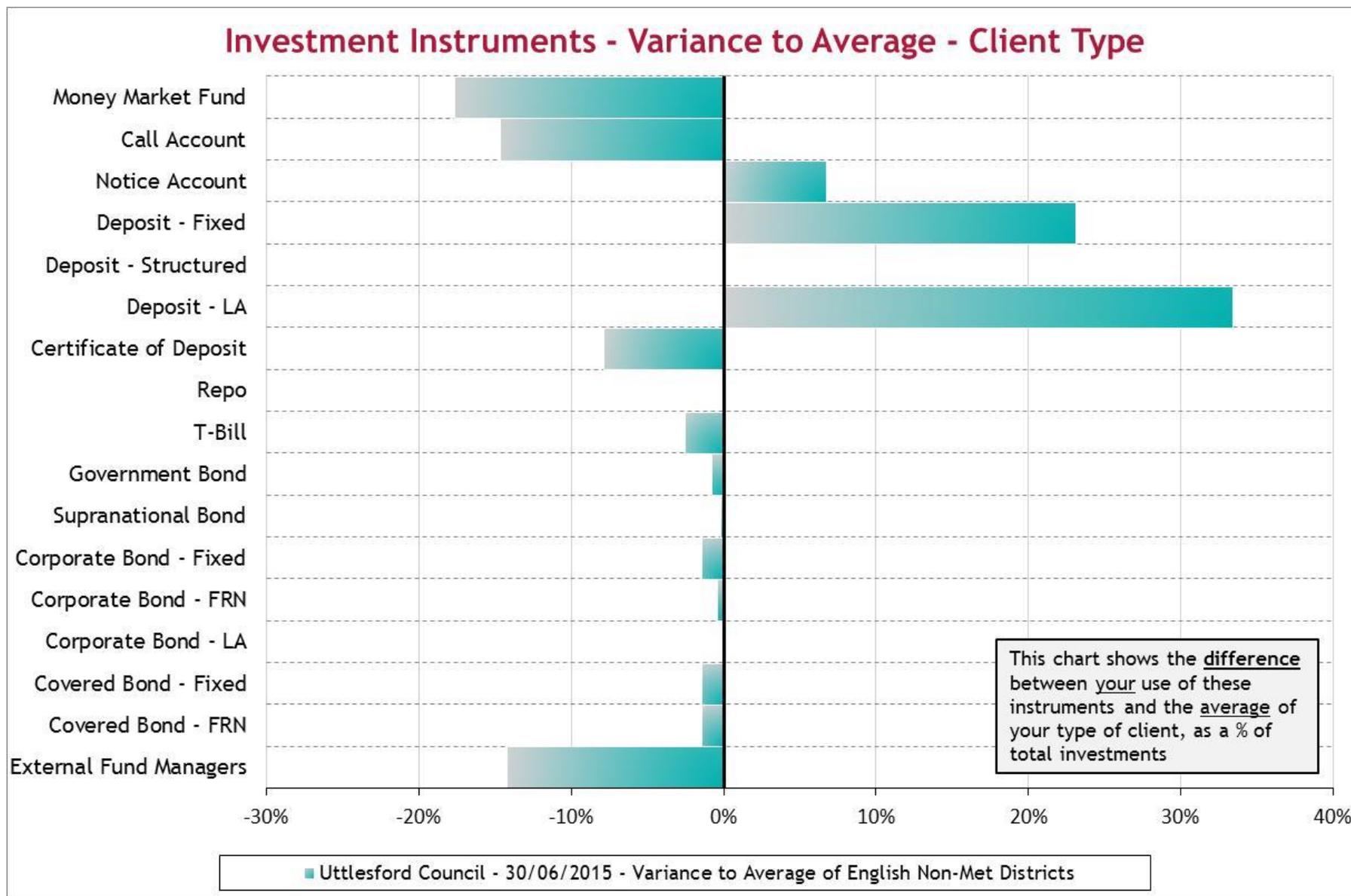
Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Loss of Council funds through failure of banking counterparty	2 (minimal risk due to nature of institutions used)	4 (significant sums are placed on deposit)	Treasury Management Strategy and regular monitoring with independent advice from Arlingclose Treasury consultants.

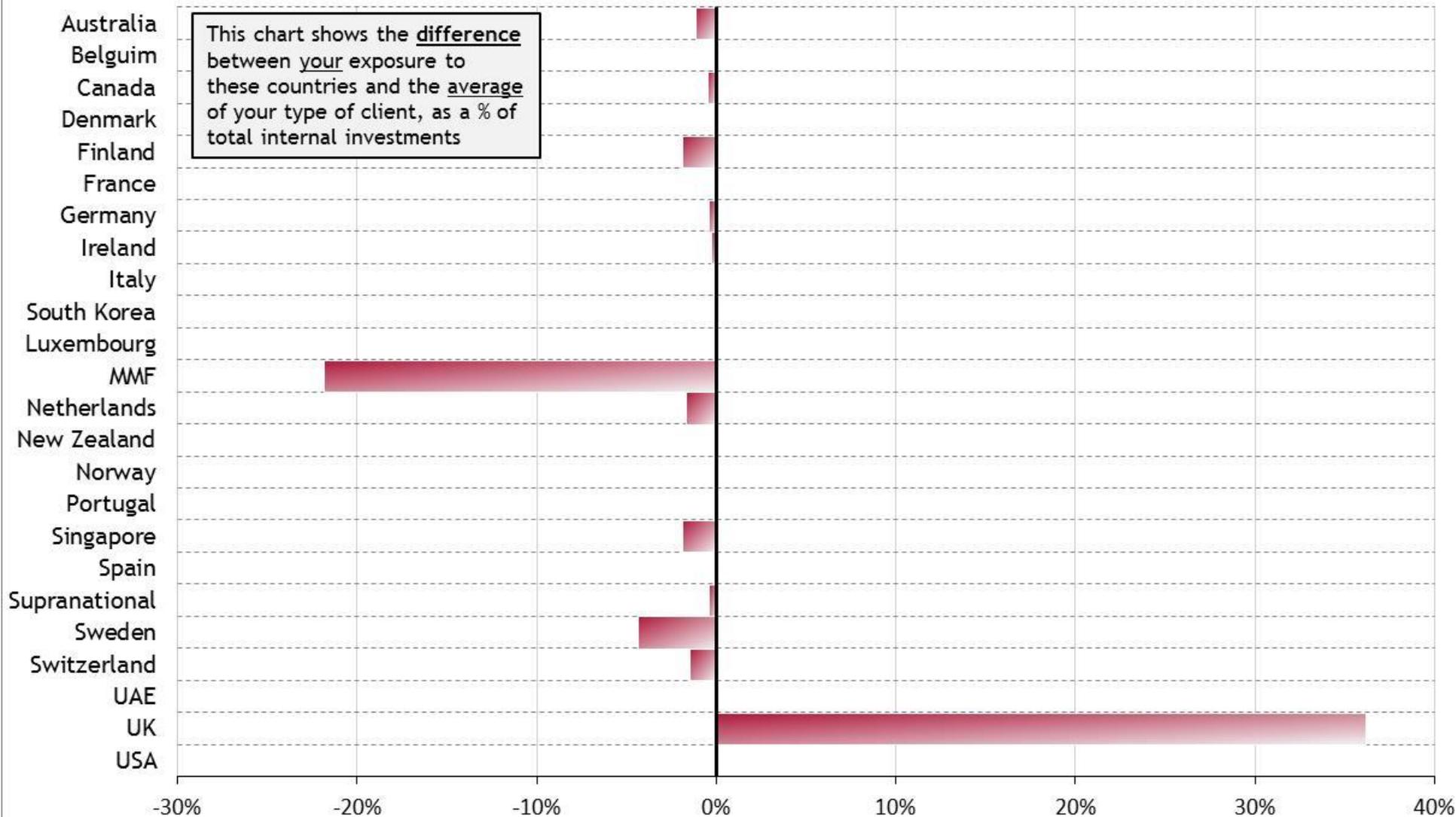
- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



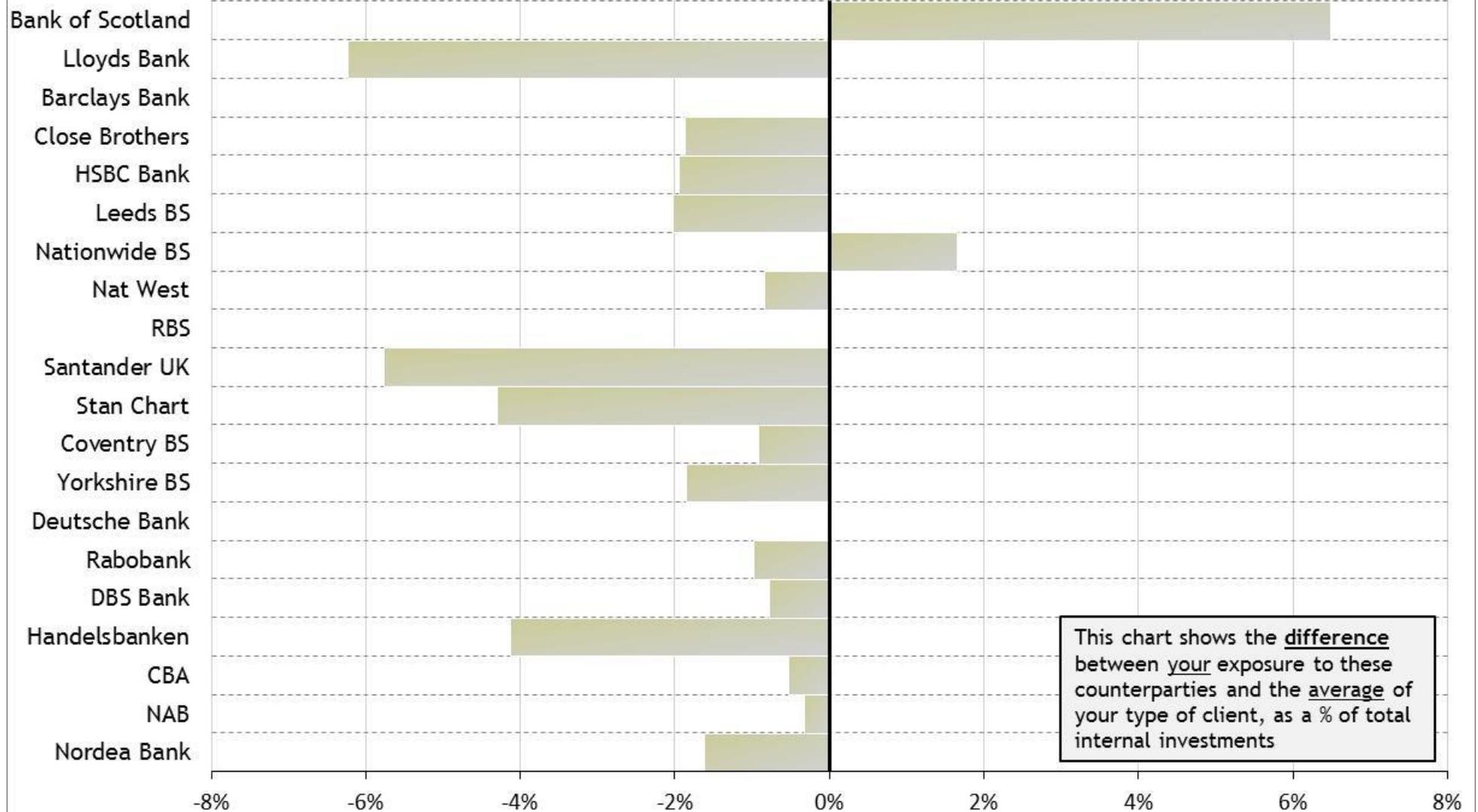




Country of Investment - Variance to Average - Client Type



Counterparty of Investment - Variance to Average - Client Type



This chart shows the difference between your exposure to these counterparties and the average of your type of client, as a % of total internal investments

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

10

Title: Autumn Statement – An overview of the key points

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Simon Howell

Key Decision: No

Summary

1. This report outlines the key points arising from the Autumn Statement as they affect the council.

Recommendations

2. The Cabinet is recommended to note the report.

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	The Autumn Statement announcements will in the most part be subject to further consultation by the government.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	Implications of the Autumn Statement will feed into the Medium term Financial Strategy.

Background

5. On Wednesday 25 November the Chancellor delivered the Autumn Statement. It gave some insight into the future direction of government funding although

as expected it did not contain necessary detail to enable the council to form a firm opinion on the funding available for the forthcoming four years.

6. With that in mind this report sets out the high level announcements and highlights in bold the key areas as seen at the moment.
7. The overall cut being applied to Local Government Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) is 46% in cash terms or 56% in real terms, but when business rates is added in at the retention target the cut is roughly 21% cash or 31% real.
8. Once council tax is added in as well the Treasury is forecasting that the local government spending will be higher in cash terms in 2019-20 than it is in the current financial year (albeit only by £0.2bn). **This prediction is based on the assumption that council tax is increased by the maximum in every authority and there is 0.75% p.a. underlying growth.**
9. The impact on districts looks to be severe and they are the big losers from the announcement unless there is some mitigation in coming settlements. **There is a decided shift in funding towards social care and upper tier authorities.**

New Homes Bonus

10. There are proposals to **reduce the funding for New Homes Bonus by £800m**, which is a cut of about two-thirds. The **current allocation of NHB is about £1.2bn**. The Government is going to be consulting on reform, and we will get further detail in a consultation alongside the Settlement in December.
11. Many district councils – particularly in the south-east of England – will be significant losers. For these councils the period over which current funding commitments will be tapered will be important. **The suggestion that there will be a floor to protect councils suggests that the tapering may be rapid.**
12. The assumption is that the cuts to New Homes Bonus will start in 2017-18 though this is not certain. Partly this is because we assume that the DCLG will not want to hold a rushed consultation which affects 2016-17 (although of course they might), and partly it is because the funding from NHB savings is only required from 2017-18 onwards. **It is suggested that the savings arising from the reduction in NHB will be used to fund social care.**

13. It is currently not clear how a reformed NHB might work. For instance, paragraph 1.242 of the announcement says that the Government is considering “reducing the length of payments from 6 years to 4 years”. Whilst this might imply a reduction of only one-third, it might be that the reward for each new dwelling is reduced (or “sharpened”) so that the Government is able to remove the £800m from the total. **Uttlesford does well from the work to bring homes back into use, it would appear this part of NHB may cease.**

14. According to a CIPFA comment

‘The NHB change sees shire districts losing 39% over the period with fire losing 32% and others closely matched in the 25% to 28% range. The largest cut is 51% (Uttlesford in Essex).’

15. What this looks like in terms of funding from 2015/16 to 2020/21 **could** be in terms of a freeze in 2016/17 and a two thirds reduction in current NHB from 2017/18:

£,000	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	714	714				
	534	534	534			
	794	794	794	794		
	835	835	835	835	835	
	721	721	721	721	721	721
		690	690	690	690	690
			622	622	622	622
				989	989	989
					1,295	1,295
						1,308
Total	3,598	4,288	4,196	4,651	5,152	5,625
Possible	3,598	3,598	1,199	1,199	1,199	1,199
Deficit	0	690	2,997	3,452	3,953	4,426

Business Rates

16. The proposal that councils can retain 100% business rates was previously announced and this was confirmed in the Autumn Statement and there will be

a consultation next year. There was an indication of some of the services that could be transferred over to local government in return for 100% retention. **The main one of these was the potential for funding of Housing Benefit for pensioners to be transferred to the council.** It seems reasonable to assume we will not be significantly better off under the new scheme.

Reserves

17. The proposals to tax reserves or force authorities to use their reserves have not materialised. Instead **authorities are being “encouraged” to use their reserves to manage change.**

Other items

18. There was no mention of any funding for past or future council tax freezes.
19. The general council tax referendum limit was not mentioned, though the statement that "from next April, police forces will be able to increase the amount they require from council tax collections by 2%" provides some idea of Government's thinking on what will be the referendum limit.
20. The doubling of small business rate relief will be extended for an additional 12 months

Next steps

21. The local government finance settlement provisional announcement will be made this month and that will set out funding for 2016/17 and will start the consultation on changes to NHB. It may also have more information at this point around the consultation on Business Rates retention.
22. A member briefing will be held on the evening of 11 January 2016.
23. The budget strategy for 2016/17 will be presented to Cabinet on 12 January 2016.

Risk Analysis

None – this item is for noting only.

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

11

Title: 2016/17 Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Simon Howell

Key decision: No

Summary

1. There is a requirement to annually review the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme, and propose changes to the scheme for the following financial year. The decisions made, even if no change is proposed, must then be consulted upon before a decision is taken at Full Council in December on the final scheme for the following financial year.
2. As can be seen from the table in paragraph 8 Uttlesford has the lowest percentage contribution requirement of any authority in Essex. This demonstrates the council has used its resources to support the scheme and it has been the council's policy to phase in increases in contribution over an extended period. Furthermore it has been the council's policy to make a full contribution to protected claimants.
3. In 2013/14 when the original scheme was introduced the contribution rate was set at 8.5% and this increased in 2014/15 to 12.5%. This rate was frozen in 2015/16.
4. Following a report to Cabinet in June 2015 a consultation was undertaken on the following basis
 - The 2016/17 LCTS scheme is set on the same basis as the 2015/16 scheme and therefore the contribution rate is frozen for the second consecutive year.
 - Provide discretionary subsidy for town & parish councils for 2016/17 in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph 29.
 - The 2016/17 Council Tax discounts are set at the same rate as the 2015/16 discounts as set out in paragraphs 30 – 33.
5. Details of the consultation can be found at paragraph 36. There was strong support for continuing the current scheme parameters as consulted upon for 2016/17.
6. In November 2015 Scrutiny Committee reviewed the consultation outcomes and noted the views of the public.

Recommendations

7. The Cabinet is requested to approve, for recommendation to Full Council, the Local Council Tax Support scheme as recommended in June and as set out in this report.

Financial Implications

8. Detailed in the report (paragraph 39).

Background Papers

9. None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Proposals were subject to public consultation and discussions with major preceptors
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	An equalities impact assessment will be completed.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Compliance with relevant legislation.
Sustainability	The objective is to achieve a financially sustainable set of arrangements.
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	Ongoing demands on the Revenues & Benefits, Housing and Customer Service teams

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)

10. LCTS replaced Council Tax Benefit (CTB) from 1 April 2013. The Council has adopted a scheme for 2015/16 which has the following key elements:

- a) Pensioners on low income protected from adverse changes (as required by Government)
- b) Disabled people, carers and blind people on a low income receive discretionary protection from adverse changes
- c) Working age people previously on full CTB pay no more than 12.5% of the council tax bill
- d) £25 per week of earned wages income disregarded from assessment (to provide a work incentive)
- e) Child Benefit and Child Maintenance disregarded from assessment (to minimise exacerbation of child poverty, or accusations of same)

- f) Hardship Policy to enable additional support for genuine extreme hardship cases
- g) Discretionary subsidy from UDC budget to ensure cost neutrality for County, Police and Fire (because the cost of the 'generous' UDC scheme is greater than the Government funding provided)
- h) Funding of parish councils to ensure no effects on parish council tax Band D calculation (caused by LCTS discounts reducing the taxbase).

2015/16 Contribution Rates across Essex

11. The council has the lowest percentage liability cap within Essex as is shown below

	% Liability Cap 2013/14	% Liability Cap 2014/15	% Liability Cap 2015/16
Basildon	15	25	25
Braintree	20	20	20
Brentwood	20	20	20
Castle Point	30	30	30
Chelmsford	20	23	23
Colchester	20	20	20
Epping Forest	20	20	20
Harlow	24	24	24
Maldon	20	20	20
Rochford	20	20	20
Southend-on-Sea	25	25	25
Tendring	15	15	20
Thurrock	25	25	25
Uttlesford	8.5	12.5	12.5

Caseload

12. What the table below shows is the significant drop in the number of Working Age claimants (30% between 2012/13 and 2015/16). Whilst this is positive and welcomed it does mean any future changes to the scheme are directly impacting a much smaller group of people which means for them bigger changes than previously encountered. In addition, as the group is smaller the monies raised from increasing the contribution rate has also decreased.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16

	Baseline Caseload	Caseload	Caseload	Caseload
Pensioner and Disabled Claimants	2,540	2,586	2,541	2,497
Working Age Claimants	1,321	1,132	957	920
Total	3,861	3,718	3,498	3,417

- The small drop in pensioner and disabled claimants may be a consequence of the change in retirement age from 65 to 67

Costs

13. Under the old CTB scheme the council was refunded the full cost. When LCTS commenced the government only gave councils 90% of the cost with the expectation that the cost of the lost 10% would be passed onto the taxpayer. The core funding of UDC's share has been paid through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) which has been reducing for the last few years as it is being replaced by New Homes Bonus and Business Rates Retention. By 2020/21 the RSG will have gone completely and with it the direct funding from the old CTB scheme unless Central Government continue to fund pensioners.
14. The cost of the 2014/15 scheme for UDC was £59,000 and this increases to a forecast £120,000 for 2015/16. Whilst the LCTS scheme was frozen the reducing RSG led to the overall increase in cost.
15. With the RSG forecast to decrease by a further 20% in 2016/17 it will add an additional £89,000 to the cost of administering the current scheme, even after the reduced caseload is taken into account. This means the total cost for 2016/17 is forecast to be £209,000
16. This figure would be reduced if the contribution rate was increased for Working Age group claimants.

Increasing the Contribution Rate

17. If the cap is increased the scheme would generate more income. However as the Working Age group is reducing in size the amount of additional income per percentage point is also decreasing.
18. When the LCTS scheme for Uttlesford was established it was anticipated that collection from the taxpayers may be a challenge and therefore the expected collection rate was set at 75%. Collection has not proven to be a major issue with the current rate being in excess of 90%. For this report we have assumed a collection rate of 90%.
19. The table on the following page sets out the additional income achievable by increasing the liability cap from 12.5% and the additional money that would have to be paid by the claimant each year and each week.

	Income benefit to billing authority and major preceptors	Effect on claimant

Contribution Rate	Additional Council Tax Income £	Additional Income with 90% Collection Rate £	Average Additional Cost per claim per year £	Average Additional Cost per claim per week £
15.00%	21,225	19,103	23.07	0.44
17.50%	39,267	35,340	42.68	0.82
20.00%	56,857	51,171	61.80	1.19
22.50%	74,008	66,607	80.44	1.55
25.00%	90,730	81,657	98.62	1.90
27.50%	107,034	96,330	116.34	2.24
30.00%	122,930	110,637	133.62	2.57

20. What the table above demonstrates is that an increase of contribution rate to 15% would generate an additional council tax potential income of £21,225 of which £19,103 would be collected and shared between the preceptors. The impact on a Working Age claimant who receives the maximum amount of LCTS would be an additional 44p per week to pay adding up to £23.07 for a full year.

Income Sharing Agreement

21. An Essex wide income sharing agreement was entered into with all billing authorities and the major preceptors at the time of implementation of the new LCTS scheme. The main principles of the agreement are to ensure a joint approach to maximising income collection (please refer to points 31 and 32 of this report) and reduce fraud and ensure compliance. In monitoring and working proactively on fraud this ensures that our Taxbase is maintained at the maximum level generating extra revenue for both the major preceptors and billing authorities.

Preceptors receive a share of all income generated for Council Tax and this is allocated through the Collection Fund at year end.

The increased income generated specifically from these activities and internal decisions by UDC each year is monitored and the preceptors have agreed to share their element of the extra income with the Local Authorities.

A further post is being funded through this agreement from 2015/16 for a period of three years to work directly on all areas of fraud and compliance within Council Tax. The income generated directly from this work will also be shared as per the agreement.

Funding for Town/Parish Councils

22. A key feature of the LCTS scheme is that the LCTS discounts reduce the taxbase, and therefore affect council tax calculations, including the headline Band D figure.

23. The Government intends that billing authorities distribute a share of their LCTS funding to town & parish councils to compensate for the reduction in their taxbase. This should avoid excessive increases in parish Band D figures. Whether and how this is done, is a discretionary matter for each authority.

24. For 2013/14 UDC decided that the most appropriate course of action was to distribute funds to town & parish councils in such a way as to ensure that they are neither advantaged or disadvantaged by the LCTS taxbase adjustments. The effect is that the parish Band D figure is not affected by these adjustments, and any increase or decrease in the Band D figure was solely because of changes in the town/parish council's budget.

25. An example of this principle is below.

2015/16		2016/17 without UDC funding	2016/17 with UDC funding	
Parish precept	£12,000	£12,000	Parish income requirement	£12,000 (no change)
			UDC funding	-£3,000
			Parish precept	£9,000 (£2,000 increase)
Taxbase	400	300 (smaller figure due to LCTS discounts)	Taxbase	300
Parish Band D figure	£30.00	£40.00	Parish Band D figure	£30.00
		33% increase		No change
				£36.67 (22% increase)

26. Calculations show that the total UDC funding required to achieve neutrality in each town/parish for 2015/16 was £171,000 and this is the figure that has been used for calculating the cost of the 2016/17 scheme.

27. Although an entirely discretionary payment, it is fairly clear that to discontinue some form of parish council subsidy would lead to large parish band D increases. It is not yet known whether there will be a council tax referendum limit for town and parish councils in 2016/17. If there is a referendum limit then discontinuation of the UDC subsidy would cause financial difficulties for some town & parish councils.

28. Payments made to individual town and parish councils in each of the last 3 financial years are as set out below

	Grant Paid (£)	Grant Paid (£)	Grant Paid (£)
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Arkesden	99	86	114
Ashdon	771	588	635
Aythorpe Roding	119	75	64
Barnston	1,822	1,665	1,289
Berden	360	308	291
Birchanger	1,187	1,076	1,064
Broxted	1,124	917	868
Chickney	0	0	0
Chrishall	725	571	576
Clavering	654	630	544
Debden	622	638	602
Elmdon & Wendens Lofts	503	523	463
Elsenham	3,165	2,952	3,106
Farnham	482	458	352
Felsted	4,165	3,948	3,557
Flitch Green	1,070	1,121	921
Great Canfield	96	57	27
Great Chesterford	2,339	2,354	2,126
Great Dunmow	47,545	44,501	42,680
Great Easton & Tilty	1,158	1,056	965
Great Hallingbury	447	524	454
Hadstock	393	393	402
Hatfield Broad Oak	2,383	1,852	1,701
Hatfield Heath	1,831	1,683	1,479
Hempstead	481	470	411
Henham	1,171	888	724
High Easter	292	255	256
High Roding	0	0	0
Langley	283	247	196
Leaden Roding	604	629	486
Lindsell	0	0	0
Little Bardfield	183	185	190
Little Canfield	640	663	636
Little Chesterford	64	46	40
Little Dunmow	773	894	802
Little Easton	997	896	800
Little Hallingbury	1,719	1,685	1,615
Littlebury	1,234	1,348	1,074
Manuden	321	276	290
	Grant Paid (£)	Grant Paid (£)	Grant Paid (£)
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Margaret Roding	441	330	352

Newport	4,796	4,348	3,679
Quendon & Rickling	1,187	1,138	988
Radwinter	783	654	678
Saffron Walden	69,823	64,546	61,882
Sampfords, The	498	508	478
Sewards End	217	169	161
Stansted	13,271	13,569	12,178
Stebbing	2,070	1,817	1,729
Strethall	0	0	0
Takeley	7,931	7,968	7,546
Thaxted	8,876	8,062	7,630
Ugley	319	305	234
Wendens Ambo	577	473	404
White Roding	191	201	183
Wicken Bonhunt	98	119	110
Widdington	468	427	416
Wimbish	571	474	457
Total	193,939	181,566	170,905

29. The proposal that a discretionary parish subsidy scheme continues for 2016/17. The consultation was undertaken on the following basis:

- a) UDC will provide discretionary funding to town and parish councils in 2016/17 to mitigate the effect of LCTS discount taxbase reductions on the Band D Council Tax calculation.
- b) The total UDC parish subsidy pot to be distributed using the formula of [2012/13 Parish Band D x 2016/17 Parish LCTS taxbase reduction] – thus avoiding UDC subsidising any precept increases made in 2013/14, 2014/15 or 2015/16. The payment then to be adjusted pro rata to ensure that the total funding pot is not exceeded.

Council Tax Discounts

30. From 1 April 2013, billing authorities (including UDC) have had a greater discretion over the level of council tax discounts given to owners of second homes and empty homes.
31. In 2014/15 the Council reviewed Council Tax discounts with the underpinning objective to increase Council Tax income to mitigate and offset LCTS costs and reductions in government funding.
32. Following the consultation the table below shows the changes that were made to the scheme as from 1 April 2014 and which continued to operate through 2015/16.

	Discounts given 2013/14	Changes introduced as from 1 April 2014
Second homes	10%	Remove discount
Empty Homes Class A (major repairs)	100% for up to 12 months	Reduce discount to 50% for up to 12 months
Empty Homes Class C (vacant)	100% for up to 6 months	Reduce discount to 50% for up to 6 months
Empty Homes Premium (empty & unfurnished for more than 2 years)	None	Add premium of 50%

33. The effect of these changes on the 2016/17 budget are to provide an additional £400,000 of Council Tax income of which the UDC share is £57,000

LCTS Administration, hardship and recovery funding

34. As part of the scheme the major preceptors (County, Fire and Police) provide funding of £34,000 per annum to employ an officer to ensure the efficient administration of the LCTS scheme. The officer also works with those people affected by the scheme so as to ensure they make their payments and thereby avoid costly recovery action being taken.

35. Essex County Council contributes £7,000 per annum towards the running of the hardship scheme which has a £15,000 annual budget (£8,000 UDC element).

Consultation

36. The consultation period ran from 27 July to 30 September and 1,089 responses were received. This is one of the largest responses for any non-planning consultation that the council has undertaken in recent years.

37. The following consultative methods were used, in all cases the same questions were asked:

- Dedicated pull-out four page survey distributed with *Uttlesford Life*. A reply paid envelope was also included so as to make it as easy as possible for residents to respond. Additional paper copies were also distributed to the Council's main contact points at the Great Dunmow Library, Thaxted CIC and the CSC in Saffron Walden.
- Open public consultation. The survey was promoted on the Council's website from 27 July to 30 September via an interactive form using the Snap 11 consultation platform.
- General promotion was carried out with a press release and exposure via the Council's social media channels and prominent placement on the homepage of the Council's website.

By the close of the consultation period, 1042 paper responses had been received and a further 47 online submission were registered. This represents a significant increase in overall submissions on each of the previous years when the consultation was not so widely distributed. It should be remembered that not all respondents chose to answer all of the questions and that in a number of cases residents opted to submit statements and comments in support of the 'No' option even though they had answered 'Yes' to a particular section of the consultation.

38. The consultation full report is attached as Appendix One. In summary the respondents supported the 2016/17 proposed LCTS scheme.

Putting it all together

39. The table on the following page brings together all the costs and income arising from the recommendations in the report. It shows that the forecasted position for UDC in 2016/17 is a net cost of £209,000.

All figures £000	TOTAL forecast 2016/17	County, Police and Fire share forecast 2016/17	UDC share forecast 2016/17
LCTS discounts	3,205	2,754	451
Government LCTS funding at 20% reduction	(1,883)	(1,613)	(270)
Subtotal – LCTS scheme	1,322	1,141	181
Additional income generated by changes to internal policy	(400)	(343)	(57)
Major preceptors income sharing agreement – 16% passed back to district council	0	55	(55)
Subtotal – net effect of the LCTS & discounts changes	922	853	69
UDC discretionary funding of town/parish councils	171	0	171
Major preceptor funding of LCTS administration & recovery costs	0	34	(34)
LCTS hardship scheme	15	7	8
ECC funding of hardship administration	0	5	(5)
TOTAL NET COST	1,108	899	209

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Assumptions about costs and income levels are incorrect	3 (a high degree of variability and estimation is involved)	3 (use of reserves may differ from the level envisaged)	Monitor trends closely and review scheme each year to make necessary adjustments. Maintain adequate contingency reserves.

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

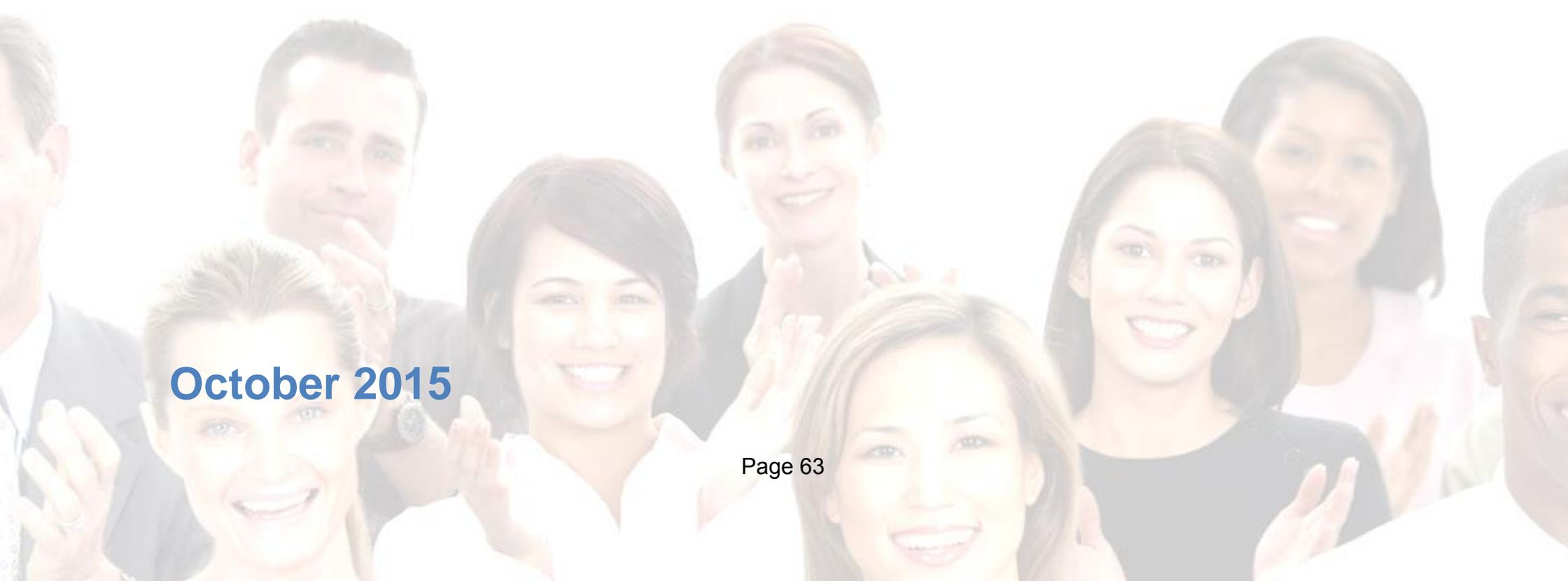


Appendix One
Uttlesford District Council

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)

A report on the public survey about Local Council Tax Support provision in Uttlesford for the year 2016-17

October 2015





Contents

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 - Introduction
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- 2. Purpose methodology**
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 - Open text responses
 - Questionnaire
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1. Executive summary

In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced by a new local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme. The Government required councils to protect pensioners so that they would receive the same level of support as they did under Council Tax Benefit. This means that LCTS has applied only to working age people. Since the start of this scheme in 2013 the number of working age people in receipt of LCTS in Uttlesford has dropped by 30% from 1,321 to 920.

This is the fourth year that a consultation asking for residents' views on the provisions that the council makes for local people within the scheme.

Information about the LCTS setting process and the survey was distributed to every household in the district as an insert into the council's magazine *Uttlesford Life* and, as part of the authority's drive towards channel shift, the 2015 survey was also available through an online questionnaire which was publicised on the website and in press releases. A small number of additional copies of *Uttlesford Life* were distributed to libraries and the council's CIC points across the district to ensure that all residents would have a chance of taking part even if they had lost their original issue of the magazine. A copy of the survey was not included in the summer Citizens Panel questionnaire as it was considered that panellists could respond independently. The results are detailed below.

Local Council Tax Support Questionnaire

Introduction
Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) has replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme and each year the council must consult on the proposed scheme for the following year. The results of this consultation will be presented to councillors in the autumn with the final scheme for 2016/17 being agreed in December, to start on 1 April 2016. The government's aim for the scheme is to promote the work ethic and ensure that people are better off working than not. Since the start of this scheme in 2013 the number of working age people in receipt of LCTS in Uttlesford has dropped by 30% from 1,321 to 920. The council wants to hear your view on this scheme so please take a few minutes to complete the form and send it back to us in the envelope provided. If your envelope is missing, please contact the council by phone 01799 510510 or email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk. Alternatively you can complete this questionnaire online at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/LCTS. This consultation is anonymous but collated results will be publicly available, including written answers. These will not be attributed to any individual but please do not include any personal or confidential information in your responses.

1. The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

Do you agree with this? Yes No

If no, why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected, in this box

Please turn over

Results summary

The results of the survey have been analysed using Snap Survey Version 11 and are supplied as both counts (the number of people who answered each question) and percentages (the proportion of people who answered a question in a particular way). Data from both online and paper survey submissions has been merged to provide a single dataset.

The Uttlesford District Council LCTS scheme is the most generous in Essex providing additional protection and support for vulnerable working age people. Questions in the 2015 survey sought the views of residents and stakeholder groups as to whether this stance is generally supported and should be continued into the 2016/17 financial year. Since April 2014 discounts available on Council Tax liable for empty homes and second properties have been curtailed and the funds used to support the LCTS scheme. Additional sections of the survey asked for feedback on this approach. The results are given below:

Results actuals

Questionnaire responses

NB In a number of instances respondents who answered “Yes” to a question also added a comment in the box allocated to those answering “No” to that same question. This has led to an apparent disparity in the count return rates for a number of questions.

Headline results are highlighted in bold. Full text responses are available in Appendix 1.

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>Q1 The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.</p> <p>Do you agree with this?</p>	<p>Yes: 979 (95.2%)</p> <p>No 49 (4.8%)</p>

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.</p>	<p>90 comments received</p>
<p>Q2 For each 2.5% of increase the LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay, on average, an additional £23.07 of Council Tax each year. The cost to the council of keeping the rate at 12.5% would be approximately £209,000. Do you agree that the council should keep the rate at 12.5% for a third year?</p> <p>If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.</p>	<p>Yes 800 (77.9%)</p> <p>No 227 (22.1%)</p> <p>250 comments received</p>
<p>Q3 The council currently makes sure town and parish councils do not lose money by providing a grant to make up the difference. If the council didn't provide this money it is likely that the amount town and parish councils charge residents would need to increase. For 2016/17 it is likely that the cost of this funding will be in the region of £170,000 across all town and parish councils in the district. Do you agree that Uttlesford District Council should continue to protect town and parish council budgets by bearing this cost?</p> <p>If you have answered "No", why not?</p>	<p>Yes 946 (93,5%)</p> <p>No 66 (6.5%)</p> <p>90 comments received</p>
<p>Q4. To help fund the LCTS, the council reviewed Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes.</p> <p>a. Second homes</p>	<p>Yes 971 (93.8%)</p> <p>No 64 (6.2%)</p>

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed so the charge is the same as for every other house. Do you agree that this treatment of second homes is correct? If "No", please explain why.</p>	<p>83 comments received</p>
<p>b. Empty homes undergoing major repair Prior to 1 April 2014 there was a 100% discount for a period of up to 12 months from when the property became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 12 months. Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs? If you have answered "No", what should be used and why?</p>	<p>Yes 813 (79.4%)</p> <p>No 211 (20.6%)</p> <p>249 comments received</p>
<p>c. Empty homes Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6 months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months. Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs? If "No", please explain why.</p>	<p>Yes 752 (73.9%)</p> <p>No 265 (26.1%)</p> <p>289 comments received</p>
<p>d. Empty homes premium Prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (ie the owners of such homes would pay</p>	<p>Yes 753 (74.1%)</p> <p>No 263 (25.9%)</p>

Headline question	Result (counts) percentage
<p>150% of the Council tax per house). Do you agree that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period? If "No", please explain why.</p>	292 comments received
Q5 Further comments made regarding the LCTS scheme	123 comments received
Q6 Postcodes data entered	1014
Q7 Are you in receipt of LCTS?	<p>No 909 (90.3%)</p> <p>Yes 98 (9.7%)</p>
Q8 If you in receipt of LCTS, are you in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer)?	<p>Yes 83 (91.2%)</p> <p>No 9 (9.9%)</p>

Results priority analysis

Previous surveys conducted in 2012 for the initial introduction of the scheme in 2013-14, in 2013 for the 2014-15 scheme, and in 2014 for the 2015-16 scheme were conducted to determine the most effective resolution for recipients in Uttlesford. Questions have been varied during each of the annual consultations. Whilst not directly comparable, the 2015 consultation for the 2016-17 scheme in part seeks to revisit a number of elements previously adopted in order to determine if there has been a move in public opinion. An example of this is seen in Q4a where the decision on second home discounts, implemented in 2014-15 following the 2013 consultation, is re-visited.

Local Council Tax Support Priorities:

The broad principle of the scheme has been maintained since its introduction, with some elements being refined in succeeding years. Headline results across all consultation streams indicate that the public are broadly in favour of the local scheme as currently delivered. Following public consultation, in December 2012 the Council adopted an LCTS scheme which included protection for pensioners (a mandatory requirement for all schemes) but added further protection for vulnerable working age people. Respondents indicated a marked preference for the continuation of this discretionary element with 95.2% supporting ongoing protection within LCTS for disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

The LCTS scheme for 2014/15 implemented an amendment to increase the minimum amount paid by LCTS recipients formerly entitled to full Council Tax Benefit from 8.5% to 12.5%. This still represents the most generous support package in Essex, but costs the Council approximately £209,000 per annum. Just over three quarters of residents (77.9%) indicated their continued support for retaining this arrangement.

A further financial implication of the scheme arises from the support Uttlesford District Council provides to town and parish councils in order to ensure that they are not adversely affected by the loss of Council Tax income. Again, there was consistent support for continuing this course of action with 93.5% of respondents indicating their approval.

A further section of questions sought to ascertain the current views of residents on Council discounts for second home owners and empty homes that were amended from 1 April 2014. These included the removal of second home discounts and the reduction of relief for empty homes undergoing repair. The resulting additional income has been used to support the LCTS scheme, thus reducing the direct impact on Uttlesford District Council budgets. Across the board there was support for maintaining the current level of discounts. Over nine in ten people (93.8%) continue to support the removal of the 10% discount for second homes whilst just under eight in ten (79.4%) maintain their approval for the reduction of empty homes discount – this was scaled down to 50% from 1 April 2014. Some 73.9% of those responding to the survey also continued to approve of the current level of discount on homes that are empty but not undergoing major repairs whilst a further 74.1% of respondents further agreed that the premium to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use should be continued.

2. Purpose methodology

Uttlesford District Council has a statutory duty to consider annually whether to revise its Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS), replace it with another or make no changes. If it wishes to amend or substitute the scheme in the forthcoming year the Council is obliged to consult with interested parties. The results of this consultation will inform the decisions made by officers and councillors when setting Council Tax spending for the year April 2016 to March 2017.

In a departure from the format of previous years the LCTS survey for the 2016-17 scheme was distributed as a centre page insert into the summer edition of the Council's widely distributed community newsletter, *Uttlesford Life*, which is delivered to

every household in the district. A copy of the survey was not, this year, included in the summer Citizens Panel questionnaire as it was considered that panellists could respond independently.

The consultation was run over the period 27 July to 30 September 2015. Respondents were asked to indicate their support for the scheme as it currently stands and to provide comments where they thought any amendments might be applicable. They were also offered the opportunity to make any further observations. For profiling purposes they were also invited to include a postcode and to state if they were in receipt of LCTS.

The following consultative methods were used, in all cases the same questions were asked:

- Dedicated pull-out four page survey distributed with *Uttlesford Life*. A reply paid envelope was also included so as to make it as easy as possible for residents to respond. Additional paper copies were also distributed to the Council's main contact points at the Great Dunmow Library, Thaxted CIC and the CSC in Saffron Walden.
- Open public consultation. The survey was promoted on the Council's website from 27 July to 30 September via an interactive form using the Snap 11 consultation platform.

General promotion was carried out with a press release and exposure via the Council's social media channels and prominent placement on the homepage of the Council's website.

By the close of the consultation period, 1042 paper responses had been received and a further 47 online submission were registered. This represents a significant increase in overall submissions on each of the previous years when the consultation was not so widely distributed. It should be remembered that not all respondents chose to answer all of the questions and that in

a number cases residents opted to submit statements and comments in support of the 'No' option even though they had answered 'Yes' to a particular section of the consultation.

3. Survey results, detailed findings

Survey results across all streams

The results for each of the different consultation streams – paper and online surveys – are reported below as a single merged dataset.

LCTS substantive questions

This analysis comments on the responses received across both consultation channels and makes some reference to previous consultations. Results are broadly in line with the views of residents as reported in previous years, principally research undertaken with stakeholders and the Uttlesford Citizens Panel to inform the 2014/15 scheme.

Q1 Protecting pensioners and disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income saw 95.2% support with only a 4.8% rate of dissent. Protection for pensioners is a mandatory requirement, though Uttlesford District Council has also opted to provide additional protection for vulnerable working age people – disabled people, carers and blind people. Although only 49 people considered that this additional support should be withdrawn, some 90 respondents chose to make a comment. These comments ranged from support for the long term ill – “People who are genuinely long term ill, but not necessarily classed as “disabled” ought to be included at the discretion of the council” to a suggestion that “Everyone should pay something.”

Q2 Maintaining the level at which non-vulnerable LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay Council Tax at 12.5% for a third year was supported by 77.9% of respondents. Those who answered 'No' in relation to this question were invited to supply additional

comments on other groups that might be protected or additions to the scheme. In all 250 people offered additional information ranging from suggestions for a “Slight increase, say to 15%. We seem to lag behind all other councils, significantly behind some. Whilst there may be a good explanation, none is given” to suggestions that it should be raised to “At least 20%”. The survey for the 2014/15 scheme undertaken in 2013 saw a 58% support rate for the 12.5% payment level. By comparison the current survey results represent an almost 20% increase on that figure.

Q3 Supporting parish and town councils to ensure that they do not lose money was backed by 93.5% of those who answered this question. Some 66 people (6.5%) did not agree with the continuation of this funding to which a further 90 added some additional clarifying comments. These ranged from “The money saved would be better spent on the section of the community who need it and who the council are currently cutting” to “In the end it all comes from us”.

Q4 The partial funding of the LCTS scheme via changes to the Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes elicited a range of responses. Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed and as part of the consultation residents were asked if they considered it right that second homes should be charged at the same rate as for every other house. In total 93.8% agreed that this amendment to second home discount should remain in place, with just 64 people objecting. In all 83 comments were made in relation to this part of the consultation with statements such as “10% discount to continue” and “Second homes should receive discounts of 25% unless they are being used all the time or rented out”. In relation to empty homes undergoing major repair, there has, since April 1 2014, been a reduction in the Council Tax Discount available (down from 100% to 50%) for a period of up to 12 months whilst works are being completed. From both paper and online surveys 79.4% of residents agreed that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs. Supplementary comments were well supplied in relation to this question with 249 people quantifying their opinions. These varied from “Should be no discount” to “If the owner does not, or cannot, repair these properties, the council should be able to requisition and bring it back to good living standard then either rent it out or sell it!”. Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6

months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months. Some 73.9% agreed that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs and again there was a significant response rate in the additional comments box with 289 people leaving some extra detail. Some considered that the “Discount [should] be phased out completely” whilst another noted that “3 months is long enough to find a new tenant especially at present with short age of suitable rented properties”. Again, prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (i.e. the owners of such homes would pay 150% of the Council tax per house). Of those who expressed an opinion 74.1% (753 people) agreed that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period, though 292 people added some supporting comments. These ranged from “I don't think it's fair to pay more than the normal council tax and with the increased development I can see a problem for sellers and those wanting to rent their properties in the future. I already know of people being unable to sell properties now because of the developments” to “Should be 100% i.e. Pay 200% after 2 years empty”. In the 2013 survey for the 2014/15 scheme there was 84% support for the removal of the 10% second homes discount. The current return takes this up to just under 94% indicating the continued support. Likewise, in 2013, 79% approved of the reduction in empty homes discount in relation to those buildings undergoing repairs. This figure is virtually unchanged in the current survey, again indicating continued popular support. Similar questions posed in respect of empty homes vacant for up to six months and the empty homes premium were again approved in 2013 with 82% and 89% support respectively. In 2015 there has been an 8% drop (down to 73.9%) in support for the first of these and a 15% drop in the second (down to 74.1%). These two elements represented the only significant fall off of public opinion throughout the entire survey.

Q5 Respondents were invited to make any additional observations on the scheme and 123 people chose to take up this option offering a range of opinions from “We are told we need more housing, let's get what we have back on the market. I fail to understand why single occupancy receives a discount, they use the same services and should pay going rate” to “Nice to be asked for an opinion”.

Q6 Although 1089 responses were received via the paper and online surveys only 1014 people chose to enter their postcode data. This still provides a comprehensive dataset and permits the plotting of response distribution across the district.

Q7 Of those who answered this question 98 people indicated that they were receipt of LCTS. This represents 9.7% of those who replied.

Q8 In relation to the previous question 83 people in receipt of LCTS noted that they considered themselves to be in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carers). It will be noted that whilst a further 9 replied that they were not in a protected category this makes a total of only 92 – 6 people then answered Q7 but omitted to follow through to Q8.

4. Appendices

4.1 Open text responses received

The following open text responses were received.

Q1 The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income. If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.

Responses received

Should be available only if claimant has been a resident of Uttlesford for a qualifying period - perhaps the three years prior to being eligible to claim

Your question is misleading – am I saying yes to what the government is saying? Or yes to what Uttlesford is doing? I agree with the Government stance on this. Not Uttlesford's.

Would like to see young vulnerable people e.g. those leaving care, protected. 18-25 year olds are very unlikely to earn more than a low income wage.

We should encourage all people to be self dependent.

People who are genuinely long term ill, but not necessarily classed as "disabled" ought to be included at the discretion of the council.

While I agree with Government's aim for this scheme, there are always those in dire need and it is part of the state's and citizens' duties to support them to avoid further and more expensive problems in health and education so that future generations can prosper.

As few as possible to be supported. Further 30% off 2016-17.

There is no reason why pensioners should receive a better settlement than the rest of the

community.

Disabled people and carers already receive benefits why should I as a full rate tax payer subsidise them anymore.

However - a small contribution should be made. Anything free is often abused. Most pensioners these days have adequate pensions.

A good scheme - enables those on low income to live on a reasonable standard of living and hopefully not be a burden on the community and state

Pensioners and disabled people on a low income do not have the same sorts of choices in seeking employment. Therefore financial threats are not likely to work, but are punitive.

Anybody who is in need.

While I have no objection in principal to protecting certain pensioners on low incomes and disabled people on low incomes.....should not their 'free' savings be taken into account ('free' savings meaning assets excluding the home itself)? The principal ought to be to protect individuals who cannot afford the CT, not whole categories of people.

Does 'disabled' income include those with mental health difficulties? This particularly vulnerable group should be included. Staff would, however, need a very intensive training in how to deal with distressed or vulnerable people, which they have clearly never received.

But those with a history or background of criminal history, refusal to work etc. Should not have same help as those who deserve it. People who have worked most of their lives and behaved in a proper manor.

Somehow, but other areas should be considered too like Health care aged, less able people, incapacitated mentally due to depression PTSD, anxiety attack, dementia sufferers (ALZ) and so on.....etc. And on top of this we have problem with Health care cost every time we travel to GP, Mind, hospitals etc. Financial poverty exists.

If they are not working then I think they should demonstrate their inability to work (eg. Number of hours in a caring capacity, the extent and type of disability) before being able to receive LCTS.

Those with the lowest incomes should be supported and not taxed with charges they cannot pay. But applicants should be properly assessed by competent people.

But you are cutting back where ever you can.

This benefit should be restricted to existing groups.

Definition of low income is crucial here. It should be around the level of state benefits e.g. Disability Living Allowance.

How is 'low income' defined?

Everyone should pay something.

Unfair they already receive plenty of other support and funding. They need to bear some personal sacrifices and not only demand more help. Maybe carers can remain their carers benefit but not disabled as carers have a choice so should be supported.

'Protected' yes, but to what degree?

Families who have a sick child, requiring frequent hospital visits/treatment should also be included. I work with parents in this situation and the financial impact on their households is huge - often needing to take unpaid leave from work to attend appointments - so whatever their income they are usually unable to meet normal financial commitments, and are not all in receipt of DLA or carer's.

Whilst agreeing in principal with the notion of protecting disable persons and their carers a distinction needs to be drawn between disabled groups. A person requiring a carer is more likely to be unable to work and thus increase their income; however, the definition of 'disabled' is too generic and may for example, include such groups as obese where the 'disability' is essentially a lifestyle cho

Not certain one way or the other.

This depends on the level of disability and support needed.

I think too many pensioners have never saved a penny for their old age. Their attitude is the state will have to look after me. There is too much protection promised by Government. Why do you think all these migrants want to come and live here.

I am 88, I live alone in a council bungalow and I do not feel protected from anything.

Although answered 'Yes' I think pensioners/carers where there are only 1 or 2 persons in a household should be considered. Today's salaries are much greater than they were, average £25,000 p.a. and ordinary pensioners and people who care for them will not receive ANYTHING like this as their income. In other words widen the income range. 'Single' households do not pay as much rates as v. elderly pensioners.

How is a 'low income' figure derived and how is it checked?

It rather depends on the circumstances surrounding their “low income”. Are they genuine cases or people who have chosen the benefits route. How long have they been resident in the UK?

Should be increased by 2.5% next year and a further 2.5% the year after.

Add low-income cancer patients who cannot work (Temporary protection).

Someone may have a low income but have huge wealth. If the criteria was low wealth and low income, I would agree.

There are very few pensioners left who did not have the means to provide for their old age whilst in employment. Would like to see scheme abolished within 10 years. There might need to be protection for those with health issues who struggled with employment.

. At the moment there is not enough proper jobs and support like day care for a lot of people outside of even these exempts. Young people can hardly even start their life without help from family - who already struggle.

I don't see why pensioners should be given special treatment either but if that is government policy you have to. Other groups have their needs meet with welfare and should not be given extra perks on spending.

It depends if they spend their income on smoking.

People who are in the ESA “support group” should also be protected as they are effectively “disabled” and unable to search for work at that time. They are therefore unable to increase their income i.e. anyone that is unable to increase their income should be protected.

This should be covered by disabled allowance.

Should follow government policy and minimise social care costs - promote work ethic.

Low income is not defined so difficult to judge without a threshold to work with. 'Some' of the people in these groups may have factors taken in or left out when calculating lets. Define low income?

People on low incomes because they are unable to work owing to mental or physical disability or long term illness.

Pensioners on low income should be encouraged to downsize to cheaper property. The LCTS should reflect this aim. Disabled people and carers should receive MORE support as they have little or no choice in their circumstance.

If they have pissed it up the wall all their lives, why should the rest of us support them in their

excess?

Protection should be means tested. Some pensioners are very well off.

Everyone on a low income should be given the benefit of the scheme.

Council Tax should be incorporated into income tax thus reducing bureaucracy, staff and time.

Single parent families on a low income should also be included.

Anyone on a low income should be protected

Each year UDC do a BIG media push proclaiming "CUTS" in council tax! Each year I end up paying more?

Stick to government scheme.

Households on low income include working age people on Employment Support Allowance and Income Support. It is (lawful) age discrimination to give protection to pensioners and not others, who are likely to be on lower income than many pensioners.

All those on low incomes must be protected from any schemes that would affect their income and reduce it in any way.

So long as people who are already working aren't penalised.

All people on low income. Some disabled and OAPs have a lot of money.

Throughout a person's working life, there is plenty of time to make provision for post-retirement income. Disability, apart from the most severe cases, is not a reason to work and make provision for future income. The onus here is for society as a whole to enable people with all but the most severe problems to provide income for themselves and to increase and maintain their self-esteem.

But I believe it only protects disabled people in the ESA support group and not disabled people in the work related group who have been told they are unable to return to work at the moment without extra help or support.

Everyone needs to be doing their bit to help the country cut the debt. There are lots of jobs and volunteering they could do to give something back to society.

No - there are obviously some disabled or carers that need this support, but others, do not and take advantage of 'the system'.

"Yes" as a general principle, but a more detailed answer would depend on the definition of and the policing of "low"

The discount should be reduced. The abuse of "Blue Badges" by the disabled is well known. Doubtless the discount scheme is also widely abused.

"Other groups" should include those in the retail trade who earn only pence more than the minimum wage.

Low wage earners with no other income should also be supported.

It would have been handy to have been able to know what % of the Council's budget we are dealing with here. It looks like a very small %. That makes the decision easier.

Pensioners should have made provision for their old, carers should be paid a living wage, disabled are entitled to benefits.

All people should be protected if their state is through no fault of their own.

If people have worked hard all their lives, they should have the benefits they deserve.

People who need social security support and housing "benefit" should not pay Council Tax. If people with no property are required to pay Council Tax, then it is effectively a poll tax.

Subsidies should be considered when all adults pay council tax and not just the householder as at the moment. There is already too great a burden on householders which is disproportionate.

Stay at home mothers/fathers who need to look after under 5s, if they are on low income. single occupants

As pensioners are protected - UDC has no say on this. Everyone on low income should be protected. UDC should absorb the cut in funding as some councils in London do, This should come before all services except those that UDC must by law provide. To do other creates division and indeed ill will against those who are protected.

I think UDC should concentrate on the quality of services it is giving, not on charging for services it doesn't give, or charges by the back door (brown bins - which take cut flowers but not garden waste because you want to be able to charge for that!)

All people on low income should be given protection. I know a number of people who have moved from benefits to working and have been worse off because of losing several benefits including council tax and housing.

Being disabled and a carer I hope we will not be shoved to the back burner again. We have worked all our lives paying into the system so we should be treated with respect not as a nuisance.

Protection should also be given to single mums on low incomes with children under five years old. Protection should be withdrawn from pensioners on low incomes paying council tax and living in houses in bands E-H of the council tax assessment scheme.

In principle those requiring financial assistance should be provided but this should be subject to regular scrutiny and revision if circumstances change.

I see no reason why pensioners should be protected

I agree that disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income should be protected, but NOT pensioners on low income. Disabled people and carers are usually unable to change their low income status, whereas I believe pensioners have more options.

Pensioners etc. get other benefits and top ups so should be treated as others entitled to LCTS. Whilst pensioners have earned the right to special treatment (they've paid their dues already), everyone else on a low income should be treated equally. This is about reducing the amount of money demanded from people with limited means, so it should be based on peoples' abilities to pay, not merely whether or not they fit into two arbitrary categories (however worthy they might be).

There could be a scale, dependent on how much a person can afford.

I don't see why pensioner should be protected, simply because they are old but if the Government insist you can't do anything. People on the same income should not be treated differently because they are disabled or a carer

Q2 For each 2.5% of increase the LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay, on average, an additional £23.07 of Council Tax each year. The cost to the council of keeping the rate at 12.5% would be approximately £209,000.

Do you agree that the council should keep the rate at 12.5% for a third year?

If "No" why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected.

Responses received

20% as a minimum. Uttlesford should not be out of line with other districts

Uttlesford's rate is too low. 25%-30% would be fairer to local tax payers

But only if the extra money is spent on repairing the roads around the district in desperate need of repair

That is half the rate of some other districts. Be realistic!

20%

15%

Why is Uttlesford's % so much less than all the others? Surely it should increase just as the council tax increases every year. A small increase would help cut the cost to the council.

20% for fairness and equality across Essex

15% to bring us nearer average

Slight increase, say to 15%. We seem to lag behind all other councils, significantly behind some. Whilst there may be a good explanation, none is given.

20% is more in keeping with other councils

13% a small increase in line with most others.

15% - This keeps rate lowest in Essex

It should be brought in line with Chelmsford and Braintree + 20% seems to be the average.

increase to 15% in third year, it is less than 50p a week and educates the public to the cost of services - 'nothing is for free!'

Council contributions should reduce to zero

An increase should be considered certainly it should not be reduced. Perhaps 20% is fairer.

Q2. We should bring the rate up to 15% this is still too low figure compared to other councils. But as a council we should encourage people to pay as much as possible.

15% it's good that we're below the rest of Essex, but I'm not sure we need to be that far below, so a small increase is justified.

12.5% is very commendable providing it does not cause problems with the council's budget elsewhere.

Correct and reasonable to ask for contributions of £23 p.a

17.5% still better than other Essex Council and the additional cost is less than £1 a week.

15% UDC need to raise its percentage by 2.5% over the next 3 years. 20% is asked for by other councils. Why is UDC discriminating against its council tax payers yet again - green garden bin discount etc.

No reason is given for why Uttlesford should be more or less generous than the rest of the County! The money released could be better allocated.

25% a much fairer rate for tax payers and more in line with other councils.

15% still lower than anyone else.

Take average of the other councils. This rate is too low!

20% which seems to be in line with similar councils.

What about people who are struggling having worked all their lives their state pension has been delayed why should I support after I cannot afford to do this.

On second thoughts I feel that a good small increase of 2.5% should be applicable. This would mean that Uttlesford claimants would still be paying less than elsewhere but is a fair increase after two years at the same level.

25% The protection should be uniform in the district

Not fair to subsidise towns and villages.

8.50%

Make work pay

Should be more in line with other councils.

Although I agree in principle with the authority it should be more in line with other councils.

It's too low

I think it should be slightly higher 15% with the money put towards benefitting the community

I dont have the information to answer 2 & 3.

To keep the rate the same is a cut because of inflation shameful that you would even think about it. Parish Council is kept well briefed by its representatives attendance at Parish Council meetings at Hempstead.

I am proud to live in a district that that look, after the genuinely needy.

21 is average between all councils. This amount makes more sense UDC is low compared to other councils.

17.5% would be appropriate. it would cost an average recipient £46.14 a year:less than £1 a week. The figure would be justifiable because at present Uttlesford DC's rate of 12.5%is seriously out of line with all other essex authorities.

Original community charge promises were that charges would take into account ability to pay over 10% is injurious and inexcusable.

Not sure why Uttlesford is so low. What is the money being spent on?

It should be brought into line with other councils, with a minimum increase of 2.5%

Raised to 15% this would ease the pressure on the council's costs, albeit not significantly, without imposing a wholly unrealistic financial burden on the LCTS recipient.

Raise to 15%

At least 20%. I don't get any relief even when I'm out of contract (sole employed) and struggling to pay. Why should I help the feckless.

It should be 8.5% or less. The people receiving the LCTS have not seen their income rise by 12.5% therefore they are worse off having to pay 12.5%.

At least 20%

Suggest 15%, this is still lower than all other councils in Essex.

Put up 2.5%. Uttlesford need more money.

At District Council boundaries, near neighbours in similar circumstances would be paying very different council amounts causing potential stress/desire to move across the street.

20% as at VAT increased and inflation rate and no job sector available to take peoples skills, and recessions and pverty of social, makes legitimate 2 the help not make them more vulnerable.

15% would be fair

Uttlesford % is so much lower than all the other Councils. It needs to increase in steps each year to come up to around 25% (stepped over 5 years).

The additional income will provide funds for those people who are less well off.

15% Even then it would be the lowest in Essex.

15% would be a minimal rise and keeps us at the lower end compared to other Councils.

Suggest 20% in line with other Essex Councils.

I don't know as I do not have access to the Council's budgetary information.

Increase to 15%

It should be in line with other local councils (20%)

15% seems a fair amount.

On the assumption that UDC is in a position to fund it easily.

The old and vulnerable should not be asked to pay any increase.

20% its in line with other low % councils.

15% improve litter collection, road repairs etc.

15% wouldn't be unreasonable.

20% in line with most others

The increase of £23.07 is a modest amount, given that LCTS recipients are already being treated favourably compared with others who despite having relatively low incomes nevertheless are paying the full tax. I suggest therefore that the 2.5% increase should be implemented.

It should be slightly increased to 15%

I think it is reasonable to pay 30% as Castle Point. After all services have to be maintained by council. In a time of adversity everyone should pay a little more. They still get 70% discount!!!

The mean of other council's figure - between 20-25%

15% - 17.5% - 20% over 3 years and continue to match lowest rate in Essex thereafter.

We need to support people who are not too well off.

22.5% Average of remaining councils. Why is Uttlesford's claimants contribution so low?

15% It seems reasonable to me that UDC should narrow the wide gap between itself and other

authorities in Essex.

I would prefer us to be a beacon district, providing more help, than one which offers less. However it is difficult to judge without knowing numbers involved and relative levels of hardship.

25%

It should pay it's way. It should be more in keeping with other councils. I'm suprised they are not all the same 20%.

As you are out of line with ALL the others an increase to 20% seems correct.

If we want to protect services esp for vulnerable we need to pay a little more and we are out of recession so the time is right to do so.

25% - to make it comparable with other areas and reflect the fact that Uttlesford is not a particularly poor district.

The figure should accord with the lowest figures of other Essex councils i.e. 20%, as a minimum. There is no reason to maintain an artificially low contribution which i suspect has political connotations. In any case the increase would be a mere £10 on a little over £1.00 p.w.

We live in a special part of the UK, the quality of life is excellant. Whilst there are less fortunate individuals who need support I do not see why their contributions should be out of line with other Districts in the area.

15% would still be the lowest in Essex.

Increase to 15% to bring closer to other Essex Councils but still keep the rate low for those in need.

It should be more in line with other councils.

8.50%

The disparity between Uttlesford and the other councils is too great. I suggest raise it over 3/5 years to 20% paid. The money raised bight be better used for targeted social care at home.

Where did the 12.5% come from when the nearest rate is 0.5% and I have not had a pay rise since 2008. I try to do everything to reduce my outgoings but somehow all this rate hike always seems to make it a losing battle. Even if we go by the rate of inflation, this is way too high. This is government taking money because they can. That's all.

Those who suffer from certain 'mental' illnesses may find it hard to return to the work place - even though physically able. Such things should be taken into consideration and this group should be

protected.

It appears ridiculously low, and out of step with other Essex councils.

20% fall in line with other councils

We should be in line with other areas nearer to 15 % or 17.5% . This higher rate would therefore add less than £0.13 per day to recipients rather than increasing the cost to those of us NOT receiving LCTS.

Uttlesford should position itself in line with the other councils in the county - may 20-25%. Asking people to make a sensible contribution to the cost affects the way all view and use the service.

As the number of people has dropped, the percentage could be increased.

Should be lowered - say 10% - Pensioners, fixed income.

15% first year, 17.5% second year, 20% third year. Can't see why Uttlesford should be so much less than others.

Initially 15% increasing to 20% in 2017/2018

15% because holding at the lower figure for another year may stretch other council resources and even low incomes will rise enough to cope with the higher rate (living wage introduction...).

No, Uttlesford should not be significantly out of step with other councils. 20% should be charged but increase would need to be stepped.

It should be about 20% in line with the rest of the county.

20% to maintain parity.

At least 30% . Genuine needy cases will hopefully be covered 100% by benefits. All Essex councils should be in unison.

It would be sensible to raise it to 20% in line with many other local councils. This still seems like a relatively small contribution to ask people to pay. The bill for keeping rate at 12.5% is very high.

We are currently out of step with other councils. I would suggest 20%.

15% an incentive to recipients of LCTS to help themselves.

Should go up to level like other councils - e.g. 20% so that the cost of £209,000 is reduced.

20% (or more)

Council should consider bringing rate more in line with other local areas.

Uttlesford is well below Essex average. If not in 2015/16 the rate should rise to 15%, possibly with a commitment to hold it therefore at least 3 years.

15% . If amount does not rise slowly, then at some point a larger increase would be required.

A rise to 15% = an extra £2 (almost) a month should not cause too much pain

It should be increase to align with other local councils. Currently too low at 12.5%.

Possibly not. Seems low.

20%. Average amount by all councils = 21.75% therefore 20% is a fairer charge.

20%. Incentive to find work. Council use surplus to help pensioners, disabled and other services.

Increase to 20% so it is comparable.

Work upwards from 12.5 to 20 in increments say 15,17.5, 20. I can't think of a reason why council money should be spent in this way while so many other services are being cut.

As long as the council can maintain this and is viable given budgets.

Review bands. The poorest of even working families struggle. House owners struggle to maintain their properties. DO NOT RISE. GO BACK.

If Southend and Basildon can charge 25% so should you. Big issue would effect my vote to be honest you are giving my money to others.

15% - A reasonable increase per annum when other council services are under stress less than £2 a month/6p a day.

The average of the other councils is 22.461% I consider it should be increased gradually to 20% ion keeping with other councils.

I believe that Uttlesford residents have a better chance of employment than in many other areas. I think that the level of support should be more in line with other councils. The figure should be 25%.

20% to be in line with other Essex councils.

Should be no lower than 20% to be in line with the other Essex Councils.

Suggest an increase of 1.5% - i.e. Roughly in line with inflation.

12.5 is very low maybe 15% would be more in line with other councils.

It is not comparable. It ought to be nearer 20% the minimum of other Essex councils. It would be less than £1.50 a week extra, but mean a significant increase in revenue for the council.

20% Bring it into line with other Essex councils

Uttlesford should be brought more into line with other Essex Councils so that residents in Uttlesford will not be expected to provide a greater subsidy than elsewhere in Essex.

15% as a trial and the following year reconsider whether it should return to 12.5% or raised further.

Revert to 2013-14 figure.

But only for the people in the defined groups but again what defines low income?

12.5% is well out of line with other authorities. The arithmetic average of the other districts is 22.5

Uttlesford should aim to bring itself into line with them.

At least 15% Uttlesford is a prosperous council and should support those who are on low incomes.

See Q1

20%. This seems to be the amount considered apt by most areas.

My question would be at what rate in next 5 years will Uttlesford need to be at. I would suggest rising rate slowly rather than a larger hike like other councils. If 2019/20 20% then a modest rise of 2.5% a year seems in order.

Before answering I would want to know what use the £209,000 saved would be put to.

20%

We should be more in line with other local councils - maybe 15%

At least 15% to bring it nearer to other Councils. That figure is still a long way below the next highest so perhaps 17.5% or even 20% would be more appropriate. Whatever I think it should definitely be raised.

20% to bring us closer to the mean.

- I would prefer LCTS recipients to pay 0%.

Make small increase to help stop cut backs

20% to be more appropriate

The council have already worked wonders by keeping the rate so low for the past 2 years. The money has to be found from somewhere!

20% adjacent areas, such as Chelmsford (20%) and Harlow (24%) have considerably higher rates

It should be brought in line with other districts 15% to 20% seems about right.

People are paying much less here than in other districts. They have to be realistic that we all have to pay

more.

This figure is a lot lower than any other council, and should be more in keeping with their rates. At least 20%.

Uttlesford rate @ 12.5% is much lower than the rest of the list it should be be min 15% for 15/16 and rise a further 5% next year.

The rate should be 720% to match other essex councils.

Should be more inline with other areas.

A rise of 15% would seem reasonable.

15%

15% An increase of £23.07 per recipient is reasonable to ensure that the benefit is available to all that need it.

15% would seem more realistic.

15% will be nearer to the Essex average.

15% would seem more realistic.

The majority is 20% which seems more realistic

Needs to be increased to Essex average - 20%

It isn't quite clear what you mean here. Could it be tiered? So 12.5% for first year, then increase?

A much lower figure and one that means I pay less!

Congratulations on having the lowest rate in Essex. However, this should not be a "postcode lottery". I feel the rate should be zero across the country subsidised by the government. Less admin for Uttlesford.

Should be more in line with other districts.

A figure between 20-30% in line with other councils. The subsidy provided by Uttlesford is unaffordable given the need to show austerity.

Instead of 12.5%, maybe lowering it to 12%

LCTS must continue to be available for those who need it the most.

Should go up to 20% for comparable purposes.

The rate should be increased in line with other councils. What makes Uttlesford different?

15%. Because this is still lower than most other councils and is moderate increase.

If Yes it will be taken elsewhere and may double next year. I think an increase of 2.5% is acceptable.

Fair to pay 25%. People will have to cut down on drink and fags.

I think 20% is reasonable. Uttlesford is too generous in this instance.

It should be brought in line with the majority of councils e.g.20%

15% with a view to increasing 2.5% year on year towards 20% in line with the modal average of other LAs. Currently UDC is considerably lower than other LAs therefore not unreasonable to increase.

15% to move forward again and gain parity eventually with other Essex Councils by regular annual increases

It should be 20 the same as the lowest % for other areas.

15% minimum

£209K - or even an increase to , say, £251K, is such a small percentage of the overall budget that the importance of protecting the low paid is more important than increasing towards the Essex average.

The figure should remain at 12.5%. The Council should continue to operate within its means and not seek to raise its charges endlessly as it did a few years ago. There is still much waste that can be cut from the Council expenses.

20% still compare favourably with other areas.

1.Many low income households have a high income male who stays overnight and weekends/holidays.

Also some children /teenagers work. 2.These same households can run 2 cars (typically 3 to 7 year old models), own a dishwasher, high end cookers/hoods, expensive garden tools/lawnmowers 3.The average of the above in the table for the years 2014/16 is 21.75% (with the mode and median figures both 20%) making Uttlesford's 12.5% look ridiculous. Use 20% to 25%. 4. Increases in minimum wage due April 2016 increasing to £9 /hour by 2020

15%

Slight increase say 15%

Should be in line with other councils and be at least 20%

Perhaps a little bit higher to bring it in line with the others - say 20% contribution from claimant or just below.

The council should aim to reduce it back to about 8% on the basis that CT is a tax on property. In general the richer you are the larger your property, the subsidy is thus well directed and funded.

15%, we are all having to make sacrifices.

Need to calculate monetary value claimant contributes for each council in Essex and ensure UDC claimants pay an equal value. EG Braintree c/tax is less than Uttlesford therefore 20% of Braintree c/tax is less than 20% of UDC tax. Need to adjust accordingly - needs to be greater than 12 1/2%. May need transitional period?

Public finances are under pressure. Assuming these funds are directed to 'good use'. Else where there is no reason why Uttlesford shouldn't fall in line with other Councils.

The benefit culture is becoming a way of life, it has become a problem to differentiate between the needy and the greedy. They can afford mobile phones, cigarettes etc.

The benefit culture is becoming a way of life, it has become a problem to differentiate between the needy and the greedy. They can afford mobile phones, cigarettes etc.

If it were to go higher, people on low income will fall into debt.

20% to bring Uttlesford into line with other Essex Councils.

15%, as a first step in gaining harmony with other Essex councils.

Rather than keeping the money it needs to go to pensioners who need it.

The rate for recipients of social security and for people in rented accommodation on low incomes should be zero. Council tax should be paid by private landlords, and not passed on to tenants. Social housing schemes should not pay tax.

Everyone should make a greater contribution to spread the cost fairly between all the adults within the area.

15% - 20% same as other local councils and will enable Uttlesford to spend in other areas.

It should be increased to 15% this time and up to 20% next time to come in line with neighbouring councils.

12.5% represents too great a deviation from the Essex average.

At least 20%. Why should those who pay 100% continue to subsidise. 12.5% is a JOKE. An extra £69 is probably less than they spend on luxury goods such as the latest phone with 4G or SKY TV

It should be brought in line with other councils rates

Do not understand

15% need to come closer to the other Essex councils

15% at least, possibly 20%. In cases of real hardship and poverty help should be given.

If you have more money then you can provide better services and a smarter town in Saffron Walden.

17.50%

The rate should be increased to 15%. This will mean that local claimants still pay 5% less than other districts. The economy is improving and this should be reflected in the payment

20. The figure should be more closely aligned with the rest of Essex. Uttlesford needs to find ways to save money.

15% and gradually increased inline with majority i.e. 20%

100% benefit - already poor recipient should pay nothing

20% is more in line with other Essex councils. However, it would have been good to see data for adjacent councils e.g. South Cambs before making any response here.

We should be in line with other councils

25% should be used, paying a quarter of what everyone else has to pay seems very fair and in line with other councils. The £209,000 could be used on facilities for everyone to benefit from especially the elderly or children.

This sum could be better spent improving facilities for all council tax payers who are struggling.

20-25% in line with other councils

The figure should be 15% and would still be one of the lowest for Essex. This would enable the council to make a substantial saving for allocation elsewhere.

20%. The current rate is significantly lower than all other Essex Council and I don't see the justification in maintain this disparity. I would hope that an increase 5 would reinforce the encouragement that work pays. In these times of reduced funding. I don't think that we can be so much more generous than other councils.

The average for all 14 councils is some 21%. I see no reason why Uttlesford's should be maintained at the lowest level. I would suggest at least 15-18% for 2015/16 us when compared with other parts of Essex.

Increase to 15 % to bring in line with others.

15% - The figure remains relatively low, saves the council a significant amount of money and only impacts recipients by less than £2/month.

20% to keep in line with other councils. Uttlesford currently way out of line.

A higher figure to encourage more people to go to work. We are an affluent area with low unemployment and much opportunity to work.

Increase the rate to encourage more people back into full time employment and if this rate is increased more can be done for the pensioner or the disabled.

20 so we get better public services.

As other councils can give a 25% discount I feel we should do the same for the most needy

Raise it to the Essex average

I think 12.5% is too low, considering the demands on the Council Tax. I would suggest 20%, which is in line with other Essex councils.

Unless there are special circumstances affecting Uttlesford, the rate should not be so much lower than the average for the county. Suggest matching Tendring at 15%

The average for other Essex Councils for 2014/2015 is 22%, so why are you so out of step? Should increase to minimum 20% for next year.

It should be increased in line with the other councils

The Uttlesford rate is way below other councils, and even the second lowest, Tendring, has increased from 15% to 20%. I think that an increase to 15% would be justified, and still leave Uttlesford the most supportive of Essex councils.

Why not reduce the discount to the level of our peers and spend the money saved on allowing others, not currently covered by the existing scheme but who are on an equally low-income, claim the same benefits?

All councils appear to have a different rate, which is effectively a post code lottery. Uttlesford should set a rate of 20% to bring the rate in line with other councils. The 20% rate would still be the lowest in Essex. 20% should be used, as this figure reflects the average of our neighbouring councils.

According to http://npi.org.uk/files/9214/3386/4426/CTS_challenges_and_options_FINAL.pdf minimum payments have mostly risen; the most common is now 20 per cent.

I would suggest 15%. It is difficult to argue in favour of subsidising the low income groups by so much more than elsewhere in Essex.

We are the lowest in the area, I think there should be a small increase to 15% at least (if not even more to 18%)

It is too high.

It should be more in keeping with other councils. It is not clear why it should be so much less.

The council should charge these people as much as they are allowed to - fairness to all council taxpayers

Q3 The council currently makes sure town and parish councils do not lose money by providing a grant to make up the difference. If the council didn't provide this money it is likely that the amount town and parish councils charge residents would need to increase. For 2016/17 it is likely that the cost of this funding will be in the region of £170,000 across all town and parish councils in the district.

Do you agree that Uttlesford District Council should continue to protect town and parish council budgets by bearing this cost?

If you have answered "No", why not?

Responses received

Each Parish and Town Council should pay their own way. Balance their books!

It's just book-keeping. Robbing Paul to pay Peter

Town and Parish councils can raise their precept more easily than UDC who I believe are capped by central government as to their ability to raise money - the taxpayer has to pay whichever way it falls.

It is vital that this is continued.

In the end it all comes from us.

They should have their own grants etc.

Selective support may be acceptable, depending on the causes of the need being justified. But general support could lead to unjustified dependence.

The Councils should be responsible for their own losses.

Council tax is charged across the full area of the council. Town and parish should not be involved.

It surely makes no difference where the money comes from, it will be paid by tax payers.

Yes: (in the interests of 'keeping things simple'!)

Parish Council so charge the right amount in the first place.

Local/Parish councils must propose and execute their own budgets. Makes Councillors accountable for their own proposals and results.

Need to know what they do first before I can answer this.

Have to pay for it either way so makes no difference.

The money saved would be better spent on the section of the community who need it and who the council are currently cutting.

Depends on other factors. A yes/no answer is not as straight forward as you have worded it.

Unfair

However I am aware of Parish Councils who have tens of thousands in reserve, never touching it whilst contingency cash is good practice, perhaps those with a sizeable pot do not need a council boost of cash.

Times are tough for Councils. Households will have to absorb the few pence increase in Parish Council Tax.

Not sure/don't know.

See Q.2 reasoning.

It is impossible to answer this without more knowledge of what the councils concerned are providing, and what will suffer at parish or district level if either has reduced funds.

Parishes should be able to self finance their needs.

Providing there is not a difference between Town and Parish Councils and one may be expected to pay disproportionately more than another - NO.

People should pay the difference themselves.

If the county council is prepared to find the shortfall of other Councils at a minimum of 20% why should Uttlesford be different? The only losers are Uttlesford residents who should expect the same level of service as elsewhere - less money available must reflect in reduced services.

The system you are using encourages financial discipline rather than thrift.

It is more important to protect disabled vulnerable people than to protect the generality of tax payers from increases.

This layer of council should be abolished entirely - it is unnecessary and a waste of money.

Each town or parish council should shoulder more responsibility to fund their spending.
A very small increase in highest band properties would easily collect the amount stated.
They should live within their means as all of us are always advised to.

Yes - but scrutinise how they own their budgets - to be satisfied that the funds are applied for policies Uttlesford supports.

If possible

(Yes) although ultimately the same tax payers are paying!

Why can they not budget for it themselves?

Essex County Council should bear the cost.

Town and parish councils should set realistic budget for the needs of the local community and they should stick within those budgets. They should be able to hold contingency funds.

It's swings and roundabouts! We would pay through our Council Tax, however it is labelled!

I think this relief should be better targeted at those councils with the highest need.

The grant to our village is too high at the moment. Villages like our village (the majority) take on developments / so called improvements unnecessary which would not occur if funds provided by Uttlesford were less.

I don't know enough about this to comment. I would like the area to be liveable in a by a range of socio/economic classes/groups, so if support in this way would help that, my answer would be yes.

I don't understand this question and I am not so very stupid. This questionnaire is NOT right.

Councils should as much as possible raise their own money and justify it to the voters.

I have yet to find out just what parish councils do?

Transparency means UDC, Town and Parish Councils should truly and accurately demonstrate THEIR costs. By hiding a proportion of the costs inflates UDC costs. Whilst the tax payer will pay the same, each council should take full responsibility and accountability for THEIR costs.

This needs to be directed to the recipients to shoulder.

I feel local areas should meet their cuts. These are usually for benefit of their local areas. I am not happy to have costs from other districts charges to my area (precept).

The charge to residents should increase.

Grant for what (why do the P' and T' councils lose money?)?

Yes, because this helps distribute wealth from richer to poorer parts of the district.

Local communities should have authority over their own budgets as well as responsibility.

Parish and Town Councils should raise their own income in order to maintain transparency of operation.

See above.

If an area has a higher proportion then why would local town/parishes suffer.

Again, what does this mean per household. If it is just a few pounds I would be prepared to see the increase to my charges.

But only if this is REALLY financially possible.

My parish council do almost nothing yet take a healthy precept. Let them use that or Uttlesford DC can use the money for other high priority services.

We'll be paying it either way.

My parish council still give money to the church for their fire insurance. Surely if church goes prayed harder, they wouldn't need it! Better still, the church should make the "goers" pay an entry fee, should not be a burden to council tax payers!

Town/Parish councils should pay their own way so we can judge their financial performance.

As Above (" A figure between 20-30% in line with other councils. The subsidy provided by Uttlesford is unaffordable given the need to show austerity") - ultimately tax payer will end up subsidising, wherever the responsibility falls be it Uttlesford / Town / Parish council.

It will hit people somewhere else.

If there is a shortfall in grant availability then other residents should bear the cost.

Town and parish councils should be empowered to set own rates and stand by their decisions.

Town and Parish councils would be more answerable to their residents.

Parishes/towns should have some impact on finances as district

I think the council tax is already enough, over £100pm from each household! Traffic congestion and road states are shocking. The character of the town is being lost by putting as many houses as possible that look like ugly messes.

The money all comes out of the same pockets ultimately, and the present system allows PCCs and town councils to focus "their" budgets on other, more local issues of importance.

The amount should not be increased. To stop the grants then the money would be kept by Uttlesford and disappear into its budget.

Town and Parish residents should pay for what their council spends - and know that they will - local accountability.

Town and Parish residents should pay for what their council spends - and know that they will - local accountability.

The Council should remove the discounted subsidy from 18.5% to 20% and fall in line with other Council's. This will lessen any need to provide grants.

As above, subsidised living is not the way forward, I have worked and saved for my old age and continue to do so.

As above, subsidised living is not the way forward, I have worked and saved for my old age and continue to do so.

It depends on how much the council gives to each council.

By removing part or all of the protection would ensure each parish/town council continued to focus on their local area responsibility to control claimants.

Every household across the district should pay the same rate for each band. It is unclear why these subsidies exist and whether there is any benefit to the region as a result.

Why should my money be taken to other parish councils where it does not benefit me/

Either way the resident still needs to pay. By putting the onus back to Town and Parish level local residents will be more aware of the cost to the town/parish.

Uttlesford needs to be more realistic about budgeting and citizens should be aware of what they have to pay for. Perhaps we should stop funding all unnecessary organisations.

I feel that there needs to be a big shake up. Why does the council need to provide grants. The expenditure for town and parish and district councils need to be looked at!

Depending on what the town/Parish budgets are being use for ?

It's irrelevant how the taxpayer pays for this , They will still have to pay one way or the other.

Bureaucratic nonsense!

Towns and parishes need to appreciate the cost implications of policies and should not be safeguarded

I may have missed something here but I believe the onus should be on town and parish councils to set the precepts they need and work within them. If the grant is phased out it might reduce any pain by spreading it over several years.

why should we

Parish & Town Councils have the ability to raise their own precept and without limits, if they require more funding the money should be raised locally in their boundary and not expect to be topped up by the District as a whole. Where this has gone wrong is Saffron Walden Town Council for example puts Council Tax up to pay for services they have taken on from Uttlesford while also accepting grants.

If town and Parish councils are spending the money they should have to justify the raising of it to the residents at election time

Q4. To help fund the LCTS, the council reviewed Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes.

a. Second homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed so the charge is the same as for every other house.

Do you agree that this treatment of second homes is correct?

If “No”, please explain why.

Responses received

2nd homes should receive discounts of 25% unless they are being used all the time or rented out.

If you have 2 homes in UDC you should receive some discount for the second home.

2nd homes do not use facilities the same as first

People who own a second home should pay 100% council tax on both homes. If they can afford to buy a second home they can afford 100% council tax.

There should be a transitional period to allow for the extended time it takes to sell original home whilst funding second which will become permanent.

If they can afford a 2nd home they can afford the full (or more) amount.

Second homes should be taxed and empty forced to give to poor or needy.

Second homes should pay full council tax

They should still pay full tax.

Start increasing this - e.g. 10% extra...

No . If you have two houses you should've paid the the full amount

I believe 2nd homes should be charged at a higher rate. They are a luxury that doesn't help the current housing shortage.

Second homes are usually a luxury - if people have the means to own one - good luck to them - but they probably have the means to pay the full council tax on the second home.

Tax on second homes should be double empty homes, holiday homes do not add life to the community and should be discouraged, especially during housing shortages.

Most 2nd properties are rented out, therefore, the demands on local services remains the same.

If people can afford a second home they can afford to pay more for it.

Empty home should be exempt after all they are not using any council services.

10% discount to continue.

They don't use the resources so why pay.

They are only using Council services for part of the year.

Second homes should be discouraged unless they are genuine Buy-To-Lets. All other second homes should pay a penal rate of tax say 10%.

People who can afford second homes can also afford to pay full council tax in my view.

Second homes should be charged a higher council tax rate than other houses.

If individuals are wealthy enough to 'own' multiple properties then they cannot expect subsidies in full whack please!

If the owner is actively in process of trying to sell second house then some other scheme is required.

Second homes do not use the same amount of services as first homes.

If they can afford 2 homes then they can pay 2 council taxes

Sometimes inherited and there can be many high costs to deep in repair/or suitable for rent (providing a house for a family). Securing, for example, from vandals/squatters can cost home owners a great deal.

Yes, as many of these may be let out as a source of income.

Given the current lack of housing I think owners of second homes should be charged more rather than less council tax, to discourage second home ownership and provide funds to the council to support those who do not have a home.

Second homes should be discouraged by a 200% rate until housing development reaches the level that is required.

Where no occupants then no services required. Second homes - again less occupancy, demand for services are less.

Second homes should be treated the same as a first home and pay 100% council tax.

Some people have worked hard and use the rent from a second home to supplement their state pension so it is unfair to penalise them.

1) Second home users tend to use less services. 2) Second home users contribute to the economy

Should receive a discount as they make less use of services.

A second home owner will be using less local services so should have a discount.

Many times a person with a 2nd home may perhaps had to move because of changing jobs into new area, or perhaps they have had further increase in size of family and needed to move and because of this unable to sell existing home thus leaving it empty.

Second home and empty homes provide employment (gardeners, carers, cleaners).

A second home is not usually using as many services.

If one has a large enough income to buy another house they should certainly be charged the same per house as the rest of us.

People using a second home do not benefit from all the facilities in the same way as two separate families.

I think second homes should pay an increased council tax as they do not contribute as much to the local community and add to housing pressure. So an increase in council tax for them would be fairer to the community as a whole.

Council tax on 2nd homes should be surcharged significantly rather than discounted. Luxuries, such as 2nd homes, should attract a higher level of tax than necessities - ie a let home.

There should be a premium on second home council tax. It may discourage second home ownerships and thus make more housing available.

If they can afford 2nd homes they should pay double on whichever is the dearer!

Council tax could be increased for second home.

Because second homes use the services provided through council tax less eg less rubbish generated. There should be a discount to reflect this.

second and empty homes should have to pay an additional premium - set at a rate double that of occupied dwellings.

I think second homes should pay higher council tax to discourage this to ensure local people can buy 1st home.

It is unfair as owners of second homes generally do not use any of the council services such as refuse collection education etc.

CT should be levied at a rate to discourage 2nd homes in view of chronic housing shortage.

People with a second home should pay HIGHER council tax

People who have worked hard to buy a second home should not have to subsidise people on benefits.

If a household does not use the Council facilities it should have a discount.

Second home owners should pay more because local first time owners cannot afford the rise in price that second home owners bring.

All second home owners should pay "DOUBLE".

By definition a "second home" is not used all the time, so neither are the council's services.

Owner should estimate how much home is used. Council could estimate bin empties. Then estimate discount.

Second homes would tend to have a lesser call on council services. The only reason for charging second homes at (or above) the same level as main residences is to increase council income.

Second homes should incur a charge greater than the charge levied on first homes

If it is legally possible, second homes should attract a council tax surcharge. They should not be charged less than residents.

Owners of second homes should pay at least 150% of the appropriate rateable value of the property. Having a second home means they can afford the increased rate. This should help the less fortunate in society.

Charge 2nd homes / empty homes no discount.

Second home owners should pay full rate.

Each house should pay the same.

Second homes should be charged a premium as for LTE greater than 2years @ an additional 50% . This would act as a disincentive to owners to declare a property as second home when it isn't - + encourage empty property to be brought back to use.

2nd homes should pay 110% - its not us though the owners are needy.

It is their choice to have a second home so should pay.

The concept of providing a council tax discount on second homes is reasonable and should be reinstated. This principal applies in many other areas of life/commerle.

People who have second homes should sell them so that familys can move in when they have no where else to go.

The second home is not utilising as many services as the first.

However, if it was put up to say 110% it may get people to sell their second homes and increase the stocks available for sale.

A second home should not receive a discount

Second homes ara luxury. If someone can afford a second home, they can pay tax.

If they are rich enough to own two houses they are rich enough to pay full tax if not a surcharge on top.

You should not charge for a service you are not providing - 10% is not much, but at least its something.

Unless there is a clear need for work or educational demands, second home should be surcharged (50%)

There should be some link between occupation of property and cost i.e. an empty property requires less in the way of council services.

TEST

There are various reasons for people having second homes. A small rebate is a fair reflection of the reduced call on local services.

It is unfair that second home owners, who are already paying full council tax on their main home, should have to pay the full rate of council tax on a second home. The property owner probably makes very little use of the local services relating to the second home, and should receive an appropriate discount.

If you can afford a second home a 10% discount on council tax is unlikely to make any difference to whether or not a second home is purchased.

it will use less services

b. Empty homes undergoing major repair

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was a 100% discount for a period of up to 12 months from when the property became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 12 months.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs?

If you have answered "No", what should be used and why?

Responses received

Six months should be adequate

No discount should be offered. This would encourage rapid completion + deter those waiting for the property values to rise

Residents who are wealthy enough own two homes should pay the full tax on all homes. Why are wealthy people given any discounts?

If a home is undergoing repair it should not take more than 12 months. Therefore I believe a discount should only be given for the first 12 months. There are too many empty homes not being used / rented out.

We feel it should be 50% for 6 months so that properties will be completed.

I think an empty property undergoing major repair should be free at 100% for the first 6 months and then at 50% for the next 6 months. After all someone is bringing a property up to date and making housing improvements, bring what could only be a derelict property back to life usually for someone else's benefit. I will encourage them to do it quicker.

An empty home does not mean UDC services and costs

Yes - if it really is undergoing repairs and the work is completed in 12 months. Otherwise deliberately empty - no discount should be allowed.

12 months is too long.

Reduce to 50% for six months or until a Planning application is approved whichever is the sooner. Then another six months following approval, to encourage builders to get on with it. What about properties which are left to decay for a long time e.g. Three Colls on Cambridge Road Stansted

No facilities used should mean no charge.

Rate should be 50% discount for up to six months as this is a realistic timeframe in which to renovate a property.

Surely 50% for 6 months is adequate?

should be 25% for 6 months. If the owner can afford major repairs which take say 6 months to complete they can afford the extra council tax.

Because refurbished properties are a benefit to the community.

Costs are so high.

There is too much possibility of manipulation of the time taken.

12 months is too long 6 months should be long enough for most major repairs.

As a landlord 100% for 6 months would be better. Using an estate agent for management in Chelmsford only 3 months is allowed.

Should be no discount.

Why can't it be treated simply as 'empty'?

I don't think these should be any discount on empty homes undergoing repair.

If people can't afford to renovate a property and pay charges maybe they shouldn't start the project.

I think 100% for 6 months is better. Many families take time to clear and sort out houses when a parent dies. Having to pay Council tax for an extra property as well as their own can be a burden.

The discount should be 25%. Most improvements are to increase market value.

As above

No discount

There should not be any empty homes

. Should be 100% for 6 months and 50% for next 6 months (if needed). To encourage faster repairs/ property to be brought back into use sooner.

Reduce to 25% it should not take 12 months to make a property habitable. After 12 months it should be NIL.

Yes for discount but time period should be 6 months. Surely most work should be completed in that time.

do not know (understand)

Reduced to 25% for 12 months as these properties are often sold within a few years at a hefty profit.

Surely a house unergoing major repairs can be completed with 12m. Therefore I would say 100% discount for 6m and 50% for second 6m

I believe this should be reduced to 6 months

Should be part of the cost of developing home. Full tax should be paid.

If the owner do not, or cannot, repair these properties, the council should be able to requisition and bring it back to good living standard then either rent it out or sell it!

50% for six months.

When the work is finished, the property will have increased in value giving the owner a tax free increase. He/she will then charge a bigger rent if applicable.

if the home is empty due to accidental/fire damage the reduction should be 100% until repairs are completed. if the house is being improved or developed for profit there should be no reduction.

No discount should be given to encourage the house to be ready as soon as possible.

The only exception to this should be if a property has become uninhabitable, e.g. due to a fire, when the discount should still be 100%.

In order not to penalise people buying run-down properties i think that if they intend to live in the property then the 1st 6 months should be 0%, the 2nd, 50% then 100% after that.

Developers/second home buyers etc should pay 100% from the start.

Property pays tax always: if any property remains empty for 6 months then discount applies if property is updated/repaired for 6 months. After any property empty for more than 6 months a premium above tax of 25% applies. For 6 months then 50% thereafter.

Empty homes needing major repairs need to be renovated and lived in people need to be encouraged to use these properties to stop slums forming, giving full discount will encourage the take up of empty homes.

If the owners only home they should still pay.

If the owners only home they should still pay.

If the owners only home they should still pay.

No discount should be given, if a house needs repair it is still an asset to the owner. Houses increase in value - TAX should be paid.

This could be used as a play to evade tax. 12 months is too long to renovate a house.

Six months should be absolutely enough for any single dwelling repairs - you can build a whole house in less than that time!

The level of discount (%) is too generous. The percentage should be around 20%.

We want homes to be repaired so why penalise them for doing so.

6 months encourages land owners to get the work done quickly and re let.

6 months encourages land owners to get the work done quickly and re let.

I do not agree that this level of tax should be placed on these houses as it is very expensive doing renovation work and after as in my case I am paying tax on a rented home.

I do not object to the discount for home empty due to being uninhabitable e.g. flood or fire. I do not object to a discount for second homes that may fall into the empty homes undergoing major repairs category or investment properties.

Yes- Assuming property is fully unoccupied if it is occupied whilst undergoing major repair then no discount.

Every house should pay 100% even if empty.

It should be possible to arrange repairs within 6 months.

There should be a further sliding scale whereupon the property should receive a discount of 50% for 3 months not 6 months to incentivise quick turnaround work.

So long as the total discounted period is no more than 24 months.

The reason may be a factor i.e. because of flooding - structural damage - should be taken into account.

The area is very desirable so renovation should pay for itself no need for subsidies should be 25% max.

If work is not complete within the initial 12 months discount period then 100% tax should apply. If not occupied after 24 months then a penal rate of 150% should apply.

I also think there should be certain cases that are reviewed on their own merit.

This expense should be planned for - along with major repairs.

Major repair will often take at least 12 months including obtaining permissions etc, and will increase the values of the property to enable higher valuation of council tax, therefore no charge should be incurred for first 12 months followed by full 100% after this period. As no services are being used.

Would reduce further to 30% discount.

A fairer way would be to support property developers to carry out their work quicker. So, 100% discount for 6 months, 25% for next 6 months.

Not quite sure I understand this * explanation it shouldn't cost the council any more money. 25% discount for 6 months for empty houses going through repairs. There's a housing shortage, why should people have a house empty and get such a generous discount for such a long time, when repairs are made???

This is simply a punitive tax on home-owners. Suggest 50% after 6 months with first 6 months free.

6 Months is a reasonable period to complete major repairs - 100% over 6 months would better motivate the completion of work at no loss of revenue to UDC (100% over 6 months same as 50% over 12 months).

Builders can hit snags and hold up repairs but I feel tax payers should not have to underwrite private property.

If a home is empty, it doesn't need to 'receive' any local services.

Too generous

In my view a 50% discount for 6 months is sufficient.

100% for 12 months is excessive. 50% more realistic but why give any concession.

12 months is a high length of time and people need to get a move on. Reducing it to 6 months would focus attention on getting work on house done.

The definition of 'undergoing major works' is too vague. This may merely be a ruse to hold the property whilst upgrading and awaiting rises in property values. The disruption to nearby residents is also not considered. Maximise income and decrease subsidies!

Investing in property seems to be a national hobby, why does it need to be treated as a special case? Dustbins still need emptying, streets cleaned, old people protected etc.

100% for 12 months - the upgrading work to our house took over 9 months.

I believe that major repairs/restoration particularly of historic properties can take much longer than even 12 months due to nature and size of the buildings and shortage of companies fully competent to undertake such work. Also horrors come to light once work starts!

Should be 100% for 6 months being that the property is not inhabitable.

But I think this can be changed if genuine major repair works happening.

If no-one is living in the home, no one is using any of the council amenities. So the discount should be 100%. At the same time the repairs will provide a home of good standard.

12 months is too long and encounters repairs to be delayed 6 months is more realistic to allow planning and repairs.

It depends on the repairs. Some are bound to take over 6 months

There should be some flexibility for exceptional cases only - for instance if an important archaeological find beneath the property.

It should remain at 100%, so long as it is owner-occupied, and the owner has to move out while repairs are going on.

I consider 6 months should be adequate for repairs to be carried out.

If you own property you should pay 100% tax all the time.

Why is the property needing major repairs? It means that the property has been neglected over the years and what is to stop the property being left open and not occupied in the future? These landlords should be made to let the property.

A major repair can take more than 6 months - a 12 month timescale seems fair. As the homeowner is investing in updating and improving the property, they should not be penalised for doing so. A 100% discount for 12 months is fair.

If they can afford 2 homes then they can pay 2 council taxes

Should be 100% for 1st 12 months to help the house owner (not property developer) to repair the house to live in /sell/or let. We found this very beneficial when we had major repairs on our own Grade II listed building.

Should be 100% as sometimes extensive maintenance / alterations, updating is nowadays very expensive

If the home is empty, what services are they paying for?

Because if they can afford major repairs they can afford to pay council tax at the same rate as everyone else - major facilities e.g. water, sewage, rubbish collection, roads to and from will all be used just the same.

I agree providing planning applications are dealt with more speedily.

Presumably a large proportion of recipients of this discount are builders and developers - and this seems hardly fair. It should be reduced or discontinued if there are professional builders or developers involved.

I do not understand the question

A house is a house. This is a loophole that should be closed. All houses should be subject to the same tax level. Houses are often empty because of speculation and speculators should not be subsidised.

If uninhabitable then no user so not making use fo any council provision so shouldn't pay at all. Could shorten time period to max 6 months to encourage return to market.

100% discount for 6 months would give a greater incentive to complete major repairs/refurbishment, without any change to the cost of the scheme to the council.

6 mths should be more than adequate

I would propose a 50% reduction for 6 months

Every effort should be made to bring property back into housing stock. This includes financial assistance to do it.

It may encourage owners to delay completing the repairs for 18 months/2 years

Increasing the amount of discount is no incentive to getting work done. Decrease the discount to 15% and work would be done and more homes for people would follow.

50% (or less) for 6 months might provide an incentive for getting on with the work.

Some people have worked hard and use the rent from a second home to supplement their state pension so it is unfair to penalise them.

Should be 100% for 6 months then 50% for a further 6 months, as a major refurbishment can be subject to delays.

I consider the time span should be reduced to 6 months.

Most people doing major repairs have to live somewhere else and pay for that, not always by choice.

12.5% is fair in time like this but first time buyer should get more help 50% as long as they undertake to live in finist house 10 years.

Should be 100% for 12 months - better to improve properties and invest in them, than build new ones.

I feel it should be 100% discount if the home is uninhabitable. Perhaps a sliding scale of 100% for 6 months 50% for 6 months.

it should be means tested. Couples under 40 should get 100% discount. Over 40s should get 50% discount.

There should be no discount. Firstly, the property is using council services while being repaired (Police, roads, fire brigade, planning department). Secondly, paying full council tax will encourage to make the property habitable as soon as possible.

There should be no discount on empty properties unless they are up for sale.

But should be reviewed annually to see if it is still appropriate.

It depends on who owns the property and why it is empty. Say a family home burns down compared to a landlord speculation on price hikes etc.

But only provided it is undergoing major repairs.

A empty house is using no council services so should no pay anything.

12 months is too long. Keep the discount as 50% but for 9 months as incentive to get work finished quickly and bring houses back into use.

I agree with the level of discount but feel that a discount for 6 months only would be fair. No house need take longer than this to repair.

If you buy a house you should expect to pay council tax on it!

The discount should be 50% for the first three months and nil thereafter.

First 3 months = no council tax. Second 3 months = 50% to pay. After 6 months = 100% to pay.

It will not take 1 year to major repairs. I think this should be reduced from 12 months to 6 months.

Should be 50% for 6 months or 25% for 12 months.

An empty home undergoing a major repair will provide an extra unit of accommodation. This is desirable. On the assumption that no Council service are provided for an empty house no charges should be raised against it.

50% for 12 months, there after NO discount.

Should be 50% for 6 months so that the premises are brought back into use earlier.

Suggest that as soon as discount application is received that a building inspector is sent to access the timescale needed for reasonable completion and thus set the period for which the discount shall apply.

There is no cost to the Council if no-one lives there, so why not 100%? We want empty homes repairs and brought back into use.

Should be reduced to 6 months. Builders and investors are the main beneficiaries.

Make it 25% we need all empty homes to be occupied asap. It would concentrate minds.

If undergoing repairs should not pay any tax.

We agree with this but houses that have are 'Listed' could remain as the 12 months because getting permission for the changes can take some time so no work can/dared be done!

Empty homes should be back in use as soon as possible.

Sometimes it takes more than six months to repair a building especially if it is a sensitive listed property.

There should be no discount.

50% for 6 months. Most major repairs can be completed in that time.

If a property is uninhabitable due to major works, no one is using the facilities for which council tax is levied i.e. schools, street lighting, refuse collection etc. and therefore no charge should be expected for the first 12 months. We have been made aware that police will not attend burglaries from inhabited properties so not even policing will cover empty properties.

A property that has been neglected for many years before new ownership could take a long time to be made properly habitable.

6 months for major repairs is reasonable.

12 months is adequate for major repairs.

Provided renovations are really being done.

Empty houses cost money and deprive people in need of a possible home. The % should be decreased to 25% and the time period to 3 months. Owners (esp Buy to Let owners) should be made to be efficient.

It should 100% from the off when sold to developers etc

Depends on the reason for major repairs eg if due to flooding/fire beyond the owners circumstances the amount should be reviewed, as the persons involved will have to pay tax on the property they are renting.

Should be 100% for six months, then 50% for the next six months. After that, full payment.

If a property requires major repairs it will need to be empty and the owners would need to live elsewhere while work was undertaken. They would be paying council tax where they lived.

What is 'major repair' - can people use this as a loop-hole. Two years seems a long time for a major repair.

Major repair, especially after a collapse or other failure, can take a long time to be agreed with insurers etc. From personal experience this can take more than 12 months.

Major repairs may take up to 12 months and a 100% discount should be applied.

- but maximum period should be 12 months and a review should be made to see if owner is using 50% worth of council tax service. If not should go up to nearer 100% discount.

The timescale should be reduced to six months after which the full tax should be paid.

Should stay the same to encourage owners not to leave empty when so many people are

needing a home.

Allowance should be made for extenuating circumstances beyond an owner's control.

6 months is appropriate not a year.

6 months is appropriate not a year.

Major repairs could well for 'old' ie listed properties exceed 12 months. Repairs to listed properties should receive full discount.

CT should be levied at a rate to ensure that contractors proceed expediently. Discount only for 6 months.

As long as they are not accessing rubbish collection!

No tax should be paid on an empty property.

Because property developers are pricing families/young people out of the market. They are in no rush to complete their work and already make a fortune in profit. Pay 100%!

Repairs can take longer than planned.

If nobody is living in the property they will be having to live somewhere else (usually nearby) where they will be paying council tax. They will not require double the services of the council so should only have to pay once. Hence I believe the 100% discount for a maximum of a year is suitable, not 50%.

If only 25% given to solo residents - if you can afford to renovate a house you should be able to afford to pay council tax.

I think if a property is rendered uninhabitable by natural causes i.e. flood, fire etc. it should be council tax exempt. If it then becomes an unaffordable liability to the owner the council should fund restoration, then reclaim on their insurance!

Again, if the house is not occupied, council services are not being used. Rate should be 100% discount but perhaps for only six months unless it can be shown works have been delayed for unavoidable reasons.

The 50 % level should be reduced to 6 months.

Often difficult to carry out major repairs quickly - especially on listed buildings. Unfair to charge people for a property they cannot use.

50% for 6 months would be better.

The period of discount should be limited to 6 months or less. This would encourage property repairs to be completed asap and properties available to rent/sold

The wording should read “undergoing repairs prior to re-occupation”

For landlords declaring a property under repair could be used to dodge paying council tax, therefore reduce the % and timescale.

50% discount for 6 months feels fairer. Any major repair should be complete inside 6 months. Why should the council over-subsidise people gaining additional wealth from developing 2nd homes?

I do believe that repairs should be able to be effected in 6 months. I think the discount should be 100% for 6 months. After all an empty property is not using council resources.

It encourages people to buy old properties to improve otherwise there will be lots of derelict houses.

Major repairs are seldom undertaken by the poorer groups and 6 months should be the limit.

The discount should be reduced to 6 months to encourage owners to repair their property.

Charge full amount

Empty homes should be liable for 100% of council tax.

If they have the money to carry out the work they have the money to pay 100% of the tax these are not poor people.

It should be 100% discount for 2 months then minimum of 50% from 3 months, then after 12 months full amount due.

6 months is long enough to sort problems - longer people have the less they will be motivate to sort.

A property may be occupied whether or not major repairs are ongoing. Also C Tax is a property tax and not a poll tax. Hence just because it is undergoing repairs should not entitle it to a reduced rate of C. Tax.

Difficult to answer the question without definition of ‘major’ + without understating how burden of proof is managed, but the decision by the owner to renovate is a function of commercial decision(e.g. +rent/price will rise) + therefore ‘50% for 12 months’ is too generous. Suggest 10% for 6-12 months.

A reduction would be an increase in Council funds. A discount of 10% would ensure the repair work is carried out quickly and housing made available.

But should only be to a maximum period of say one year or eighteen months

Treat as a second home, therefore no discount.

50% for 6 months - as 6 months is long enough for a refurbishment.

Depends on circumstances. Ok as long as major repairs have a time limit and major repairs are being completed so that house is habitable and intends to be lived in.

The cost of empty property should be the same as an occupied one at all times.

Six months should be adequate

25% for 6 months to encourage re-occupation sooner.

Need to prevent people from sitting on houses. Why not give 75% discount for first 3/12, then reduce to 50% for 3/12 with final reduction of 25% for remaining 6/12. Houses need to be lived in - if not sold or rented out - don't subsidise people who sit on property! (developers and landlords).

Cannot assess this properly in the absence of any definition of what constitutes a 'major' repair.

Most homes undergoing major repairs refurbishing is to the benefit of developers and speculators.

Six months should be adequate

Six months should be adequate

If homes are in need of major repair then the CT payer should not have to pay while the works are on going ie 100% relief/discount should be applied for 6 months.

If it is for living in.

If somebody has the financial means to undertake significant renovation then they can find the money to pay council tax. This money will typically just remain in the hands of small property developers.

There are too many costs involved already without adding further burden. This will deter many developers.

The full council tax should be charged for all homes left empty for longer than 12 months. This would encourage the owneres to complete the repairs and make a home habitable in a more timely manner.

If the property cannot be occupied it should not attract tax for 12 months. The owners presumably pay tax on their temporary accommodation. If not should do so.

Should only be 50%. Even an empty property still needs fire and police cover.

Need to encourage landlords to improve the quantity and quality of properties in the Borough. If a scheme genuinely takes longer than 12 months Council Tax should not be charged. It should be charged if it is empty for any other reason than a normal void 9 i.e. 2-3 months between tenancies)

Empty homes should be charged council tax.

Should go back to 100% - if they're not living in the house while it has repairs - they're not using services.

No use of council services is being sought if the property is empty.

Make CT simple - every home pays it whatever the circumstances. May encourage people to speed up renovations and get house back into use.

Discount should balance with CT discounts given i.e. 20% for 12 m.

They should pay full tax. That will teach them to bring the property back into use asap.

Newcastle City Council is 100% for six months. Why do you always want to charge?

If you can afford to buy and renovate a home you should be liable to pay the council tax in full.

50% for 6 months would encourage landlords to facilitate repairs. There could be a process to apply for an extension in exceptional circumstances.

If discount was reinstated at 100% (for 12 months) it would be a better incentive to get run-down properties back on to the sales/rental market to ease the housing shortage

100% discount for six months would give a stronger incentive to planning the work thoroughly beforehand . Before moving out and executing the work swiftly, subsequently.

Reduce to 30% for 6 months . Too many empty properties which are deteriorating.

Those undertaking renovation and repairs are increasing the value of the properties .Empty houses should be taxed the same as those occupied to ensure they return to the market ASAP.

A reduced time scale that leaves properties empty for a shorter time.

Restore the 100% discount, the property is being improved and may provide housing in the future.

I don't think that it would be unreasonable to reduce the period to 9 months (keeping the discount at 50% as an incentive for work to start on a property and to be completed in a timely fashion. I think 50% for 6 months is fair with a simple appeal process (backed by architect's/surveyors reports).

50% discount for 9 months

12 months seems reasonable for major repairs, but paying as much as 50% for a home you can't live in does not. I think the percentage discount should be increased to 75% at least.

Empty properties are often refurbished and repaired by property developers and I believe they should bear more of the cost.

100% for six months

Should be 100% for 6 months. Do not see why major repairs should take longer than 6 months if properly project managed. Only fair to give 100% if property uninhabitable.

TEST

Six months would be better

It would be better to halve the cost by halving the duration, not the %age. If one's house is rendered uninhabitable, it's wrong to be charged a tax for the services provided to inhabited houses, so a 100% reduction is appropriate (and softens the blow of losing one's house), but 6 months should be enough to make arrangements.

Some time ago I was fortunate to inherit an almost derelict house. It took almost one year to receive planning permission for the renovation and rebuilding work. It is totally wrong that the owner of such a property should have to pay Council Tax when the house is uninhabitable, and renovation cannot commence because the Councils Planning department will not approve the plans!

A 50% discount should only last 6 months, this will encourage properties not to remain empty for long periods.

I don't see why any discount should be applied at all.

The time period should be reduced to 6 months, this will give more incentive to complete any major repairs. Too many properties appear to remain empty for long periods of time when the lack of housing is at such a high level.

There is huge money and wealth in the property development market in this District. Developers and homeowners can easily afford the Council Tax, so why should they be exempt? Homes are sold for large profits in this area and is a lucrative business, we shouldn't be propping up the free market with support.

I think it would be better to give 100% discount for 6 months. When properties need a major refurbishment this would be an incentive to get them done within 6 months

the owners should still pay 100% council tax even though the property is empty

If a home is empty and unliveable due to major repairs, I would prefer the discount to increase (perhaps to 100% as it previously was)

The housing stock is improved if people do repairs and they shouldn't be penalised for doing so

c. Empty homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6 months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs?

If "No", please explain why.

Responses received

No discount should be offered and a positive rate introduced to encourage the return of the property to the housing market

As with question b) above. Local taxation should apply uniformly. Repairing houses cannot justify lower taxes

If a home is undergoing repair it should not take more than 12 months. Therefore I believe a discount should only be given for the first 12 months. There are too many empty homes not being used / rented out.

To release property back to open market in time of housing shortage.

Should the housing market slow down again a renew may be necessary. The house of a deceased person could take longer than 6 months to sell.

50% for 3 months sufficient - there should be no empty homes in Uttlesford

No discount. Too many empty homes

Should be 9 months at 50%. If it's a probate case it should be free.

An empty home does not mean UDC services and costs

There should be no discount for empty homes given the shortage of available properties to purchase.

If a house is empty due to death of the occupant, probate can take a long time to come through and then to sell the property for the estate may also take time. It is unreasonable for an estate to

pay tax on uninhabited property due to death. The rate should return to 100% for 6 months. My view is that each case needs to be reviewed as I am sceptical as to why properties are empty.

No discount should be allowed

There should be a strong dis-incentive to keeping properties empty

This time should be reduced.

Properties should be renovated within a certain time.

Be fair to landlords who are not using facilities.

50% for 3 months.

3-4 months would seem more reasonable. 6 months is a long time for a house in reasonable condition to be empty.

Discount to be phased out completely.

If a home is empty and no attempt to regenerate or to let is so, then a possible home for a desperate tenant is not going to happen and anyone able to own a empty home and not do anything to change this can afford to pay more.

Should be 25% for 6 months. An incentive to move the property on - let/sell etc.

Can make more than 6 months to sell or arrange tenancy.

I believe some people are unable to pay.

See the answer above. Also some pressure to bring empty property into use is valid.

With a shortage of housing stock there should be a stronger incentive for houses not to remain empty. A lower discount is more appropriate.

3 months is long enough to find a new tenant especially at present with short age of suitable rented properties.

As an encouragement to use the property should get no discount.

There is a housing shortage therefore an empty home is a waste and burden. It should not receive any reduction - encouraging fill occupancy at all times.

Should be no discount.

Why can't it be treated simply as 'empty'?

I don't think there should be any discount on empty homes.

Empty homes need to be filled there are lots of homeless people so it might encourage people to move faster if there are no discounts.

If the house remains empty, with no evidence of effort to sell or undergo major repair, then they should pay full council tax. The house shouldn't sit empty.

Not sure empty homes owned by Council should be repaired asap.

For the same reason as above (Many families take time to clear and sort out houses when a parent dies. Having to pay Council tax for an extra property as well as their own can be a burden). It also depends on whether the family had to move for work reasons and cannot immediately find a buyer. There needs to be discretion written into these rules.

no discount should be given, there is a nationwide shortage of housing, this 'no discount' should encourage owners to get these houses occupied.

The discount should be 25%

No discount

3 months is better incentive

. 3 months should be at 100%, 3 months at 50% and 3 months at 25%, again to encourage properties to be brought into occupation sooner.

Reduce to 25% it should not take 12 months to make a property habitable. After 12 months it should be NIL.

C. Tax should relate to the person using the services not the home.

Should reduce time to 3 months except for service personnel or people in hospital or like.

Empty properties should be sold or rented ASAP. Reduce discount to 10% and start from 2 months.

Reduce to 50% for 3 months

Do not know (understand)

But no more than 6 months

Why should there be a discount? The owners should ensure their property is lived in.

Reduction was too small - should be 25% to encourage owners to take some action. Also why not 12 months instead of 6 as other types.

With the current housing shortage I believe 3 months is sufficient for a tenant to be found or house to be sold

Should be part of the cost of developing home. Full tax should be paid.

If the owner do not, or cannot, repair these properties, the council should be able to requisition and bring it back to good living standard then either rent it out or sell it!

No tax discount for houses left empty.

i see no reason why, if a property is vacant, the rest of us should pay more.

If a house is empty or full, the cost to the council is the same, if not undergoing major repairs then the house is fit to be rented/sold so therefore should not be subject to a discount.

I would suggest 50% fr up to 12 months remaining empty many properties become empty on the death of the sole resident. Six months is nowhere near long enough to prepare a property for sale and find a buyer at a fair price.

Houses empty due to bereavement/illness or family crisis should be at the 50% for 6 months rate, otherwise no discount should be applied.

Empty house should not stay empty for longer than one month to check repairs.

No discount should be given to encourage the house to be occupied as soon as possible there are too many empty houses.

It should be 0% to pay for the 1st month, then 50% for next 2 months, then 100%. That avoids penalising house buyers doing urgent but minor repairs and families where elderly parents living alone have to move out suddenly.

No discount. Property pays tax or council apply for order to set unpaid tax against sale price. Council should always intervene if property empty for more than 24 months.

Empty properties should receive no discount and if not occupied within a certain time should be subject to a compulsory purchase order.

See 4.

Should get no discount then perhaps they would sell them or rent them out instead of leaving them empty to rot or be squated etc.

If owner deceased then ok. If just left empty owner should pay something.

Cannot see why there should be any discount at all.

They should pay the full amount as there are many people who need a house or home.

Especially local people.

Unsure. If the house is empty due to death you should not have to pay. If it is an empty rental property - should pay the full amount.

An empty house is an asset, and should pay tax even if it is not occupied.

The house has any excuse to remain empty for any length of time. If the rent is too high making it stay empty, then reduce the rent and pay the correct amount of tax.

Three months should be sufficient for minor repairs and decoration and finding new tenants. If someone can afford a house they don't live in, even during that 3 months discount should only be 50%.

Should be reduced to 3 months considering the national shortage of houses.

Depending on circumstances the discount should be removed.

Again, no more than 20% for 6 months.

There should be no excuse for delaying repairs to getting the property habitable.

Chances are that the home is empty due to a bereavement (death) and so you are putting increased burden on those left. Could be empty due to hospital illness.

This could be reduced to 3 months to encourage landlords to relet asap.

As above, I do not object in the case of hardship e.g. repossession, domestic violence but I do object in the case of second homes and investment properties.

I would prefer 100% for 3 months only to encourage properties to become occupied after 3 months.

As above.

It depends on the reason for the property being empty. If, for example, the owner has died it may take more than 6 months to sell the property.

If someone has an empty property, quite often by choice reduction to 3 months should be sufficient.

As above. Noting Hastings Council had an issue with poor quality beachfront housing. To the extent mandatory purchase orders could be imposed to force landlords to undergo repairs and thereby ease their immigration housing issue. In short order.

If it's not undergoing major repair, wouldn't this be a second home and taxable as such?

No empty property not undergoing repair pay 100%.

There should be 0% discount for empty homes not undergoing major repairs. There should be no advantage for leaving a home empty.

Again the reason: - i.e. empty thro Death should matter. If house on market - funds may not be available.

If a landlord cannot get a tenant for upto 6 months, he should not pay rates on an empty property. I think a discount of 100% for 6 months is fair.

Should be 25% MAX as current encourages empty homes.

If a house is empty, habitable and not being renovated then NO discount should be given if empty more than 24 months a penalty rate should apply at 200%.

I think there should be AT BEST a token discount on empty property. Again, I believe certain cases should be reviewed on their own merit (ie: owner deceased); all properties should be subject to CT - even if empty, the property needs the immediate area maintained.

If citizens can afford a second home and leave it empty then they should be charged the full amount. This may encourage them to return it to use again. Empty home are bad for the community.

Housing is in short supply. If the house is empty for no good reason the full council charge should apply.

I still feel that owners of empty properties should pay council tax as the rest of us do. We should not be encouraging people to keep properties empty by giving them reductions.

Demand for property (rental) is high so Landlords are unlikely to leave properties empty. I have property in London Boroughs and there is 0% discount for it being empty! This is harsh, I think it should be 100% for 3 months.

Abolish the reduction as an incentive to speed up the works.

If house is empty for 6 months, max of 10% discount, after that full council tax. There's a housing shortage, why should people leave houses empty and get discount in council tax anyway????

Suggest as above N4b. ie first 6 months free @ 100%, then 50% for further 6 months.

Empty homes could be let so full council tax could be paid or if not 3 months is better not 6 or 12. No discount should be allowed. This would encourage landlords to ensure that houses are not left vacant.

Maybe a month - one month - no more!

Difficult to answer - probably depends on circumstances surrounding reason for empty property (although a scheme whereby different circumstances received different discount would be difficult to administer.)

This will then provide an incentive for renting out or selling at the earliest opportunity.

Where an empty property is empty following bereavment is under probate a 'period of grace' seems reasonable and the existing discount likewise. However for any other reasons seems to be merely speculative on the part of the owner and no discount should be applied.

Similar comments to a) and b) above.

I have been clearing a large house for over a year. The house has been in the family for almost 100 years and everything needs to be gone through. One cannot work, visit elderly relatives in homes 25 miles away and be clearing the house in a hurry.

There should be no discount of any type for empty homes and I feel that even the new 50% for 6 months is a waste of tax payers money.

Think it should return to 100% for 6 months from personal experience, mortgage still has to be paid on empty home. Paying council tax makes things even more difficult for owner, i.e. inherited property with mortgage still to be paid. When that person living in rented property and already paying one lot of council tax.

If a house does not need major repairs it should be inhabited. There should be no discount. Uttlesford has a housing crisis.

If a property is genuinely empty because of Bereavement or families moving abroad they should be given 100% disc for 12 months and 50% discount for a further 6 months.

Empty homes, without a valid reason should pay full council tax.

Owners of empty properties need to be encouraged to keep their properties in use. A heavier penalty should be imposed to ensure this.

But only in the case of awaiting probate on administration.

I think if you own a property one should pay 100% tax all the time.

No discount should be given, it only encourages landlords to keep the property unoccupied.

If they can afford 2 homes then they can pay 2 council taxes

6 months. no longer. It may be the house is empty due to a parent's death and families are trying to sort out the parent's affairs.

If a property does not need major repairs 25% discount for 6 mths should help to get it back into occupation.

Still, what services are they paying for?

Because if they can afford major repairs they can afford to pay council tax at the same rate as everyone else - major facilities e.g. water, sewage, rubbish collection, roads to and from will all be used just the same.

Similar criteria to the answer above. Council tax payers in general should not have to fund the activities of developers/builders, aiming to buy and then sell at a profit at a time to suit themselves.

Incentive to get repairs done.

The discount should be less than 50% other than in the event of a sole resident's death and a 6-12 month 50% discount should apply to give the estate time to be settled.

I do not understand the question

Speculators should not be subsidised.

I think the council should be allowed to use empty properties for short lets. They would then receive the council tax from the tenants.

It should be 200% to discourage empty houses and get them back in use after a reasonable time, say a year.

Too many people looking for homes. This allows for houses to stay empty at no cost. Cut the discount.

Only OK if property is passes as part of a deceased estate. Otherwise 200% level (as in 4a above) should apply.

It may take families this long to settle wills/probate/sale following a death.

I would advocate reducing this discount to encourage properties to be filled as promptly as possible.

Empty homes are a sin when people are homeless or in need. No discount should be given and owners should be forced to let or sell empty houses.

Empty homes should not receive any discounts as it contradicts the housing crisis. It should be the responsibility of the empty home owner to populate it, therefore taking some pressure off the new build market.

I'm not sure it is correct. Serious consideration should be given to reducing both discount and timescale.

If the property has been advertised but has not tenant for the period, Council tax should not be paid. If it is vacant because owners are absent (e.g. holiday home) then it is fair to charge a council tax of 50%.

Timescale should be shorter. A house empty for 6 months could be rented out.

Full council tax to be paid

Need discretionary exemptions for people with long-term sickness or need to go into care. 100% discount for 12 months would be appropriate in these cases.

If the percentage and timescale were reduced it might encourage rental or sale of the property. Thereby assisting the housing shortage.

Empty properties should receive no discount. Should be charged at 100%

Although I do agree for the sake of funding the scheme, it is very helpful to not have the worry of paying council tax on an empty property at times of bereavement, when probate is being dealt with.

Depends why they are empty. Should be more if empty due to someone in care.

They should not be empty.

There should be no discount. Firstly, the property is using council services while being repaired (Police, roads, fire brigade, planning department). Secondly, paying full council tax will encourage to make the property habitable as soon as possible.

There should be no discount on empty properties unless they are up for sale.

The owner of empty property should pay 50% rate from outset. This providing a greater incentive to get the property back in occupancy.

Properties with no attempt to improve/sell for e.g. residential occupation should pay the full amount.

Reduce to 50% for three months only

It could be reduced further to encourage occupancy / re-occupancy (say to 25% for 6 months) and to discourage property ownership solely for investment in bricks and mortar/land.

As above. (It depends on who owns the property and why it is empty.) No discounts as a rule.

There are housing shortages in the UK. No house should be empty for no reason.

Then after 6 months NO reduction in Council Tax (as also applies to second homes) until after 2 yrs Council Tax become 150%.

Whether people have empty houses or not should be up to them not you. It's like saying, I have to drive my car!

Reduce this to 40% for six months. With housing in short supply there should be no encouragement to leave property empty unless subject to probate delays.

If people own houses they should pay the council tax whether the house is used or not. I consider the time should be reduced to 3 months.

Why should the owner of an empty house receive any discounts?

Many times a person with a 2nd home may perhaps had to move because of changing jobs into new area, or perhaps they have has further increase in size of family and needed to move and because of this unable to sell existing home thus leaving it empty.

As above if you own a property you should pay for it.

The discount should be 50% for the first three months and nil thereafter.

First 3 months = No council tax giving time to find tenants. After that 100% to pay. There shouldn't be empty homes with people desperate for housing.

It should be bought down to 0 months. The fire brigade will still come out to an empty house.

An empty home undergoing a major repair will provide an extra unit of accommodation. This is desirable. On the assumption that no Council service are provided for an empty house no charges should be raised against it.

50% for the first 6 months only. This should ensure home owner/landlord seek a tenant.

Should be 50% for 3 months so that the premises are now allowed to deteriorate and left empty.

'Yes' in so far as stated but (1) 50% discount should be extended in cases of complicated probate and (2) Rate should be increased by increments of 50% for every 6 months over 12 months of the property remaining empty.

As above. Homes may be between tenants for a short time. How about 100% for one month?

Make it 25% we need all empty homes to be occupied asap. It would concentrate minds.

There should be no discount at all for these homes.

There should be no discount.

For completely empty houses I consider that one month is sufficient time to find a tenant or put the property on the market.

50% for 3 months. With the housing crisis all properties ought to be lived in.

It takes an inordinate amount of time to sort out Probate and subsequently to dispose of a property and as no one is in that property using the facilities for which council tax is levied, it is unfair to penalise those who are trying to organise everything whilst grieving for the lost relative/friend.

In the case of a death a house can take considerably longer to empty and market than 6 months (experience x2)

Reduce it further in view of the shortage of housing abolish the discount all together?

Time period should be 3 months only to encourage letting at reasonable market rates.

I can see no reason for any discount whatsoever.

See above. NO discount should be allowed.

See above

In the case of death if the property cannot be sold the people involved may not be able to afford council tax in an empty property.

I would like this to be the same as an empty house with repairs. If there are no residents in the property there should be a discount for a year.

It does not give the property owner sufficient time to deal with the property.

100% for six months seems reasonable for a short period.

If a property is empty and no attempt is being made to refurbish/rent then there should be no discount.

It may take up to 6 months to find a suitable occupant for a property a 100% discount should be applied.

Properties in this category should pay the same as 2nd home owners.

I do not think empty homes should receive a discount. People need homes and the owner should pay full council tax or rent the house to someone in need of housing.

People should not be encouraged to leave homes empty. After 3 months they should pay double the standard rate.

To discourage owners to get on with any work needed so they can be lived in

Full tax should be payable as this will encourage sale or use of property.

However perhaps the CT charge should be 200% after 24 months to encourage properties to be brought into occupation because of the chronic housing shortage.

If they can afford to keep it empty they can afford to pay council tax. I suggest 50% for 3 months not six.

No tax should be paid on an empty property.

An empty home is no benefit to the community

In circumstances where the property owner has died and the deceased family have the property on the market to sell but no buyer comes forward there should be a 100% discount for at least 6 months and I would suggest up to 1 year provided the family are seen to be doing all they can to sell the property at a sensible price agreed by the agents. They should be protected

Seems hard for people moving from their own home into a Care Home who can't sell their home within 6 months. Suggest 100% and 12 months for this category of people.

There should be no discount or a discount for less time i.e. 3 months. An empty property is possible a 2nd property or rents out - no need for a discount to be applied. This also ties in with 4d) overleaf.

Time between selling or renting and moving can be an issue - 6 months & 100% discount seems fair - but no longer.

But...Why not make it a 100% discount but for a shorter period of time? E.g. 100% for 3 months. This would encourage them to get newer tenants /occupants in quicker and minimise the number of empty homes in the district.

There are people crying out for houses - there is no reason property should be empty for 6 months or more.

Too complicated! If the owner is proven to be on the fiddle, then compulsory purchase property and rent it out.

Each case should be judged on its merits. When I lost my parents it took me a year to grieve, decide what to do, empty their house and dispose of it. Sometimes people are forced to move, and cannot sell their house.

The 50 % level should be for 3 months only

Probably all right at present but somewhat unfair when the property market stalls and selling takes a long time.

No discount for any period should be given.

By charging council tax immediately hopefully avoid property developers holding on to potential housing put back on market.

At a time of shortage of properties for sale or rent no discount should be given to empty properties unless they are undergone major repairs, leaving properties empty should not be encouraged.

Due to market conditions selling houses can be difficult and prolonged. Sensible negotiation should be considered.

For the above reasons (“ For landlords declaring a property under repair could be used to dodge paying council tax, therefore reduce the % and timescale.”) Additionally the value/assets are increasing.

There should be no discount.

Zero discount for an empty home. 2nd homes should be let to private or council tenants if they are empty. Again, why should the council (and taxpayer) subsidise those who may be making capital gains?

Empty properties should be discouraged. A period of 3 months should apply.

There should be no discount for empty homes. This will encourage the sale of such properties.

Charge full amount. 2 month discount fair.

Empty homes, even under repairs should be liable to 100% of council tax.

The same comment at b) is true for c) (“If they have the money to carry out the work they have the money to pay 100% of the tax these are not poor people.”). No discount should apply.

It should be 50% for 2 months , plus encouraging the owner to rent out the property on a 6 month lease to help reduce the housing crisis in Uttlesford.

No discount should be given.

Suggest 100% to discount for 3 months then full amount chargeable after that. Downside is that empty property ??? cannot easily determined no. of LTE from council tax data (need proper report). Upside is - owners are focussed on repairing property to use speedily.

All homes should pay Tax. It is a good way of holding one’s money in property, the property goes up in value, thus the tax needs to be paid.

There is more than enough demand for homes in the area - no excuse any should stand empty.

If the house is empty, no cost to council.

There is no justification for a reduced rate. The property, whether empty or not, should pay the normal rate of C.T. If the owners are not happy about this they can sell or rent the property. An empty property is a waste of resources and should not be encouraged.

No discount should be given. Houses are there to be lived in and everything should be done to encourage occupation.

In view of housing shortage, empty houses should be occupied as soon as possible.

Empty properties should be charged full rate Council Tax., There are too many empty properties and we surely need more housing - so any discount is a disincentive to bringing the properties back into use.

This depends upon reason property empty. Medical grounds Yes - owner living abroad for 6 months - No

Would it increase admin costs to have a scheme for which empty homes had to qualify? i.e. if it's just a second home, no discount, if it is empty because for example, an estate is awaiting probate, then ok to give discount.

Would it increase admin costs to have a scheme for which empty homes had to qualify? i.e. if it's just a second home, no discount, if it is empty because for example, an estate is awaiting probate, then ok to give discount.

Discount for 6 months IF on open market.

Discount for 6 months IF on open market.

No house should stand empty for more than 3 months - discount should be lost after that time encouraging Landlords to look for new tenants.

50% for 3 months - 3 months is long enough to sell a property.

We should discourage empty properties in an area where there is a housing shortage. E.g Is there a good reason for not renting out. Is the property habitable?

Individual cases need to be investigated as to why the property is empty in the first place.

The cost of empty should be as occupied weather under going repairs or not.

If property is habitable give discount for 3 months only. Owner can either move in, sell or let - 3/12 plenty of time to sort out houses need to be lived in - this will reduce problem of houses not being available for people in need. Stop subsidising landlords and developers.

Same as b. above. Need to define what is a major repair and what isn't.

Failure to charge the full amount means rate payers pick up the loss. Homes should not be left unoccupied, but returned to the Council as a source of income.

I do not believe that a discount should be offered at all. Because it does nothing to encourage the process of repair and therefore increases the likelihood of the property being neglected further.

An empty house NOT undergoing repairs should be treated as a second home.

Why is house empty if there is a Housing Shortage. Only get discount if is undergoing repair.

Empty homes could be "For sale" or just "empty" reducing time scale to 3 months would encourage quicker sales and also focus empty house owners to occupy or sell property.

If the owners are trying to sell a property after a death the discount should stay on for a longer period.

Should be longer where the homes are empty due to the delays caused by probate

As above ('If somebody has the financial means to undertake significant renovation then they can find the money to pay council tax. This money will typically just remain in the hands of small property developers.') Empty homes should not receive any discount from council tax.

Do they then pay 100% after 6 months .before the 150% after 2 years.

Why should owners be penalised for not occupying a property?

Empty homes should receive 50% discount for 3 months only.

It should depend on the reason a property is empty. A single occupant death should qualify for 100% for 12 months or until sold - for example.

Basically yes but normal voids should be zero rated. It is an administrative nonsense to extract a few days tax from the landlord .

Empty homes should be charged council tax.

Needs to be 12 months to allow for the sale of properties to go through and then repair.

After two bereavements with legal complications regarding ownership, the period of discount was inadequate and took no account of the timescale for resolution. Very stressful!

As above ('Make CT simple - every home pays it whatever the circumstances. May encourage people to speed up renovations and get house back into use.') There is a shortage of homes in Essex and rising homelessness. There should be no benefit for leaving a home empty.

Empty homes should be discouraged considering how many new ones are being built with the shortage of housing?? 20% x 6m

They should pay full tax at least. That will teach them not to leave a house empty while this country is facing a massive housing shortage.

No discount at all. Too many empty homes.

Bereavement? Divorce? There are numerous reasons for property being empty, and if you are not providing a service, they should be charged for it! You do not refund for people going on holiday - why should you charge owners with empty property - JUSTIFY THIS!

If you can afford to have a home that is empty and not being used you should be liable to pay the Council Tax

Reduce the period to 3 months max at 50%, 3 months at 25% then 0%. Empty homes should be occupied ASAP.

Homes for sale should receive the benefit of 100% discount for 6 months when empty.

If it was 100% for 12 months it would encourage more landlords to keep rental properties in good condition - e.g. a couple of weeks between lets to carry out small repairs and decorating.

They should not receive such a high discount . Housing is scarce and so empty homes should be filled quickly. Not having a discount would encourage homes to be filled by landlords/owners

If the house has become empty as a result of the death of the council tax payer and probate is required a period of six months without payment should be granted.

25% for 3 months

Empty houses should be taxed the same as those occupiers. This would ensure houses return to an occupied state ASAP. Otherwise those leaving houses empty are rewarded

Empty property does not need council services.

50% discount for 3 months

Empty homes should not receive any discount - unless the person is in residential care or hospital . Anyone who owns a home and can afford not to live in it can afford council tax.

With the current housing crisis the council should be discouraging homes standing empty. Give a discount of 50% for a max. 3 months.

Depending on WHY the property is empty and what the circumstances are. Could the property be used for a short term meaning more revenue for both parties.

Should be less. There are plenty of people looking for housing. No one should be sitting on a property that isn't available for habitation and not have to pay for the privilege.

Because these houses there should be no empty houses in Uttlesford District Council and whether council or not so many homeless people everywhere.

TEST

Why is there any discount?

No discount should be given.

The only reason for a house to be empty when not under repairs would be for example houses left in wills and in the process of being sold, if there is no rationale for it being empty there should be council tax

Simpler to treat all 'empty houses' the same, regardless of the reasons. Saves on administration costs. I do agree that it should be time-limited to discourage long-term disuse of properties.

I am the landlord of my late parents' home in a beautiful rural area in the North of England. The house is currently vacant since the last tenant moved out, and there is not a strong demand for large rental properties in the area. I strongly object to having to pay the Council Tax when I do not make any use whatsoever of the local services.

With the amount of people in need of housing at the moment, there should be more encouragement in filling empty housing quicker. There is no reason a liveable house should be left empty for 6 months when there are so many people looking for housing. I appreciate the housing market in Uttlesford is extortionately priced but perhaps this would encourage a change. I don't see why there should be any discount applied at all.

As previously stated to many properties appear to remain empty for long periods of time. The discount should remain at 100% but the timescale reduced to 3 months, which should be ample time to make arrangements for the sale or occupation of the property.

As before, property development is a huge business in this District with large profits being made on the sale of homes. They can afford to pay 100% of the Council Tax.

The housing market can leave an empty home for a long time. This can put a heavy financial strain on someone, if they have already moved and are still trying to sell.

I think if a house is being refurbished, it should get 100% discount for 6 months. Rental properties need to be kept to a decent standard and landlords should not be discouraged from doing renovations

There should be no discount

A empty house is not costing the council expense in services so should pay less until it is occupied

I see no reason why an empty property should allow the owner to avoid paying 50% of the council tax for up to six months.

Where property is for letting, I think landlords should be given a much shorter time to find a new tenant, say 2 months. However there needs to some consideration for holiday lets where there may be longer out of season empty periods which are quite reasonable. Where property is not for letting but just left empty I don't think any discount should be given in view of the national housing shortage.

d. Empty homes premium

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (ie the owners of such homes would pay 150% of the Council tax per house).

Do you agree that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period?

If "No", please explain why.

Responses received

Empty homes are an insult to eople desperate for housing. A punitive council tax might be the spur the owners need

I think it should be introduced after 1 year

Absurd premium!! A private house is exactly that. Not really anyone's business if it's empty but council tax is paid. (BTW I do not have an empty house)

Suggest additional charge of 100% to reflect the need to increase available housing

1 year is sufficient - no home should be left empty for longer without penalty.

Should be discretionary as circumstances will vary.

The unfurnished and empty period should be reduced to 1 year.

Full charge to encourage compliment and occupancy.

I think this is Daylight Robbery. If the property is empty no one else is living there and therefore not using any of the Council's services - they will already be making a contribution to the LCTS both in their primary residence and also paying a second council tax anyway.

It is essentially unreasonable and unfair

The property should be brought back into use as soon as possible. A property should not be left empty any longer than six months. The additional charge is correct.

The time period before the premium becomes due should be decreased.

Full charge should be applied

As per 4 (c). Even stronger incentives should be applied to get properties occupied.

The 2 year timescale should be reduced to 1 year.

There should be latitude given to properties held within difficult / disputed probate cases.

People need homes. There should be no empty houses. Landlords/owners should be penalised.

This is a red herring in housing policy.

It should be increased as unoccupied property adds to the local housing shortage 2 years is enough. Why not increase it to 200% and 100% per year then every year.

I agree this is the correct level of charge, but it should be charged after a property has been empty for 12 months.

Additional charge of 50% after 1 year, additional charge of 100% after 2 years.

Think it should be only ONE year, 2 years too long and not justifiable.

As with C) I would reduce timescale to no more than a year and ideally less.

Council tax to be fully decreased.

. Should be 1 year or more with an additional charge of 100% ie owners would pay 200% of the council tax per house. This would encourage owners to get things sorted out.

Just pay normal council tax at 100%.

Reduce the time scale to 12 or 18 mths.

To encourage use should pay full amount.

The level of additional charge is correct but the time period should be reduced to 1 year.

Correct time 6 months. After that 100%

Should pay more for leaving property.

There should be a higher additional charge after one year eg 100%

there should be no limit houses become disrepaired vermin move in plenty of people need homes. People keep houses and want for the property value to change to make more money.

Very good idea

100% is what is charged on occupied houses why the extra unless it is a builder/speculator wanting to let the property deteriorate so much that it has to be pulled down leaving them able to build flats or more smaller houses!

It does not give the homeowners encouragement to get the house back on the market or rent
Less than one year.

Should come in after 1 year

Should be 100% ie. Pay 200% after 2 years empty.

No penalise anyone who leaves a property empty. They will cash in on the inevitable rising price of the property.

C.Tax should relate to the person using the services not the home.

1 year. I thought council were able to acquire long standing empty homes.

Correct level - Yes; Two years - No, suggest 1 year

1 year is adequate

The period should be reduced to one year

I don't think it's fair to pay more than the normal council tax and with the increased development I can see a problem for sellers and those wanting to rent their properties in the future. I already know of people being unable to sell properties now because of the developments

150% is the minimum - could be higher . again to encourage quicker action by owner

The length of time property left empty should be reduced to six months of one year. But the cost remain at 150%. Unless property on the market for sale.

Additional charge - Yes; tow years excessive - one year reasonable I think

The additional charge should 100% (total 200%) and operate after six months.

The additional charge should come in force as soon as possible. The owners should show why they have made their decision.

Additionally, pubs that are left derelict (in hope of forcing reversion to domestic use) should be charged even more.

There should be no endtime. If a house is empty it should be used, so incentives to bring it to market must be in place.

Please see previous answers.

Increase the 'penalty' for empty houses. It is immoral to leave houses empty when there is such a need for houses.

If the property already incurs 100% council tax, a 50% hike is unjust and will not address current housing shortages for a number of reasons.

2 years period should reduce to 6 months.

They should use a sliding scale after six months grace which increases till the house is used to buy or rent instead of standing empty. Its like parking your car at a reduced rate in the car park and clogging the system.

With housing so difficult there can be almost no reason why a house stands empty (agree in some cases there might be legal reasons these are the exceptions.)

Additional charge should be applied after one year, ie reduction in timescale which would generate more revenue and encourage owners to bring property back into use more quickly.

There should be no time limit on empty homes - a house is an asset, the owners should pay maximum amount of tax.

1 year is long enough for a landlord to make a decision before 150% applies.

18 months

Unless an owner can show conclusively that there is a valid reason for it being left empty the surcharge should be increased by a further 50% every 6 months.

Period should be 18 months

200% - 1 year or more.

Should investigate reason for house being empty for such a time. Most people if able would want to cash the asset in.

But in certain circumstances there could be some level of discount ie where probate is going through courts and court has no concern of situation.

One year should be the norm.

% rate should increase every year after the first two years.

Too confusing to answer!

It should also apply to furnished properties. Unless the property is empty due to hardship e.g. severe damage, domestic violence, the timescale should be reduced to one year.

150% is fine, but should start after only 1 year.

The time should be reduced to 1 year. It can have an adverse affect on neighbouring properties for a home to remain empty for prolonged periods.

Bring the period down to one year.

To alleviate housing issues there should be a ratchet timescale i.e. 50% after 3 months. Zero after 6 months + 50% after 9 months + 100% after 12 months + 150% after 18 months +200% after 24 months.

Shorten the time period to 12 months (2 years is unnecessarily long).

The council does not provide any greater service therefore should not charge extra.

The 50% premium should be levied on homes left empty for 1 year not 2 to encourage empty homes back onto the market.

A second home is an investment. 100% is already adequate and reasonable. One should not be forced into seeling one's investments, whatever the nature of the investment. This is an objective opinion, as I do not have a second home as described above.

Increase additional charge to 100% ie 200% in all.

I think 1 year is sufficient time, but I think the amount is correct.

Depends if this level of charging is working? How many of these homes are now back in use?

If the house empty for no good reason the council charge after two years should double.

Property owners paying the full 100% are already making a contribution.

Would reduce period to 18 months rather than two years.

Should be 50% for one year, then full council tax. I do not agree with 150%.

I don't think empty house owners should be charged more than an occupied property. If it is empty, thus uninhabited then there are no demands on council services - no bins to empty etc etc. 100% should be the maximum and a better incentive (grant?) to help owners bring properties into use.

Raise to 200% after 2 years - 300% after 5 years. Empty homes are a blight and are socially reprehensible.

There's a housing shortage! A lot higher council tax if house empty for more than 6 months, there are a lot of people waiting for housing, people should be charged for leaving properties empty to encourage properties back to use, especially as Uttlesford are selfishly stopping any new homes in the area of being built.

Empty for 12 months is sufficient to resolve most issues with property including probate. I would suggest additional 50% after 12 months and increase to additional 100% after 2 years. This would provide a strong incentive to bring property back into use.

That seems rather excessive. There could be circumstances beyond their control to why is empty for so long. As they are not using any services, refuse collection or otherwise, then NO.

In my view reduce to 1 Year.

Keep it at 50% owners pay 150% of council tax per house but not 2 yrs - reduce to 1 yr or even 6 months.

See previous.

Reduce to a year to incentivise selling or renting out.

Two years is far too long for the property to stand empty - consider anti-social implications - and should be reduced to a maximum of 12 months. The additional cost should be 100% of Council Tax to facilitate swift disposal - despite services not being used they are available!

I don't see why you must wait 2 years before you do this, the UK is short of accommodation and you wish to permit no sanctions for 2 years, make it 1 year.

I suggest that the period should be reduced to one year, unless the house is undergoing major repairs.

But I think individual circumstances should come into play.

12 months is long enough to sell or let a property.

Reduce time to one year

I would like to see the 2 year period reduced as there are still too many empty properties.

But period could be reduced to 18 months

A house should not stand empty when people are homeless.

I agree with the level but I think that the timescale should be reduced to 1 year. That should be long enough to get the property sold or let.

2 year period should be reduced to 1 year max.

I think the correct level should be £150.00 after one year.

That 2 year period should be reduced to 6 months.

This amount could be raised to 200% and still have our support.

If a home is left empty for so long it should be bought by the council and used for the less fortunate (like me!!)

150% ? I do not see why the owner should pay ½ as much again. No call on bin collections, education etc. etc. I think this is unfair. 2 year time scale agreed.

I can't see how this fits in with c) (Empty homes). Assuming that I follows the period of 6 months .

What happens between 6 mths (disc) and 2 yrs (Premium)?

It feels very punitive and too high - not encouraging.

Additional charges is correct but timeframe is too long.

I believe the time period should be reduced to one year which seems fair.

Make owners pay 200%

100% full charge should apply (i.e. no refund/discount) but why more than 100%?

Increase the charge - increase what Uttlesford receives or consider compulsory purchase of the properties

Suggest reducing time period.

I do not understand the question or statement

Not sure - Depends on why the house is empty - for example this is not fair if due to someone being ill and relatives not wanting to sell house - especially relevant for elderly. Otherwise OK - should be exceptions.

Make it one year and increase the tax to 200%. There is a housing shortage. Houses kept empty for speculation is a crime.

I agree with the charge but the house should only be allowed to remain empty for a maximum of 1 year.

Some properties not suitable for use.

Reduce the timescale to 18 months to bring empty property back into use earlier.

200% after one year.

Empty houses should attract: After 1 year 150% tax After 2 years 200% tax After 3 years 500% tax

I would propose that the rate increases to 150% after 6 months, and that after 12 months there is an additional increase.

Only OK if property is passed as part of a deceased estate. Otherwise 200% level (as in 4a above) should apply.

Double or treble the additional charge - houses should not be empty when people are homeless. As per response (C), this should be 100% payable for 6 months and increase to 150% immediately thereafter.

Additional charge after one year

Should go up to 200% after two years and 150% after one year to provide an incentive to make houses available.

I consider all empty properties not undergoing any repair to make them inhabitable should pay the full 100% council tax.

Time period should be reduced to bring homes back in use sooner.

A further addition of 50% (i.e. the owners pay 200%) would be acceptable. We need to have all our empty houses occupied as soon as possible.

2 years should be reduced to 1 year`

Percentage increased/timescale reduced - see comments on previous question (If the percentage and timescale were reduced it might encourage rental or sale of the property. Thereby assisting the housing shortage.)

I believe 1 year would be adequate.

1 Year

Make them pay more to incentivise them to bring the property under occupation or sell onto someone who will.

The two year period should be reduced so that people are encouraged to bring empty houses into use sooner.

Depends on circumstances.

Charges are ok but timescale too long. 1 year would be better.

The time limit should be one year.

Reduce empty period to one year before increasing to 150%

Could be brought in after 1 year @ +50% . 2nd +75%, 3rd +100%, for same reasons as c)(to discourage property ownership solely for investment in bricks and mortar/land.)

Would suggest that this additional charge is on a sliding scale - it should increase the longer the property is empty. Would bring down period from 2 years to 1 year.

Not sure I understand this but no property should be empty. Help with letting if people are in hospital/prison/abroad?

Same as last reason none of you business.

I consider it too generous. I consider 1 year efficient and that if an owner wants to leave a house empty if unfurnished, council tax should be levied at 150% after 12 months.

It seems logical to allow any empty house to escape the additional charge. Why should the charge be removed for 2 years or any other period?

Once again this should depend on certain issues whether you are able or unable to sell your home because of certain changes to your life.

They would be encouraged more to get the homes ready for use if full tax had to be paid.

Council tax should be payable in full after 3 months non-occupancy.

Second home and empty homes provide employment (gardeners, carers, cleaners).

After 2 years empty properties should be confiscated by the council and used to house people without housing. I would apply this to 2nd homes when others have none.

I think that the level of time is brought down to 6 months. Otherwise we are paying for people with properties bought for investment. This pushes the house prices up.

Should be levied after property empty and unoccupied for one year or more.

See 4b) overleaf (An empty home undergoing a major repair will provide an extra unit of accommodation. This is desirable. On the assumption that no Council services are provided for an empty house no charges should be raised against it). Also 2 years is arbitrary, does it have any economic justification?

12 months max.

Should be 150% for 1 year after the premises become empty to encourage owners to act sooner. See c) : (1) 50% discount should be extended in cases of complicated probate and (2) Rate should be increased by increments of 50% for every 6 months over 12 months of the property remaining empty.

Unless covered by probate, 12 months is a more reasonable period.

Shorten it to a year.

If people wish to leave houses empty they should be able to. But pay tax after 12 months but maybe less 10%.

The Premium should be paid after 1 year.

That period should be until the property is back in use

I agree with additional charge but it should be brought in sooner (6 months)

I consider that the percentage should be increased and the timescale should be reduced.

Time scale should be 1 year (See previous answer: 'With the housing crisis all properties ought to be lived in.')

Empty houses should be occupied within 6 months.

Many pensioners need to go into Care Homes towards the end of their lives and Uttlesford, like many councils in the S.E., do not fund these pensioners. Uttlesford should therefore not profit from these empty homes, the only asset left to such pensioners, as they are not providing any facilities at all to these homes for which council tax is levied.

The council tax should remain the same as no one will be using council facilities.

Charge more after a shorter time e.g. +100% after 1 year. Helps increase housing stock.

I would increase it. Say 50% after 1 year and 100% after 2 years to prevent owners from sitting on empty property. If properties listed I would increase more to enforce repairs and use.

Charge 200% as large profits are made from property speculation on empty property.

6 months should be quite enough. Houses should not be left empty - please discourage.

Level of charge should be raised to 200%, and time limit reduced to one year. A further 50% should be charged for each additional year.

The premium should be introduced after 6 months especially where there might be legal problems such as waiting for probate.

Should be 200%

If property is trying to be sold during the whole time and hasn't been sold it's unfair on the owners.

Should be additional 50% after 1 year.

I feel charging 150% is a bit too much.

The additional charge should be increased there are no gains for leaving properties empty.

1 year 150% 2 years +200% as a reasonable stronger encouragement.

?

The council tax for any property should never be more than 100%. To charge above this is to use council tax for a purpose other than that for which it is intended.

The period during which a home is empty should be three months after which the council tax should be set to 200%.

I think the additional charge should be increased to maximise properties being in use.

As 4 B+C

This explanation is not clear!!

Should be more if it's just a greedy landlord or indecisive council. Many properties un-inhabited actually belong to local authorities / councils.

Reduce time limit

See (c)

Correct level of charge but it should commence after ONE year.

Agree with charge but feel two years is too long for owners - perhaps 1 year.

They shouldn't have to pay more - just pay the 100% like everyone else.

However after two years ie 200% increase would be fair.

Home owners should not be forced to occupy their property if it does not suit them.

Should be 1 year - to encourage selling or letting property.

It is the owners choice if they want their property to remain empty. They should not be made to pay more than 100%

I think the grace period should be reduced to 12 months except if there is a genuine planning application in progress, then 2 years is sufficient.

Should be additional 100% after one year - empty properties must be discouraged.

Or even double the council tax.

Reduce time to 18 months. Housing is in very short supply and every effort should be made to bring empty properties back into use.

If you own a property you should pay council tax.

No timescale, if proven owner unable to afford restoration, then compulsory purchase and rent out.

This does seem reasonable. Although again I would urge to judge each case on its merits. As why is this house empty for so long, and perhaps there are circumstances where discretion should be used.

I cannot believe that people leave houses unfurnished and empty for 2 years + without good reason. If they have good reason I hope there is some discretion for the council to waive part or all of this surcharge.

200% should be payable after one year

Limit the empty property to 12 months and then additional charge is added - hopefully encourage housing back on 'market'.

The additional charge of 50% should be introduced after 1 year, also, an additional charge of 100% (i.e. double council tax) should be introduced after 2 years or more, owners need to be encouraged to bring empty properties back into use.

But ...Deliberate attempts to allow properties to depreciate and then applying for planning permission for several swellings should be unlawful and charged appropriately.

Empty homes premium should start after 1 year vacancy.

Housing shortage is acute, therefore empty houses need to be available ASAP therefore reduce the timescale.

Reduce time period to zero.

The timescale should be reduced to 6 months and the % should be increased to 200% this to encourage these properties to be sold for the benefit of the community.

Charge full amount. You have powers for forcing people not to leave homes empty.

Empty homes should be liable for 100% of council tax.

The time should be one year and a charge of 200% after that. This would put more pressure on them to bring the property back into use in addition this should double for each extra year it is not in use. Unless a very good reason is put forward to the council in chambers to agree.

This premium should be brought in after 1 year at least.

Make it a 100% premium - so 200%

I think Council tax should be paid at the point of the house becoming empty. (nice way to make an enormous amount of capital on one's house going up in value.)

I think this should apply after 6 months - especially as the town is not designed for the amount of houses it currently has - if all vacant building were in use it would relieve the pressure to keep building.

Why should owners be taxed for doing nothing?

Double the rate to incentivise owners to fill homes and apply this both furnished and unfurnished, if legally possible

Absolute maximum of 1 year; "genuine" reasons for standing empty over 1 year must be few and far between.

Increase the premium to 100% after six months if substantial progress has not been made to bring the property up to liveable condition.

It is unbelievable that Uttlesford only charges 12.5% (2014-2016) compared to the average from the table on page 2 of 21.75%. Why is this so low? A reasonable figure surely would be 20-25%
Yes right charge. No to timescale - why two years when all other time scales are based on 12 months

Reduce period to one year. There are too many empty properties in the area.

No building should be left empty for 2 years. Perhaps assistance should be offered to Landlords in return they would allow the council to reduce their waiting list.

200% for properties empty and unfurnished for 1 year or more.

Perhaps, one year or more, unless there are circumstances that cannot be resolved e.g. in hospital. If empty that there is some evidence of maintenance and protection of habitability OR

market for sale.

With the shortage of housing why are they empty in the first place, 2 years is too long.

I believe that in a democratic society home owners should be allowed to do what they want with their own property and not be subjected to additional Tax charges with the provision that the property is NOT causing nuisance or a health problem to neighbours.

No house should be left empty for more than one year.

You should consider levying this surcharge after 18 months at 150%.

Should be one year.

Additional charge should be 100% 2 yrs is correct timescale.

Additional charge should be 100% 2 yrs is correct timescale.

This should be raised to at least 200% and the period reduced to a minimum of 12 months.

Would reduce to 1 year to encourage homes to be left empty for a shorter period.

If a house is empty for no reason they should pay council tax. Should not have had a discount in the first place.

Without knowing the reasons why a property is empty I do not believe that you can charge more than 100%

The period should be reduced to one year

To encourage occupancy of empty properties Reduce time 1 year

Should be exceptions for delays within the probate office.

Remove any discount for empty homes and keep everything at a flat rate this should help remove administration costs fo council tax and keep the system simple

How can you justify charging extra for no services being used? It is entirely feasible that the property cannot be sold adding further problems for the owner.

Too blunt. It should depend on circumstances

Should be reduced to one year only. We need homes now not in 2 years!

For most instances the answer is yes, but if an old couple die intestate (without a will) problems can go on for a long time tracing family members etc.

Should be encouraged to get someone living/using the property. Needs to be short term window to allow them to get someone in, but after that they need to be encouraged to get it in use.

As stated overleaf ('After two bereavements with legal complications regarding ownership, the period of discount was inadequate and took no account of the timescale for resolution. Very stressful!') there should be an appeals procedure that can be referenced in individual cases.

These appeals could be verified by solicitors acting for the applicant.

The timescale should be reduced to 18 months . There is a real need to bring homes back on the market and this may be an encouragement.

Reduce from two years to one year. No excuse in current situation not to ensure that all properties are used to provide homes.

House left empty this long should be compulsorily purchased, failing that tax should be much higher.

No. I don't own a second property - but if I did I believe it is my right to do what I want with it - it's nothing to do with the council!

It should be 12 months and not 2 years. Leaving a property unoccupied for over 12 months is not acceptable or justifiable.

Reduce the period to one year at 150% then increase to 200% - shortage of homes means empty properties should be back in use ASAP

But each case must be considered on its merits and reasons.

I agree with the level of charge but consider that one year is quite long enough to keep a property completely empty without incurring (an additional) charge.

Even assuming the 50% surcharge is lawful this may not be the best way to achieve the objective, given potential redevelopment value and risk to listed or character buildings.

Compulsory purchase should be considered.

100% is fair enough. 150% is unduly targeting landlords but owners/landlords need to prove that work is being carried out.

Make it 200%, not 150% i.e. double the council tax . apply it to furnished homes as well.

18 months at 200%

Do not make any additional charge in line with government guidance when a property is genuinely on the market for sale.

The period should be reduced to one year to encourage owners of multiple properties to either occupy, sell or rent them. In the current property shortage this is appropriate.

My thoughts at that the additional charge is correct at +50% but that the time period could be reduced to 1 year as an incentive to return a property to use in these times where housing is desperately needed! Perhaps this should be done in 2 stages - first reducing to 18 months, then to 1 year.

Reduce time period to 1 year

I think there should be exceptions in cases where owners are unable to sell the home - e.g. planning blight.

With current lack of housing, there should be no incentive to leave a property empty for more than 12 months. However, there should be provisions to allow homes being empty before and after major repairs without penalising home owners.

With the current housing crisis owners should be encouraged to bring empty properties back into use by an additional charge of 100% after 6 months.

My answer is an empty homes premium is whatever My answer is less than 2 years is people should not a second home just not keep for just live in, always not standing empty

TEST

The percentage is fine, but reduce the timescale to 12 months.

In some cases there may be good reason that the property remains empty e.g there may be no buyers for that property or the housing market is stagnant. Also, an empty property is not generating demand for council services and there is no real justification for any charge let alone a surcharge.

I believe that the timescale should be reduced to ONE year for empty homes.

Should be after 1 year.

The question does not provide sufficient information to give a response. If the Council is empowered to fine owners of empty properties, then there should be a process that takes into account the reasons for the delay in bringing the property back into use. The mass of restrictions, often arbitrarily applied in Uttlesford (as compared with other councils) can make it a slow and difficult process

Don't stop there - keep raising the cost as time goes on. 150% isn't a big enough stick - add another 50% each year (and in the event of non-payment, eventually enough will be owed that the property can be claimed in lieu so that the council can then bring the property back into use itself).

150% should be applied after 1 year not 2 years.

I think you could argue that the period could be reduced from 2 years to 1. The owner receives a discount for the first 6 months (as per previous question), pays the full rate for the following 6 months and I think should be penalised thereafter for failing to keep the property occupied.

The time period should be reduced to 1 year and an additional surcharge should be made equal to any increase in property value made in the same period.

That will not help owners to renovate, as they will not be able to afford it.

I believe the additional charge should apply after 12 months and increased by 50% for each subsequent year. It is totally unacceptable to have homes empty for longer than a year when there is a problem of housing need. Residential property should not be treated as an asset like art or fine wine to appreciate in value for future sale, but as something that should be lived in.

Don't understand the implications

The additional charge should begin six months after the property had stood empty, whether furnished or unfurnished.

I agree there should be an additional charge but I think a shorter period of say a few months should be the case before the premium is charged. This will discourage owners from keeping property empty and unfurnished.

Q5 Further comments made regarding the LCTS scheme

Responses received

If you have any further comments to make regarding the LC...

Apart from the desperate need for housing empty properties have a deteriorious effect on neighbourhoods

I think the amount of support available should be increased where individual circumstances may merit this additional assistance

You should review who is exempt from Council Tax . Whilst I agree with most there are certain individuals that should no longer be exempt e.g. Religious communities, USAF personnel and dependants and diplomats. They all earn a good wage.

It is very important to protect the frail or elderly who are poor and still living in their own home from council tax which in some cases is their biggest bill. To have to choose food or heat or council tax is undignified in a civilised rich western country.

A useful study!

. It should help ALL those on low incomes of less than £16,500K. Low income families who are working but own their own houses still need help!

Uttlesford is a wealthy area and we should be prepared to support those less fortunate and ensure that usable housing is not left empty in a period of shortage.

Uttlesford virtually full employment, affluent area. UDC should phase out discount support to all others than those with total or proven financial needs.

Any incentive is good to provide much needed homes.

On an urgent matter pensioners would appreciate details of honest work people & gardeners. I find it very difficult. Roof and hedge top of list (it was cut one month ago a now needs doing again!) Thank you.

Hit the rich not the poor or disabled Make a stand. Advise people who are a the pour disabled being hit - Disgrace conservative policy!!

Cuting grass round rout more not just twice a year not safety walk with children and fixed more

pothalls.

What about Pensioners in three bedroom houses and only using downstairs when there are family waiting for them

Low income but working is an important consideration - i wouldn't want this reduced

Seems quite complicated - but fair

As an elderly, low income, lady I find the scheme a godsend that enables be to live the rest of my life in a happy and safe 'sheltered' flat with the occasion treat - thank you.

My answers are in accord with improving work ethic and ensuring people one better off working when possible. Benefits should not otherwise be provided.

I think that the costs should be lowered for people over the age of 75. My wife and I are over 80 and and we need to have all the help/assistance we can get.

As a disabled pensioner I am relieved that I will receive some protection. I did work, very hard, for 40 years as a farm labourer but need some mercy in my current situation and in need of help at this time in my life, which the government should understand.

Re. 4d. Two years is a long time and, unless there are absolutely genuine reasons for the house to remain empty for two year, owners should be encouraged even further than at present, to bring it back into use.

We can only hope this new scheme is not as error-ridden or discourteously implemented as the previous 'benefit' one. The structure was extremely wasteful and punitive. Also, the credit card surcharge for payment is throughly outrageous.

i like the aim to not allow properties to remain empty as we need to use our exisiting housing stock rather than build more houses - so why then do you not do something about all the properties with agricultural ties that are empty. If the tie was removed from all these a lot more houses would be available.

Within the (ridiculous) parameters and budgets set by central government I think the council should protect the vulnerable, especially if they rely on welfare benefits, whilst encouraging best use of clement housing stock.

Arrears of tax is unacceptable. Either apply for curt orders tro loby to change law for council to directly seize monies owed from sale of property. Talks less and do more.

Why was this pretty much only about property.

GET EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO THE MARKET.

In this area the scheme needs to focus on the target groups mentioned who must be protected. There are too many house owners etc in this affluent area who are exploiting the system.

n/c

Make some allowance for people trying to sell.

Landlords who make money buying and selling houses should pay maximum taxes and society should look after the vulnerable.

Those with enough money/extra properties should be subsidising those on low/no income who CANNOT (not choose not to) work.

You should protect and help the vulnerable people in real crisis.

Thank you!

Keep the activity of the council to a minimum so that extra bureaucracy is avoided.

Pay more attention to the section of society who needs help.

Does the drop in LC support mean that we have more people out of work? Need to survey those who have dropped out of school. Why is this?

Bring back national council tax benefit!

The quick and easy way to reduce housing shortages is to make use of the 300 000 + houses already built in the UK that are empty or not fully repaired. Kick start the process with incentives to get going and repair!

Empty business properties should also be taxed in this way. It is shocking to see so many old local pubs being intentionally vacant and left to rot, so that developers can knock them down and make vast profits. For example The Colts in Stansted.

A sliding scale for LCTS would be fairer. As a retired, married couple we pay full tax on our home, despite living on a modest income. Our house is a large one, because we have worked hard to make it so, yet our consumption of council services is very low. A balance should be struck.

There are too many empty homes/second homes this should be discouraged we are an over crowded island and need to stop building new homes when existing are empty or under used.

UDC have got it about right, well done.

The days of 'feather bedding' benefit claimants at the expense of property owners has surely to

cease with a so called conservative government.

It is clear that there is a need for this scheme and I suspect we have more people in the protected groups than most people assume. It is difficult to answer the questionnaire without more info about the alternatives or what else the money could be spent on.

What are you doing to actually get people to pay this (ie overdue amounts)

Consideration should be given to 100% discount for empty homes that are 'for sale' or in the process of being sold. Some circumstances should be assessed on a case by case basis.

Shame people should have to pay for Garden Waste. Don't think about Pensioners or disabled people. Also I don't think Pensioners should have to pay Council Tax

I am not familiar with LCTS. Last question below not sure how to answer. Do you have to be already designated by a professional to say you are in a protected group? I have put our status beside previous question. (2 pensioners / Poor health. I am carer for my husband)

It's difficult to believe that this is anonymous when you ask for a post code! Perhaps it would be just as useful if you asked for just the first part.

With more houses being built the LCTS should go down not increase, because you will be collecting more money from more people, so pooling of the rates. So in actual fact the rates should go down.

Would the council consider taking over empty houses to help their housing lists. (just a thought)

Recipients should

Vital that this is targeted to those who really need it - stringent eligibility rules must apply.

There should be a strong message that empty homes do not help anyone. En masse, they destroy communities, often fall into disrepair and could be used by those less fortunate who are desperate for housing.

Plus a rebate 25 % 2 years once in use.

No further comment.

Almost every article in 'Uttlesford Life' refers to an email address for further information!! What about we who have no computer??

Thanks for asking but I'm not sure many, including me, are well enough informed to make other than 'in principle' judgements.

I rent over 60 years old the rent keeps going up £25 every year their needs to more help for us because were does it end they the landlords are priceing us out I can't get a council house because they go to people with kids who haven't done a days work in their lives had child to get a council house and benefits.

People with more than one property (how many rooms do you need?) can better afford to pay, there should be no discounts!

Like all activities you should try to spend as little of other peoples money as possible.

We are happy to help people that can't help themselves but not people that won't help themselves. If you can afford a second home, you can afford council tax.

As a pensioner living alone on a low income the 25% discount for lone occupancy is not enough.....

If we are here and benefit from its balmy climate we should pay for it. They could always try Margate or Hastings.

Your authority needs to get unpaid tax paid - you need to charge tax when monthly payments are not made. Stop 6 and 12 month payments. Attention to LET properties, these should pay in advance as tenants leave without paying.

All empty home owners should be encouraged to rent them or sell them. Inthsi housing shortage staying empty only makes them deteriorate faster.

If an elderly person has to go into a carehome this should after the house being empty for up to a year - so it sells.

I think Uttlesford Council do a wonderful job. Thank you.

Would suggest looking at longerterm (5 to 10 years) and see where LCTS level needs to be. And base rates criteria on a level incline to that point. Easier for recipients to acclimatise to.

If a house lies empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years then the owner can afford to pay a maximum amount. Unless they are ill, work abroad or a legitimate reason then the house for them is just an investment.

Staff needed to make checks and not let owners keep get away with excuses for not paying what is due.

I think pensioners should not have to pay council tax if they only have a state pension.

It is very wrong to take extra tax from hard working people to subsidise people on benefits.

Looks like the council are making the right decisions.

Without the LCTS I would be in dire straits. It is a very worthwhile scheme. Regarding empty home - I really think the government's scheme of building no homes is wrong and with a million empty homes in the UK anything that helps to fill these is surely the best use of resources.

People purchase a second home or buy to rent to make money - IF THERE SO GREEDY they'd rather keep property empty till they rent out at above market rate - of course rates etc. increase People from abroad, who own property for investment / holiday homes, in UK should be charged more to subsidise LCTS.

Each time I complain some smartarse at UDC explains why I'm wrong! Sack the b*****d!

A more generous LCTS scheme would reduce arrears which incur transactional costs for the Council (chasing, court procedures), so may even save money.

I'm using this to bring forward about lack of potholes fixed in Saffron Walden. also the amount of houses being built is a joke. There's a lot more traffic . Thus people are becoming more aggressive with their driving. All accidents and deaths are on your hands!!

I am in the happy position of being able to afford my Council Tax. I wish to see those less fortunate than myself helped as much as possible please.

Charge or sue.

My husband and I are both approaching our 80s always worked hard never claimed anything, We just are out of the threshold of claiming help. It is a financial struggle to hold onto our home, but we love our home. So why should we expect people with second homes benefiting. Surely they should be the first to be able to afford council tax as others do. If you can't pay your way DO NOT EXPECT OTHERS TO ONLY if you are disabled.

What is happening to the buildings next to the hospital opposite Tesco which are abandoned and look ugly?

The LCTS should be kept to a minimum to avoid excessive expenditure by the council and increasing demands on council tax payers.

This questionnaire covers quite complex issue. It might have been helpful to know how many people receive this benefit. The principal of protection of those in need, living in an affluent area is correct.

Maintain strict control of LCT

We are told we need more housing, lets get what we have back on the market. I fail to understand why single occupancy receives a discount, they use the same services and should pay going rate.

I'm not sure how listed buildings are covered, (it at all), by this scheme but there must be some action/monetary sanction to protect such buildings from deliberate neglect by unscrupulous developers.

There are always exceptions or unforeseen circumstances and consequences. Therefore, whilst the cited criteria all appear reasonable and justifiable, there ought to be a review system available for claimed special cases. Perhaps it already exists.

Hard working people must be protected.

“Work ethic” is a doubtful concept. Karl Weber, who coined the term, did not do so appraisingly. He also described the capitalist “iron cage”. Work is a complex notion. André Gorz criticizes the ideology of work as supportive of inequality. Much of the best rewarded “work” is socially useless or even destructive.

Nice to be asked for an opinion.

In cases of real hardship and poverty help should be reviewed.

It would have helped with some of the questions if you'd told us what constitutes a 'low income'. Single occupancy houses should have more reduced rate. Not fair to punish people for living alone.

There should be more support for elderly applicants, who are often very anxious and confused about their entitlements.

Although I myself pay CT anyone who refused to do so has my full support. I give UDC what I must by law - beyond that, money or anything else, nothing whatsoever.

How about using some of these empty houses to house some of the refugees.

Who worded this document? The questions aren't good enough to elicit a response that can be properly assessed.

Cases of a single parent who goes out to work, but has to pay after school and holiday child care should be carefully considered. Some people are struggling with this.

If a house stands empty and unfurnished for more than 2 years then the owners should pay more

that 150% council tax.

I would not wish to see anyone who has to been residing in the UK for at least 5 years benefitting from this scheme.

2nd home discount should still apply to annex attached to a home...dependent on how this is viewed by the council.

Get homes (empty) back on the market a.s.a.p.

There are clear steps the council can take here to help the housing crisis while reducing cost of LCTS. So do it!

My husband, 81 years of age born at Ingleside Place in 1934 April 1st . 21 in 1939 his Dad was allocated a new council house at 10 Catons Lane Saffron Walden , Essex. No LCTS in 1939

TEST

As long as the people in need get the help I agree but safeguards must be in place to prevent any fraud

I benefited from the council tax reduction when my home was empty and undergoing major repairs so I know how welcome this reduction was when faced with the costs of refurbishment/repairs. The temporary reduction acts as an incentive to bring a home up to modern standards and is to be welcomed generally as a way of improving the housing stock of the nation/council.

The need for a support system suggests that the Council Tax scheme itself is flawed but this is a matter for Parliament and beyond the control of the council.

I am happy with the current scheme as long as LCTS is provided for those genuinely on low incomes. I would however like to see a reduction in the timescale for the empty homes premium to one year, this would benefit UDC in an increased income and be an incentive to owners of empty properties to put them back on the housing market.

Lower rates for single person living.

This survey limits the amount of text one can enter. Modern IT systems should be able to cope with more text than most of the public can be bothered to type in with negligible cost - being unable to complete a paragraph because a programmer decided that 400 characters was enough is unacceptable (and annoying). Either you want people's opinions, or you don't. Seems that you don't...

Please check this document for advise:

http://npi.org.uk/files/9214/3386/4426/CTS_challenges_and_options_FINAL.pdf

I am not in favour of promoting the 'work ethic' in cases where people are genuinely unable to work. Current policies seem uncomfortably close to Social Darwinism.

I believe this is a positive step forward, the people on lowest incomes should not be hit harder with these changes. People who leave houses empty and are in no rush to fill them because they know they have 6months - a year before they have to start paying should not be allowed to get away with this to the detriment of residents who pay their council tax every month/cannot afford to pay any/more.

Property that remains empty for long period of time soon become uninhabitable and therefore steps should be taken ensure the council is aware of the owned reasons for the property being empty and their intentions for the property. If the council is not satisfied with their explanation, steps should be taken for the compulsory purchase of the property.

The Conservatives at UDC need to get a grip of Town & Parish Councils abusing their grants while also increasing their share of Council Tax. The most cost effective resolution for residents in Saffron Walden is for the Town Council to become a unitary authority with UDC. Why are we paying out for two Council buildings, two sets of staff and so on when the public doesn't understand the difference?

It can be punitive against those with very low incomes. The Council Tax dept is atrocious and quite inept and unhelpful.

Questionnaire should have had a don't know option.

I hope you mean to reduce spending on this as much as possible

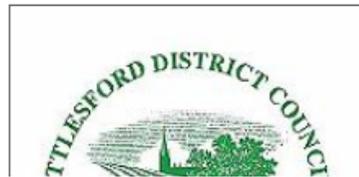
I don't think benefits claimants should be charged anything, particularly those with children

4.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire forms for the paper and online consultation followed an identical format.

Have your say on council tax support scheme

Every resident in Uttlesford has the chance to have their say on how much financial assistance should be given to working age recipients of local council tax support.



As a result of changes to the welfare system, councils now run a scheme called Local Council Tax Support (LCTS), which has replaced the old Council Tax Benefit. It is a government system designed to ensure people are better off working than not.

The scheme is administered by councils, which have some discretion over how LCTS is set, and are also required each year to ask residents how much support they think



Uttlesford Local Council Tax Support Questionnaire

Q1 The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

Do you agree with this?

Yes

No (Please specify below)

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for Uttlesford's scheme in 2016/17 are for working age recipients to pay their bill - the same as this year.

ell, Cabinet Member for Finance & Administration, said: "Uttlesford has consistently maintained the most generous Local Council Tax e in Essex and this is something we can be proud of. That we are able in which the council has been run.

inity, and so we must balance our financial ability to support those on s such we are committed to ensuring all residents get the opportunity to

short questionnaire which is included in the latest edition of *Uttlesford* or by calling the council's Customer Service Centre on 01799 510510.

d) Empty Homes Premium

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was no incentive within the Council Tax scheme to encourage owners to bring empty properties back in to use. As from 1 April 2014 an additional charge of 50% was introduced for properties that had stood empty and unfurnished for a period of 2 years or more (ie the owners of such homes would pay 150% of the Council tax per house).

* As a guide, if the percentage is reduced and/or the timescale increased the amount of Council Tax payable is reduced and the cost of the scheme increases. Equally, if the percentage is increased and/or the timescale is reduced the amount of Council Tax payable is increased and the cost of the scheme decreases.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of additional charge and that two years is the correct time period?

Yes No

If no, please explain below

5. If you have any further comments to make regarding the LCTS scheme please use the space below

About you

Please enter your postcode here

Are you in receipt of LCTS? Yes No

If yes, are you in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer)? Yes No

Next steps

This consultation will close on 30 September 2015.

This scheme needs to be agreed by Uttlesford District Council's Full Council, in this case by 31 January 2016. If approved, the scheme will take effect from 1 April 2016.

Following the decision, the results from the consultation will be available on the Council's website.

Local Council Tax Support Questionnaire

Introduction

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) has replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme and each year the council must consult on the proposed scheme for the following year.

The results of this consultation will be presented to councillors in the autumn with the final scheme for 2016/17 being agreed in December, to start on 1 April 2016.

The government's aim for the scheme is to promote the work ethic and ensure that people are better off working than not. Since the start of this scheme in 2013 the number of working age people in receipt of LCTS in Uttlesford has dropped by 30% from 1,321 to 920.

The council wants to hear your view on this scheme so please take a few minutes to complete the form and send it back to us in the envelope provided. If your envelope is missing, please contact the council by phone 01799 510510 or email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Alternatively you can complete this questionnaire online at www.uttlesford.gov.uk/LCTS

This consultation is anonymous but collated results will be publicly available, including written answers. These will not be attributed to any individual but please do not include any personal or confidential information in your responses.

1. The Government has said pensioners on low income must be given full protection from the implications of this scheme. At the moment Uttlesford also protects disabled people on a low income and carers on a low income.

Do you agree with this? Yes No

If no, why not? You can add other comments, such as other groups that should be protected, in this box

Please turn over

2. The table below shows how Uttlesford's rate compares with other Essex councils.

	% how much claimant pays 2013/14	% how much claimant pays 2014/15	% how much claimant pays 2015/16
Basildon	15	25	25
Braintree	20	20	20
Brentwood	20	20	20
Castle Point	30	30	30
Chelmsford	20	23	23
Colchester	20	20	20
Epping Forest	20	20	20
Harlow	24	24	24
Maldon	20	20	20
Rochford	20	20	20
Southend-on-Sea	25	25	25
Tendring	15	15	20
Thurrock	25	25	25
Uttlesford	8.5	12.5	12.5

For each 2.5% of increase the LCTS recipient(s) will need to pay, on average, an additional £23.07 of Council Tax each year. The cost to the council of keeping the rate at 12.5% would be approximately £209,000.

Do you agree that the council should keep the rate at 12.5% for a third year? Yes No

If you have answered no, what figure should be used and why?

3. The council currently makes sure town and parish councils do not lose money by providing a grant to make up the difference. If the council didn't provide this money it is likely that the amount town and parish councils charge residents would need to increase. For 2016/17 it is likely that the cost of this funding will be in the region of £170,000 across all town and parish councils in the district.

Do you agree that Uttlesford District Council should continue to protect town and parish council budgets by bearing this cost? Yes No

If you have answered no, why not?

4. To help fund the LCTS, the council reviewed Council Tax Discounts on second homes and empty homes.

a) Second homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 a second home received a council tax discount of 10%. This discount was removed so the charge is the same as for every other house.

Do you agree that this treatment of second homes is correct? Yes No

If no, please explain why below

b) Empty homes undergoing major repair

Prior to 1 April 2014 there was a 100% discount for a period of up to 12 months from when the property became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 12 months.

* As a guide, if the percentage or timescale is increased the amount of Council Tax payable is reduced and the cost of the scheme increases. Equally, if the percentage or timescale is reduced the amount of Council Tax payable is increased and the cost of the scheme decreases.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property undergoing major repairs? Yes No

If no, please explain why below

c) Empty homes

Prior to 1 April 2014 properties that were empty but not undergoing major repairs received a discount of 100% for up to 6 months from the date they became empty. This was reduced to 50% for 6 months.

* As a guide, if the percentage or timescale is increased the amount of Council Tax payable is reduced and the cost of the scheme increases. Equally, if the percentage or timescale is reduced the amount of Council Tax payable is increased and the cost of the scheme decreases.

Do you agree that this is the correct level of discount and time period for an empty property not undergoing major repairs? Yes No

If no, please explain why below

4.3 Profiling

Geographical distribution

CM6 2BA	CM24 8JD	CM6	CB10 2XD	CB11 3PQ	CB11 3QD	CM6 3NJ	CM6 2QS
CM22 6DD	CM6	CM6 2PF	CM6 3QQ	CM6 2PH	CM6 3QS	CM6 1UG	CM6 2DD
CB10 3LE	CB11 3LE	CB11 4DX	CM22 7TG	CB10 2XH	CM6 3BA	CM6 1YI	CB10 2SB
	CB11 3UJ	CM22 6JS	CM6 3LU	CB11 3EE	CM6 1BY	CB11 3AA	CB11 4BH
CM6 1PT	CM24 8HU	CM24 8HX	CM24 8HP	CM24 8HJ	CB10 2AX	CB11 3ES	CB11 4PE
CB11 3UH	CM6 3NE	CM22 6HY	CM24 8BD	CM6 3EP	CM6 2AA	CM6 2AQ	CM22 6QH
CM6 1LU	CM6 1BS	CM6	CB11 3YG	CB11 3UG	CB10 2BS	CM22 6HH	
CB10 2HA	CB10 2SW	CB11 3DN	CB10 2BB	CB10 2BA	CM23 1DR	CM22 6AB	CM6 3FH
CM6 1SE	CB11 3AR	CM22 7EU	CB11 3DZ	CM24 8EJ	CM6 2LL	CB11 4JU	CM22 6LB
CB10 1BY	CB11 4QS	CM24 8BD	CB11 3FA	CB11 4HD	CM6 3HQ	CM24 8GJ	CM24 8HW
CM24 8HJ	CM6 3DY	CB11	CM6 3RT	CM6 3HY	CM6 3NP	CM6 3NE	CM6 1BU
CM6 1BS	CM22 6AT	CM23 1BD	CM6 3NA	CM24 8FQ	CB10 2XW	CM22 6AU	CM24 8ES
CM22 6TD	CM6 1NF	CM6	CM6 2LJ	CM6 1UD	CM6 1SR	CB11 4QN	CM22 6AE
CM6 1TY	CB10 1BD	CM1 4Q	CB11 4QT	CB11 4HA	CM6 2HY	CM22 6RW	CB11 4DE
CB10 2ED	CM6 2AE	CM24 8FP	CM24 8DL		CM24 8RL	CM24 8HJ	CB11 3GZ
	CM6 2QD	CM6 2FL	CM24	CM24 8NB	CB10 1TS	CB10 2DF	CM22 6TG
CM6 2H	CB11 4TH	CM6 2LN	CM6 1JP	CM6 3HY	CM23 1DR	CM23 1HP	CB10 2XD
CB11 4HA	CB11 3DA	CB10 1DG	CM6 1UG	CM6 1BP	CM6 2AQ	CM6 1XW	CB11 4SB
CB10 1QD	CB11 4LQ	CM6 3HD	CB11 3TJ	CB10	CM6 3SX	CM6 1LZ	CB11 3XJ
CB10	CB10 2AJ	CM6 3RA	CM6 3DP	CM6 3DL	CM6 2AY	CB11 4DX	CB10 1PH
CM22 6LL	CB11 3DJ	CM22 6HZ	CM24 8DL	CM24 8JT	CM6 3QT	CM22 6RX	CM22 6PP
CM22 6LH	CM24 8NF	CM22 6HA	CM6 3DY	CM6 3AY	CM24 8LD	CM6 3QF	CM6 3JD

CM6 3HB	CM6 2PZ	CB10 2SR	CB11 3SG	CB10 2SE	CM22 6QT	CM6 2ND	CM6 3HY
CM6 1DA	CM22 6TG	CM6 1EE	CM6 3PP	CM6 1ED	CM6 3QU	CB10 2TZ	CM22 6HG
CB11 4UU	CB10 2XR	CB11 3LP	CB11 3HF	CB11 4BA	CM22 6AX	CB10 2DS	CM22 6ED
CB11 2ES	CB11	CB11 3AD	CB11 3DE	CM6 1JP	CM6 2AB	CM22 7EH	CB10 2HG
CB11 4NP	CM6 3HX	CB11 3BT	CB11 4BL	CB11 3AG	CM6 3DU	CB10 1AJ	CB11 3HU
CM22 6LR	CM24 8HQ	CB10 2AH	CB10 2DW		CM22 7ET	CM23 1DD	CM6 3GN
CM6 3SA	CB10 2PE	CB10 2PD	CB10 2TZ	CB10 2DP	CM6 1PL	CM6 3TE	CB10
CB10	CB11 3PZ	CM6 1HQ	CM6 1TF	CM22 6DQ	CB11	CM22 6PJ	
CB10 1NY	CM6 1TQ	CM6 3QU	CMY 4TN	CB10 2XA	CB10 1BD	CM24 8SP	CM22 7DH
CM24 8AR	CM22 7AA	CM6 2ND	CM22	CM6 1PW	CM6 1ER	CM6 2NB	CM6 2LT
CM6 2LL	CM6 3EG	CM6 1WP	CB11 3EH	CB10 1LZ	CM6 3GF	CM6 1YQ	CM6 3NG
CM6 1PJ	CM6 3BU			CB10 2AE	CB10	CB10 1JF	CB21 4NN
CM24 8HX	CB10 2LQ	CB10 2TQ	CM24 JKL	CM24 8DN	CM24 8JS	CM22 6LD	CB11 3SG
CM6 1DS	CM3 1HU	CM6 1AF	CM22 2TG	CM22 6AQ		CM6 1FJ	CM6
CB10 1AH	CM24 8JX	SG8 8NP	CM22 7DB	CM6 1EE	CB11 4DE	CB10 2BS	CM6 1EA
CB10 2NA	CB11 3WH	CM6 2LT	CB10 1NP	CB11 3DB	CB10 2HR	CB10 2GF	CB10 2AB
CM6 3QR	CB10 2DA	CB10 2AA	CB10 2AZ	CM6 3LX		CM22 6SP	CB10 2YY
CB10 2QW	CB11 3TZ	CB11 3XF	CM6 3HT	CM6 3DG + 3DX	CM6 3EG	CM6 4FR	CB10 2AS
CB10 2AX	CB11	CM6 1AS	CM6 1SL	CM6 1RL	CM24 8PB	CB10 2PL	CB10 2DF
CB11 3HG	CM6 1UG	CB11	CM6 2H2	Ashdon	CB11 4GJ	CB10 2AH	CB11 3PE
CB11 4BL	CB11 4TS	CM6 3QD	CM24 8AT	CB11 3PP		CM6 1QZ	CB11 4HJ
CB11 3UG	CB11 4EX	CM6 1NS	CM6 1QB		CM6 1PX	CB11 4AW	CM6
CM6 1FA	CM6 1JP	CB10 2QG	CM22 6QP	CB11 3DE	CB11 3DB	CB10 2LF	CB10 1BY
CM6 1LT	CM22 6DD	CB11 3XJ	CM24 8NB	CM6 1XE	CM22	CM6 1PN	CM22 6PP
CM22 6DH	CM22 6QZ	CM24 8		CB11 3ES	CB10 2BP	CB11 3S4	CB11 3WH

CM6 3HP	CM22 6RA	CM6 3AX	CM6 3EU	CB10 2RQ	CB10 2UT	CM6 1GA	CM24 8TF
CM22 6NN		CB11 3EQ	CM24 8NN	CM6 1HB	CB10 1EJ	CM24 8HP	CB10 2XP
CM6 2QR	CB11 3GP	SG8 8QT	CM22 6NL	CB11 4AS	CB10 1PJ	CM6 1HG	CM6 1BL
CB11 3AE	CB11 4XJ	CM22 6TD		CB21 4PE	CB10 1AU	CB11 3WH	CB11 3LN
	CM6 2QW	CM22 7EN	CM22 7EN	CB10 2BA	CM24 8NF	CM22 6HL	CM24 8LZ
CM6 2BS	CM24 8RL	CB11 4BD	CM23 1DS	CB11 3SQ	CB11 4TG	CM22 7EG	CM23 5QD
CB11 3PU	CB10 1XN	CM23 1AX	CB11 4DJ	CB11 3BU	CB11 4BG	CB11 4GJ	CM6 3EL
CB10 2RY	CM23 1BT	B10 IJF	CB10 1NU	CM22 7QP	CM6 2EJ		CM22 6RT
CB11 4LT	CB10 1AH	CM22 7RH	CM24 8LE	CB11 4DW	CM23 5QL	cb11 3af	cb11 4dh
CB10 1AT	CB11 4JJ	CB10 2AP	CM6 3FD	CM6 1PL	CM3 1QQ	CM6 3JR	CB10 2AZ
CB11 4UU	CB10 2ED	CB11 4DG		CB11 4DJ	CB11 3QT	CM22	CB10 2HL
CM24 8UJ	CM6 3EP	CB11 3FZ	CM24 8NS	CM24 8JD	CM6 3GL	CB10 2AS	CB11
CB11 3DG	CM22 7EZ	CB10 2D	CM7 4TP	CB11 4TH	CB11 3BL	CB10 1NB	CM6 1PH
CM24 8EH	CM23 5QG	CM23 5QD	CM6 1YQ	CM6 3DT	CM6 1PH	CM6 2DR	CM22 7HY
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CB11 3TH	CM6 3GW	CB10 2DQ	CM24 8GY		CB10 1RD	CB10 1XH	CM6 1RG
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CM22 7EZ	CB10 2HG		CB10 2BP	CB10 2AZ	CB10 1PU	CM6 1XW	CB11 4AR
CB11	CB11 4EA	CB11 3XD	CM22 7AD	CM24 8JS	CB10 1UX	CB10 1BN	CB10 1NA
CB10 1DZ	CB11 4PQ	CM22 6BN	CB10 1NA	CM24 8DW	CM6 1HW	CB11 3BJ	CB11 4XB
CM6 3SF	CM7 4TS	CB10 2TG	CB11 4KS	CM6 2JX	CM22 7PH	CM24 8DT	CM24 8UF
CM24 8AX	CB10 2PP	CM6 2RF	CB10 1XB	CB11	CB11 3DB	CB10 1PL	CB11 3RD
CB11 4JG	CB10 2HZ	CM6 1BU	CM6 2LJ	CM7 4TN	CM7 4PU	CM6 2PG	CB21 4PE
CB10 2LY	CM24 1RL	CM6 3NY	CM6 3NE	CM22 7JD	CM6 3SW	CB11 4PP	CM6 2JY
CM6 1FW	CM22 7AP	CB11 3AH	CB11 4UU	CM24 8JD	CB10 2HR	Broad Oak	CB11
CM22 6HW	CB11 4QS	CM22 7PH	CM22 7TZ	CM6 2PF	CB10 1AG	CB10 1EH	CB11 4QU

CB10 1TS	CB11 3QB	CM6 1PB	CM3 1JY	CM6 1AZ	CM24 8FY	CB11 4PQ	CB11 4 JY
CB11 4AW	CB10 1QD	CB10 1PL	SE8 8QR	CB10 2HN	CM22 7TA	CM6 3ND	CB11 4DE
CM23 1AX	CM23 1AA	CB10 2AX	CM24 8FW	CB11 3EF	CM6 1WG	CB10 2RQ	CB10 1DG
CM6 2DD	CB10 2LZ	CM6 1EE	CM22 7HY	CB11 3FA	CM6 1BG	CM6 1PX	CB11 3PJ
CB10 2AT	CB11 4RT	CB10 2BE	CM6 3SY	CB11 4GN	CB10	CB10 1QF	CB10 2HS
CM22 6QR	CM24 8DU	CB10 2HL	CB11 3A	CM22 7JB	CM22 7QS	CM6 3RA	CM6 1AS
SG 8 8QJ	CM22 6LA	CB11 4PE	CM22	CB11 3BL	CB10 2AB	CM22 6SH	CM24 8TJ
CB10 1LZ	CB10 1EU	CM22 7ER	CB10 1PL			CM6 1BW	CM22 7HX
CM22 7HY	CM22 6RA	CB11 4DF	CM24 8EZ	CM22 6DJ	CM6 3ND	CM6 3LU	CM24 8AU
CM24 8FP	CM23 5QA	CM6 1TL	SG8 8QJ	CM6 2DU	CM6 1SA	CM24 8UX	CM24 8AD
CB11 3UG	CB11 3SF	CM2	CB11 3PJ	CB11 3EF	CM22 7EZ	CM23 5QA	CM22 7SW
CB11	CB10	CB10 2XA	CB10 2BA	CB10 2DP	CB11 3FA	CB10 1AW	CB10 1AW
CB10 2BY	CB11	CM6 2HR	CM6 1QT	CM6	CM24 8H	CM6 3TE	CM
CM22 7RH	CM6 2SE	CM6 2AY	CM22 7JD	CM22	CM22 6	CM22	CM6 3
CM6 3NN	CB11	CM1 4QX	CB10	CM6 3ST	CM6 ZAY	CM6 2AG	CM6 3LF
CM6 3SA	CM6 1BX	CM22 6EZ	CM24 8DS	CM1 4QZ	CB11	CB10 2LW	
CB11 4TH	CM22	SG8 8QN	CB10 2LF	CM22 6RP	CM6 2DT	CM6 2QS	CB10 1JS
CM23 1DG	CB10 1NW	CB10 1BN	CB10 2BN	CM6 1WU	CM24 8FQ	CB10 1NY	CB10 1BJ
CB10 1BJ	CB11 4JB	CB10 1FP	CM22 7AZ	CM22 7RF	CB10 1JQ	CM6 3PP	CM23 1BT
CB11 3DU	CM24 8AR	CM24 8LN	CM22 7LT	CM22 7RE	CM24 8HH	CM6 2JT	CM22 7PH
CB10 1PX	CB10 2DF	CM3 1JY	CM24 8JX	CM1 4QW	CB11 4QY	CM6 3QL	CM22 7RL
CM6 1FW	CB10 1AQ	CB10 1LZ	CM6 3EG	CM6 1RE	CM22 7AJ	CM24 8NH	CB11 3XJ
CM6 3	CM6 2EY	CM24 8RL	CM6 2LS	CM6 1QD	CM6	CB10 2RJ	CB10 1JG
CB11	CM6 3SQ	CM24 8HX	CB11 3SJ	CB11 4AF	CB10 1AQ	CM3 1QF	CM22 7RF
CB10 1NA	CM6 2BE		CB10 1QA	CM6 1DY	CM22 6LA	CB10 2AQ	CB11 4GA
CB11 3TR	CM22 7BT	CB10 2XG	CM24 8FE	CM23 5QH	CM6	CM6 3PX	CM6 2NE

CB10	CB10 2AP	CB10 1JS	CM6 1BS	CM6 3BE	CB10 1PW	CM22 7QU	CM22 7BH
CM6 3SN	CB11 4BE	CB11 4BT	CM6 2QF	CM6 1LX	CB11 4QS	CB11 4AR	CM22 6RT
CM22 7QY	CB11 3EA	CM23 1DR	CM6 2QR	CM24 8DA	CB10 1NN	CB10 2LG	CB11 3EQ
CM6 1SL	CB11 3RS	CM22 6TB	CM22	CB11 4TQ	CM22 6AY	CM22 6RG	CB10 2BN
CB10 2DP	CM6	CM22 6TG	CB11 3PJ	CB10 2BA	CM22 7ER	CM6 3SE	CM23 1DY
CM6 1PX	CB11 3JN	CB11 4DQ	CB11 4PU	CB11 36A	CB11 4QR	CB11 4XB	CB11 4JB
CB11 3PU	CM22 6SP	CM6 2JA	CM23 5QS	CM6 1SY	CM6 2SE	CM24 8SS	CM22 7ET
CM22 6TG	CB11 4SN	CM6 3RG	CB11 4HB	CM24 8HG	CM23 5QH	CM6	CB11 3RW
CM22 6LB	SG8 8RP	CB10 1PA	CB11 4HA	CB11 3LB	CM6 1WF	CM22 7RF	CB11 3QG
CB11 3PX	CM22 7PH	CB11 3SB	CB10 1PT	CM24 8DT	CM6 2BQ	CB11 3AH	CB11 3PP
CB11 4HB	CB10 1PT	Takeley	CM6 3NG	CB10 1PZ	CB11 4BT	CB10 2AX	CM24 8NW
CB11 3LN	CM6 2FG	CM6 1BX	Cb11 3QN	CM23 1HD	CM22 6TH	CB10 2NE	CM6 3NW
CM23 1AX	CB10 2EG	CM22 6HL	CM6 1WZ	CM3 1QQ	CB11 3AA	CM23 1BT	CB11
CM22 7 RZ	CM24 8QB	CB10 2SS	CM6 1UL	CM22 7	CM6 3EY	CB10 1AW	CB10 2PD
CM24 8FB	CM24 8SH	CB10 1PZ	CB10 2DJ	CM77 8QW	CM6 3SP	CB11 3AA	CB114BA
CB10 1TS	CB10 2RX	CB11 4PQ	CB11 3LF	CB10 1BZ	CM22 6SH	CM6 3EP	CB10 1NR
CM7 4SH	CB11 4QX	CM22 7TA	CM24 8HH	CB10 2XW	CM23 5QP	CM22 6RN	CB10 2SR
CB10 2AN	CM22 6JS	CB11 4RY	CM6 2AY	CM6 3QS	CB11 3GP	CM6 3QH	CB11 3BX
CM6 3RG	CB10 1WA	CM6 1SB	CM22 6TG		CB11 3XE	CM6 3TU	CM23 5QL
	CB10 2TJ	CM6 3FH	CM6 1PL	CM24 8RJ	CM23 5OR	CM6 2LA	CM24 8UT
CB10 1PE	CB10 1JW	CM6 2AA	CM22 6HA	CM23 5QD	CM6 2QT	CB11 4SB	CM3 1QB
CM6 1BY	CB10 2HG	CM22 6LH	CB10 2DP	CB10 1BD	CM6 2	CB11 3LZ	CM22 6AF
CM6 3GW	CM24 8HG	CM6 2BE	CB11 4DW	CM24 8UX	CB11 3PP	CM24 8JJ	CB11 4QS
CB10 2UA	CB10 2BD	CM6 2HQ	CB11 3GP	CB11 4AL	CB11 4XG	CB11	CB11 4XB
CM22 7QS	CM6 1TA	CB11 3SE	CM6 2SE	CM6 3GL	CM6 2AA	CM6 2AA	CM1 4QU

CM6 3EG	CB10 2BU	TEST	CB113EN	Cb10	CM24 8LB	cm62ld	Cm6 2bs
CB11 4JU	CM6 2AY	cm6 1qw	CM6	CM227HG	cm22 6ra	CB11 4JU	cb11 4ds
CM22 6LD	CB10 2EF	CB11 4QR	CB11 4QY	CB214PQ	CM24 8HJ	CM23 1BP	CB11 3JW
SG8 8QT	CB11 3HB	cm22 6by	CM6 3PZ	cb11 3ex	CB10 2DF	CB11	cb10 1aa
CM24 8AN	CB10	cm22 6ay	cb11 4de	CB10 2BH	cb10 1eh	cm1 4rd	
CM22 6LS	CM7 4SH	cm23 1aa	CB11 3D	CB114QP	CM6 2RB	CM6 1DT	CM24 8HP
Cb11 4ae							

Respondents in receipt of LCTS

(% of those who answered the question)

No	909 (90.3%)
Yes	98 (9.7%)
Not provided	82

Respondents in a protected group (pensioner/disabled/carer)

(% of those who answered the question)

Yes	83 (91.2%)
No	9 (9.9%)
Not provided	6

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

12

Title: Special Purpose Vehicle

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Howell

Item for decision

Summary

1. This report seeks in principle approval of Cabinet for setting up as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Council a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The purpose of the SPV will be to develop a range of commercial opportunities, including property development of Council-owned General Fund land.
2. The initial loan to the SPV would be made by way of a new reserve funded from the Strategic Initiatives Fund.
3. Such a SPV will take several months to set up and there will need to be appropriate legal advice obtained on the best business model to adopt to ensure maximum income for the council.

Recommendations

4. The Cabinet is requested to
 - Approve the principle of establishing a SPV.
 - Instruct the Chief Financial Officer to establish a SPV Reserve in readiness to provide a loan to the SPV.
 - Require officers to bring an interim report to Cabinet setting out the draft Articles of Association and likely costs and timescales for establishing the SPV.

Financial Implications

5. The establishment of the SPV will be funded from the initial allocation in the reserve.

Background Papers

6. None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	No specific implications

Equalities	None
Health and Safety	No specific implications
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No specific implications
Sustainability	No specific implications
Ward-specific impacts	No specific implications
Workforce/Workplace	None

Background

7. As government funding reduces councils are looking increasingly at alternative ways of generating income. A number of councils similar to ourselves have established SPVs for a range of commercial purposes.
8. The SPV would enable the Council to explore the opportunity of generating additional sources of income and achieve higher rates of return on our investments than are currently being achieved through non-property based options. Setting up a separate, wholly-owned subsidiary of the Council in the form of a SPV for housing and commercial purposes (although not restricted to these) would enable the Council to engage in direct development of General Fund land it owns and to also transfer assets into the SPV.
9. The SPV is likely to be established as a company limited by shares with the Council being the sole shareholder. It would be controlled by a Board of Directors with the power of appointment and removal resting with the shareholder. Key decisions about the operation of the SPV will be reserved to the Council as the shareholder.
10. The Council will need to sign Articles of Association. It is common practice for a company's objectives to be unrestricted, which means that it would have the constitutional capacity to carry out any business which the directors choose.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The SPV does not deliver the income expected	2 Some councils have struggled to make a success of SPVs	1 As the sole shareholder the properties would be sold and the monies returned to the council	Advice is being sought at all stages. As this is in effect a trial it can be terminated at any point and the properties sold

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

13

Title: Use of Council building for weddings

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Simon Howell

Key Decision: No

Summary

1. This report outlines an opportunity that has arisen for the Council, working with local businesses, to promote the Council's offices as a wedding venue.

Recommendations

2. The Cabinet is recommended to
 - a. Allocate the sum of £20,000 from the Strategic Initiatives Fund to enable the production of a wedding brochure.
 - b. Agree the 2016/17 fees and charges as set out in Appendix One.

Financial Implications

3. As set out in the report

Background Papers

4. None.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Communication will be to all parishes, newspapers and via the UDC website
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Background

5. The Council is actively exploring ways of developing additional income generating services. Essex County Council (ECC) has recently reviewed its Registrar service and, as from 1 April 2016, will withdraw from the promotion of wedding venues, providing only Registrar services. The Council aims to promote the Saffron Walden council office as a wedding venue and this is seen as an opportunity to work with the community to promote local businesses and offer the complete wedding service.
6. It has been agreed with ECC that the basic wedding option will remain for 2016/17 at the same price as 2015/16. However the location of the basic service will change. The council has three rooms registered as wedding venues
 - Council Chamber
 - Committee Room
 - Chairman's Office

The Chairman's Office will be the basic wedding venue with additional charges for using either or both of the other rooms.

7. The council will need to develop a wedding brochure promoting the offering. It is felt that in order to be able to work with all types of wedding related businesses within the district it would be advantageous to offer free standard size adverts from other providers. This offer would only be free for the first print run of the brochure. Larger advertisements would be available for a charge. The types of businesses/organisations the council would want to work with include
 - Parish halls
 - Music providers
 - Formal dress hire
 - Hat hire
 - Restaurants
 - Outside bars
 - Marquee providers
 - Car hire/taxi companies
 - Photographers
 - Florists
 - Hotels
8. The council is in the process of taking bookings for 2016/17 and therefore needs to establish the charges. Where possible officers have benchmarked against other providers and ensured charges are similar. Other local authority providers have 5 bands of charging depending when the wedding is.

- Monday to Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday a.m.
- Saturday p.m.
- Sunday and Bank Holiday

9. This equates to 15 different charges. However officers also want the option of letting two rooms at a reduced combined rate to enable pre/post wedding drinks (subject to Licensing requirements). Proposed charging is shown at Appendix One.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The council fails to promote the Saffron Walden building as a wedding venue.	1 This report addresses the risk	2 The council would lose about £10,000 pa of current wedding income and also the potential to expand this income by at least a further £10,000 pa	The council is looking through this report to develop the wedding venue business and gain advantage for local businesses from the process

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

APPENDIX ONE

Room charge - Weddings	Charge exclusive of VAT	Charge inclusive of VAT
	£	£
Chairman's Room Monday-Thursday	62	74
Chairman's Room Friday	95	114
Chairman's Room Saturday a.m.	124	149
Chairman's Room Saturday p.m.	146	175
Chairman's Room Sunday/Bank Holiday	208	250
Committee Room Monday-Thursday	83	100
Committee Room Friday	117	140
Committee Room Saturday a.m.	146	175
Committee Room Saturday p.m.	167	200
Committee Room Sunday/Bank Holiday	229	275
Council Chamber Monday-Thursday	125	150
Council Chamber Friday	158	190
Council Chamber Saturday a.m.	188	225
Council Chamber Saturday p.m.	208	250
Council Chamber Sunday/Bank Holiday	250	300
Chamber + Chairman's Monday-Thursday	146	175
Chamber + Chairman's Friday	221	265
Chamber + Chairman's Saturday a.m.	271	325
Chamber + Chairman's Saturday p.m.	313	375
Chamber + Chairman's Sunday/Bank Holiday	417	500
Chamber + Committee Monday-Thursday	167	200
Chamber + Committee Friday	233	280
Chamber + Committee Saturday a.m.	292	350
Chamber + Committee Saturday p.m.	333	400
Chamber + Committee Sunday/Bank Holiday	458	550

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

14

Title: Transfer of land to Great Chesterford Parish Council

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Howell

Key decision: No

Summary

1. This report seeks Members consideration of the transfer of UDC land to east of Great Chesterford Recreation Ground, Great Chesterford, for nil value to Great Chesterford Parish Council.

Recommendations

2. That the land is transferred to Great Chesterford Parish Council, subject to no objections being received following the public notice of the proposed disposal of the land.

Financial Implications

3. The land has been valued by the Council's registered valuers Wilks Head and Eve at an open market value of £52,000.

Background Papers

4. Valuation report prepared by Wilks Head & Eve dated 11 September 2015.

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Notice of the proposed disposal of public open space at the site at Great Chesterford in accordance with the requirements of Section 123(1) and (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The Council is required by the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain best consideration reasonably obtainable unless the Secretary of State consents or it falls within the General Disposal Consent 2003.
Sustainability	None

Ward-specific impacts	Littlebury, Chesterford and Wenden Lofts
Workforce/Workplace	Legal team

Situation

5. One of the strategic objectives in the council's Asset Management Strategy is to devolve the responsibility for owning and maintaining assets to local people where appropriate. Although a substantial area of land, its function is that of a local amenity for nearby residents. The land was obtained as a requirement under a s106 agreement to provide education/community space. The transfer of the land to the local council and the retention of the land as education/community space promotes the environmental well-being of the area.
6. The land forms part of an open space provision associated with the new Stanley Road residential development. The land consists of a single parcel (appendix 1) located in the east of the existing recreation ground and comprises open grassland and landscape planting. This parcel has a site area of approximately 2.3ha.
7. The Great Chesterford Parish Council has agreed in principle to take the land and maintain it as education/community space.
8. As the Council is not receiving any consideration for the land being transferred, despite it being valued at £52,000, the Council needs to be sure that the disposal of land will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being and the value of the land is less than £2 million.

Conclusion

9. It is concluded that the transfer of the land to the Parish Council is in accordance with the council's Asset Management Strategy and is the best way of managing the land.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Land is not used for the stated purpose	1 – The Parish Council have confirmed that they will use the land for this purpose.	3 – Loss of community facility.	S106 obligation runs with the land and this sets out the allowed uses.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Adrian Webb
Director of Corporate Services
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER

MA/JM/8290
maldis@wilks-head.co.uk
11th September 2015

Dear Sir,

Valuation Report - Land at Great Chesterford, Saffron Walden, Essex,

We write further to your recent instructions to prepare a valuation for the parcel of land at Great Chesterford, Essex. We have pleasure in reporting as follows:

1. Purpose of the Valuation

This report provides independent valuation advice in respect of the land located in Great Chesterford, Saffron Walden. The land is currently owned freehold by Uttlesford District Council (UDC).

The land was passed over to the District Council pursuant to a planning application (UTT/12/5513/OP) and secured by way of a S106. This S106 provides a number of limitations as to the use of the land (community use, pre-school or primary school).

If no school is provided within a 15 year timeframe then the land must be passed back to the previous land owner, as of 10th July 2013.

UDC would now like to pass the land over to the Parish Council (they would need to enter into an agreement on the restriction of use and also the pass it back clause).

As Chartered Surveyors we set out to provide independent advice and opinion in respect of the primary issues as identified by your Authority. This report has been prepared under the terms and definitions set out in the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors RICS Valuation – Professional Standards issued in January 2014 (The Red Book).

Wilks Head and Eve is a Limited Liability Partnership. Registered in England. Registered Number OC315743. Registered Address as above.

Regulated by RICS



Partners:

I R J Dewar FRICS FIRR V MCI Arb*
R G Messenger BSc FRICS FIRR V MCI Arb REV*
A M Williams Dip BSc (Hons) MRICS FIRR V REV*
W A Minting BA (Hons) MSc
G Harbord MA MRICS IRR V (Hons)*

Associates:

S Mcbeth

Consultants:

R J Guy FRICS (Dip Rating) FIRR V
B Morle FCSD

This valuation report does not constitute a formal valuation report but is prepared as advice to the Authority and the applicants in respect of these issues.

Our report is constrained only for the provision of advice in respect of valuation and specifically excludes any implied or direct decision making or determination in respect of estate management matters. These aspects are for consideration by the Authority and its officers (see Section 4 below).

2. Date of Valuation

The date of valuation is 1st September 2015

3. Inspection

We inspected the property on the 18th August 2015

4. RICS Appraisal & Valuation Manual

This valuation report has been provided under the provisions of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Professional Standards (Incorporating the International Valuation Standards) – January 2014.

This edition applies to all valuation reports with a valuation date on or after 6 January 2014 undertaken by Chartered Surveyors.

As mentioned within Section 1 above; within the guidance it is recognised that valuation advice provided expressly in preparation for, or during the course of negotiations may result in the mandatory application of VPS1 to VPS4 not being appropriate. This is the case for this report and is classified as an exception as opposed to a departure for these purposes.

5. Reporting Format

This signed valuation report and advice is the ultimate result of this instruction and has been provided in an electronic format.

6. Valuers

The valuation report has been prepared by:

- M S Aldis BSc MRICS IRRV (Hons) RICS Registered Valuer of Wilks Head & Eve LLP, Fairgate House, 78 New Oxford Street, London, WC1A 1HB.

The report was subject to the internal audit by our in house RICS qualified Partners:

- I R J Dewar FRICS FIRR V MCI Arb,
- R G Messenger BSc FRICS FIRR V MCI Arb REV,
- A M Williams Dip BSc (Hons) MRICS FIRR V REV.
- G S C Harbord MA MRICS IRRV (Hons)

We confirm that all surveyors involved in the instruction are RICS Registered Valuers and are suitable qualified and experienced for the purposes of the instruction and have the knowledge, skills and understanding to undertake the valuations competently.

All personnel involved with the instruction are employed by Wilks Head & Eve LLP of Fairgate House, 78 New Oxford Street, London, WC1A 1HB. Wilks Head & Eve LLP is a RICS Regulated Firm.

7. Sources of Information

For the purposes of this report and valuation we have had to rely upon information provided to us by the UDC by way of an instruction letter, plan and accompanying documentation. We have also made independent enquiries in order to prepare this report.

8. Location

The valuation instruction relates to a parcel of land located adjacent Great Chesterford recreation ground and to the north of the residential properties along Meadow Road and Hyll Close. Effectively the land is located between B1383 Newmarket Road and B184 Walden Road, north of Great Chesterford. (See Appendix 1)

Great Chesterford is a medium sized village and civil parish in the Uttlesford District of Essex. It is located 18 miles north of Bishop's Stortford, 12 miles south of Cambridge.

9. Description

The site is a vacant land plot which has been seeded, levelled and fenced measuring 2.3 hectares.

10. Tenure

We assume that UDC can prove Title and that there are no other unusual or onerous covenants restricting use or fragmentation.

11. Construction and State of Repair

We have assumed that the land is in good condition given the recent work and that this condition would not affect value adversely.

We have not inspected the parts of the land that are inaccessible and such parts we assume to be in a reasonable state of repair and condition. We cannot express an opinion about or advise up on the condition of the unexpected parts and this report should not be taken as making an implied representational statement about such parts.

12. Services

We understand there are no services present. If services are present in the land then no inspection or testing of the services has been undertaken as part of this report.

13. Contamination, Deleterious or Hazardous Substances

We are not aware of the content of any environmental audit or any other environmental investigational soil survey, which may have been carried out on the land, which may have drawn attention to any contamination or possibility of any contamination.

In undertaking our work, we have been instructed to assume that no contaminative or potentially contaminative uses have been carried out at the site.

We have not carried out any investigation into the past or present uses either of the site or any neighbouring land to establish whether there is any potential for contamination from these sites to the subject site, and therefore assume that none exists.

14. Non – Publication Clause

Neither the whole nor any part of this report nor any reference thereto may be included in any published document, circular or statement nor published in any way without the previous written approval of Wilks Head and Eve as to the form and context in which it may appear.

Our letter of consent will be given when a final proof of the document is available and the consent will refer to a specimen annexed and signed as identification of what has been approved.

Such publication of, or reference to, this report will not be permitted unless; it contains a sufficient contemporaneous reference to any departure from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Appraisal and Valuation Standards.

This report is provided for the stated purpose and for the sole use of the named client and their professional advisors and the Valuer accept no responsibility whatsoever to any other person.

15. Basis of Valuation

The value of the land has been determined using the Market Value / Fair Value definition set out in The RICS Valuation – Professional Standards.

These definitions are set out in Appendix 3.

16. Valuation Commentary

We understand that the parcel of land is to be transferred to the Parish Council and be held as amenity land, in which the Parish Council is to enter into an agreement on the restriction of use and also the pass it back clause.

Whilst in this area of Uttlesford the prevailing highest use for development land is for residential use we understand that this site is not suitable for this type of development.

On this basis and for the purposes of this valuation exercise we have attached a value to the site based on the existing restricted use amenity land value. This assumption would adopt the defined methodology of existing use value and would assume that there was no development potential for this site or the value reflected relating to surrounding parcels of land (namely the agricultural land adjacent to the East and North).

At present based on letting values for sports and leisure uses, the value of land restricted and used for amenity or leisure uses is in the order of £25,000 per hectare in rural areas. Higher figures have been established in more urban locations, or where intensification of use through multiple use games areas (MUGA) or other leisure facilities have been permitted. These additional figures do not apply to the subject sites by virtue of their size, layout and location, but in light of the specific obligation to provide the amenity land as a consequence

of obtaining planning consent to develop the land south of Stanley Road and Four Acres, we feel that it is realistic to assume £50,000/ha in this case.

Assuming freehold possession, with no claw back provision our opinion of value at the valuation date is in the region of;

- £115,000 (One Hundred and Fifteen Thousand Pounds)

Due to the clawback provision within the agreement of the transfer, an allowance has to be made if no educational development takes place. Therefore, the transfer of the land between UDC and the Parish Council will only be for a maximum of say, 13 years as at the valuation date.

In order to determine a value for the transfer, we are of the opinion that it is more of a rental value for a limited term.

We are of the opinion that the transfer value would be in the region of 40% to 50% of freehold value with vacant possession.

Value of the transfer of land between UDC and the Parish Council at the valuation date is in the region of say;

- **£52,000 (Fifty Two Thousand Pounds)**

17. Conclusion

We have established the Fair Value for the site for the purposes of informing the Authority on the basis that the land is restricted to amenity use.

As discussed we understand that the land will be transferred subject to an agreement on the restriction of use and also the pass it back clause. We are of the opinion a clawback provision in the transfer to the Parish Council is applicable.

As stated, if the land is not developed for educational purposes within the 15 years from the agreement on 10th July 2013 then the land will transfer back to the previous land owner, rendering the site worthless and no value to the Council. In order to unlock the true value, UDC would be required to construct a school on the site.

We are quite willing to discuss these valuations in more detail if this should be required but trust that the conclusions are as expected.

If you require further information or evidence please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully,

WILKS HEAD & EVE

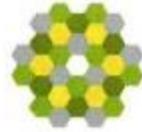
M. S. ALDIS BSc MRICS IRRV (Hons)

This report was prepared by M S Aldis BSc MRICS IRRV (Hons), RICS Registered Valuer, subject to internal audit by our other valuation partners: I. R. J. Dewar FRICS FIRR V MCI Arb, R. G, Messenger BSc FRICS FIRR V MCI Arb, A. M. Williams Dip BSc (Hon) MRICS IRRV (Hons), G.S.C Harbord MA MRICS IRRV (Hons).

APPENDIX 1 SITE PLAN

Land Registry
Official copy of
title plan

Title number **EX885586**
Ordnance Survey map reference **TL5043SE**
Scale **1:2500**
Administrative area **Essex : Uttlesford**



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APPENDIX 2 PHOTOGRAPHS



APPENDIX 3 VALUATION DEFINITIONS

Definition of Market Value (VPS 4 paragraph 1.2)

1.2.1 The definition of market value as defined in IVS Framework paragraph 29 is:

“The estimated amount for which an asset or liability should exchange on the valuation date between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm’s length transaction, after proper marketing and where the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.”

1.2.2 Market value is the basis of value that is most commonly required, being an internationally recognised definition. It describes an exchange between parties that are unconnected and are operating freely in the marketplace and represents the figure that would appear in a hypothetical contract of sale, or equivalent legal document, at the valuation date, reflecting all those factors that would be taken into account in framing their bids by market participants at large and reflecting the highest and best use of the asset. The highest and best use of an asset is the use of an asset that maximises its productivity and that is possible, legally permissible and financially feasible – see IVS Framework paragraphs 32–34 Market Value.

1.2.3 It ignores any price distortions caused by special value or synergistic value. It represents the price that would most likely be achievable for an asset across a wide range of circumstances. Market rent applies similar criteria for estimating a recurring payment rather than a capital sum.

1.2.4 In applying market value, regard must also be had to the conceptual framework set out in IVS Framework paragraphs 30–34 Market Value, which includes the requirement that the valuation amount reflects the actual market state and circumstances as of the effective valuation date.

- **IVS Framework paragraphs 30 – 34, Market Value**
- **30.** The definition of market value shall be applied in accordance with the following conceptual framework:
- “the estimated amount” refers to a price expressed in terms of money payable for the asset in an arm’s length market transaction. Market value is the most probable price reasonably obtainable in the market on the valuation date in keeping with the market value definition. It is the best price reasonably obtainable by the seller and the most advantageous price reasonably obtainable by the buyer. This estimate specifically excludes an estimated price inflated or deflated by special terms or circumstances such as atypical financing, sale and leaseback arrangements, special considerations or concessions granted by anyone associated with the sale, or any element of special value;
- “an asset should exchange” refers to the fact that the value of an asset is an estimated amount rather than a predetermined amount or actual sale price. It is the price in a transaction that meets all the elements of the market value definition at the valuation date;
- “on the valuation date” requires that the value is time-specific as of a given date. Because markets and market conditions may change, the estimated value may be incorrect or inappropriate at another time. The valuation amount will reflect the market state and circumstances as at the valuation date, not those at any other date;

- “between a willing buyer” refers to one who is motivated, but not compelled to buy. This buyer is neither over eager nor determined to buy at any price. This buyer is also one who purchases in accordance with the realities of the current market and with current market expectations, rather than in relation to an imaginary or hypothetical market that cannot be demonstrated or anticipated to exist. The assumed buyer would not pay a higher price than the market requires. The present owner is included among those who constitute “the market”;
- “and a willing seller” is neither an over eager nor a forced seller prepared to sell at any price, nor one prepared to hold out for a price not considered reasonable in the current market. The willing seller is motivated to sell the asset at market terms for the best price attainable in the open market after proper marketing, whatever that price may be. The factual circumstances of the actual owner are not a part of this consideration because the willing seller is a hypothetical owner;
- “in an arm’s length transaction” is one between parties who do not have a particular or special relationship, eg parent and subsidiary companies or landlord and tenant, that may make the price level uncharacteristic of the market or inflated because of an element of special value. The market value transaction is presumed to be between unrelated parties, each acting independently;
- “after proper marketing” means that the asset would be exposed to the market in the most appropriate manner to effect its disposal at the best price reasonably obtainable in accordance with the market value definition. The method of sale is deemed to be that most appropriate to obtain the best price in the market to which the seller has access. The length of exposure time is not a fixed period but will vary according to the type of asset and market conditions. The only criterion is that there must have been sufficient time to allow the asset to be brought to the attention of an adequate number of market participants. The exposure period occurs prior to the valuation date;
- “where the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently” presumes that both the willing buyer and the willing seller are reasonably informed about the nature and characteristics of the asset, its actual and potential uses and the state of the market as of the valuation date. Each is further presumed to use that knowledge prudently to seek the price that is most favourable for their respective positions in the transaction. Prudence is assessed by referring to the state of the market at the valuation date, not with benefit of hindsight at some later date. For example, it is not necessarily imprudent for a seller to sell assets in a market with falling prices at a price that is lower than previous market levels. In such cases, as is true for other exchanges in markets with changing prices, the prudent buyer or seller will act in accordance with the best market information available at the time;
- “and without compulsion” establishes that each party is motivated to undertake the transaction, but neither is forced or unduly coerced to complete it.
- **31.** The concept of market value presumes a price negotiated in an open and competitive market where the participants are acting freely. The market for an asset could be an international market or a local market. The market could consist of numerous buyers and sellers, or could be one characterised by a limited number of market participants. The market in which the asset is exposed for sale is the one in which the asset being exchanged is normally exchanged (see paras 15 to 19 above).

- **32.** The market value of an asset will reflect its highest and best use. The highest and best use is the use of an asset that maximises its potential and that is possible, legally permissible and financially feasible. The highest and best use may be for continuation of an asset's existing use or for some alternative use. This is determined by the use that a market participant would have in mind for the asset when formulating the price that it would be willing to bid.
- **33.** The highest and best use of an asset valued on a stand-alone basis may be different from its highest and best use as part of a group, when its contribution to the overall value of the group must be considered.
- **34.** The determination of the highest and best use involves consideration of the following:
 - (a) to establish whether a use is possible, regard will be had to what would be considered reasonable by market participants,
 - (b) to reflect the requirement to be legally permissible, any legal restrictions on the use of the asset, e.g. zoning designations, need to be taken into account,
 - (e) the requirement that the use be financially feasible takes into account whether an alternative use that is physically possible and legally permissible will generate sufficient return to a typical market participant, after taking into account the costs of conversion to that use, over and above the return on the existing use.

1.2.5 Valuers must ensure in all cases that the basis is reproduced or clearly identified in both the instructions and the report. There is no mandatory requirement VPS 4 Bases of value, assumptions and special assumptions RICS Valuation – Professional Standards January 2014

1.2.6 However, a valuer may be legitimately instructed to provide valuation advice based on other criteria, and therefore other bases of value may be appropriate. In such cases the definition adopted must be set out in full and explained. Where such a basis differs significantly from market value it is recommended that a brief comment is made indicating the differences.

1.2.7 Notwithstanding the disregard of special value (see definition in IVS Framework paragraphs 43–46 Special Value), where the price offered by prospective buyers generally in the market would reflect an expectation of a change in the circumstances of the asset in the future, the impact of that expectation is reflected in market value. Examples of where the expectation of additional value being created or obtained in the future may have an impact on the market value include:

- The prospect of development where there is no current permission for that development and
- The prospect of synergistic value (see definition in IVS Framework paragraph 47) Arising from merger with another property or asset, or interests within the same property or asset, at a future date.

1.2.8 The impact on value arising by use of an assumption or special assumption should not be confused with the additional value that might be attributed to an asset by a special purchaser.

1.2.9 Note that in some jurisdictions a basis of value known as 'highest and best use' is adopted and this may either be defined by statute or established by common practice in individual countries or states.

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

15

Title: Sale of Land in Wood Lane, Birchanger

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Redfern

Key decision: no

Summary

1. This report advises Cabinet of a request to purchase an area of Council owned land to the front of 5 and 5a Wood Lane in Birchanger.

Recommendations

2. That Cabinet approves the sale of the land in front of 5 and 5a Wood Lane in Birchanger.
3. The land will be sold subject to conditions preventing any development of the land and the purchasers will bear all legal and survey costs of the transaction

Financial Implications

4. The land concerned is a council asset and the sale will raise a capital receipt.
5. The council must satisfy the requirements of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to derive the 'Best Consideration' for disposal of the land.

Background Papers

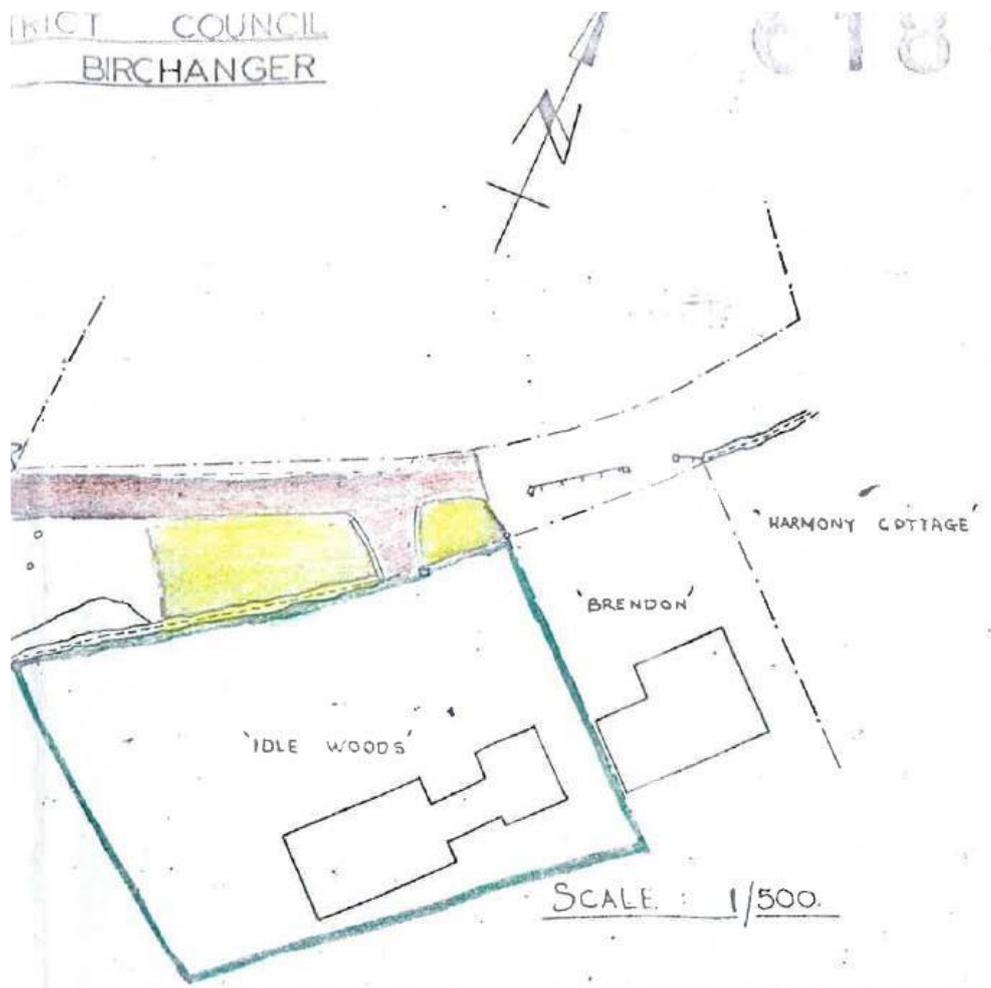
6. None.
- 7.

Communication/Consultation	Owners of 5 and 5a Wood Lane, Birchanger
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The land will be sold subject to conditions preventing any development of the land
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	Birchanger

Workforce/Workplace	N/A
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Situation

8. The Council has received a request from the residents of 5 and 5a Wood Lane in Birchanger to purchase an area of Council owned land in front of their properties.
9. Wood Lane is a quiet residential back road within Birchanger located to the rear of the local sports ground and community buildings.
10. The parcel of land is split by the right of way granted by the Council to provide vehicle access to 5 and 5a Wood Lane. The land is located at the front of the dwellings and is currently used as a grass verge between them and the access road. If the land is sold to the owners of 5 and 5A Wood Lane the continuing use will be as garden land.
11. The area of the site, highlighted in yellow on the plan below, is approximately 130sqm.





12. There is no planning potential for this land and it will be transferred subject to a restrictive covenant limiting the use of the site to garden use only.

13. The value of the land will be determined using the Market Value/Fair Value definition set out in The RICS Valuation – Professional Standards, and will be based on its existing restricted use as garden land.

14. The purchaser bear all legal and survey costs of the transaction

Risk Analysis

15.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

16

Title: Car Parking Review

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Barker

Key decision: No

Summary

1. The District Council owns and manages a number of car parks across the settlements of Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet. The car parks are managed to provide a service and to support the town and village centres in which they lie. This report brings together a number of work streams surrounding parking and draws together the recommendations and implications. This covers the Scrutiny Review of car parking of October 2013, the report to Cabinet on parking in March 2014, the recent review of parking charges and the externally commissioned report into car parking across the district.
2. The report sets out a number of recommendations and a work programme for the coming year.

Recommendations

3. That the new parking charges (including season ticket prices) and timings as set out in Appendix 2 and paragraph 25 be adopted following formal advertising.
4. That parking charges are levied on all users of the car parks including Blue Badge holders.
5. Discuss with Saffron Walden Town Council (the owners) the future of the Catons Lane car park with the option of either levying a parking charge in line with others in the town or passing the maintenance and running back to the Town Council.
6. Allow season ticket parking spaces to be open to all users from 10am in the morning and all day at the weekend.
7. Refresh all car park signage to prominently advertise Mipermit.
8. In principle agreement to purchase an additional area of land (Appendix 4) adjacent to Lower Street car park, Stansted Mountfitchet to create an extended car park. This would be subject to independent valuation and a future Cabinet report.
9. To carry out a review of Lower Street car park, Stansted Mountfitchet post opening of the new Medical Centre to consider any change of usage patterns.

This will include a review of the season ticket pricing levels in comparison with the station car park.

10. Arrange annually meetings with Chairs of the Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow Town Teams, Chair of the Stansted Economic Development Forum and Chairs of the relevant committees from Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow Town Councils and Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council to discuss the effectiveness of the car parking provision. These meetings to include discussion on the best way of using car park pricing to support the economic vitality of the centres.
11. That a “dashboard” of indicators be created and published quarterly to enable monitoring and management of the effectiveness of car parking provision.

Financial Implications

12. Cost of the purchase of land Lower Street car park to be agreed through independent valuation and subject to future Cabinet report.
13. Other costs will be met from within the Car Park allocation from the Strategic Initiatives Fund.

Background Papers

14. None

Impact

- 15.

Communication /Consultation	Formal advertising of the changes to parking charges and timings is required.
Community Safety	Not affected.
Equalities	Affects all equally.
Finance	Advertising costs for any change in charges or hours can be met from existing budgets. Costs of physical works to car parks can be met from existing budgets. The general changes to car park prices are expected to be cost neutral.
Health and Safety	Not affected.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Not affected.

Sustainability	The report focuses maintaining sustainable town centres.
Ward-specific impacts	All wards in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted.
Workforce/Workplace	Existing staff resources.

Current Situation

16. The Council owns and manages a number of car parks throughout the District. In addition it manages a number of car parks on behalf of other organisations. The day to day running of the car parks is contracted (via a Partnership Agreement) to the NEPP although pricing and hours of operation are set by the District Council. Any changes to the contract with NEPP could have an impact on the other Councils in the Partnership and therefore general agreement to operational changes is required.
17. Car parking in any area creates considerable concern and comment and any change proposed is usually objected to by one sector of the community. The Councils role, both as land owner/manager and as steward for the community, is to consider all these issues and create a balanced proposal in the best interests of the community as a whole.
18. The car parks are held and managed to provide suitable off-street parking places for vehicles to relieve and prevent congestion of traffic and to support the viability and vitality of the various town centres within the district. Charges can be levied to cover the costs of running and maintaining the car parks and also set at a rate to take into account wider parking policy such as encouraging long stay parking in certain areas and encouraging short stay, quick turn over in others. Any alteration in the charges for the car parks or their layout or operation should be taken with the view to these issues.
19. Cabinet at its meeting in March 2014 received a report regarding parking across the district. The report noted that a number of actions had already been carried out:
- Facilitated shoppers parking rebate in Great Dunmow (part of recommendation ii) and will work with Stansted Business if this is requested.
 - Additional signage directing visitors to the car parks has been erected/ordered (recommendation vii)
 - Reviewed with NEPP the reliability of the data (recommendation viii)
 - Implemented pay by phone (recommendation x) (NOTE: This was already in hand following a Cabinet Decision).
 - Additional promotion of the airport parking hotline has occurred (recommendation xiii)

20. The report recommended further work on the following issues:

21.

- Review and consideration of Scrutiny Committee report (October 2013)(Appendix 3);
- Review of parking charges, to include a statement regarding the Council rational of charging;
- Review of current capacity of car parks and whether they meet demand;
- Appraisal of existing car parks as to whether additional spaces can be provided if needed;
- Appraisal of other Council owned land to consider whether additional car parking provision can be provided if needed;
- Appraisal of non-Council owned land to consider whether additional car parking provision can be provided if needed; and
- Clear recommendations and conclusions.

22. To aid this work the Council commissioned People and Places to carry out a review of the existing car parks and make recommendations. This report was produced in draft and subject to a number of meetings with stakeholders in the three settlements. The report has now been received in its final form. The report makes clear recommendations for the Council which reinforce the findings of the Scrutiny report.

Car park charges and hours

23. The People and Places report reveals that the factor that most affects town centre users choice of parking is convenience.

24. The People and Places report makes clear recommendations for alterations to charges and hours within the car parks to better manage parking availability through increased turnover of spaces and changes in usage. The existing tariffs are set out in Appendix 1 of this report with the proposal set out in Appendix 2. In summary the changes are:

- Introduction of an intermediate 4 hour charge in White Street;
- Making The Common a short stay car park with a maximum of 2 hours stay to ensure frequent turnover of spaces;
- Removing the availability of a 30 minute tariff in Swan Meadow due to its location and use as a long stay car park;
- Make on-street parking in Saffron Walden £0.70 for 1 hour correcting disparity between the current £0.40 rate for 1 hour on-street parking compared to £0.70 for off-street parking so that car park users are not penalised (this decision will need to be taken by NEPP).
- Introducing a 4 hour tariff in Lower Street; and making the 10 hour tariff in Lower Street the same as the Station car park. NOTE: Discussions regarding the future of Crafton Green car park need to occur.

25. As part of the wider review the issue of charging for Blue Badge holders has been considered. Our partner Councils of Braintree and Colchester, as well as all commercial operators. The main consideration is not one of affordability, but of how we ensure that our car parks meet the needs of this group of users

in terms of easy access to local shops/amenities. In considering this issue, it seems only right that all car park users – including blue badge holders – should pay for parking to ensure that our charging structure is applied in a fair and consistent way. Blue badge holders will be required to pay for parking when the new charges are affected.

26. There are a number of physical changes to the payment machines which will need to occur to ensure ease of use for all. This will ensure the facilities meet the requirements of all users.

27. As well as hourly and daily charges the Council has a range of season tickets available as set out in the table below. There are some anomalies within the current charges which are proposed to be amended to ensure parity across the district.

Current season ticket pricing

	3 month	6 month	12 month	Businesses
Saffron Walden	£90	£175	£300	Reduction for multiple buy
Great Dunmow	£90	£175	£300	
Stansted Mountfitchet (employed locally)	–	£130	£250	
Stansted Mountfitchet (employed elsewhere)	–	£200	£420	

Proposed season ticket pricing

	6 month	12 month
Saffron Walden	£175	£300
Great Dunmow	£175	£300
Stansted Mountfitchet (employed locally)	£130	£250
Stansted Mountfitchet (employed elsewhere)	£200	£420

Cambridge Road Stansted Mountfitchet

28. On street parking capacity on Cambridge Road in Stansted Mountfitchet regularly reaches critical levels. The People and Places report proposes a number of measures to alleviate this pressure so that there is good availability of ‘pop-and-shop’ parking to include:

i. Restricting parking on Cambridge Road to 30 minutes, free-of-charge to allow for increased availability for ‘pop-and-shop’ use. More radically

consideration should be given to the creation of a simple £0.50 for 30 minutes tariff to help increase the turn-over of spaces, ease enforcement and not penalise users of the near-by Crafton Green Car Park. This could be introduced on a trial basis and 30 minutes free parking could initially be offered in the Crafton Green Car Park to encourage new parking patterns.

ii. The use of on-street parking for loading heavy goods and picking-up chiropractor patients etc. can be consistently accommodated by enforcement that enables such legitimate use.

iii. The introduction of restricted delivery periods by lorries on Cambridge Road.

29. These proposals are not in the gift of the District Council and changes can only be made by NEPP. Further discussion with the relevant stakeholders are necessary and included within the proposed stakeholder engagement meetings – refer to section below “Stakeholder engagement and “investing in partnership”.

Future proofing car parking technology and Mi-permit

30. It is highly probable that cashless payment methods that can be topped up off-site and reimbursed seamlessly following spend in local businesses will be widely used within the next few years. Such developments do not require significant capital investment by the local authority and will evolve with technology to meet customer needs.

31. The pay by phone service Mi-permit is now in operation across the district for residents permits, on-street parking and off-street parking. The People and Places report concludes that the “development of the MiPermit pay by phone system offers the most flexible and cost-effective development opportunity.” The Council has launched a further marketing campaign to encourage people to use this method of payment using Uttlesford Life, local newspapers as well as providing leaflets to shops to distribute to customers.

32. The People and Places report identifies that the only car park in the District where pay-on-exit could be considered is Swan Meadow. However, there is neither a high turnover of spaces nor need for payment with notes to justify the high capital and operational cost of a payment on exist system.

Review of Council owned land

33. Following a review no areas of Council owned land have been identified where additional town centre parking could be provided.

Review of non-Council owned land

34. Following a review an area of land (Appendix 4) adjacent to Lower Street car park in Stansted has been identified as a potential extension to the car park. Given the pressures that the existing car park is facing and the new medical

centre, retail and residential development additional capacity in this area is likely to be needed. The redevelopment itself and relaying out the car park will provide additional spaces in this area. It is difficult at this stage to fully understand what impact the operational medical centre and other uses will have on the car park use. Given that the land is available now it seems prudent to purchase the land to safeguard it for this future use. The Council has sought a valuation from its retained valuers and also costs for the clearance and construction of a car park.

Appraisal of existing car parks

35. The People and Places report has appraised all car parks for their capacity to expand and for any other improvements which could be made. The report concludes that whilst in some of the Council's car parks and off-street car parking are under pressure at peak times that overall there is sufficient capacity. The report also states that "the indication from retail studies is that footfall in town centres will continue to steadily decline at a rate that is greater than housing growth." It will be important to regularly measure car park usage and this is referred later in this report in the section headed "car parking indicators."
36. The council has invested in some new signage to direct people to car parks and around the town in Saffron Walden. The recent report highlights further work as being necessary in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted. It is expected that the cost of additional or replacement signage will be met from the car park allocation from the Strategic Initiative Fund.
37. Over the last year the Council has provided additional car parking spaces at Swan Meadow and The Common and overseen a revamped car park at Faircroft/Waitrose all in Saffron Walden. The car park at Lower Street Stansted will be revamped as part of the adjacent development providing additional spaces. It is considered that additional space at Lower Street car park could be required due to the additional draw of the medical centre. A piece of land for an extension has been identified and the owner is in principle willing to sell this to the Council.

Stakeholder engagement and "investing in partnership"

38. The People and Places report was commissioned to help objectively understand the issues concerning the role of car parking in our town and village centres as a basis for developing local consensus between key stakeholders.
39. The process would be focussed on an annual meetings with each of the town and village centres to discuss the effectiveness of the car parking provision, test analysis, develop a consensus on issues and building up a joined-up approach to future delivery.
40. Those attending these meetings would include the District Council's representatives on the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP), Chairs of the

Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow Town Teams, Chair of the Stansted Economic Development Forum and Chairs of the relevant committees from Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow Town Councils and Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council.

41. The People and Places report recommends the on-going monitoring of car park usage and stakeholder views in ensuring that car park provision continues to respond to needs and that any changes are successfully implemented.

42. A “dashboard” of indicators to include business perception survey, car park usage audit, town centre user perceptions and footfall counts in the town and village centres.

Conclusion

43. This report and recommendations form part of an evolving customer-led approach to car parking in the District. This approach focuses on car parking performance relative to customer needs and stakeholder opinions and considers car parking as part of the whole town and village centre experience.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Car parking adversely affects footfall within the town and village centres 1	Unlikely with ongoing monitoring 1	Little impact 1	Review of tariffs, capacity, signage, etc and any action required taken 1
Lack of consensus achieved with key stakeholders 2	Stakeholders can hold strong and conflicting views on car parking 2	Low impact 1	Annual review meetings, ongoing dialogue with Town Teams, Town and Parish Councils 2

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Appendix 1 - Current prices and hours

Car park name	No. spaces	Charging times	Charges Up to 30 mins	Charges Up to 1 hr	Charges Up to 2 hrs	Charges Up to 3 hrs	Charges Up to 4 hrs	Charges Up to 5 hrs	Charges Up to 6 hrs	Charges up to 10 hrs	Notes
Great Dunmow											
Angel Lane	31	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20					Short stay
Chequers Lane	67	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20					Short stay
New Street	11	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20					Short stay
White Street	172	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20		£2.40		£3.50	Long stay
Saffron Walden											
Fairycroft		8am – 5pm	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20	£2.00					Short stay
Rose and Crown	27	8am – 5pm	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20						Short stay
The Common	109	8am – 5pm	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20	£2.00	£3.00				Short stay
Catons Lane	49	8am – 5pm	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free		Free	Long stay
Swan Meadow	394	8am – 5pm		£0.70	£1.20	£2.00			£2.50	£3.50	Long stay
Swan Meadow coaches	6	8am – 5pm						£3.00		£6.00	Long Stay
Stansted Mountfitchet		8am – 5pm									
Crafton Green	52	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20				£3.00	Long stay
Lower Street	109	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20			£2.40	£4.00	Long stay
Lower Street coaches	6	8am – 5pm								£6.00 per visit	Long stay
<i>Stansted Mountfitchet station car park (info</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>24 hrs</i>	<i>£4.70 daily</i>	<i>£2.90 off peak</i>	<i>£22.40 weekly</i>	<i>£80.50 monthly</i>	<i>£829.50 annual</i>				<i>Not Council car park</i>

Appendix 2 - Proposed prices and hours

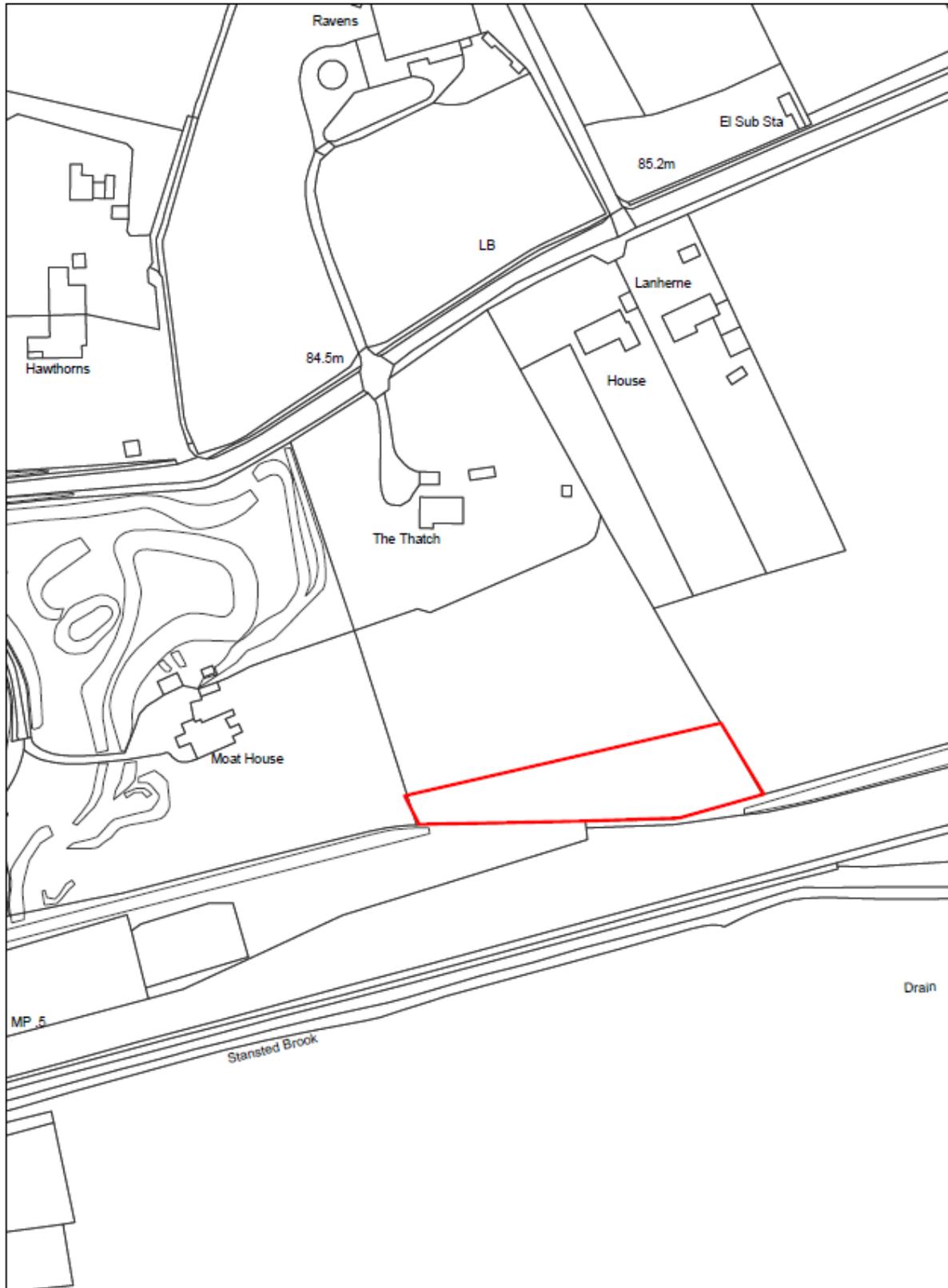
Note: These charges apply to all users.

Car park name	No. spaces	Charging times	Charges Up to 30 mins	Charges Up to 1 hr	Charges Up to 2 hrs	Charges Up to 3 hrs	Charges Up to 4 hrs	Charges Up to 5 hrs	Charges Up to 6 hrs	Charges up to 10 hrs	Notes
Great Dunmow											
Angel Lane	31	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20					Short stay
Chequers Lane	67	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20					Short stay
New Street	11	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20					Short stay
White Street	172	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20	£2.00	£2.40		£3.50	Long stay
Saffron Walden											
Fairycroft		8am – 5pm	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20	£2.00					Short stay
Rose and Crown	27	8am – 5pm	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20						Short stay
The Common	109	8am – 5pm	£0.50	£0.70	£1.20						Short stay
Catons Lane	49	8am – 5pm									Long stay
Swan Meadow	394	8am – 5pm		£0.70	£1.20		£2.00		£2.50	£3.50	Long stay
Swan Meadow coaches	6	8am – 5pm						£3.00		£6.00	Long Stay
Stansted Mountfitchet											
Crafton Green	52	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20	–			£3.00	Long stay
Lower Street	109	8am – 5pm	£0.40	£0.60		£1.20	£2.00		£2.40	£4.70	Long stay
Lower Street coaches	6	8am – 5pm								£6.00 per visit	Long stay
<i>Stansted Mountfitchet station car park (info</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>24 hrs</i>	<i>£4.70 daily</i>	<i>£2.90 off peak</i>	<i>£22.40 weekly</i>	<i>£80.50 monthly</i>	<i>£829.50 annual</i>				<i>Not Council car park</i>

Appendix 3 - Recommendations of October 2013 Scrutiny Report

- i) Investigate 30-minutes free parking at all car parks except Swan Meadow during the 2014 tariff review – do not pursue free parking after 3.00pm as it could cause over-capacity at some car parks which are already busy,
- ii) Facilitate any shoppers' parking charge rebate scheme for Stansted Mountfitchet that may be set up by local business forums and retailers,
- iii) Discontinue the 4-hour tariff at The Common, as there is adequate space in Swan Meadow, and The Common functions well as a short stay car park,
- iv) Delay any specific recommendations on Lower Street and Fairycroft until patterns of usage are known following redevelopment work,
- v) Allocate specific areas for season ticket holders at Swan Meadow, but allowing pay and display to have the nearest spaces to the town,
- vi) Monitor what happens to usage of Swan Meadow following the Waitrose extension, and investigate whether there any opportunities to build on any uplifted use,
- vii) Liaise with ECC Highways re display of “distance to/from and walking time to/from” information re Swan Meadow,
- viii) Review with NEPP the reliability and usability of tariff and sales data, ix) Better advertisement of free parking after 5.00pm, and encourage shops to open an hour later on at least one day per week,
- x) Implement “pay by phone” as soon as possible as an extra payment option,
- xi) Explore increased disabled space provision at The Rose and Crown in place of the less accessible disabled spaces at The Common,
- xii) The impact of proposed new developments on existing public car park capacity should be fully understood at the planning application stage. This impact should be quantified in transport assessments and traffic impact statements, with the proposed mitigation clearly set out if there would be a material impact,
- xiii) Better promotion by the District Council and Town/ Parish Councils of the airport parking hotline.

Appendix 4



Lower Street Stansted



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Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10 December 2015

17

Title: Designation of Thaxted Neighbourhood
Development Plan Area

**Portfolio
Holder:** Cllr Barker

Key decision: No

Summary

1. The Council received an application from Thaxted Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Plan Area on 16 October 2015.
2. The application has been advertised in accordance with the Regulations for a period in excess of 6 weeks ending on 2 December 2015.

Recommendations

3. To designate the amended area outlined on the map at Appendix 1 as the Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Financial Implications

4. The District Council will be able to claim a grant of £5,000 once the designation has been confirmed to cover the costs of assessing and dealing with the submission.

Background Papers

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Application from Thaxted Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	Consultation has taken place in accordance with the Regulations. The decision to Designate a Neighbourhood Plan Area will be advertised in accordance with the Regulations.
Community Safety	None

Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	Thaxted and The Eastons
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

7. The Council received an application from Thaxted Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area on 19 October 2015. This request was made under Section 5 – 7 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
8. The application has been advertised in accordance with the Regulations for a period in excess of 6 weeks ending on 2 December 2015. The application was advertised through the Councils website and via press release.
9. The Parish Council has proposed that the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area follows the existing parish boundary for the village. The Parish Council consider that this is the appropriate area to be designated as it is the area administered by the Parish Council.
10. No comments have been received to date. Any comments received before 2 December 2015 will be verbally updated to Cabinet.

Considerations

11. The proposal is that the Neighbourhood Development Plan Area is contiguous with the Parish Boundary of Thaxted. This is a logical and sensible approach and demonstrates that the Parish Councils wish to plan for the whole of their area.
12. Officers consider that this is a sensible approach. At this stage no ideas have been developed about the type of policies which the Plan would include. However, this would be led by the Parish Council and their public consultation. The Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the District Local Plan for it to be accepted.

Conclusion

13. The area should be supported and adopted as the Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Risk Analysis

14.

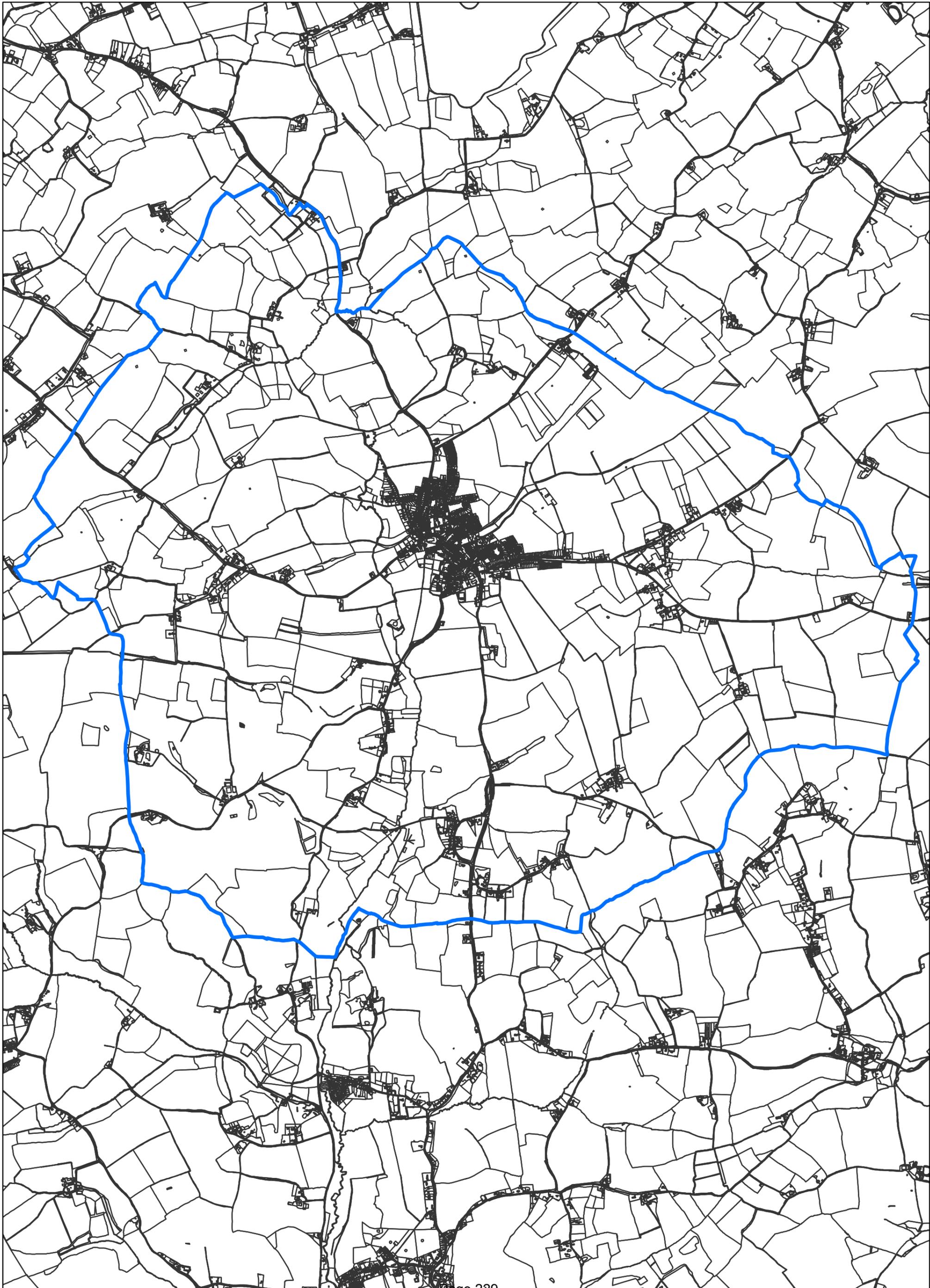
Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Concerns and complaints may be raised about the area designated.	1. Low likelihood as the boundaries are contiguous with those of the Parish Council which is a logical boundary.	2. Little or no impact would occur.	Full consultation in accordance with the Regulations has taken place.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 10th December 2015

18

Title: RNP1 (RF) trial at Stansted Airport

Cabinet Member: Councillor Susan Barker

Key decision: No

Summary

1. This report is about a trial undertaken at Stansted Airport which uses modern navigational procedures to improve track keeping of departing aircraft. The airport operator, London Stansted Airport, is now consulting on whether these procedures should be formally adopted via an airspace change proposal which would be submitted to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The report explains what the trial is, what the results are and how the Council should respond as part of the consultation.
2. This report was considered by the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel on 23rd November, when the following recommendations to Cabinet were agreed. These recommendations have been sent as an interim consultation response to meet the consultation deadline. Any changes agreed by Cabinet will be forwarded after the meeting.

Recommendations to Cabinet

3. That taking into account Government policy on noise, the Council should support the airspace change proposal as;
 - i) it would result in fewer people being directly overflowed by aircraft, and
 - ii) it would give more certainty about the paths that departing aircraft take.
4. That the RNP1 procedures be implemented as soon as possible on the remaining four SIDs.

Financial Implications

5. None.

Background Papers

6. None

Impact
7.

Communication/Consultation	The consultation is being undertaken by London Stansted Airport. The consultation runs from 1/9/15 to 27/11/15, and has included community outreach events in Great Dunmow, Bishop's Stortford and Hatfield Heath.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	The trial has impacted: Broad Oak and The Hallingburys Great Dunmow North Great Dunmow South and Barnston Hatfield Heath Takeley Thaxted and The Eastons
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

8. Aircraft departing from Stansted Airport use one of six Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs), which are the lower level initial sections of Standard Instrument Departure (SID) routes before they diverge. There are three NPRs at both ends of the runway, their use depending upon wind direction and then the aircraft's destination. Up to a height of 4,000ft, Government guidance identifies reducing local noise as the key environmental objective of airspace management. Between 4,000 – 7,000ft the key objective is to balance noise and CO² emissions, whereas above 7,000ft reducing CO² emissions has priority.
9. To reduce local noise, departing aircraft are required to keep to the relevant NPR until they have achieved a minimum height of 4,000ft when they can be vectored onto a more direct heading to their destination by Air Traffic Control. Each NPR is 3km wide (1.5km either side of the SID centreline), and is traditionally flown using ground based navigation techniques. Within each

NPR, there will be a spread of departure tracks due to a number of factors influencing the position of an aircraft such as wind speed and direction and the aircraft's flight management system. At the ends of the NPRs, when aircraft are at 4,000ft, there is effectively a swathe of departure tracks taking up the full 3km width of the NPR.

The RNP1 (RF) trial

10. Following discussion with local community representatives, London Stansted Airport decided to carry out a track keeping trial using modern global positioning system (GPS) navigational techniques (the RNP1 (RF) trial) to enable departing aircraft to fly as close as possible to the SID centreline. This was the first trial of this kind in the UK, the aim being to reduce the number of people being overflown. Reducing the number of people being overflown aligns with Government policy in the Aviation Policy Framework (APF):

“to limit and, where possible, reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise”.

11. RNP refers to *Required Navigation Performance* which allows an aircraft to accurately fly a specific path between two defined points, an RNP of 1 meaning that a navigation system must be capable of calculating its position to within one nautical mile. RF refers to *Radius to Fix*, which is a radius about a fixed point to enable more accurate track keeping through turns, especially tighter ones.
12. For the trial, one SID was chosen at each end of the runway so that it could proceed irrespective of which runway was in use due to the wind direction. The following two SIDs were chosen:

Runway 22 Clacton SID: RNP1 (RF) would reduce overflying of Hatfield Broad Oak and Hatfield Heath as the SID centreline runs between the 2 villages, and would also reduce overflying of Little Hallingbury

Runway 04 Detling (formerly Dover) SID: RNP1 (RF) would improve departure track keeping compliance on what has traditionally been the least compliant SID due to the tight 160° southerly turn soon after take-off. This would result in reduced overflying of Little Easton and Great Dunmow.

13. The trial started in May 2013 with easyJet, initially for one month for data gathering and feedback purposes. After that period, other RNP1 (RF) approved operators joined the trial, which remains ongoing for data gathering purposes. However, the CAA will not allow open-ended trials and a decision now needs to be made on whether the RNP1 (RF) procedures should be adopted permanently for the two trialled SIDs, or dropped. London Stansted Airport estimates that 92% of all aircraft will be RNP1 (RF) equipped at the time of adoption, but by 2021 all aircraft will have to be so equipped.
14. London Stansted Airport has submitted the trial results to the CAA for review, and this consultation begins the formal airspace change process. This

process will involve the collation and review of all feedback received, and the submission of a consultation feedback report to the CAA. After that, an airspace change proposal will be submitted to the CAA. The CAA will decide whether the airspace change proposal should be approved.

15. The consultation document and a list of frequently asked questions, published by London Stansted Airport, are attached as appendices to this report.

Outcome of the trial

16. The headline results of the trial are set out on Pages 8 and 9 of the consultation document. The number of people directly overflown would reduce from 5,000 to 700, the largest reduction being under the Runway 22 Clacton SID. Adherence to the centreline of the SIDs would be greatly improved. On the Clacton SID, 99% of aircraft flying RNP1 (RF) are within a swathe of less than 500m (compared to 3km), whilst on the Detling SID the figure is 99% within a swathe of less than 420m. The trial has also indicated that all types of aircraft and sizes are able to fly the accuracy required by RNP1 (RF).

Consideration

17. As with all airspace change proposals, there are winners and losers. The 700 people who live under the SID centrelines will experience more overflying, but 4,300 people will experience less or no overflying, and the paths that aircraft take will be more certain. It is the experience of officers that people looking to move to the area and who enquire about the effect of aircraft noise appreciate more certainty over the paths that aircraft take, as it aids their judgement. Taking into account Government policy in the APF, it is considered that the Council should support the airspace change proposal.

Risk Analysis

18.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That the Council's views are not taken into account as part of the consultation process.	1. STAAP has made a recommendation to Cabinet, which now must decide how to respond to the consultation.	1. All residents are able to take part in the consultation process and express their views.	The Council responds to the consultation.

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

PERFORMANCE BASED NAVIGATION

New innovative technology to
reduce the impact of aircraft noise
on communities around Stansted Airport



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FOREWORD

London Stansted Airport is the fourth busiest airport in the UK carrying over 21 million passengers a year. As well as a key enabler of growth and jobs in the local community, we also help to connect business and leisure passengers to over 170 destinations across 32 countries.

In addition to being an economic catalyst for the East of England, we strive to be a responsible neighbour and that means operating in a sustainable way, both by sharing the benefits of living near an airport and limiting any environmental impacts that may be felt as a result of our operation.

We continue to look for ways in which we can manage and reduce the number of local people affected by noise as a result of our operations and we are delighted that we have been able to work in partnership with the community, airlines and industry bodies to introduce new and exciting innovations in aviation technology.

Together with the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee's Environmental Issues Group, over the last two years we have conducted an airspace trial at Stansted that I feel demonstrates significant and positive improvements for the local area. The trial data shows a significant reduction in the number of local people directly overflown. On the two routes trialled, participating aircraft directly overflew 85% fewer people compared to traditional departure procedures.

We welcome feedback from members of the local community about adopting the trial technology permanently at the airport.

I have been involved with Stansted Airport for nearly 15 years, initially with my village protest committee but quickly progressing to the 'inside' and working with the airport as part of the Noise and Track Keeping Working Group.

This Group comprises industry specialists and community representatives (who over time have become pretty expert themselves) and has as one of its many tasks to seek to maximise adherence of departing aircraft to the centre line of legally prescribed Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs). On this, thanks to the efforts of the airport staff, we demonstrated considerable success. However, it became increasingly clear that new procedures would be necessary to gain further improvement.

I also chair the Environmental Issues Group (EIG), a sub committee of the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee (STACC). This Group works in tandem with airport staff on all matters environmental – from the usage of utilities and services to the improvement of the noise environment around the airport. I therefore grasped the opportunity to progress the environmental benefits that improved departure route adherence offered.

The EIG has worked jointly with airport staff, the Civil Aviation Authority and NATS, who all in turn have worked with the airlines, to develop two trial instrument departures designed to modern navigation standards, known as RNP1 Departures. These mirror as close as possible the statutory NPRs and have been trialled for two years. They have proved demonstrably effective in improving the accuracy of departing 'tracks' for those aircraft using the trial specification. It has taken at least seven years to bring this to fruition, overcoming the necessary obstacles of simulation testing, safety procedures and regulatory approvals along the way, but our perseverance has now been rewarded.

The EIG together with the airport team now wish to make these two departure 'tracks' permanent, hence this consultation. We all feel the noise and environmental benefits are considerable and urge our local communities to look at the achievements and facts provided here and make their responses accordingly.



Andrew Harrison
Managing Director
Stansted Airport



Keith Artus
Chairman
Environmental Issues Group of the
Stansted Airport Consultative Committee

OVERVIEW

Aircraft noise can sometimes be seen as intrusive and disruptive, particularly for those people that live closest to the airport and its flight paths. London Stansted Airport ('Stansted') has a long-term aim and commitment to manage, and reduce where possible, the number of people affected by noise as a result of aircraft operations.

Through communication and engagement with local community groups, an opportunity was identified in late 2011 to help reduce the number of people affected by aircraft noise. Stansted agreed to investigate this in further detail.

Our investigation resulted in a trial of modern navigation techniques for departing aircraft from May 2013 – a new innovation in the UK called RNP1 (RF) – which would better enable them to fly two of the existing flight paths more accurately. Keeping to these existing flight paths more accurately means fewer people would be affected by overflying aircraft in the local area.

A partnership approach was taken, engaging a number of bodies in the trial. Those involved from the initial concept of the trial included the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Stansted Airport, the EIG (a sub-group of the Stansted Airport Consultative Committee), NATS and easyJet. This allowed for a transparent process whilst testing the latest available navigational technology with a number of industry experts from air traffic control to airlines themselves. We thank all partners for their guidance and input into the trial.

The trial has been a success and Stansted has submitted the results of this trial to the CAA for review. This consultation begins the formal regulatory process to permanently adopt the procedures used in this trial. The full trial analysis report along with other consultation material is available to view at

www.stanstedairport.com/consultation

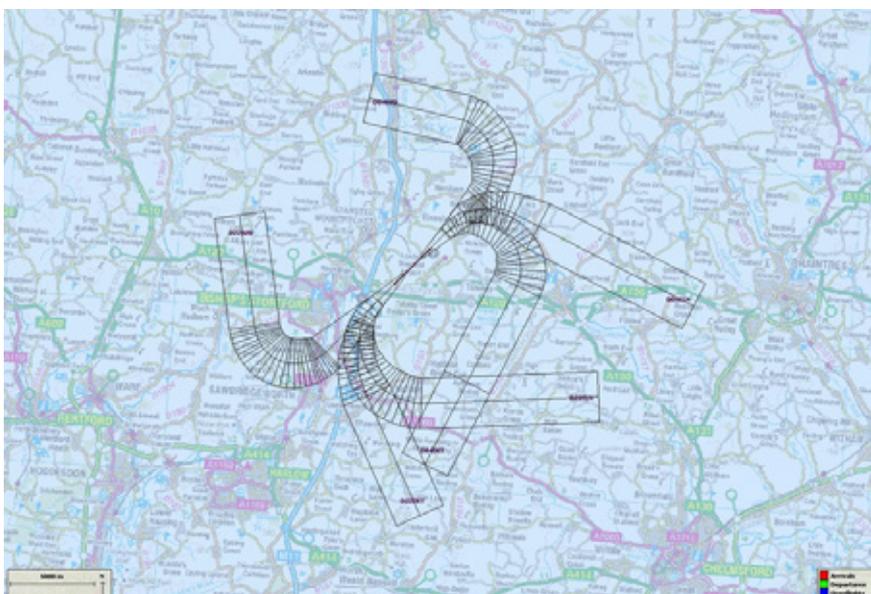
“By using new technology to fly more accurately, fewer people would be overflowed.”

STANDARD INSTRUMENT DEPARTURES AND NOISE PREFERENTIAL ROUTES

Stansted is a noise designated airport and as such many of the noise controls are set by UK Government, including the establishment of Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) for departing aircraft. This has been the case since the early 1990's following public consultation.

A Noise Preferential Route is an area surrounding the conventional departure route which is ± 1.5 km. Aircraft are required to remain within this area up to a minimum altitude, usually 4,000ft.

Stansted has six NPRs that encompass the low level initial section of the Standard Instrument Departure Routes (SIDs) before they diverge. A map of the six existing NPRs at Stansted is shown below. These SIDs are designed around conventional ground based navigational aids, which are now becoming obsolete.



London Stansted Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs)

A Standard Instrument Departure 'SID' is the intended route for an aircraft to fly immediately after take-off.

Departing aircraft are deemed compliant when they remain within a NPR corridor up to 3km wide (narrower closer to the runway and 1.5km either side of the SID) until they have achieved a minimum height, usually 4,000ft, when they can change heading onto a more direct heading to destination by Air Traffic Control (ATC).

Historically, there has been a wide spread of departure tracks within these 3km NPRs due to a range of factors influencing the position of an aircraft within the NPR including:

- airframe type
- departure weight
- wind speed and direction
- temperature
- the aircrafts Flight Management System(FMS) capability
- its navigational database encoding
- Noise Abatement Departure Procedures (NADP)

THE TRIAL

Following discussions with local community representatives, two of the existing SIDs (runway 22 Clacton and runway 04 Detling) were selected to design and trial with modern navigational procedures.

The rationale behind this decision is detailed below:

- Replicating a SID on each end of the runway would allow data gathering irrespective of which runway direction was in use due to wind direction;
- Replicating the 22 Clacton SID would help alleviate community concerns by potentially reducing the over-flight of the villages of Hatfield Heath and Hatfield Broad Oak
- Replicating the 04 Detling SID would improve departure track-keeping compliance, as this has traditionally been the hardest route to fly and the least compliant SID at Stansted due to the tight wrap around turn after departure; and
- Replicating the 04 Detling SID would potentially reduce the over-flight of Great Dunmow.

The recommendation from the CAA was to conduct a departure track keeping trial with procedures designed to Required Navigational Performance standard (RNP1) using Radius to Fix (RF) Path Terminators for the turns within the NPR. As previously mentioned, this technology is a new innovation to the UK.

The objective of the RNP1 (RF) SID design was to replicate the existing standard SID as closely as possible to better enable all departing aircraft to keep as close to the centre of the existing NPR as possible.

The trial has been limited with an average of 5 – 6 departures per day (10%) flying the RNP1 (RF) procedures as opposed to all aircraft flying the same conventional route. Only operators with state regulatory approval for RNP1 (RF) operations can participate in the trial.

Those that have been able to participate so far are:

- AtlasAir
- easyJet
- Fayair
- FEDEX
- German Wings
- Global Supply Systems
- Pegasus
- UPS

All the above airlines have all flown the RNP1 (RF) SIDs with a variety of aircraft types and sizes. We expect the numbers of aircraft able to operate on RNP1 (RF) SIDs to increase over the coming years as further regulatory approval for operators evolves.

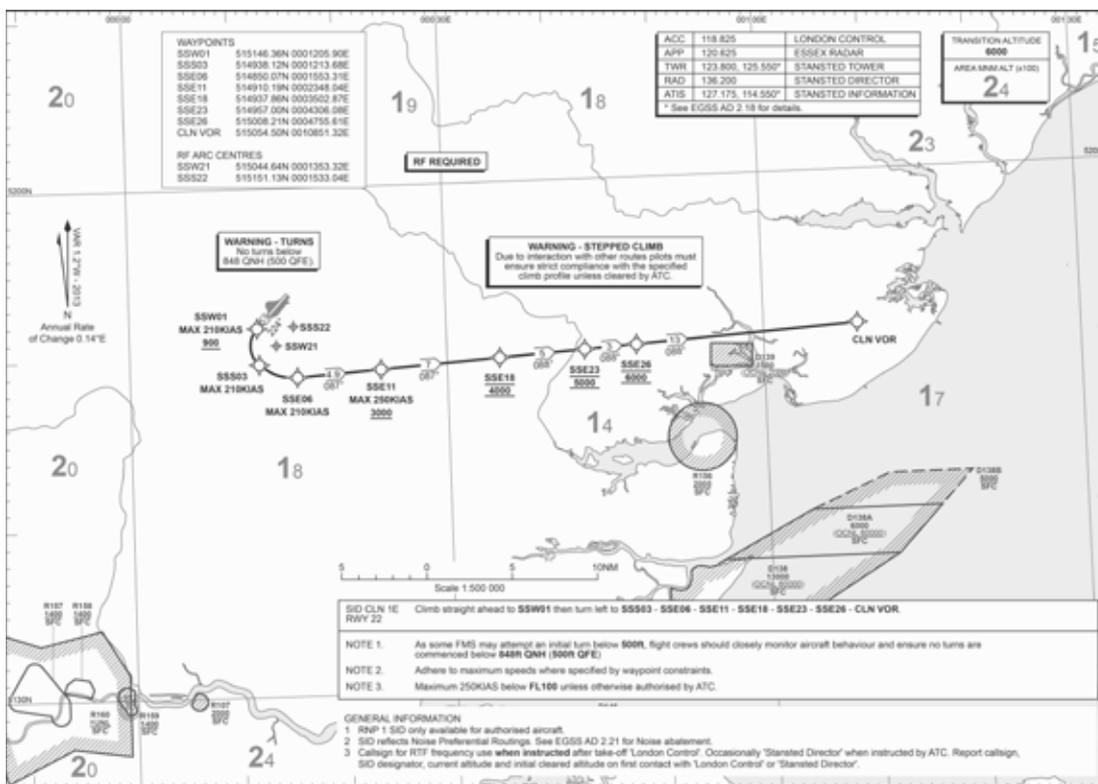
WHAT IS RNP1 (RF)?

Required navigation performance (RNP) is a type of performance-based navigation (PBN) that allows an aircraft to accurately fly a specific path between two defined points in space.

RNP also refers to the level of performance required for a specific procedure or a specific block of airspace.

An RNP of 1 means that a navigation system must be able to calculate its position to within 1 nautical mile. RNP SIDs can also incorporate Radius to Fix (RF) turns, that better enable accurate track keeping, especially through tight radius turns. This then provides the same ability to conform to the track-keeping accuracy during the turn as in straight line segments. Bank angle limits for different aircraft types and winds aloft are also taken into account in RNP1 (RF) SID procedure design.

A typical example of the runway 22 Clacton RNP1 (RF) SID design is shown below.



TRIAL RESULTS

22 Clacton Standard Departure Procedures

Figure 1 shows a typical spread of departures within the 3km wide NPR. The point where most aircraft are at approximately 4,000ft and can be vectored is also highlighted.

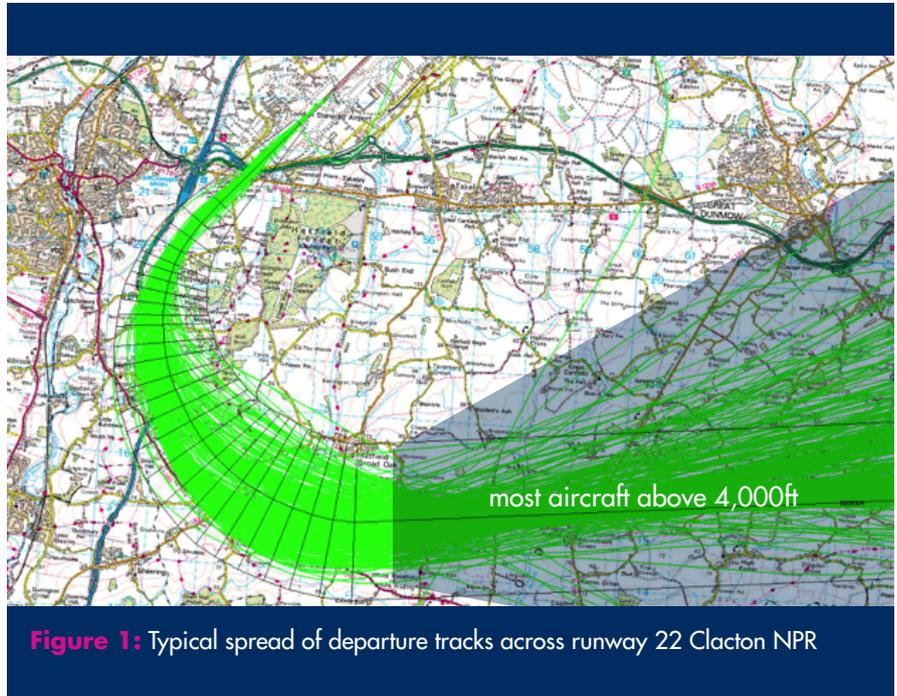


Figure 1: Typical spread of departure tracks across runway 22 Clacton NPR

22 Clacton trial results

Figure 2 shows a small sample of aircraft flying the RNP1 (RF) trial procedures. The RNP1 (RF) SID is shown as a red line and the design routes aircraft between Hatfield Heath and Hatfield Broad Oak whilst also avoiding the overflight of Little Hallingbury earlier in the departure route. This designed RNP1 (RF) trial SID replicates the conventional SID.

The results of the trial indicate that there is a strong adherence to the designed procedures, irrespective of aircraft type, weight, FMS and wind speed/direction which traditionally have a strong influence of how an aircraft fly's a conventional SID. Typically at around 4,000ft in height, over 99% of aircraft are within a swathe of less than 500m, instead of the typical 3km wide NPR.

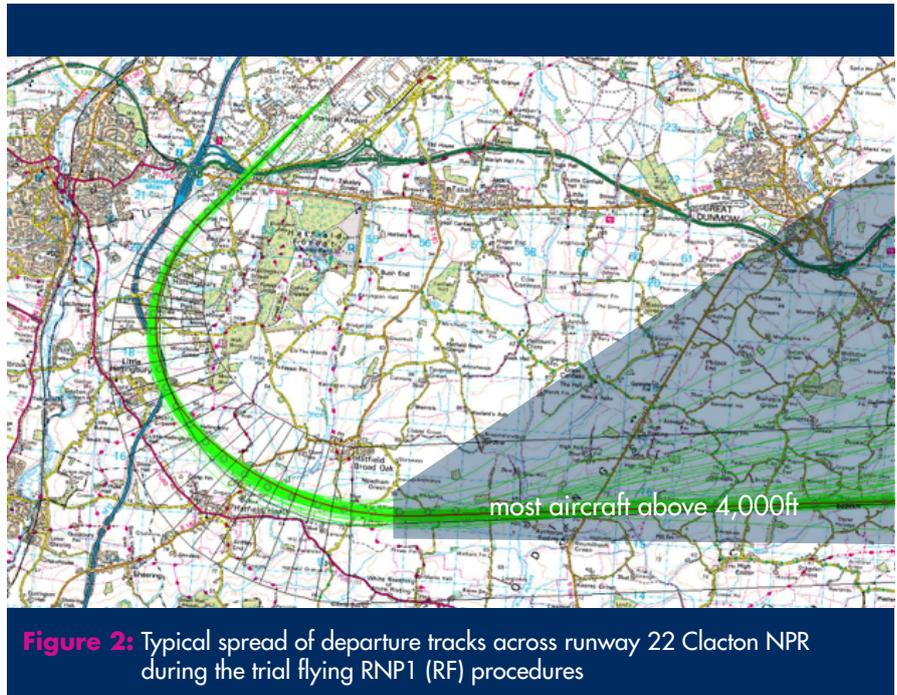


Figure 2: Typical spread of departure tracks across runway 22 Clacton NPR during the trial flying RNP1 (RF) procedures

22 Clacton Up to 4,000ft	Number of people directly overflown
Aircraft flying traditional departure procedures	3,800
Aircraft flying RNP1 (RF) procedures	500

Data supplied by ERCD and population data

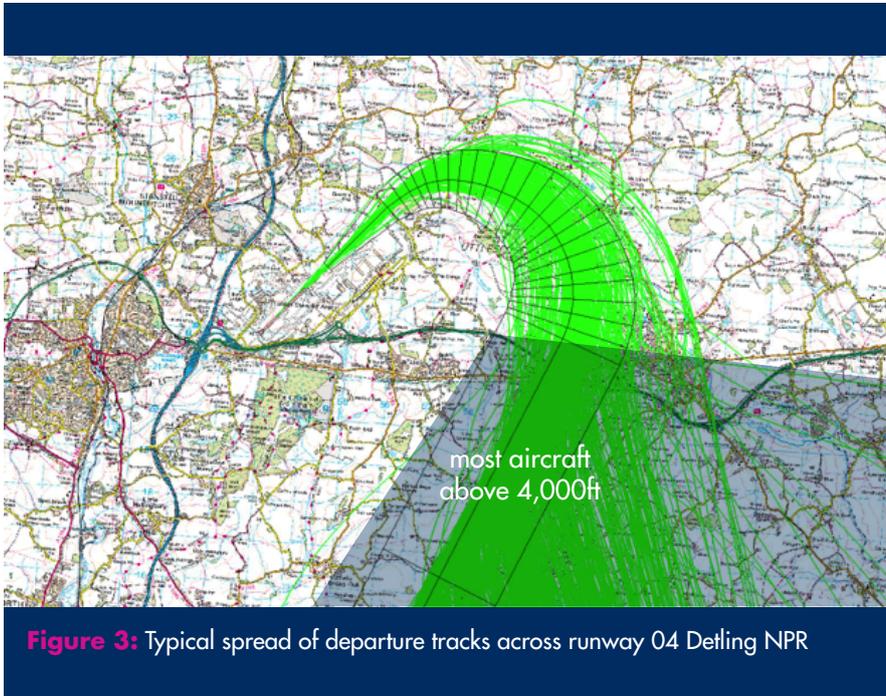


Figure 3: Typical spread of departure tracks across runway 04 Detling NPR

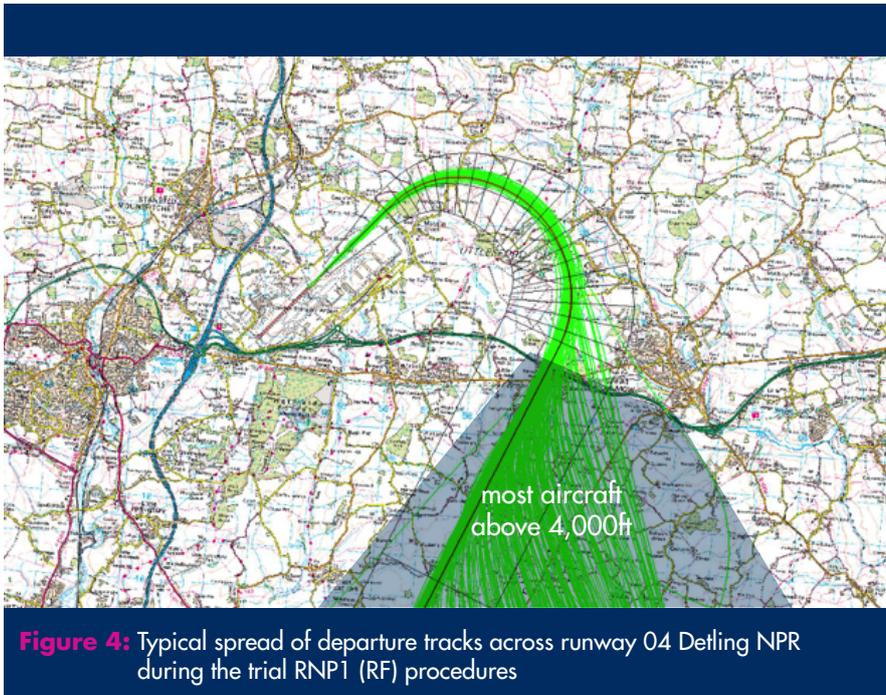


Figure 4: Typical spread of departure tracks across runway 04 Detling NPR during the trial RNP1 (RF) procedures

04 Detling Standard Departure Procedures

The second SID that was trialled with RNP1 (RF) procedures was the runway 04 Detling. This was chosen as this is the hardest to fly and traditionally the least compliant in terms of track keeping within the NPR due to the tight right turn immediately after take-off.

Figure 3 shows a typical spread of tracks across the conventional 04 Detling NPR and the typical height where aircraft are vectored when they are above 4,000ft.

The 04 Detling RNP1 (RF) SID also shows a very tight concentration of tracks as shown in Figure 4. The designed RNP1 (RF) SID shown as the red line avoids the overflight of Little Easton and Great Easton, with the greatly reduced overflight of Great Dunmow. Typically, over 99% aircraft flying the RNP1 (RF) SID were within a swathe of less than 420m. This RNP1 (RF) SID closely replicates the conventional SID.

04 Detling trial results

The 04 Detling results have shown a high degree of accuracy in terms of lateral track keeping when analysed against the designed RNP1 (RF) SID. It is clear that the benefits of this Performance Based Navigation turns through the RNP1 (RF) design prove to be extremely accurate and flyable, with in excess of 98%+ of operations contained within a swathe of just 400 metres. What is most noticeable about the design is how track keeping accuracy has been achieved with a wide range or aircraft types. This improved accuracy of track keeping has been demonstrated irrespective of aircraft type and size with aircraft from a small Gulfstream GV (SP) G550 to a very large Boeing 747-8F operating on the RNP1 (RF).

04 Detling	Number of people directly overflown
Up to 4,000ft	
Aircraft flying traditional departure procedures	1,200
Aircraft flying RNP1 (RF) procedures	200

HOW CAN I HAVE MY SAY?

We are seeking the views of our local communities about the permanent adoption of this technology.

As part of your response, please indicate:

- Your name and postcode
- If you are commenting on behalf of an organisation
- Whether or not you support adopting the technology used in the trial
- Please also indicate if you do not wish your name, or any other personal details to be included in the consultation feedback report.

To respond to the consultation, you can send your thoughts to us via email at consultation@stanstedairport.com

or write to us at:

Airspace Consultation Team
Airfield Operations
3rd Floor
Enterprise House
Stansted Airport
CM24 1QW

All consultation responses will be submitted to the CAA.

We are also holding a series of local community outreach events covering all elements of Stansted Airport's operation including local employment, public transport provision and this consultation.

If you would like to come along and speak to a member of the airport team, please drop in on the following dates:

- 22 September 2015 – Foakes Hall, Great Dunmow – 3pm to 7pm
- 24 September 2015 – Rhodes Centre, Bishops Stortford – 3pm to 7pm
- 07 October 2015 – Hatfield Heath Institute – 3pm to 7pm

TIMELINE

The consultation begins on 1 September 2015 and will close on 27 November 2015 and we invite you to share your views. Details of how to do this can be found below.

At the close of the consultation period, Stansted Airport will collate and review all feedback received, submit a consultation feedback report to the CAA and then submit an airspace change proposal to the CAA with the aim of adopting the trial technology permanently.

GLOSSARY

ATC	Air Traffic Control – air navigation service provider for controlled airspace
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority – UK regulator for civil aviation
EIG	Environmental Issues Group – a sub committee of STACC
FMS	Flight Management System – a specialised computer system that automates in-flight tasks including aircraft navigation
NADP	Noise Abatement Departure Procedure – a procedure adopted to minimise noise immediately after take-off
NPR	Noise Preferential Route – an area +/- 1.5km either side of a SID, where departing aircraft concentrate
PBN	Performance Based Navigation – specifies performance in terms of accuracy within airspace
RF	Radius to Fix – a curved path designed within a RNP1 SID
RNP1	Require Navigational Performance of 1 Nautical Mile
SID	Standard Instrument Departure – conventional departure route based on ground navigational aids
STACC	Stansted Airport Consultative Committee, a regular meeting of locally elected members, industry and community groups
04 DET	Runway 04 Detling SID
22 CLN	Runway 22 Clacton SID





PERFORMANCE BASED NAVIGATION

New innovative technology to reduce the impact of aircraft noise on communities around Stansted Airport

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a SID?

A 'SID' is a Standard Instrument Departure route with navigation design based on old ground based navigational aids. These conventional SID designs have been in place for decades and are now outdated by modern navigational and aircraft capabilities.

What does RNP1 (RF) stand for and what does it mean?

RNP1 stands for Required Navigational Performance of 1 Nautical Mile and is a modern navigation design standard for arriving and departing aircraft. RF stands for Radius to Fix and is defined as a radius about a fixed point to better enable track keeping accuracy around a turn.

Are the RNP1 (RF) SIDs new departure routes?

No, the RNP1 (RF) SIDs are not new departure routes. They have been designed to replicate as closely as possible the existing conventionally designed departure routes. We are not proposing any new routes, but by adopting these procedures we believe aircraft can fly the existing routes more accurately.

Why are you doing this now?

The trial conducted for the two RNP1 (RF) departure routes has been running for just over two years and will end in May 2016. We believe the trial has been a success and wish to adopt the RNP1 (RF) SIDs permanently.

Who are you consulting with?

We are consulting publically with those areas that are affected by the proposed changes. We have written to the relevant Parish Councils, to local MP's and Essex County Council. We have issued a press release detailing the start of the consultation and we encourage members of the public to participate in this consultation.

Where can we find more information?

More information can be found on the airport website;

www.stanstedairport.com/consultation

A copy of the full trial report can also be found at

<http://www.stanstedairport.com/community/local-environmental-impacts/noise/>

How long does the consultation last?

The consultation will commence on 1st September 2015 and will close on 27th November 2015.

Is this consultation connected to an extra runway/further expansion?

No, this has no connection to any extra runway or further expansion

Will more people be overflown?

No, the trial RNP1 (RF) procedures have proven that there will be fewer people overflown.



Will there be further changes to flight paths in the future?

We will always seek, where possible, to adopt best practice and to take advantage of the opportunities presented by new technologies. When we do so we will aim to minimise changes to existing flight paths where possible.

How does this project differ from last year's NATS consultation?

The NATS consultation in 2014 was about the wider airspace modernisation. The proposal was to move air traffic from the Detling departure route to the Clacton departure route during the busier daytime period. This RNP1 (RF) consultation is about adopting a modern SID design that all aircraft can fly more accurately. The two consultations are not related.

Why is this just for departures and not for arrivals?

At present we are only trialling two RNP1 (RF) departure procedures that replicate the existing SIDs. This was to prove the concept and ascertain the degree of accuracy and flyability of the procedures. Arrivals can also be designed to RNP1 standard and in future years this may be something that we develop and adopt.

Will every airline/aircraft follow the RNP1 (RF) routes?

No, only airlines/aircraft that have regulatory state approval can fly the RNP1 (RF) trial routes, but we would expect the number of aircraft flying RNP1 (RF) procedures to increase significantly over time. At present Ryanair are not RNP1 (RF) approved by their state regulator, the Irish Aviation Authority, but are currently seeking approval to fly the RNP1 (RF) SIDs. In time we would expect the vast majority of departing aircraft to fly the new procedures.

Is this just happening at Stansted or at all airports?

At present we are not aware of any other RNP1 (RF) departure procedures being trialled in the UK. In the future we would expect the conversion to RNP1 (RF) SIDs to be more common, especially in busy and constrained airspace.

Are these procedures for the benefit of the Airport and its Airlines by trying to save fuel?

No, the RNP1 (RF) SIDs have been designed to replicate the old conventional SIDs as closely as possible. Fuel burn can be saved by reducing track miles, but these SIDs do not reduce the distance flown by shortcutting corners within the noise preferential routes.

Has the Airport Consultative Committee been made aware of the trial?

Yes, we have kept the Airport Consultative Committee fully up to date as the trial has progressed from its design, through to the start of the trial and the results of the on-going monitoring. This has mainly been driven through their sub group the Environmental Issues Group who report at each of the main Consultative Committee Meetings.

When will the RNP1 (RF) SIDs become permanent if the outcome of this consultation is favourable?

The trial is due to end in May 2016, so we would anticipate adopting the RNP1 (RF) SIDs around this time.

How many departures per day have been flying the RNP1 (RF) SIDs?

Currently there has been an average of approximately 6 departures per day flying the RNP1 (RF) SIDs, some days with none at all and the most we have seen is 14 departures in one day.

Committee: Cabinet
Date: 10 December 2015
Title: Assets of Community Value
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Barker

Agenda Item

19

Key decision: No

Summary

1. The Localism Act 2011 introduces a concept of an 'Asset of Community Value'. Section 87 of the Localism Act places a duty of Local Authorities to 'maintain a list of land in its area that is land of community value'.
2. Officers have requested submission from Parish and Town Councils and this report reports the most recent response.

Recommendations

3. To agree to include the following on the Assets of Community Value list:
 - Upper Hill Green, Clavering
 - Fox and Hounds Public House, Clavering
 - The Yew Tree Public House, Manuden

Financial Implications

4. There are direct financial implications arising at this stage which relate to the formal process of identifying and contacting asset owners and, if relevant, registering an asset as a Land Charge. These costs can be met from existing budget and staff resources.
5. There is also an unquantifiable financial risk to the Council. This needs to be kept under review and at an appropriate time consideration should be given to establishing a contingency reserve to mitigate the risk to the Council's budget.

Background Papers

6. Submissions for consideration as Assets of Community Value

Impact

- 7.

Communication/Consultation	Notice to the owner is required.
Community Safety	No impact.

Equalities	The duty will effect all equally.
Health and Safety	No impact.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Pursuant to s.19 Human Rights Act 1998 the Secretary of State has certified that in his opinion the Localism Act is compatible with the Convention rights.
Sustainability	No impact.
Ward-specific impacts	Clavering and Manuden
Workforce/Workplace	Work will be coordinated within the Planning and Housing Policy, Land Charges and Legal Teams.

Situation

8. The Localism Act 2011 introduces a concept of an 'Asset of Community Value'. Section 87 of the Localism Act places a duty of Local Authorities to 'maintain a list of land in its area that is land of community value'.
9. Section 87 states as follows "*s. 87 of the Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of land and buildings in their areas which are of community value. Entry of an asset on the list lasts for 5 years although it may be able to be removed earlier in certain circumstances which may be specified in secondary legislation. Subject to the Act and any regulations made under it the form of the list is in the local authority's discretion.*"
10. An Asset is of community value if (in the opinion of the local authority) either:
 - The current use furthers the social wellbeing or interests of the local community; and
 - it is realistic to think that at some time in the next five years the Asset will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the community or
 - there was a time in the recent past when a use of building or land had furthered the social wellbeing or interests of the community; and
 - it is realistic to think that in the next five years the building/land could further the social wellbeing or interests of the community.
11. Although it is for the local authority to determine whether an Asset falls within the criteria to be included in the list s. 89 provides that Assets may only be included in the list in response to a community nomination (a parish council or a voluntary or community body with a local connection) or in circumstances contained in secondary legislation. In addition to the List of Assets of Community Value the council must also maintain a list of land which has been the subject of unsuccessful community nominations.

12. The Act defines social interest as: cultural interest, recreation interest and sporting interests which is a fairly wide definition.

Assessment

Upper Hill Green, Clavering

13. Clavering Parish Council has submitted a request to the Council to consider Upper Hill Green, Clatterbury Lane as an asset of community value. The land is currently registered as a village green and is used as a cricket field by the village cricket club. It is also used as amenity green space and play space. Upper Hill Green meets all the four tests set out in paragraph 10 above. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Assets of Community Value list.

Fox and Hounds Public House, Clavering

14. Clavering Parish Council has submitted a request to the Council to consider The Fox and Hounds Public House, High Street, Clavering as an asset of community value. The Fox and Hounds is situated in the heart of the village and is a 'traditional' pub which is host to a number of community activities such as quiz and music nights. It is also a meeting place for local groups and fund raising events. The Fox and Hounds meets all the four tests set out in paragraph 10 above. It is therefore recommended that it is added to the Assets of Community Value list.

The Yew Tree Public House, Manuden

15. Manuden Parish Council has submitted a request to the Council to consider The Yew Tree Public House as an asset of community value. The pub is currently owned by Donald Moody Investments and Development LTD. The Yew Tree is situated in the centre of the village and is the only pub in Manuden. The Yew Tree is a pub, restaurant, a hotel and offers function rooms. The Parish Council state that a number of events were held at the pub in the past including quiz nights, WI meetings and a May Ball in 2012. However, it is not evidenced that these meetings/events have taken place in the pub recently. The pub, however, does host the fireworks evening in November and carol singing at Christmas.
16. Donald Moody Investments and Developments LTD has objected to the nomination, stating that the pub is not used regularly by locals, nor is it used as a meeting place for clubs/groups as the new community centre is the preferred location for events. They argue that the pub does not further the social wellbeing and interests of the local community and should not be listed as an asset.
17. The Yew Tree has an important community function; it is the only pub in the village, providing a place for members of the local community to come together. The opening of the local community centre offers local residents a choice of meeting places and venues; this does not make the Yew Tree less important to the community. It is therefore recommended that the Yew Tree

Public House is added to the Assets of Community Value list as it meets all the criteria in paragraph 10 above.

Conclusion

1. The Council has received valid requests for consideration and the recommendation is that all 3 nominations are added to the Assets of Community Value list.

Risk Analysis

2.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The nominating body is unhappy with the decision reached.	1 – If the property comes onto the market the nominating body can always bid.	2 – While there might be some cost exposure this would be minimal	Carefully scrutinise submissions for inclusion on the Asset List so as to ensure only those which comply with the criteria are included.

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.