



Public Document Pack

Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

To all Members of Uttlesford District Council, you are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the District Council to be held as shown below to deal with the business set out in the agenda.

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Council

Date: Tuesday, 23rd April, 2024

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Chair: Councillor G Driscoll

Members: Councillors M Ahmed, A Armstrong, H Asker, G Bagnall, S Barker, N Church, M Coletta, A Coote, C Criscione, J Davey, A Dean, B Donald, J Emanuel, J Evans, C Fiddy, M Foley (Vice-Chair), R Freeman, R Gooding, N Gregory, N Hargreaves, R Haynes, P Lees, M Lemon, J Loughlin, T Loveday, S Luck, C Martin, D McBirnie, J Moran, E Oliver, R Pavitt, A Reeve, N Reeve, B Regan, G Sell, R Silcock, M Sutton and M Tayler

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 notice by 12 noon two working days before the meeting. A time limit of 3 minutes is allowed for each speaker.

Those who would like to watch the meeting live can do so by accessing the live broadcast [here](#). The broadcast will start when the meeting begins.

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 the previous meeting** 5 - 8
To receive the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3 Chair's Announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Chair.
- 4 Reports from the Leader and Members of the Executive** 9 - 24
To receive matters of report from the Leader and members of the Executive.

Written reports have been received from:
 - Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities
 - Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development
 - Portfolio Holder for Planning
- 5 Questions to the Leader, Members of the Executive and Committee Chairs (up to 30 minutes)** 25 - 27
To receive questions from members for the Executive and committee chairs.
- 6 Matters referred from the Executive and the Council's committees**
To consider any reports referred from the Executive and the Council's committees and receive questions and answers on any of those reports.
- 7 Matters received about joint arrangements and external organisations**
To consider matters concerning joint arrangements and external organisations.

8 Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan 28 - 42

To consider the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan.

9 Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group Final Report 43 - 108

To consider the Operational Resilience Report.

MEETINGS AND THE PUBLIC

Members of the public are welcome to attend any Council, Cabinet or Committee meeting and listen to the debate. All agendas, minutes and live broadcasts can be viewed on the Council's website, through the [Calendar of Meetings](#).

Members of the public and representatives of Parish and Town Councils are permitted to make a statement or ask questions at this meeting. If you wish to speak, you will need to register with Democratic Services by midday two working days before the meeting. There is a 15-minute public speaking limit and 3-minute speaking slots will be given on a first come, first served basis.

Guidance on the practicalities of participating in a meeting will be given at the point of confirming your registration slot. If you have any questions regarding participation or access to meetings, please call Democratic Services on 01799 510 369/410/460/548. Alternatively, enquiries can be sent in writing to committee@uttlesford.gov.uk.

The agenda is split into two parts. Most of the business is dealt with in Part I which is open to the public. Part II includes items which may be discussed in the absence of the press or public, as they deal with information which is personal or sensitive for some other reason. You will be asked to leave the meeting before Part II items are discussed.

Agenda and Minutes are available in alternative formats and/or languages. For more information, please call 01799 510510.

Facilities for people with disabilities

The Council Offices has facilities for wheelchair users, including lifts and toilets. The Council Chamber has an induction loop so that those who have hearing difficulties can hear the debate. If you are deaf or have impaired hearing and would like a signer available at a meeting, please contact committee@uttlesford.gov.uk or phone 01799 510 369/410/460/548 as soon as possible prior to the meeting.

Fire/Emergency Evacuation Procedure

If the fire alarm sounds continuously, or if you are instructed to do so, you must leave the building by the nearest designated fire exit. You will be directed to the nearest exit by a designated officer. It is vital that you follow their instructions.

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

Telephone: 01799 510548, 510369, 510410 or 510460

Email: Committee@uttlesford.gov.uk

General Enquiries

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Telephone: 01799 510510

Fax: 01799 510550

Email: uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Agenda Item 2

COUNCIL held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on MONDAY, 11 MARCH 2024 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor G Driscoll (Chair)
Councillors M Ahmed, H Asker, G Bagnall, S Barker, N Church, M Coletta, A Coote, J Davey, B Donald, J Evans, C Fiddy, M Foley, R Freeman, N Gregory, N Hargreaves, R Haynes, P Lees, T Loveday, C Martin, D McBirnie, E Oliver, R Pavitt, A Reeve, N Reeve, G Sell, R Silcock, M Sutton and M Tayler

Officers in attendance: P Holt (Chief Executive), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Manager) and N Katevu (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer).

C83 PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Chair said he had agreed to read out a question on behalf of a member of the public, Mr. J. Holloway, as follows:

“Are all members of the council satisfied that all recent FOI requests pertaining to the loss of Uttlesford's vehicle operating licence have been answered with full honesty and accountability?”

Councillor Hargreaves said the Council had received five Freedom of Information (FOI) Act requests on this topic, and received around 650-700 such FOI requests a year, which were answered by council officers and not by elected councillors. He said that any requester who was not satisfied with any given answer was entitled to request an internal review, which was carried out by an objective officer not involved in the original response. Anyone still not satisfied after an internal review could also complain to the Information Commissioner. He added that in the case of the five FOI requests on this topic, all had been replied to, although two requests were now being internally reviewed. Furthermore, the documentation that had been released in response to these five requests was extensive, containing 35 documents, with none withheld under any of the allowed exemptions, and only limited redactions to black out small parts. Therefore, he was confident that the process had been properly followed in relation to Freedom of Information Act requirements.

C84 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Armstrong, Criscione, Dean, Emanuel, Gooding, Lemon, Loughlin, Luck, Moran and Regan.

In respect of the Business Rates Relief Policy item, Councillors Barker and Foley declared non-pecuniary interests as members of Essex County Council.

Councillor Silcock declared a pecuniary interest as a business owner in respect of the Business Rates Relief Policy and said he would recuse himself from the meeting for Item 8.

C85 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024 were approved as a correct record.

C86 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Davey entered the meeting at 7.15pm.

The Chair said he had attended a number of civic events since the previous meeting, including events in Castle Point, Chelmsford Cathedral and the High Sheriff of Essex Community Foundation Awards. He added that he had arranged a quiz for the benefit of Accuro later this month and he urged members to sign-up to ensure there were sufficient numbers for the event to go ahead.

C87 REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor Evans provided an update on a recent East of England Water Summit that he had attended at Chesterford Research Park. He said fifty local authorities had been represented, as well as water companies and academics, and the purpose was to bring stakeholders from across the region together to discuss relevant water issues. He thanked the Chief Executive for starting the initiative.

Councillor Hargreaves spoke on the Uttlesford Business Awards ceremony that he had attended in February. He congratulated all participants for a great event and referred to the winner, Capture House, a visual content agency. He said many businesses in the district were awe inspiring. He also referred to the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) and said there had been financial issues at the organisation but these had now been resolved.

Councillor Barker raised a question regarding a "mini-Mortimer's Gate" in Takeley, which referred to four electric car charging points which had disrupted the lives of residents in the immediate vicinity. She asked whether there were any planning conditions that could be looked at in future. Councillor Evans said he would meet with her to discuss this specific issue.

In response to a question from Councillors Bagnall and Sell regarding the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP), Councillor Hargreaves confirmed that 'Traffic Regulation Orders' (TROs) had been temporarily paused until its financial problems had been resolved on the instruction of its membership.

In respect of the aforementioned Business Awards, Councillor Asker added that Café Cornell, who had catered for the event, had recently been awarded the King's Voluntary Award for its contribution to the community.

In response to a question from Councillor Fiddy regarding housebuilding and the five year land supply, Councillor Evans agreed that developers had been granted permission to build homes but were delivering these at a slower rate in order to maximise profit, rather than to fulfill housing needs.

Councillor Bagnall asked whether the Portfolio Holder for Planning would write to the Secretary of State on the issues raised by Councillor Fiddy, in order to make representations on land supply and housebuilding.

C88 QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER, MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS (UP TO 30 MINUTES)

Councillor Gregory had provided notice of an urgent question; he asked Councillor Sutton, as the Council's representative on Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel, what steps she would take when she attended the Panel meeting on Thursday to address with the Chief Constable and Police Commissioner the operational failure within Uttlesford to deal with brazen and overt drug dealing across the district?

In response, Councillor Sutton said she fully agreed that this was a serious issue and she would continue to champion the point as the Council's representative. She said she had written to the Panel to formally ask the question and would take this forward.

The Chair moved onto the written questions as set out the agenda papers.

In response to a question of clarification from Councillor Gregory regarding Reynolds Court, Councillor Coote said he was not aware of any further investigations that had taken place but he would ascertain the answer and respond in due course.

No further questions of clarification were asked.

C89 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS TO PLANNING CODES AND PROTOCOLS

Councillor Oliver, Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee, said it had been brought to his attention that members felt the proposals regarding Planning Codes and Protocols required further work. He moved to formally withdraw the proposal.

There were no objections and the report was withdrawn.

C90 MATTERS RECEIVED ABOUT JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL

ORGANISATIONS

There were no matters to report.

C91 BUSINESS RATES RELIEF POLICY

Councillor Silcock recused himself and left the meeting at 7.50pm.

Councillor Hargreaves spoke to the report regarding the Business Rates Relief Policy and referred to the changes from the previous year, including the back dating and extension of existing reliefs, as specifically set-out in paragraphs 8 to 18. He proposed approval of the recommendation.

Councillor Alex Reeve seconded the proposal.

Councillor Barker asked whether a “catch-all” or “any other reliefs” category could be established within the policy in order to assist with the administration of Government directions with urgency, as per the experience with the various Covid-19 relief grants.

RESOLVED to approve and adopt the Business Rates Reliefs Policy 2024/25 as set out at Appendix A to this report, to take effect from 1 April 2024, using its discretionary powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended).

The meeting was closed at 7.55pm.

Councillor Arthur Coote,

Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities

Report to Council, 23 April 2024:

General Summary Repairs and Maintenance

Following the agreement not to extend the joint venture arrangements with Norse Group, we have been busy exploring the service delivery options for the future of the maintenance service.

The joint venture with Uttlesford Norse Services Limited will cease delivering services for the council on 31st March 2025 and the joint venture will be wound up.

The options for a new operating model were fully explored by Members in a cross-party working group and the Tenants and Leaseholder Panel were fully consulted in their own workshop. During these sessions the preferred option for future delivery were agreed and this was approved by Cabinet on 18th April. The preferred option is a mixed economy solution, where one contractor is procured to cover responsive repairs, void works, most capital works and asbestos works. Specialist contractors for mechanical and electrical services (including gas, electrical, fire, water and lift safety) will be selected through separate procurement processes. Following a decision from Cabinet, officers will begin the procurement process, in consultation with Members and the Tenants and Residents Panel. A communications strategy is being developed so that all stakeholders including tenants, Members and staff are kept informed. Officers are preparing the specifications for the new contract and engaging with UNSL to produce a joint demobilisation plan.

Repairs

To ensure robust monitoring of UNSL, the current repairs provider, while seeking alternatives, the council has taken several key actions:

- Employed an interim Director of Property Services with prior experience of managing Norse and maintenance contractors. This director is embedded at the UNSL depot weekly for hands-on oversight.
- Holding weekly operations meetings to promptly address any service delivery challenges.
- Implemented a structured governance framework with weekly director meetings between the council's Property Services lead and UNSL's Operations Director.
- Conducting monthly KPI meetings focused specifically on reviewing Norse's repairs performance against targets.
- Created a new weekly compliance dashboard to track adherence to regulations, complemented by monthly compliance management meetings.

These robust monitoring processes aim to maintain high accountability and service levels from Norse during this transition period, while informing the selection of a new provider meeting our rigorous standards.

A repairs and compliance budget has been agreed with a value of £3,291,013, made up of £1,339,491 for repairs, £1,257,772 for compliance and £683,750 for voids.

Capital Programme (property improvements) 2024/25

A capital works programme has been agreed with a value of £5.26m incorporating works identified from the stock condition surveys to ensure that we achieve the Decent Homes standard which includes replacement kitchens, bathrooms, windows, roofs, heating upgrades etc.

Capital Programme and Asset Management Strategy

Further to this we are working on producing a 5-, 10- and 30-year investment programme as well as a new asset management strategy to ensure that the future stock investment requirement is known and planned for. This will be of utmost importance as we go out to procure contract in the future.

SHDF Funding – Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund

We have been successful in our application to central government for £3.2M of government funding to improve energy efficiency within 276 properties and save residents money on their bills as the government. Within year one we will carry out work to 90 properties with 186 properties to follow in year two.

We are now busy, with the aid of Savills procuring a contractor to deliver the year one with a proposed start date of July 2024.

From attendance at various training and briefing session that SDHF have arranged for successful bidder, it would appear that we are ahead of the process compared to over organisations.

Moving forward and within the stock investment planning process we will be looking to include decarbonisation as business as usual adopting a” fabric first” idiom tied into a “whole house approach”.

Compliance

We continue to manage UNSL on the delivery of all areas of compliance achieving 99.85% on our gas servicing, our 5-year electrical programme is at 96.79% a slight increase in performance from last month and our 10-year electrical testing programme is at 99.89%. Asbestos, Legionella and LOLER all remain at 100%.

Housing Support Offer to Ukrainians leaving their host arrangements, and resettlement support

Cabinet has approved a new package of support to enable Ukrainian refugees to settle in their own rented home. Without the Council’s assistance these households

would find it very difficult to access the private rented sector and they do not meet the local connection criteria to qualify for a social rented home in the District.

The new package includes a rent assist offer, comprising the required rental deposit, 6 weeks' rent in advance and a council guarantee, to last for the first 12 month of the tenancy, should the tenant default on their payments.

Assistance will also be given where needed to bridge the gap between local housing allowance and market value rent.

All of the required funds will be drawn from the Homes for Ukraine Grant administered by Essex County Council.

In addition, Cabinet approved a new Strategic Grants package to support both Ukrainian households and refugees. This will provide support in areas identified through extensive research by the Council, including

- Emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Information, Advice and Guidance
- Organised activities for children, young people and families

Cabinet agreed that the Council will commission specialist agencies already operating locally to deliver these services, with funding from the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and Asylum Dispersal Grant.

Councillor Neil Hargreaves,

Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy

Report for Council 23 April 2024

Economic Recovery Fund

Of the £1million budgeted for post covid recovery support from the council's commercial income, the final £660k was spent or allocated during the last financial year, thus completing the operation of this fund. Appended are some recent examples of some of this activity.

Government funding

UDC bid for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Rural England Prosperity Fund. UDC's grant allocations for this are attached. Note that the REPF is still in progress as applications are on a rolling basis and officers call meetings as needed working with myself to decide the allocations.

The government has hired consultants Technopolis and IPSOS to assess the effectiveness of their grant schemes and we met with them recently. Of the local authorities from across the country selected to take part, UDC was the first to participate. As well as our officers, attendees included from Uttlesford Foodbank and the NHS. The consultants road tested their review process with us and we gave feed back on that as well as our own experience of the funds. While all funding is welcome and it is a Corporate Plan policy to apply for everything which may be successful, it was pointed out that it doesn't touch the huge cuts in local authority funding and other cuts in public realm funding. As noted in the budget papers UDC has already found £2m in economies and has budgeted to find another £7m. Members will have seen the report put in our pigeon holes by Citizens Advice which makes difficult reading. A similar picture is available from the Food bank.

Car parking charge increases

These have been implemented except for Catons Lane and London Road as these await installation of machines. There is a brief delay on the Sunday alteration for the Faircroft car park as Waitrose wanted a 3 hour limit retained to ensure turnover so a revised scheme for Sundays is being agreed.

NEPP

I attended the NEPP board meeting at Harlow in March. Their finances have improved and the 24/25 budget shows a return to surplus, which will allow the reserves deficit to be recovered. The minutes and reports are published on the NEPP website. They have their team of Civil Enforcement Officers at full strength – it had been well below that for some time. My inbox of complaints has changed from 'why is there no enforcement ' to complaints about parking contraventions being enforced.

Economic Recovery Fund - Year 3

1. New Business Website

This year we launched a new website. This was developed with the UDC website team who did a tremendous job making it easy to navigate and attractive. The website is kept up to date by the Economic Development team with funding, support initiatives and events.



2. Business Grants and support initiatives

2.1 The Growth and Increased Productivity fund

A match funded grant of up to £5,000 to SME's ready to grow their business.

We are Bare Beauty, Saffron Walden

We are Bare Beauty received a Growth and Productivity grant of £4,750, which was used towards their state of the art Pelvipower machine.

Business owner Deborah Imrie said "we like to move with the times and provide the best technology that you would normally only find in London."



Takeley Chiropractor

Takeley Chiropractor continues to grow and provide additional job opportunities after receiving a Growth and Productivity grant of £3,630. This was used to purchase office equipment, a reception desk, PC's and contribute towards another chiropractic

bench. The addition of the bench has enabled extra time for a second practitioner to work and created a new job opportunity for a receptionist. Owner Scott Benham said “the grant has enabled us to employ an additional member of staff and grow the business”



The Coach and Horse pub, Newport

The Coach and Horses pub, Newport received a Growth and Productivity grant of £5,000 which was used towards a new combination oven. The combination oven has improved the service and efficiency of the kitchen and is a fantastic support for the chef and staff.

Owner, Jon Luis said “without the grant we couldn’t buy the oven and create the efficiency in the kitchen”



2.2 High Street Premises Enhancement Scheme

This provided a match funded grant of up to £5,000 to improve the external appearance of town and village centre properties.

Wardrobe, Great Dunmow

Wardrobe received a High Street Premises Enhancement grant of £2,800 to improve the structure and safety of the building. Not only did this enhance the look of the High Street but also maintained a sophisticated look to match the business brand.

Business owner Nikki Anthony said “we would have struggled to complete the much-needed work without the support of the grant, this is an old building and grants like this greatly assist with completing, repairing and improving the image of the High Street.”



2.3 Digital Boost Week

In November UDC held its third annual Digital Boost Week. Online ‘Lunch and Learn’ sessions were held on a variety of different subjects such as website search engine optimisation, making the most of LinkedIn to generate sales leads, how ‘green’ is your website and digital marketing tools for businesses.

£40,000 was allocated to the Digital Boost grant which provided match funding of up to £2,500. The grant was oversubscribed within 48 hours.

Law Salons, Saffron Walden

Law Salons received £2,500 from the Digital Boost Grant. Part of the grant was used to help train an apprentice in digital marketing to run the salon’s social media channels and run their website inhouse rather than employing an external agency.

2.4 Eco-October

In October we launched the Low Carbon Workplace Grant with a series of webinars helping small businesses become more sustainable.

The Grant offered match funding of up to £5,000. Energy efficient lighting has been the most popular use for the grant.

1-2-1 consultancies were offered to 10 SME’s interested in what steps they could take to help reduce their carbon footprint.

Overall there has been a luke warm reception to green initiatives.

3. Start-ups and Young Entrepreneurs

We put a big focus into supporting budding entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses in 2023-24.

3.1 Start-up September

Our Start-up September campaign was very successful with 44 residents signing up to the Rebel Business online training program.

Testimonials:

“Wow Uttlesford! I had no idea local council supported local businesses. This says a lot about Uttlesford as a council; you obviously care! Also I think it’s unusual for a council to engage a Rebel organisation! Thank you so much for your support.”

“Thank you very much for allowing entrepreneurs to take a big jump and reach our dream business ideas without being trapped and put off for life with huge debts.”

“Just a big thank you as being able to attend this course made me realise its never too late to do new things, and has both given me the courage and empowered me to run my own business. It has reignited a long lost spark.”

3.2 Webinars and peer networks

Alongside the training course we held a series of well attended webinars and offered a peer network programme run by business support providers, The Consortium, with three cohorts of entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses.

3.3 Young Entrepreneurs

We have worked in partnership with Saffron Walden Town Council and Essex County Council to support Young Entrepreneurs. In January we held a well-attended panel discussion and networking event to launch the Young Traders market being held at Saffron Walden town hall.

Seed funding of £100 was offered to Uttlesford residents attending the market to help them develop their business idea.



3.4 Start-up Grants

25 entrepreneurs and early-stage businesses have benefitted from the Start-up Grants, part funded by UKSPF and the Economic Recovery Fund.

This is a match funded grant of up to £2,500.

Neon Leo, Saffron Walden

This sustainable business opened a shop with the support of the business start-up grant of £2,500 and the High Street Enhancement fund of £1,512. The funding helped set up their website and rebrand the shop into their unique style and identity.

Owner Abigail North said “we couldn’t have achieved this without the support of the grants, our thoughts are always towards sustainability, independent and local. The experience we give our customers is very important to us, we like to help women push their boundaries and are more likely to step outside of their comfort zone when they are renting preloved clothes”.



AG Fitness, Wendens Ambo

AG Fitness received a business start-up grant of £1,655, which was used to purchase new equipment for their gym.

Owner Andrew Eastwood said “without the grant we would not have been able to purchase new modern equipment. The grant has enabled us to buy high end spec items that will last a lot longer than the second hand equipment they were having to consider. This matches the high end professional look and standard that our business provides”



4 Upskilling local businesses in digital marketing

We have offered a variety of sessions to upskill business owners in digital marketing. Working with Harrison Cantel, from HCreative (winner of the Uttlesford Business Rising Star Award 2023) and James Garrett, from HNE Media (winner of the Uttlesford Marketing Champion Award 2024)



5 Events

5.1 Ambitious Women in Essex

We have worked in partnership with Essex County Council to support women in business with a series of networking events, including a very popular panel discussion as part of Start-up September aimed at female entrepreneurs.



5.2 Uttlesford Business Breakfast

The annual business breakfast took place at the Novotel Hotel at London Stansted Airport. Alongside a delicious breakfast attendees took part in 3 mini workshops on sustainability, funding opportunities and digital marketing.



5.3 Uttlesford Business Awards

This year's awards, held at Saffron Hall, attracted almost 200 people. Winners were announced in 13 categories.



6 Discover Uttlesford

6.1 Website

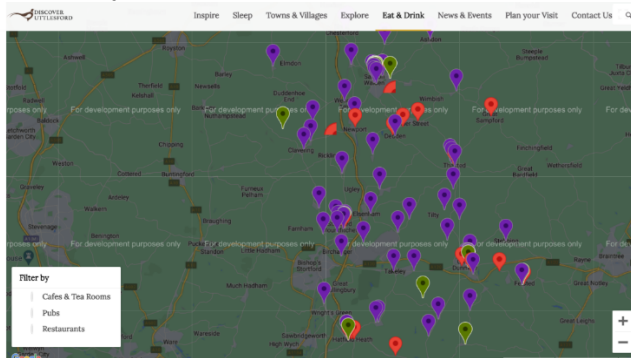
Discover Uttlesford has continued to grow in popularity and recognition.

We have seen a large increase in website users:

01/03/22 – 28/02/23 – total users 13,000

01/03/23 – 29/02/24 – total users 36,000

This year we have added new maps to the website to make it easy for users to find hospitality, accommodation and attractions.



6.2 Social Media

Our social media presence has also increased:

Facebook 2.3k followers

Instagram 1.5k followers

Stakeholders are increasingly engaging with us and many are donating days out to allow us to run 'give aways' on the social channels.



6.3 The Discover Uttlesford app

The app is also proving popular.

In December 2023 there were in excess of 3,500 unique weekly visitors to the app. Digital trails have been added to the app allowing users to follow a trail around Saffron Walden, Thaxted and Great Dunmow. Stansted Mountfitchet will be added shortly.

Discover
Download for FREE
Discover local history whilst exploring our beautiful market towns using the **NEW** digital walking trails!

DISCOVER UTTLESFORD

Just search 'Discover App' in your app store

Download on the **App Store**
GET IT ON **Google play**

The image shows a hand holding a smartphone displaying the 'Discover Uttlesford' app interface. The screen shows a 'Castle Street' walking trail with a photo of a street scene and a text description. The background of the advertisement is a blurred outdoor scene with a person's feet visible at the bottom.

UKSPF and REPG Grant Lists

Year 1 UKSPF

Buffy Bus	Playbus	£5,000
Uttlesford Citizens Advice	Digital Access Points	£16,940
Dig It Community Allotment	Plot to Plate sessions	£7,147
Mind In West Essex	Community Kitchen	£2,328
SW Community Shed	Digital Router	£6,599
Touchpoint	Refridgerated van	£24,500
UCAN	Community Responder	£14,808
UDC	Business Start up grants	£31,000
		£108,322

Year 2 UKSPF

Fairycroft House Arts and Media Centre	Voluntary sector grants officer	£18,540
Fairycroft House Arts and Media Centre	Homework Club	£12,860
Homestart	Stronger Together parenting	£24,565
Mind in West Essex	Parenting Classes	£21,469
Mind in West Essex	Creative minds	£2,500
St Clare Hospice	Bereavement Café	£9,431
Saffron Walden Town Council	Start up and young entrepreneurs market project	£33,500
Touchpoint	Establishment of community radio station	£7,646
TouchPoint	Crafton Green Refurbishment	£35,000
NWES	West Essex Business Support Programme	£24,000
		£189,511

Year 1 REPF (2023/24)

Saffron Hall Trust	New lighting system	£15,000
Fairycroft House Arts and Media Centre	Display cases for a heritage display	£9,000
Active Spring Company	Installation of solar panels	£24,116
Hatters Farm	New attraction at Halloween event	£11,512
Saffron Walden Town Council	Seating area at Jubilee Gardens	£15,000
SW rugby club	Solar panels	£27,201
Little Canfield Village Hall	Solar panels	£16,500
High Easter Village Hall	Solar panels	£15,000
Stansted Tennis Club	LED floodlights	£17,760
Widdington Village Hall	Retrofit of building	£7,910
		£158,999

Year 2 REPF (2024/25) AGREED SPEND

Bailey Hills	Visitors centre and winery	£150,000
Pepples Farm	Glamping facilities	£83,200
Julian Shoolheifer Ltd	Enlargement and reconfiguration of workshop	£25,000
Stevens Farm	New business units	£40,000
Lilys Farm	New business units	£150,000
5m books	Ebook for sustainable farming	£49,556
Porters Hall	Conversion of dovecote to accommodation	£144,165
		£641,921

Councillor John Evans

Portfolio Holder for Planning

Report to Council, 23 April 2024:

I provided a detailed Portfolio-holder Report at the Council meeting of 11 March. This provided details of the volume of work undertaken, income generated, and the various improvements made to the service over the course of the last municipal year.

Local Plan

Since my last update we have published the consultation responses received in response to the Regulation 18 consultation. Officers have sorted, reviewed, published, and began preparing responses to the 5,000 or so individual comments made. Many of the responses warrant the updating of evidence, the further consideration of certain matters, and then the drafting of proposed amendments to the plan itself. The Local Plan Panel (LPP) recently met to be updated on and discuss recent government advice with respect to the preparation of local climate change policies. As our emerging plan is a 'climate-led' plan this matter of great importance. Members of the LPP are being advised by leading consultants, who in turn are working with leading and junior Counsel on the matter.

We recently published the report following the review by Planning Advisory Service of our Local Plan project plan and resources. The review was positive. PAS states:

"The LDS timescales are challenging for the Council to achieve. It is noted that the programme plan is detailed, showing duration of individual tasks and resource requirements for each task...the planning policy team has frontloaded a considerable amount of work with the...Regulation 18, consulting on a full draft plan with detailed and well-advanced evidence base documents...[thus] enabling the council to progress to the [Reg19] stage quickly...Given the progress that has already been made in drafting [the] Local Plan and based on the resources within the team, the timescales presented within the LDS appear achievable."

We are on course to deliver a robust, and carefully prepared, final draft plan for consideration in July.

The team has also begun to scope work on a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Work is due to commence later this year and the programme will take approximately 18 months. This is considered appropriate, being that the government's proposals to replace CIL with an 'Infrastructure Levy' is not likely to be available to be administered by local authorities for a number of years.

Development Management

Performance in Development Management and Enforcement remains strong. The most recent statistics published by the Department of Levelling up, Housing & Communities show Uttlesford as having 11% of its major decisions overturned at

appeal in the most recent assessment period. This is a dramatic improvement and only 1% greater than the threshold at which de-designation will be considered.

Mandatory training for Planning Committee Members is now scheduled for 22 May 2024 and a training session for the wider Membership is also being arranged.

Building Control

I am pleased to report that at time of writing, three of our Building Control Officers are now accredited as Class 2 Registered Building Inspectors. This means they can continue to inspect a range of building projects. A fourth officer has registered and recently sat the higher Class 3 assessment. We await the outcome. A fifth member of the team has registered and can continue to work under the supervision of other officers. The team has achieved sufficient accreditation such that it will continue to offer the same high level of service it has done up to now. I am sure you will join me in congratulating the team on their success.

Consultations & Initiatives

There are often consultations in the planning arena launched by Government, other agencies and bodies upon which our officers and Cabinet are asked to comment or respond. Recent examples include the ECC Minerals Plan and Permitted Development Rights. Further consultations are pending regarding Accelerated treatment of planning applications (following Minister Gove's pre-Christmas "initiatives") and also amendments to the night flight regimes at the three London Airports. A meeting of STAAP, scheduled for later in April, has been arranged to enable discussion among its membership regarding the DfT proposals concerning this, with a view to responding to the consultation thereafter.

Work is continuing among members of the planning team and the members of the climate change team (with member input) regarding measures which might be possible/recommended to be taken for the retrofitting of listed buildings in the context of improving their thermal efficiency.

I have asked officers to consider the extent to which we can further improve the standards applied for the installation and future maintenance of SuDS (while noting that their design and specification etc are matters determined by ECC as LLFA), such prospective standards being intended to include "sign off" by professionally qualified and insured independent consultants.

Uttlesford District Council Meeting 23 April 2024

Written Questions to Members of the Executive and Committee Chairs

Written responses to be published on 22 April 2024

1. By Councillor Gregory to Councillor Coote – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities:

"To ask Cllr Coote what progress has been made on remediation of the problems discovered at Reynolds Ct, the cost to date and the extent to which those costs have been recovered?"

2. By Councillor Gregory to Councillor Coote – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities:

"At Scrutiny in late 2022, Mr Hermitage explained that criminal sanctions were possibly available in this matter- what further investigations into pursuing these have been undertaken please given the apparent negligence and disputed £68000?"

3. By Councillor Gooding to Councillor Evans – Portfolio Holder for Planning:

"The outcome of the Grenfell Fire Enquiry has resulted in Registered Building Inspectors being required to improve their levels of competency and it was intended that Local Authorities ensure that their staff be accredited by 6th April 2024. However, this has now been extended to 6th July 2024 but this extension is only applicable to building control professionals who have registered as Class 1 RBI by the 6th April. Failure to achieve this status within the staff cohort would result in Local Authorities being unable to offer Building Control Services.

Would the relevant Portfolio Holder please confirm that Uttlesford Building Control Staff will have the necessary accreditation to ensure that there is no break in the Building Control Service Offer?

4. By Councillor Gooding to Councillor Hargreaves – Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy:

“It is noted that an additional person is being recruited to sit on the Investment Board.

Would the Portfolio Holder please explain what remit this post would hold and what benefit would be achieved given the assumed cessation of further Commercial Investment by UDC at this time?”

5. By Councillor Sell to Councillor Reeve – Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate Change:

“Is the Portfolio Holder satisfied with the current resilience of this service area?”

6. By Councillor Sell to Councillor Evans – Portfolio Holder for Planning:

“Can the portfolio holder give an assurance that in future meetings of the local plan working group will have written reports by officers as opposed to reliance on oral reports?”

7. By Councillor Lemon to Councillor Reeve – Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate Change:

“On Friday 5th. April there were hardly any refuse bins collected in Hatfield Heath or White Roding. A disaster in such windy weather and refuse being blown about the village. I phoned on Monday 8th April to UDC (The phone call took 40 mins to be answered!) I was informed that the bins would be collected on Tuesday 9th- This did not happen no bins were collected so late on that day I rang to see when the refuse from the whole area would be collected-the residents in my area are getting very frustrated with the situation.(Phone call 15 mins this time) Sadly they could not tell me when there would be a collection of our bins. It is now the 10th April and our bins have not been collected!

Why are our bins not being collected and why does it take so long to speak to an officer in the environmental department?”

8. By Councillor Dean to Councillor Evans – Portfolio Holder for Planning:

“There are signs that the preparation of the Local Plan is not being conducted in an open and honest manner. Will (?) give Council an explanation of concerns expressed at the LP meeting on April 10th about the absence of written reports and assure Council with evidence that progress in completing a credible Local Plan is on target and is sound?”

9. By Councillor Silcock to Councillor Coote – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Equalities:

“How is the council ensuring the robustness of its monitoring processes for the current repair service provider, Uttlesford Norse while actively seeking an alternative provider?”

Agenda Item 8

Committee: Council

Date: Tuesday, 23
April 2024

Title: Climate Change Action Plan

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Neil Reeve, Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate Change

Report Author: Vicky Reed, Lead Officer Climate Change
vreed@uttlesford.gov.uk

Summary

1. Uttlesford District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and we have pledged to take local action to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe through the development of practices and policies which aim to achieve net zero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.
2. A progress report on the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was presented at a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 31st January 2023. Concern was raised that there was a lack of clarity about whether the activities and initiatives in the plan were having the desired impact on the UDC net zero commitment.
3. A review of the CCAP was proposed and agreed, with an objective to develop a more focused delivery plan and updated set of actions. Following the Scrutiny Committee, the Corporate Management Team agreed that an updated CCAP would be developed and agreed by 31st March 2024.
4. This paper provides a highlight report on the UDC Climate Change programme including achievements over the last 12 months and presents the proposed updated Climate Change Action plan for April 2024 to March 25, detailing key programme priorities, activities, and measures of success.
5. This report is to be considered at Scrutiny Committee on 16 April 2024 and the Committee have been invited to comment on the Action Plan. Furthermore, Cabinet are considering the report on 18 April 2024 for approval. The Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Climate has requested that the Climate Change Action Plan be brought to full Council for members information.

Recommendations

- I. To note the achievements and progress made delivering the UDC Climate Change Action Plan in 2023/24 as set out below.
- II. To note highlights, arising issues, follow-on actions, and the updated Climate Change Action Plan proposed by the Climate Change, Lead Officer, to be delivered April 2024 to March 25. *Appendix 1*.
- III. To note the updated Climate Change Action Plan.

Financial Implications

6. The Council previously agreed a specific climate change budget of £1,000,000 budget over 3 years.
7. To date a total of £842,000 of the climate Change Reserve budget has been committed or spent. Of this expenditure £300,000 was agreed to provide grants for community projects that will deliver on the Council's climate action priorities, via the Zero Carbon Communities Fund (note that in Round 2 funding of £84,371.15 was agreed from the Rural England Prosperity Fund for projects that met criteria for community net zero infrastructure. A total of £226,721 funding has been awarded as grants from the Climate Reserve Budget to date).
8. The Council are in receipt of a DEFRA Air Quality grant of £517k to deliver the Saffron Walden Clean Air project.

Background Papers

9. 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:

[The Council Climate Action Strategy and Climate Action Plan.](#)

Impact

10.

Communication/Consultation	<p>'Take Action on Climate Change' is a Corporate Priority. Progress against actions is overseen by the Corporate Management Team.</p> <p>Regular update reports are presented to the Corporate Management Team for direction and comment.</p> <p>The CCAP is underpinned by a robust supporting communication and engagement plan.</p> <p>The DEFRA Air Quality project reports to the Saffron Walden Clean Air Stakeholder Steering Group.</p>
----------------------------	--

Community Safety	The health effects of climate change have grown significantly, with health threats from heat, flooding, and food security. Building community resilience and adapting to climate change are integral to the CCAP.
Equalities	Evidence suggests Climate change will disproportionately impact the most vulnerable in our communities. Scoping and delivery of climate change action takes account of a range of impacts including health and wellbeing and fuel poverty.
Health and Safety	n/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	2008 Climate Change Act commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions in the UK to net zero by 2050. The council also have responsibilities under the Environment Act, to protect our environment, clean up our air and rivers and boost nature.
Sustainability	To successfully deliver the Council Climate Crisis Strategy all council committees must consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions; and develop and implement policies and strategies as required.
Ward-specific impacts	The council have a responsibility to lead and influence action on climate change and biodiversity restoration across the district.
Workforce/Workplace	A new council operational 'Climate Change Board' has been agreed to oversee the delivery of UDC actions on Climate Change across all key services and teams. The Council Corporate plan includes a commitment to providing carbon literacy training for all staff.

Situation

Climate Change Action Plan – Achievements

12. The existing CCAP describes actions that were due to be completed during the financial year April 2022-March 2023 with other actions marked as 'beyond this period or ongoing'. This action plan has been reviewed, and actions marked as 'closed', 'complete' or 'open' (see *Appendix 2*). We have highlighted actions within the plan that will be taken forward or updated in the new annual CCAP April 2024 to March 2025 (see *Appendix 1*).

Summary highlights of progress against the existing action plan as follows.

Decarbonisation of Council Operations

Over the last year we have achieved the following:

13. Successful Social Housing De-Carbonisation Fund (SHDF) grant application, securing over £3.8million in funding, which will deliver a programme of works and retrofit measures over the next two years to 276 of our most energy in-efficient homes. This is a two- year project that will deliver a measurable % reduction in carbon emissions whilst delivering improvements to energy efficiency that will benefit the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable residents.
14. In March we awarded a contract to commence the delivery of a Heat Decarbonisation Plan for the London Road and Canfield sites. This project will identify energy efficiency measures the Council can install that will deliver quantifiable % reduction in carbon emissions. Working with energy and architectural consultants, will also enable readiness for the Council to apply for capital grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation funding scheme which is expected to be open for applications in late summer/autumn 2024.
15. Two Carbon Literacy Training pilots have been delivered. In September a half-day in person workshop was delivered for senior managers, attended by 20 staff. In January this year, 15 Councillors signed up to an online training pilot which took place over two half days. The carbon literacy training pilots are now being evaluated and we will commission and deliver further training for officers in 2024/25.
16. We have set up a corporate account for the Co Wheels EV Car Club based at the London Road office, to enable staff to reduce their carbon footprint when travelling from this site to off-site work meetings and other work events. The impact of this project will be monitored through the Saffron Walden Clean Air project, including reduction in carbon emissions.
17. We purchased a Council electric cargo bike for staff to use to travel from the London Road office to off-site work meetings and events. The bike will initially be piloted at the London Road office as part of the Saffron Walden Clean Air project.

18. We have commenced and are due to complete a Travel Plan for staff travelling to the Saffron Walden Office as part of the Saffron Walden Clean Air project. The expected output is to develop opportunities for car share and mode shift where this is possible.

Air Quality and Sustainable Transport

19. The DEFRA funded Saffron Walden Clean Air project was launched and mobilised in February 2023. This project is being delivered over two years. The vision for Saffron Walden is for the town to be 'cleaner, healthier and greener' and for residents to see walking or cycling as their first choice for short in-town journeys. Alongside piloting of shared mobility schemes, the project is raising awareness of pollution from transport emissions and is also delivering a public health awareness campaign on the impacts of pollution from domestic wood burning.

20. In phase 1 of the project, we delivered a stakeholder engagement plan, including gathering feedback from residents and businesses on the opportunities for bike share schemes (over 200 respondents), and a survey measuring perceptions of air quality (850 respondents). We have delivered community engagement events, bike training for adults and children, and cargo bike try-outs. Research was also undertaken to inform the development of a procurement plan for the shared mobility schemes and behaviour change projects.

21. In October we launched the first [Co Wheels EV Car Club vehicle](#) at the London Road Car Park. The second vehicle is due to launch in April at The Common Car Park.

22. The first Wood Burning Public Health Campaign was delivered in January this year via local print media and online social media platforms, concluding with Clean Air Night on 24th January, a second campaign burst will be delivered in Dec 2024.

23. All 6 schools in Saffron Walden are engaged in a pollution awareness project including [anti-idling action](#), and a monitoring project with children and families invited to take home an 'air aware' monitor and diary. The project is supporting all schools to complete and progress a travel plan including Mode Shift Stars for schools. Grants have been made available through the project to support schools to implement measures that will encourage mode shift and active travel e.g. scooter pods.

24. To date 21 businesses/organisations in the Town have been engaged in undertaking a pollution awareness project, with 128 Travel Surveys completed. We are on track for 12 businesses to complete and publish a travel plan for their organisation, in addition to the creation of mode shift case studies that can be shared.

25. Phase 2 (Sept 23 to July 24) of the Saffron Walden Clean Air project implementation plan is in progress to deliver and complete the pollution awareness and behaviour change projects; complete the roll out of all zero emission transport pilots (EV car club, bike share, bike loan schemes), in addition

to completion of a Saffron Walden transport strategy (a draft document has now been received for comment).

26. On 9th April we will launch the shared bike network in the town, and a bike library loan scheme, and community cargo bike hire scheme. Community events are also planned, including free bike training, bike try-outs and a community bike ride and picnic, which will be taking place during the spring and summer months this year. A monitoring and evaluation plan is being developed for the shared mobility schemes, as these will be operational for the next 2-3 years.
27. The project has attracted interest from residents across the district who would like to see the Council focus on raising awareness of pollution in other settlements. In September we developed a proposal to replicate these projects and shared mobility schemes in other settlements and submitted a grant application to the DEFRA Air Quality Grant scheme. If successful, an 'Uttlesford Clean Air project' will be mobilised in May 2024. □

In addition to the above projects, we have also delivered the following:

28. In March, building on the learning from the Saffron Walden Clean Air project to date, a project was commissioned with [CoMoUk](#) to complete an appraisal of options and supporting evidence for the inclusion of shared transport models in new housing development. This will form part of the local plan climate and sustainable transport policy.
29. We have commissioned and overseen the delivery of the Uttlesford Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan (LCWIP), working collaboratively with Essex County Council. This project was extended in February, in order to complete additional work ensuring alignment to the draft local plan policy and growth sites. With support from Essex County Council a public consultation on the LCWIP will be delivered in late spring 24.
30. In December, we completed a data submission to Essex County Council to inform the Essex Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund business case. We have secured a funded project for Uttlesford that will deliver an increase in available electric vehicle chargers across the district to meet levelling up priorities and the needs of residents without access to off-street parking. Project allocation will be confirmed later this year along with phasing of project delivery.
31. In January we delivered an officer workshop with the Energy Savings Trust, commencing the development of a district wide EV strategy which will be produced in 2024/25.

Enabling Local Action on Climate Change

Over the last 12 months we have supported and enabled community action on climate change through:

32. Regular communication on climate matters, including funding and resources, via the council newsletters and social media platforms, and via attendance at the parish forum and community events.
33. We delivered Round 2 of the Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme. A webinar was held in September 23 to launch the scheme. 21 applications were received in December, and [15 grant awards](#) were awarded to community projects that will deliver reduction in carbon emissions, biodiversity restoration and enhancement and community engagement on climate change. To date the grant scheme has funded 14 net zero infrastructure community projects. A review of the Zero Carbon Communities grant fund will be undertaken in Q2 2024/25 to develop and agree a proposal for Round 3 of the grant scheme, subject to funds available.
34. We have delivered a quarterly Zero Carbon Communities newsletter (c.1500 subscribers), sharing updates on the Zero carbon community projects, climate resources and climate change campaigns.
35. We are delivering the government Home Upgrade Grant scheme (HUG2) through targeted promotion to eligible residents. The Council funding allocation is for 31 properties in the district to receive installation of energy efficiency measures within the next 2 years (value £500k). The council need to refer a minimum of 96 off-gas households to the scheme who meet the eligibility criteria, 55 referrals have been made to date. We are also participating in the government Energy Company Obligation scheme (ECO4 flex) and are providing the eligibility checks and declarations for applicants.
36. We have supported the growth of Community Energy projects in the district through coordinating and directing resources via the Zero Carbon Communities Grant scheme and other sources. Two internal workshops on Community Energy have been delivered, involving council officers and members, local partner organisations, Community Energy South and Essex County Council.
37. Community Energy Saffron Walden has been supported to deliver phase 2 of the Littlebury Energy project. Council grant funding has enabled direct support to householders, through appointment of a domestic energy community support worker to provide energy surveys and support residents to install retrofit measures via their own means or via available government grant schemes. The Council Planning Conservation Officer has partnered with this project to support improving consistency of advice on retrofit in listed buildings, using Littlebury as a case study.
38. In 2024 we will continue to partner with Essex County Council and Saffron Walden Community Energy, creating a partnership agreement that will support the latter to become 'Uttlesford Community Energy', and to strengthen and support the network of emerging multiple community energy groups and projects in the district.

Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way

39. We have participated in the development of the new Waste Strategy for Essex which will set out how we will reduce reliance on landfill, increase recycling and reduce waste over the next 25 years.
40. We have engaged with the Waste Resources Action Programme to undertake a review of our specific services to ensure that they align with emerging legislation and best practice. The review will continue in 2024/25 and include looking at how our services can be made more efficient against a range of measures including environmental performance.
41. We have participated in the Essex campaign to promote food waste recycling across the district providing compostable caddy liners to all households.
42. We continue to explore the potential to introduce recycling services for trade / commercial premises and these actions are reflected in the annual plan for 2024/25.

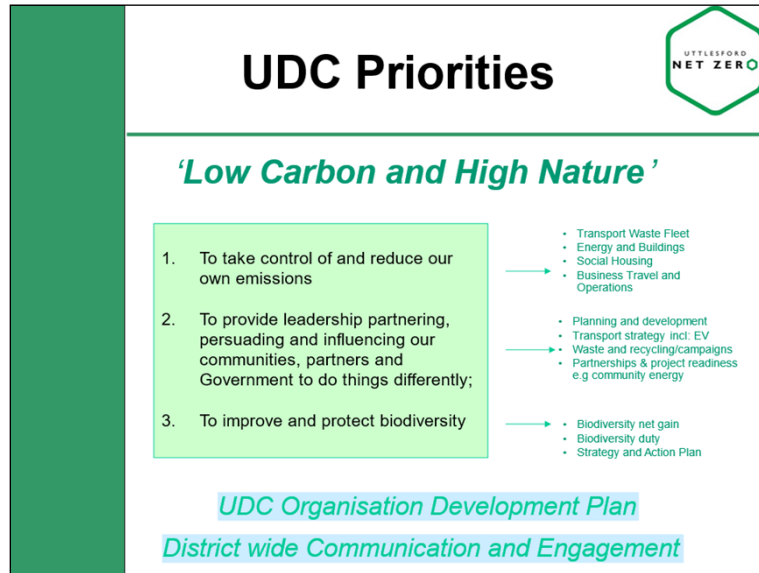
Planning and Development / Ecology and Biodiversity

43. The Planning Policy team are progressing the draft local plan policies that will set out the standards for net zero and sustainable building requirements in all new development, including green and blue infrastructure and transport.
45. In August, a Principal Ecologist joined the Planning Policy Team and commenced the development and implementation of priority operational systems and process, including delivering officer training in readiness to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain.
46. District biodiversity data and mapping has been shared with the Essex Local Nature Recovery Partnership to support delivery of the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). As a supporting authority, the council will support the delivery of the public consultation on the LNRS which is expected to commence in early summer.
47. To date the Council Zero Carbon Communities, grant scheme has supported 13 community biodiversity and nature projects. This year projects include the development and coordination of the Roding Farm Cluster Group which will bring together farmers from the Uttlesford area to deliver collaborative projects to benefit the health of the Roding catchment; we have also funded 2 river restoration projects, in Newport and at Pounce Hall.
48. The updated CCAP for 2024/25 includes a detailed set of activities and tasks that will be delivered over the next 12 months to support both Biodiversity Net Gain implementation, delivery of Biodiversity Duty and improve the districts most degraded habitats, including how we will reduce pollution in our rivers and water courses.
49. The Planning team were successful in obtaining grant funding that has enabled the appointment of an Assistant Ecologist on a 6mth contract starting in March 24, to support the delivery of this rapidly expanding programme of work.

50. 'Low Carbon and High Nature' is at the centre of the updated annual CCAP 2024/25 and our community engagement on climate action, recognising that climate change and nature emergencies are 'two sides of the same coin'.

Climate Change Action Plan – Monitoring and Measurement

51. The updated CCAP 2024/25 is underpinned by the themes and priorities contained within the Council Climate Crisis Strategy as illustrated below:



52. In the updated Climate Change Action Annual Plan 2024/25 activities and tasks have been framed using the Council Corporate priorities, where possible.

52. A priority in the 2024/25 action plan is to develop and agree a Carbon Reduction Management plan, building on best practice in carbon and energy management. This plan will be crucial to achieving the Council commitment of Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2030. The aims of the carbon management plan include a robust framework to track carbon emission reduction, and more formal procedures and awareness of energy management responsibilities of all staff that have control or influence over energy, fuel, and water consumption.

53. To support the successful delivery of the Climate Change Action Plan and activities, the council have agreed to improve operational governance by creating an officer level 'Climate Change Board' that will provide oversight to the action plan and which will mitigate any arising risks to delivery. The first meeting of this group is due to take place on 4th April.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
------	------------	--------	--------------------

Gap in programme staff resources, leading to reduced capacity to deliver CCAP and complete the Saffron Walden Clean Air Project	2	2	Priority growth bid agreed to ensure Climate Team resources are made permanent.
Gap in staff resources leading to reduced service or team capacity to support or deliver critical decarbonisation projects e.g. social housing and estates	3	3	Monitoring and oversight by Corporate Management Team and Chief Executive Officer.
Lack of detailed scoping and clarity of outcomes for climate change actions which may lead to projects being delivered that do not contribute to the achievement of Council net zero carbon targets and/or climate change objectives.	2	3	Ongoing monitoring and review of actions and scope, with success measures. Develop and agree a Carbon Management reduction plan, with baseline data and identified projects that will deliver a quantifiable reduction in emissions.

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.

1 Take Action on Climate Change	Activities /Tasks	Service or Team	Timescale	Measurement of Success	RAG
1.1 Decarbonisation of council operations (buildings, fleet, housing)					
<i>Fleet Decarbonisation Plan in place that maps the transition of our own fleet to low or zero emission by 2030 including detailing carbon savings.</i>	Commission Energy Savings Trust to undertake review of waste and recycling fleet and produce costed plan	Environmental Health Waste	Sep-24	Timeline with expected milestones and investment needed	
<i>Reduce direct emissions from council housing stock. This includes new-build homes being planned/developed.</i>	Successful application to government social housing decarbonisation fund for capital grant to deliver retrofit works to c300 homes.	Housing and Communities	Mar-24	Successful Grant Award	
	Deliver year 1 of social housing decarbonisation project. Procure retrofit suppliers. Oversee delivery of works to the quality and timeline as set out in project plan.	Housing and Communities	March 25	Retrofit measures installed. % reduction in carbon emissions.	
<i>Reduce carbon footprint of UDC business travel</i>	Pilot Corporate Account for the electric car club in Saffron Walden	Human Resources and Climate Change	Mar-25	Uptake and useage EV Car Club. % reduction in carbon emissions from business travel.	
	Complete a travel plan for staff travelling to London Road office, promote opportunities for car share.	Human Resources and Climate Change	May-24	Staff travel plan published. Mode shift case studies.	
<i>Improve the measurement and monitoring of carbon emission reduction across council operations (estate and fleet)</i>	Develop and Agree Carbon Reduction Management plan including baseline and trajectory to 2030 for emission reduction against identified GHG scope and projects.	Climate Change Team and Corporate Management Team	Sep-24	Timeline in place with costed actions and achievable milestones	
	Annual report measuring UDC operational Green House Gas Emissions and trajectory published on website.	Climate Change Team and Coporate Management Team	Apr-24	Annual report published with performance linked to the carbon reduction management plan	
<i>Opportunities identified across the Council estate/assets for water reduction</i>	Baseline data and opportunities to reduce consumption included in Carbon Reduction Management Plan	Climate Change Team, Estates Team, Environmental Waste, HR Team	Sep-24	Baseline data agreed, with supporting action plan.	
1.2 Embed sustainability and environmental priorities into council decision making and ways of working					
<i>Engage and support all staff to develop sustainable ways of working and take action on climate change (low carbon, high nature)</i>	Carbon Literacy training delivered to Council Leadership and Senior Management team	Human Resources and Climate Change Team	Mar-24	Training Evaluation. Climate Action Pledges implemented and project impacts shared.	
	Pilot carbon literacy learning package for all council officers	Senior Management Team	Sep-24	Training Evaluation. Climate Action Pledges implemented and project impacts shared.	
<i>Identify and track service and operational initiatives and actions that support reducing organisational carbon footprint and delivery of biodiversity duty</i>	Establish Senior Officer Climate Change Board including operational/service work plan priorities and owners.	Corporate Management Team	Apr-24	Work plan with deliverables and key milestones identified. Progress and good practice shared via senior team meeting, staff newsletter and conferences	
<i>Mitigate and measure sustainability and environmental impacts within council procurement and contract management</i>	Review procurement policy and supplier contract management to ensure sustainability and environmental impacts are mitigated and key performance monitored when procuring goods and services	Senior Management Team	Sep-24	Standard terms and conditions/contract template updated including quantifiable service KPIs where appropriate	
1.3 Provide community leadership and enable local action on climate change					
<i>Support Communities to deliver projects that are 'low carbon and high nature'</i>	Deliver the Zero Carbon Communities funding scheme to support delivery of community projects that are focused on carbon emission reduction and biodiversity restoration or enhancement.	Climate Change Team and Corporate Management Team	Jun-23	Grant scheme launched Sept 24. Community projects delivered from March 2025	
<i>Support residents/householders and communities to install energy efficiency measures and retrofit their homes, including renewable energy.</i>	Deliver the Government Home Upgrade Grant Scheme in off gas areas to improve energy efficiency and address fuel poverty	Climate Change Team, Environmental Health Protection	Mar-25	Achieve referrel target for council funding allocation. Number of retrofit measures installed.	
	Promote The Energy Company Obligation (ECO4 Flex) Scheme (ECO4) and administer referrals.	Climate Change Team, Environmental Health Protection	Mar-25	Number of referrels ECO 4 Flex. Onboarded energy providers.	
	Improve consistency of planning advice for retrofit in listed buildings (Littlebury Case Study)	Planning and Development	Ongoing	Information available on planning web page. Retrofit case studies.	
	Partner with and contribute to the development of Saffron Walden (Uttlesford) Community Energy. Help coordinate available resources to support the network of community energy and action groups across the district.	Climate Change Team	Nov-25	Partnership Terms of Reference. Community events and regular newsletter. Updated UDC web page for energy efficiency and retrofit. Number of groups, individuals engaged in delivering energy advice or projects	
	Collaborate with ECC and Community Energy South to support successful delivery of the Communipower project in Uttlesford	Climate Change Team	Nov-25	Number of energy advisors trained and active in the district. Number of events, and number of households given energy advice (Communipower KPI)	
1.4 Plan for future housing needs in a sustainable way (low carbon and high nature)					
	Deliver Local Plan policy and standards to address climate change, meeting future development needs in a planned and managed way (Net Zero Sustainable Building and Transport, Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity Net Gain)	Planning Policy Team	Nov-24	Production Reg 19 Local Plan	
1.5 Support community renewable energy projects at scale that deliver energy security and communtiy benefits					
	Collaborate with ECC and the North Essex Climate Change Partnership to inform the development of a renewable energy strategy for the district	Climate Change Team, Planning Policy Team	Mar-25	Knowledge shared from North Essex Climate Partnership Group working group.	

1.6 Support the development of a local area energy plan to ensure sufficient supply for the anticipated uptake of electric vehicles, heat pumps and renewables generation in the district.					
	Input to the development of a Local Area energy plan working with the UKPN DSO and partners to inform district and Essex wide energy demand management strategy and plans	Climate Change Team, Planning and Development, ECC.	Mar-25	Projects shared and mapping undertaken	
2 Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way	Key Activities/Tasks				
2.1 Work with partners across Essex on a new waste strategy for the county	Seek agreement from members on final draft of waste strategy for Essex.	Environmental Services (waste)	Jul-24	Published strategy	
2.2 Improve performance in council waste and recycling operations					
Complete Uttlesford Waste Strategy Review	Work alongside WRAP, ECC and the Essex Waste Partnership Board, to develop a revised waste strategy for Uttlesford and service implementation plan.	Environmental Services (waste)	Mar-25	Strategy in place with implementation plan, including key milestones.	
Reduce Residual Waste and Increase Recycling	Develop a recycling plan to improve recycling performance and reduce contamination at flats	Environmental Services (waste)	Mar-25	Increased number of recycling facilities at flats across the district	
	Research and undertake feasibility study for Trade Waste recycling.	Environmental Services (waste)	Mar-25	Study and options appraisal complete	
Encourage behaviour change that will support delivering reduction in waste and increase recycling rates	Run at least two multi-media publicity campaigns with identified outcome measures. Focused on low participation areas.	Environmental Services (waste) and Communications Team	Mar-25	Campaign resources published and disseminated. Pre and post campaign resident survey. Monitoring yields and participation rates.	
Encourage waste avoidance and minimisation	Research opportunities and potential pilot/s for new waste and recycling circular economy projects	Environmental Services (waste), Climate Change and Economic Development	Mar-25	Pilot project initiated.	
3 Work with partners to deliver sustainable transport	Key Activities / Tasks				
3.1 Work with partners to deliver district transport strategy					
Work in partnership with ECC to develop an overarching Uttlesford District Future Transport Strategy	Undertake review of Uttlesford strategies, projects and evidence commissioned to date including parking studies, local plan modelling	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Sep-24	Scoping and delivery plan agreed with ECC	
	Complete the Saffron Walden Clean Air Traffic Management Strategy and scheme prioritisation for S106 investment	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Sep-24	Published strategy with follow on action plan including key milestones	
3.2 Increase walking and cycling in the district					
	Deliver a public consultation on the LCWIP	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Jun-24	Stakeholder feedback received and publication of LCWIP	
	Agree priority LCWIP infrastructure projects and identify funding streams to deliver	Climate Change Team, Planning and Policy, ECC	Dec-24	Forward plan agreed with key milestones.	
	Pilot shared mobility schemes including bike hire and community cargo bike. Complete implementation of the DEFRA funded Saffron Walden Clean Air project plan and work streams.	Climate Change Team	Mar-26	Shared mobility schemes operational. Monitoring and evaluation plan and reports	
3.3 Increase the availability of EV charge points in the district					
	Business case submitted for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Project; work in partnership with ECC to agree project allocation and delivery plan	Climate Change Team, ECC	Mar-25	Project allocation confirmed. Project delivery plan with timeline and milestones.	
	Coordinate Senior Officer working group to Develop a district Wide Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy	Senior Management Team	Nov-25	Draft Framework published	
	Pilot EV Car Club in Saffron Walden (DEFRA Clean Air project)	Climate Change Team, ECC	Oct-26	EV Car Club Vehicles Available. Monitoring and Evaluation plan and reports	
4 Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife					
4.1 Meet mandatory Biodiversity Duty requirements					
	Biodiversity Duty Action Plan in place with targets for delivery 2024/25	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Feb-24	Annual report published detailing progress	
4.2 Deliver mandatory BNG for Uttlesford					
Put in place the required systems and process to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district as set out in the Environment Act 2021	Establish terrestrial, water and hedge baselines for Uttlesford	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Mar-25	Desk based survey complete. Commissioning Plan agreed	
	Create database and map to identify known potential gain sites within the district and match with emerging local need.	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Sep-24	Database and Map Created	
	Communicate with landowners across the district to identify potential sites	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Dec-24	Landowner stakeholder outreach plan	
	Staff Training delivered on software and BNG metric processing	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Jun-24	Software embedded and utilised in planning process	
	Research and evaluate feasibility of commercial operating model for the council to deliver, manage and monitor BNG units across district	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Sep-24	Research report with options appraisal and recommendations.	
Develop and implement planning policies as part of the Local Plan which will deliver habitat protection, enhancement and creation.	Develop and adopt Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy for Uttlesford.	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Oct-24	Supplementary Planning Document published	
	Ensure requirement for 'high nature' is evidenced in the local plan.	Specialist Team, Planning and Development	Oct-24	Publication of local plan policies for embedding high nature approach.	

Action No.	Initiative	UDC Corporate Priority	Status	Action Plan 2024 to 2025
PHASE 2 Delivery by MAR 2022				
Action 01	By March 2022, create a Fleet Decarbonisation Plan that maps the transition of our own fleet to low or zero emission by 2030 including detailing carbon savings.	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 02	Review consumer advice provided via our communications channels	<i>Not applicable</i>	Ongoing business as usual activity	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan.
Action 03	Governance processes established for future decision making on climate change project spending.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan. Senior Officer Climate Change Board Agreed
Action 04	Scoping and delivery of district-wide decarbonisation projects (for instance mapping where EV charging points need to go, how to take whole villages off oil and onto renewable energy) and local energy generation projects identified.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change + Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Revised actions set out in updated Action Plan
Action 05	Travel survey Map to understand where and how people travel (building on the Local Plan consultation feedback that travel is an important issue)	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Complete	No further action
Action 06	Installing EV charging points at housing owned by UDC	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Taken forward in updated action plan - District EV infrastructure strategy/plan
Action 07	Information campaign to highlight dangers to health from the pollution generated by idling engines.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	Clean Air campaign delivered Saffron Walden. Campaigns to be taken forward in updated action plan
Action 08	Review the procurement process including Scope 3 (which are essentially indirectly created emissions) and social value	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Procurement and Contract management taken forward in updated action plan
Action 09	Review energy use footprint of our fuel.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Updated actions on monitoring and measuring in updated Action Plan. UDC Carbon Management Plan.
Action 10	Review resilience plans in the light of potential for heatwaves and flooding.	<i>Adapting to Climate Change</i>	Closed	Revised actions included in updated Action Plan
Action 11	Map opportunities for biodiversity	<i>Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife</i>	Complete	No further action. Stakeholder survey complete. New Ecology actions in updated action plan.
Action 12	Working with ECC to develop a greater understanding of the carbon impact of UDC recycling services to enable future service changes to be fully understood, in terms of both carbon reduction and recycling performance	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
PHASE 3 Delivery by DEC 2022				
Action 13	Reduce carbon footprint of UDC business travel and travel to work through use of zero emission vehicles and or changes in ways of working, seeking to be	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 14	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan (LCWIP)	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 15	Encouraging active travel: Micro-mobility schemes (Case Study Saffron Walden Clean Air Project)	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 16	Car club (EVs). This could be tied in with pool cars for business use by UDC staff, for instance if available to hire as a part of a car club.	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport. Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	Pilot underway Clean Air project Saffron Walden. Follow on actions in updated Action Plan
Action 17	EV Infrastructure. Bundle on-street parking spaces so that profitable and unprofitable spaces are combined in packages, to prevent cherry picking of the profitable spaces and future public subsidy of unprofitable spaces.	<i>Work with Partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Revised actions taken forward in updated action plan.
Action 18	Enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Closed	No further action. Embedded in Environmental Health Protection role.

Action 19	A published checklist relating to energy efficiency standards be published for developers to consider as part of their proposals	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Closed	Interim policy in place. New Net Zero Climate and Environment Policy Draft Local Plan.
Action 20	Retrofit community buildings in Uttlesford - partnership between UDC and parishes where advantages of scale can be identified.	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan. Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme
Action 21	Improve biodiversity net gain (BNG) as per Environment Act.	<i>Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan. New Ecology Actions.
Action 22	Reviewing our domestic and commercial waste collection offers	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 23	Promote ways to reduce food waste and promote food waste recycling	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 24	Shift residents thinking from 'avoiding landfill' towards minimising resource usage and a circular economy (including reducing single-use plastic).	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 25	Improve the capture of material for recycling (within current and then emerging waste disposal/treatment frameworks) to reduce contamination.	<i>Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Actions	Ongoing or Complete			
Action 26	Decarbonise Uttlesford's Housing Stock	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Stock Condition Survey Complete. Social Housing Decarbonisation Project taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 27	Decarbonisation of partner's fleets	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan: see procurement and contract management
Action 28	Lobby ECC for improvements to public transport in Uttlesford	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	Taken forward in new action Uttlesford District Future Transport Strategy.
Action 29	Encouraging active travel: Highways infrastructure to support active travel	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Closed	New actions in updated Action Plan re: District Future Transport Strategy
Action 30	Support ECC with their school travel plans by providing local contacts where possible	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Ongoing business as usual activity	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan
Action 31	Installing EV Charging Points in UDC building spaces	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Complete	New Actions in updated Action Plan. District EV Infrastructure Strategy Development and ECC LEVI Project Delivery
Action 32	Installing EV Charging points in public car park spaces	<i>Work with partners to Deliver Sustainable Transport</i>	Complete	New Actions in updated Action Plan. District EV Infrastructure Strategy Development and ECC LEVI Project Delivery
Action 33	Energy Company Obligation and Government Grants for low income households	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Open	Taken forward in updated Action Plan
Action 34	Plant Trees around Uttlesford	<i>Restore, protect and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife</i>	Closed	Taken forward in updated Action as part of wider strategy and actions on biodiversity net gain and biodiversity duty.
Action 35	Respond to Consultations as they arise	<i>Not applicable</i>	Ongoing business as usual activity	Supporting workstream to deliver action plan
Action 36	UDC Policy on EV charging points at new properties	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	No further action
Action 37	Improve air quality monitoring and reporting through Air Quality being monitored in real time - installation of NO2 tubes	<i>Take Action on Climate Change</i>	Complete	No further action.

Agenda Item 9

Committee: Council

Date: Tuesday, 23
April 2024

Title: Operational Resilience

Lead Member: Councillor Neil Gregory, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee

Task and Finish Group Members: Cllr Chris Criscione (Co-Chair)
Cllr Bianca Donald (Co-Chair)
Cllr Geof Driscoll
Cllr Geoffrey Sell

Summary

1. Following disruption to the waste and recycling service in January and February, the Scrutiny Committee established a task and finish group comprising Cllrs Criscione, Donald, Driscoll and Sell to look into this matter and consider more widely operational resilience in the council.
2. The task and finish group's final report, including findings and recommendations, is to be presented to Scrutiny Committee on 16 April. Subject to the Committee's recommendation and comments, full Council are asked to note the findings of task and finish group.

Recommendations

3. To note the findings of the task and finish group and the comments of Scrutiny Committee.

Financial Implications

4. Financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers

5. None

Impact

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	Public engagement is covered in the report
Community Safety	None

Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The report covers the impact on the workforce

Situation

7. The task and finish group held a series of meetings to consider evidence and formulate conclusions.
8. The comprehensive report is accompanied by a series of appendices which provide the background documentation considered. These papers have all been published previously for task and finish group meetings.

Report of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Operational Resilience following Waste Service disruption in January/February 2024

Cllr Chris Criscione (Co-Chair)

Cllr Bianca Donald (Co Chair)

Cllr Geof Driscoll

Cllr Geoffrey Sell

Contents:

Report	Pages 45 to 108
Appendix A – Conclusions and Recommendations	Pages 52 to 54
Appendix B – Terms of Reference	Pages 55 and 56
Appendix C – Chronology of Events	Pages 57 and 58
Appendices C 1 to C7 – Supporting documents referenced in the Chronology of Events	Pages 59 to 79
Appendix D – Recovery Response timeline	Pages 81 to 83
Appendix E – Report on Public Engagement	Pages 84 to 89
Appendix E 1 – Customer Service Stats	Pages 90 to 94
Appendix E2 – Complaints Stats	Page 95
Appendix E 3 – Social Media Stats	Pages 96 and 97
Appendix F – Report on Refund Requests	Pages 98 to 101
Appendix G – Report on Broader Operational Resilience	Pages 102 to 106
Appendix H – Report on Estimated Costs	Pages 107

1. Introduction

Uttlesford District Council's cross-party Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 February 2024 held a lengthy discussion on the recent disruption suffered by residents and businesses to their waste and recycling collections. The Committee resolved to establish a task and finish group to consider these matters in more detail, and to produce a report on their findings for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee and then for discussion at full Council.

This task and finish group's brief was to look into what went wrong, how it came about, how the recovery from that situation was managed, and most importantly, what positive lessons can be learned and applied. The group's brief was extended beyond looking merely at the waste service disruption to consider resilience across the council generally, particularly in relation to 'never events' (ie to spot and mitigate

single points of failure which if triggered would lead to other such consequential negative service impacts).

In establishing the group, it was recognised that the Council's policies require, in line with both employment law and good practice, that any formal management action in relation to any individual staff members' accountabilities are matters for the Head of Paid Service [the Chief Executive] and not matters falling within the proper remit of Councillors. As such, the task and finish group was established with this clear boundary in place.

It was accepted that the maximum possible amount of its work should be in open session, with the maximum amount of evidence also published – but also accepting that there may be some specific elements of evidence or discussion that necessarily needs to be in confidential, private session – e.g. around sensitive commercial matters.

The Scrutiny Committee appointed us to the task and finish group: Councillors Chris Criscione [Conservative], Bianca Donald [Residents for Uttlesford], Geof Driscoll [Residents for Uttlesford] and Geoffrey Sell [Liberal Democrat], with Cllrs Criscione and Donald as co-chairs.

Our task and finish group was empowered to finalise our own terms of reference, meeting schedule etc. [see Appendix B].

We met as the task and finish group on three occasions in public and on one occasion informally in private, where no new information was shared and the only officer present was the one taking notes. At our public meetings we considered a substantial volume of detailed evidence [all herewith republished, as Appendices A to G]. These accompanying papers set out issues such as the chronology which led up to the operational interruption [Appendix C], specifics of the operational response [Appendix D], the costs of the stand-in solution quickly assembled [Appendix H] and the level of complaints, so we refer readers interested in that level of detail to the appendices rather than aiming to cover that same ground here in our report.

We as a group received full cooperation from the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, as well as from the Chief Executive and the Director of Environmental Services, for which we are very grateful, as we are to the Director of Corporate Services who assisted us in collating our findings and recommendations for the future, into this unanimous report. We would like to acknowledge the Chief Executive has been open and transparent in bringing to light the fact that there could be weaknesses not yet identified in other departments.

All those conclusions are pulled together and supplemented by a series of recommendations for action, so as to draw and apply learning from this service failure, in Appendix A.

<p>Conclusion A: Uttlesford District Council is right to have unreservedly apologised to all residents and businesses whose waste was not collected during this disruption to service.</p>

2. Severity of the Waste Service disruption

Having bins emptied is the most universal service received by households, and is central to many residents' perception of what they get in return for their Council Tax.

Waste crew members are amongst the hardest working and are the council staff most appreciated by residents, doing a difficult job at comparatively low pay, and this disruption was no fault of theirs.

The Council's fleet of 10 main waste collection trucks, two commercial waste vehicles and one smaller truck used for narrower lanes, was, because of the licensing issue, off the road for two weeks, from Wednesday 24 January to Tuesday 6 February. For the first three days, the residual waste bins and food caddies for three quarters of the district were not emptied, and thus began a substantial backlog.

By the following week, a 'patchwork quilt' of alternative providers began to come online, increasing in volume day by day until a peak of nine big trucks and crews were on the road on some days. Some of these crews worked full (and long) days, while others came over to Uttlesford in the early afternoon at the end of their shifts in Braintree. Various of these crews and trucks also worked on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays (which are not normal Uttlesford collection days).

Many of these vehicles were smaller than our trucks, and most were only single compartments, meaning that their capacity was lower and also that separate food caddy collections were needed, using smaller vehicles. On many occasions, Uttlesford crews preceded the waste vehicles operated by others to pull out the bins onto the street, particularly when the waste was being collected on non-normal days, and not everyone had got the message to leave their bins out.

In total, the patchwork quilt was able to operate on nine days over this fortnight (compared to the eight normal Uttlesford collection days that would have been worked had there been no loss of licence) – which was virtually every day possible as soon as it was stood up after the first few days of no collections at all.

Once the Uttlesford crews and vehicles were back on the road on Thursday, 8 February, additional capacity from the patchwork quilt of alternative provision was maintained until 17 February, so as to assist with the backlog generated over the previous two weeks. This was important, as although waste collections of the usual bins on the usual days was reinstated immediately on restart of Uttlesford's service, some households had not had a normal collection at that time for several weeks, and every effort was made to collect those without them having to wait for their next usual collection day. In addition, the normal bin rounds quite naturally contained more waste which meant that the vehicles filled up more quickly and had to be taken to the transfer station more often, meaning that in the first couple of weeks of return to normal service, many rounds were not completed on their usual day, with an estimated average of 15-20% of most rounds needing to be finished the following morning.

In practice, although normal collection days re-commenced after the initial two-week gap, it took a further two weeks until service returned fully to normal because of the need to clear this accumulated backlog.

The majority of households missed out on two weekly collections, with a substantial further number missing out on one weekly collection. A smaller number of households missed out on three collections, with a much smaller number in isolated cases missing out on four or more collections.

Conclusion B: The task and finish group concluded that this was a serious disruption of service, of the council's own making, and experienced by nearly all residents and many businesses in the district.

Conclusion C: Many people worked long and hard both to fix the problem and to put in place the patchwork quilt solution as quickly and thoroughly as possible, and they deserve our recognition and genuine thanks. Uttlesford District Council is particularly grateful to Widdington Waste Ltd and Braintree District Council for their help.

3. How this happened

We explored this matter extensively, considering a substantial volume of background information and noting that many pages of correspondence and documentation has been released in response to Freedom of Information Act requests.

Our considerations took place almost entirely in open, public session. We were careful to follow our terms of reference, and in line with Council policies and procedures (and good employment practice and law), we stayed out of any individual management procedures relating to individual staff, but we were aided by the opportunity to be briefed in confidence on certain staffing matters which provide important context to understanding both what happened and what might happen more effectively in future.

Rather than re-telling the story in detail of how the Council came to be without a staff member holding the necessary qualification on which the authority's Operators' Licence relied after the previous postholder abruptly left, we resolved explicitly to focus on drawing and applying the important lessons for the future which flow from this episode.

Conclusion D: There was a significant failing in the proper management of the process to cope with the unplanned and immediate departure from the council of the previous staff member who held the necessary professional qualification on which continued permission to hold an Operator's Licence from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner is dependent. This failure to ensure a timely replacement was due to human error, and happened in the complex context of mitigating factors. However, this situation underlines the absence of a systemic solution to managing such major risks and critical service dependencies.

We were advised that there were several discussions between senior staff and councillors in the second half of 2023, including a presentation and debate on waste services at the Scrutiny Committee and an all-member briefing, after the qualified staff member had left, underlining the importance of ensuring he was promptly replaced. We were also advised of a range of serious attempts during that period to resolve the licensing situation, each of which did not succeed for reasons outside of local control, and each of which was followed by a fresh approach to resolve the matter, until ultimately the clock ran down without a resolution, and the licence was revoked on 13th January.

We noted that while the Council has a wide range of policies and procedures in place across the whole organisation, these have not been focused into a document with an Environmental Services-specific focus.

4. Operational Response

The specifics of the operational response to the revocation of the Council's Operators' Licence are covered in the already-published papers we considered, and are again appended to this report.

We would like to reiterate our thanks to colleagues from other waste providers who stepped in to provide a 'patchwork quilt' of waste collection over the two weeks we were without a licence, and then for a short while whilst we caught up with the backlog once our trucks and crews were on the road again, under our new Operator's Licence.

Conclusion E: We noted that some of the colleagues from other waste collectors stepping in to help us out were not familiar with our area, its villages and its roads, and that this led at times to some being missed out, or approached in a sub-optimal/counter-intuitive order.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work of colleagues in Environmental Services who worked long days to pull together this operational response so quickly and also their colleagues from other parts of the Council who provided additional support during this time.

We noted that the department urgently explored a wide range of potential additional providers, but that some of these were not pursued for a range of reasons, which we explored and accepted without any negative inference – e.g. the costs of those partners we did work with represented good value for money (essentially we were recharged at, or close to, cost).

Other than that, our conclusions in relation to the operational response phase in particular are covered in separate sections of this report above and below.

5. Communication and Engagement

The papers we considered during our review provide a huge amount of detail on the number of customer complaints received during these few weeks of service disruption, and we commend those to you in Appendix E for the details.

We note in particular the efforts made to provide at the end of every day of the period of peak disruption an update on the council's website repeated in an email sent to all councillors and all parish councils and published on social media setting out which types of bins were going to be collected in which villages and towns the following day.

We also discussed modern methods of communication and how these could be adopted by the Council to aid the dissemination of information in the future.

In addition we explored the role of councillors generally, and leading councillors in particular, in times of operational disruption.

Conclusion F: Councillors bring a wide span of professional knowledge and skills to their roles which needs to be better respected and harnessed, and councillors can be useful conduits in communicating with residents, and can be more actively used in future as a positive resource rather than treated as a stakeholder to be periodically updated.

6. Cost – and Refund/Rebate Considerations

We noted the estimated cost to the Council Taxpayer of this situation net out at approximately £60,000-£70,000, which is close to (but less than) the estimate given by the Chief Executive during the period of disruption itself. We feel that it is important to note that the exact final cost will only be able to be calculated once our partners have submitted their final invoices to us over coming weeks for the support they provided, at which point the final cost table will be republished. The estimated costs are at Appendix H.

We noted that some residents have talked online about demanding refunds or rebates, but that as the average weekly cost of emptying bins works out at about 50 pence per week, the work involved in refunding one or two pounds on average per household would be disproportionate in its cost of administration. the paper on refund considerations is Appendix F.

Conclusion G: the cost to the taxpayer of this waste disruption is serious, and must not be repeated, but we do not recommend any further consideration of a refund or rebate.

7. Broader questions of resilience for the Council

We welcome the fact that the Chief Executive, after discussions with the Leader and Cabinet, had already begun a wider review of resilience across the Council before the Scrutiny Committee tasked us with exploring this in our work.

We strongly believe that for positive good to come from this unfortunate episode, lessons learned around operational resilience across the whole council will provide that greatest benefit.

We were keen to extend and apply the learning from the narrow specifics of the waste disruption to the wider council – both in identifying ‘essential workers’ and beyond across the full range of all key council functions on which so many people rely.

Our discussions focused extensively on the systematic identification of critical service single points of failure; the risk-based prioritisation of those issues to be addressed; the documentation of resilience and mitigation measures to address those priorities; the introduction of council-wide systems to monitor triggers that would give rise to the need to implement an intervention to avoid any future critical service failure; and the greater embedding of business continuity and risk management culture at all levels of the council, including at Member level.

We are particularly concerned about consistency across the Council’s departments with regard to risk management and business continuity processes and cultures.

Subject to the agreement of the Scrutiny Committee, we will review the result of this work to ensure the necessary improvements have been made.

Conclusion H: we strongly support the current exercise to identify, and then prioritise and mitigate, key service resilience risks across the whole organisation, and welcome that a senior colleague from a neighbouring council has agreed to quality-assure that exercise. We believe that this is a key action, and must be reported up for consideration at Member level, not only in regards to this focused exercise, but also on an ongoing basis in relation to assurance of business continuity measures. We equally strongly welcome the clear indication given by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Change that the whole Cabinet is taking a clear set of actions to liaise directly with their respective chief officers about major service provision risks.

Appendix A

Conclusions and Recommendations, as a basis for an Action Plan

Conclusion A: Uttlesford District Council is right to have unreservedly apologised to all residents and businesses whose waste was not collected during this disruption to service.

Conclusion B: The task and finish group concluded that this was a serious disruption of service, of the council's own making, and experienced by nearly all residents and many businesses in the district.

Conclusion C: Many people worked long and hard both to fix the problem and to put in place the patchwork quilt solution as quickly and thoroughly as possible, and they deserve our recognition and genuine thanks. Uttlesford District Council is particularly grateful to Widdington Waste Ltd and Braintree District Council for their help.

Conclusion D: There was a significant failing in the proper management of the process to cope with the unplanned and immediate departure from the council of the previous staff member who held the necessary professional qualification on which continued permission to hold an Operator's Licence from the Office of the Traffic Commissioner is dependent. This failure to ensure a timely replacement was due to human error, and happened in the complex context of mitigating factors. However, this situation underlines the absence of a systemic solution to managing such major risks and critical service dependencies.

Further actions recommended: that the management and operation of the Environmental Services team is stabilised as soon as reasonably possible, so that temporary appointments made to meet Operators' Licence requirements are made permanent.

We further recommend that the necessary qualification requirement to support the Operators' Licence is integrated into the relevant job description as an essential occupational requirement, and that an appropriate requirement is also included in the director's job description. These job descriptions should be annually reviewed (and in between as necessary in response to events) to check that they remain up to date with regulatory requirements and other changing circumstances.

We further advise that alternative/secondary provision of an appropriately qualified person is maintained, rather than relying solely on one permanent staff member.

We also recommend that the Environmental Services function carries out a broader organisational review of team structure and training & development needs, also addressing succession planning.

Conclusion E: We noted that some of the colleagues from other waste collectors stepping in to help us out were not familiar with our area, its villages and its roads, and that this led at times to some being missed out, or approached in a sub-optimal/counter-intuitive order.

Further actions recommended: we strongly endorse the action being undertaken within Environmental Services to better document and map routes and for the purposes of resilience, ensuring that these are mapped onto commonly available cloud platforms such as Google Maps, and in hard copy, and using tools such as what3words.

Conclusion F: Councillors bring a wide span of professional knowledge and skills to their roles which needs to be better respected and harnessed, and councillors can be useful conduits in communicating with residents, and can be more actively used in future as a positive resource rather than treated as a stakeholder to be periodically updated.

Further actions recommended: we recommend some structured work is organised to build further on existing officer/member relations to better reflect that even in relation to operational issues councillors play an important ongoing role as representatives of the wider community.

This ongoing work should focus on drawing value from what councillors bring to the authority from their life experience, as well as helping building communication channels into local communities, both through existing hyper-local social media sites as well as potentially compiling new text/WhatsApp/email lists (such as residents can sign up to with the Environment Agency to get flood alerts).

Conclusion G: the cost to the taxpayer of this waste disruption is serious, and must not be repeated, but we do not recommend any further consideration of a refund or rebate.

Conclusion H: we strongly support the current exercise to identify, and then prioritise and mitigate, key service resilience risks across the whole organisation, and welcome that a senior colleague from a neighbouring council has kindly agreed to quality-assure that exercise. We believe that this is a key action, and must be reported up for consideration at Member level, not only in regards to this focused exercise, but also on an ongoing basis in relation to assurance of business continuity measures. We equally strongly welcome the clear indication given by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and the Climate Change that the whole Cabinet is taking a clear set of actions to liaise directly with their respective chief officers about major service.

Further actions recommended: we recommend that as well as this service resilience exercise being reported up to Cabinet (and Scrutiny) as is already planned, that we are reconvened later in the year as a Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to explore and test the resultant new system in detail and in practice.

We acknowledge that such a detailed member-level testing will necessarily have to be in private, as the nature of such risk and resilience plans must necessarily remain confidential so as not to inadvertently enhance the risk by publicising unavoidable system weaknesses or mitigation measures to bad actors or saboteurs.

We further recommend that the balance is urgently reviewed by the Chief Executive as to the routine and ongoing administrative support provided to senior staff so that greater capacity to deal with routine but vital tasks is better resourced.

We also believe that notwithstanding the importance of improving and testing systems and processes which dominate this report, it is vital that the importance of organisational culture and behaviours are also equally valued – to hammer home the message that if you see something, bring it to light. This needs to become an ongoing process and a regular check on emerging issues/risks should be an agenda item at team meetings with the opportunity for people to pass on anything they come across in day-to-day work.

Appendix B

Terms of Reference and Scope for the Task and Finish Group

<p>Purpose/ Objective of the Review (the reason for the review and what it hopes to achieve)</p>	<p>To draw and apply learning from the recent waste collection situation to prevent recurrence.</p> <p>To take those lessons learned and apply them more broadly across the organisation in order to identify any points of structural weakness or risk and recommend proportionate mitigating measures.</p>
<p>Terms of Reference (including what is in/out of scope)</p>	<p>To work with the portfolio holder and leader, and with officers, to establish the chronology of key events that led to the interruption of waste collection services in late January/early February</p> <p>To identify the key issues behind this</p> <p>To look at the operational response</p> <p>To consider and draw lessons to be learned from this incident that can be applied both to environmental services, but also more broadly to all council services and operations, ensuring that the authority is more resilient</p> <p>To recommend when a report updating progress on the implementation of the action plan be presented to the Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Out of scope are discussions/recommendations around any matters relating directly to any individual employee of the council. These are matters reserved for the Chief Executive and senior managers in consultation with HR</p> <p>Any previous issues around missed bin collections prior to the service interruption</p>
<p>Methodology/ Approach (methods to be used to gather evidence)</p>	<p>The Task and Finish Group shall both meet in public, so as to take evidence or representations, as well as in private so as to enable discussions in confidence with the Chief Executive on management action he is taking as a result, in line with</p>

	<p>Uttlesford District Council's employment policies and procedures, and good employment practice generally.</p> <p>The final report shall be presented by the Task and Finish Group to the Scrutiny Committee in April 2024, and supplemented by a confidential private report on any restricted items should it be necessary.</p>
Potential witnesses	<p>Relevant cabinet members</p> <p>Relevant senior officers</p> <p>Service users</p>
Other issues	<p>It is important that this Task and Finish Group carries out its legitimate job through the Scrutiny function to explore operational matters, but not cross into matters out with the responsibility of members, primarily any matters relating to staff.</p>

Review Topic	Operational Resilience
Final report to go to Scrutiny meeting on:	April 2024
Portfolio Holder	Petrina Lees, Leader Neil Reeve, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change
Lead Officer	Peter Holt, Chief Executive
Stakeholders	All households Businesses that use the council's trade waste service

APPENDIX C

Waste Disruptions Chronology

Table detailing the chronology of events in the lead up to revocation of Operator's Licence.

Date	Event	Note	Additional information or documents
13 Jul 2023	Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence course booked by HR for Ben Brown		Background documents section Doc 1
31 Jul 2023	Fleet and Operations Manager resigned from post with immediate effect	This individual held the Transport Manager (TM) Certificate of Technical Competence	N/A
9 Aug 2023	Informed Office of the Traffic Commissioner (OTC) via the online VOLS (Vehicle Operator Licensing Service) that Transport Manager CPC holder had left.	BB Removed the TM from the licence.	Online system no option to record changes.
18 Aug 2023	Letter from OTC requesting information on TM CPC departure.		Background documents section Doc 2
07 Sep 2023	Letter to OTC responding to his letter and requesting a formal Period of Grace.	Period of Grace requested until 31 Jan 24.	Background documents section Doc 3
13 Sep 2023	Period of grace granted by OTC	Period of grace granted until 13 Jan 24	Background documents section Doc 4
Sep/Oct 2023	Meetings with potential interim TM / Operations manager	Meetings held with potential agency cover but candidates not suitable. Explored options for support with BDC and Colchester.	
7 Nov – 17 Nov 24	Attended Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence course in Tunbridge Wells, between 7 Nov and 17 Nov 23, Part 1 exam 17 Nov 23		
7 Dec 2023	Part 2, case study exam 7 December 2023		
17 Jan 2024	Email from Office of Traffic commissioner received stating that our period of grace had expired.		Background documents section Doc 5
17 Jan 2024	emailed OTC acknowledging email and saying that would reply.		Background documents section Doc 6
23 Jan 2024	Email from OTC revoking Licence 23 January		Background documents section Doc 7

23 Jan 2024	Discussion with chief executive updating on the situation		
23 Jan 2024	Discussions with key elected Members on updating on the situation		

In addition to the table above the following information has been supplied further to an email request by Cllr Driscoll.

Copy of budgeted Structure for Environmental Services

Copy of historic job descriptions for :-

- Assistant Director – Environmental Services – Agreed job title Director of Environmental Services
- Assistant Operations Manager – agreed job title, Fleet and Operations Manager
- Workshop Team Leader

Ben Brown

From: Logistics UK <bookings@fta.co.uk>
Sent: 19 July 2023 13:44
To: Ben Brown
Subject: [External] >> Welcome to Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage
Attachments: We sent you safe versions of your files; FAQ TMCPC - Road Haulage Nov22 v.pdf; 1633453019_TMCPC L3 Candidate Tutor Notes 0921.pdf; T&Cs 2023.pdf

Mimecast Attachment Protection has deemed this file to be safe, but always exercise caution when opening files.

Welcome to @@BookedCourseLabels



Dear Ben Brown,

Thank you for booking a place on the Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage course commencing Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage - Part One (07/11/2023 09:00 - 10/11/2023 17:00), Transport Manager CPC - Road Haulage - Part Two (14/11/2023 09:00 - 17/11/2023 17:00) at Logistics UK Tunbridge Wells - Tilbury (20).

You will receive formal joining instructions and more detailed information 21 days before the course start date.

Pre-Course Study

To effectively support you in preparing for this course, you will receive login credentials and instructions to complete your pre-course study modules roughly **two weeks prior** to your course. **Please remember to login and complete this Pre Course Study prior to your course start date.**

Candidate Examination Registration

Logistics UK is required to record all candidate identification details with the Awarding Organisation for examination registration purposes.

Failure to complete this candidate registration form now may result in non-registration of your CPC examinations.

[Click here to register for your examination](#)

Logistics UK offer additional support for candidates through case study revision days. If your candidate is already booked on this they will receive your joining instructions closer to the date. If not then please contact salesupport@logistics.org.uk

Driver CPC

Transport Manager CPC is registered with JAUPT and can offer 28 hours towards your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence. Please click on the star below to let us know if this is something you would like adding. If this course has been arranged on your behalf, please refer to the person who booked the course for you.

If there are any access, learning support or special dietary requirements or general questions regarding this course, please contact Logistics UK on 01926 450020 or email tmcpc@logistics.org.uk

This is a **NO REPLY** email address please be aware if you require to speak to a member staff to email training.admin@logistics.org.uk

Kind regards

Training Support Services- Logistics UK



The information contained in this message is legally privileged and confidential information intended only for the use of the individual or entity named above. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any use, dissemination, distribution or copying of this message is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately and return the original message to us at info@logistics.org.uk.

Please note that Logistics UK is able to, and reserves the right to, monitor email communications passing through its network.

Logistics UK is a trading name of Freight Transport Association. Registered Office: Hermes House, St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9UZ. Registered in England Number 391957. Telephone: (01892) 526171.



Disclaimer

The information contained in this communication from the sender is confidential. It is intended solely for use by the recipient and others authorized to receive it. If you are not the recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking action in relation of the contents of this information is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful.

This email has been scanned for viruses and malware, and may have been automatically archived by Mimecast, a leader in email security and cyber resilience. Mimecast integrates email defenses with brand protection, security awareness training, web security, compliance and other essential capabilities. Mimecast helps protect large and small organizations from malicious activity, human error and technology failure; and to lead the movement toward building a more resilient world. To find out more, visit our website.



Office of the Traffic Commissioner

MR BEN BROWN
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN
CB11 4ER

Compliance Team
Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
Hillcrest House
386 Harehills Lane
Leeds
LS9 6NF
e-mail: northeastcompliance@otc.gov.uk

Our Ref: OF0216604

18/08/2023

Sent by Recorded delivery and email

Dear Sir or Madam,

EARLY RESPONSE REQUIRED BY 08/09/2023

LOSS OF TRANSPORT MANAGER

Please note: failure to address the concerns raised in this letter by the due date will result in the traffic commissioner revoking the licence. This applies even if you have already submitted an application to nominate a new transport manager which has not yet been granted by the traffic commissioner. Operation of vehicles without a valid operator's licence is unlawful.

It is a requirement of holding an operator's licence that you either have a transport manager or a period of grace. It is also a condition of your operator's licence that you notify the traffic commissioner of any change, which affects your ability to fulfill the requirement within 28 days. It has been brought to the attention of the Traffic Commissioner that there is currently no transport manager specified on your licence to satisfy the requirement to have a suitable number of individuals who meet paragraphs 14A(1) and (2) or 14A(1) and (3) of Schedule 3 of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 (the Act).

Section 27(1) of the Act states that the traffic commissioner shall direct that a standard licence be revoked if at any time it appears that the licence-holder no longer satisfies the requirement to designate a suitable number of transport managers.

In view of the evidence currently available, it appears to the traffic commissioner that you may no longer satisfy the requirement to designate a suitable number of transport managers satisfying the requirements of paragraph 14A(1) and (2) or 14A(1) and (3) of Schedule 3 of the Act. In accordance with Section 27(2) of the Act, this office is serving notice that the traffic commissioner is considering the revocation of your operator's licence on the grounds detailed above. Under Section 27(3) you are entitled to make written representations to the traffic commissioner. Section 29(1) allows you to request a public inquiry, in order to offer further evidence as to why the licence should not be revoked.

Any written representations must be made to this office by **08/09/2023** for the traffic commissioner's consideration.

Your representations may include an application to add a replacement transport manager to your licence. If you have not already submitted an application, you can do this by using the online facility at:

www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence

However, applications to nominate a new transport manager must be complete. You must return any further information requested by this office in connection with the application promptly. Guidance to help you to submit a complete transport manager application can be found at Annex A.

Even if you apply to nominate a transport manager (using the online facility) you must still respond to this letter by the date specified. The licence is at risk if a replacement transport manager has not been approved by the traffic commissioner. Responding with incomplete information could still result in the revocation of the licence.

The requirement is only met once the traffic commissioner has approved the transport manager(s).

Further information about the transport manager requirements is set out in the Senior Traffic Commissioner's Statutory Document No.3 on Transport Managers which can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/senior-traffic-commissioners-statutory-guidance-and-statutory-directions> and which includes a general list of transport manager responsibilities.

A summary of the responsibilities is also available on gov.uk at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-involved-in-being-a-road-transport-manager/being-a-road-transport-manager-your-responsibilities>.

The traffic commissioner may consider granting a period of grace to enable you to find a replacement or whilst your nomination of a new transport manager is being considered, but you need to ask. The traffic commissioner is not obliged to grant a period of grace and is unlikely to do so unless there is evidence that a replacement will be recruited and that the licence requirements will be met in the meantime. An application for a period of grace must be in writing and set out what you are doing to resolve the matter. Guidance to request a period of grace whilst you recruit a new transport manager is attached at Annex B.

If you did not notify the traffic commissioner of the loss of your transport manager, you should also provide an explanation as to why you failed to comply with the condition on the operator's licence.

This letter has been sent by recorded delivery post.

Yours faithfully

Compliance Team

Sign up to [the Vehicle Operator Licensing system](http://www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence) at www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence to make applications, vehicle changes, and manage your licence.

VOL username and passwords must not be shared, you can always add additional new users.

Annex A: Guidance to submitting a complete transport manager application

The following guidance is to assist you to send a complete and accurate application for a new transport manager to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

For further information about transport manager requirements, please refer to:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-transport-managers-november-2018

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/goods-vehicle-operator-licensing-guide#transportmanagers>

Sending your application

When you submit your application, as a minimum, you must ensure that the Office of the Traffic Commissioner receives the following:

a completed online transport manager application, which has been signed digitally by both parties. Alternatively, the declaration will need to be printed, signed and returned to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner by post.

the nominated transport manager's original certificate(s) of qualification of professional competence in road haulage, or evidence of any relevant exemption.

Further information may be required, depending upon the answers provided in your application and information held by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.

You should anticipate having to supply additional information with your application, if any of the following apply. This list is not exhaustive but failure to prepare will delay a decision being made.

Continuous and effective management

When you make your application, the traffic commissioner must be satisfied that the proposed transport manager can exercise continuous and effective management across all licences they are specified on. The contract with your nominated transport manager should specify the detailed activities which will be undertaken. All transport managers are responsible for fulfilling the general responsibilities set out in the Senior Traffic Commissioner's Statutory Document on transport managers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-transport-managers-november-2018/statutory-document-3-transport-managers#generalresponsibilities>

You will be asked to supply details if:

the proposed transport manager will be on four licences.

the proposed transport manager will be responsible for more than 50 authorised vehicles. An external lone transport manager will not be accepted on a licence specifying more than 50 vehicles.

the proposed transport manager has other work as a driver.

the proposed transport manager has other work/duties which may impact on their availability.

the proposed transport manager has been involved with any licences with adverse compliance.

there has been recent adverse compliance on your licence which might suggest that an incoming transport manager may need to do more to ensure compliance.

the proposed transport manager is committing to less hours to support your licence than the starting points set out by the traffic commissioner and/or there is a significant distance between all the relevant operating centres and the transport manager's home address:

Number of vehicles	Hours per week
2 vehicles or less	2 to 4 hours
3 to 5 vehicles	4 to 8 hours
6 to 10 vehicles	8 to 12 hours
11 to 14 vehicles	12 to 20 hours
15 to 29 vehicles	20 to 30 hours
30 to 50 vehicles	30 hours to full time
More than 50 vehicles	Full time and another staff member needed
Additional hours may be required for trailers	

The suggested amounts of time above are a starting point as to what traffic commissioners might expect in terms of hours worked. They are intended as a guide to operators and the nominated CPC holder to discuss what time is actually required to carry out the General Responsibilities linked above.

Keeping knowledge up to date – continuing professional development

Further information about the relevant skills and knowledge to carry out the transport manager role can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-involved-in-being-a-road-transport-manager/being-a-road-transport-manager-skills-and-knowledge-you-need>

A transport manager needs to keep up to date through Continuing Professional Development (CPD). You might be asked to provide evidence to demonstrate this if:
 your proposed transport manager has not been listed on a licence within the previous five years.
 your proposed transport manager attained their CPC qualification more than 10 years ago.
 you are required to provide a more detailed explanation of how you will ensure continuous and effective management, as above.

Evidence which could be submitted to show this includes:

- certificates of any training courses, including transport manager refresher courses, attended, including e-learning.
- evidence of attendance at events or conferences about managing fleets of vehicles.
- evidence of where you have shared your knowledge with others, for example by giving presentations.

Annex B: Guidance for requesting a period of grace to satisfy the transport manager requirements

You have been sent this letter as it would appear that you no longer meet the mandatory requirement to have a suitable number of individuals who meet the requirements for transport managers as specified at Schedule 3 of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing Of Operators) Act 1995. A transport manager is required to be able to manage effectively and continuously the operator's transport service and is an important means by which a transport business maintains compliance. It is a condition of an operator's licence that changes affecting the ability of the licence holder to meet the transport manager requirements, including the availability of a transport manager, are notified to the traffic commissioner.

A traffic commissioner has discretion to consider granting a period of grace in circumstances where it is found that there is no authorised transport manager in place. This could allow a period of up to 6 months for you to find a replacement transport manager that allows you to meet the requirement to continue to hold an operator's licence.

In order to allow a period of grace the traffic commissioner must establish that the requirement for a transport manager is no longer met. An application for a period of grace invites a traffic commissioner to make an adverse finding that the requirement for designating a suitable number of transport manager is no longer met.

There must be tangible evidence that a period of grace will be worthwhile, in other words, there are reasonable prospects that the mandatory requirement will be met before expiry of the specified period of grace.

On application you may wish to invite the traffic commissioner to decide how long to allow within the maximum periods permitted by the legislation.

Although the period will depend on the individual merits of the case before the commissioner, the Senior Traffic Commissioner has set a starting point of three months, which allows for an extension where required.

Please make any period of grace requests in writing and specify:

why your last transport manager has left and the circumstances.
what measures were taken to prevent loss of a suitable number of transport managers.
the period of time you seek for your period of grace.
how will you cover the duties of a transport manager during the period of grace.
what action you are taking to meet the transport manager requirement as soon as possible.

Operators who are granted a period of grace should understand that if, upon expiry of a period of grace, the transport manager requirements have still not been met then the operator's licence will be revoked.

Further information about the transport manager requirements can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-commissioners-transport-managers-november-2018

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: OF0216604 Application for period of grace and response to your letter on loss of transport manager.
Date: 07 September 2023 15:20:00
Attachments: [REDACTED]
Importance: High

Dear East of England compliance team
Please find attached my response to your letter date 18 August 2023.
Should you have any questions or queries I can be contacted as set out below and on my mobile
[REDACTED]

Kind regards

Ben Brown
Director – Environmental Services

Uttlesford District Council
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex CB11 4ER

T: [REDACTED]
E: [REDACTED]
www.uttlesford.gov.uk
facebook.com/UttlesfordDC
twitter.com/UttlesfordDC



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
Telephone (01799) 510510
Textphone Users 18001
Email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk Website www.uttlesford.gov.uk

Compliance Team
Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
Hillcrest House
386 Harehills Lane
Leeds
LS9 6NF

7 September 2023

Your ref: **OF0216604**

Our ref:

Please ask for: Ben Brown on [REDACTED]
email: b [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam,

LOSS OF TRANSPORT MANAGER APPLICATION FOR A PERIOD OF GRACE

Thank you for your letter dated 18 August 2023 regarding the fact that we have removed our Transport Manager. I believe this came to your attention because I updated our online records on the www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence website. However, the Commissioner may have also notification via a third party.

In this letter I am formally exercising our right under Section 27(3) of Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 (the Act) to make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner to consider not revoking our licence.

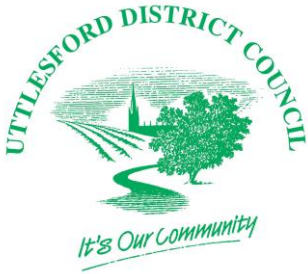
I am also formally applying for a six-month period of grace to enable us to nominate and appoint replacement Transport manager(s).

Annex B of your letter, set out several questions that would assist the Commissioner, in considering our application and I have provided this information below after repeating each question.

Uttlesford District Council is a small local authority with limited resources; however it does take responsibilities around transport operations very seriously and has historically invested in the service to ensure legal compliance and that we are a good operator. We currently have 29 vehicles on our LGV fleet and in May 2022 amalgamated our two operating centres to one central location. Our fleet is used to carry out environmental services to district residents and businesses. It is limited to the operation of waste collection vehicles.

Commissioner's Question - Why your last transport manager has left and the circumstances?

Our Transport Manager, [REDACTED] left the organisation on 31 July 2023 and chose to resign with immediate effect, with the Council's agreement. I notified the Commissioner of this via the gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-license webpage and submitted amendments that removed [REDACTED] and updated some other



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
Telephone (01799) 510510
Textphone Users 18001
Email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk Website www.uttlesford.gov.uk

records on the system. I believe this was on 9 August. It is possible that a third party, including [REDACTED], may have notified the Commissioner prior to this date. I was not clear that removal of the transport manager on the website was possibly not sufficient notification. If this was the case then I can only apologise. The amendments to the license were done in good faith that this was the correct process.

It was [REDACTED] personal decision to leave after over 20 years at UDC as he wanted to make a fresh start. He was a qualified Transport Manager and had just undertaken refresher training with Logistics UK. Prior to his departure he was working on a project to update our systems to achieve the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme, bronze standard. His departure from the Council, was not directly related to any Operator License compliance issues.

Commissioner's Question - what measures were taken to prevent loss of a suitable number of transport managers?

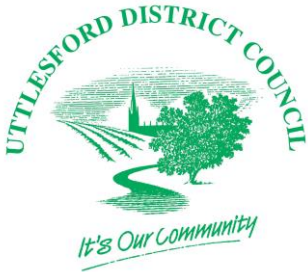
The fact that the Council had only one nominated and formally qualified transport manager has left us in a vulnerable position. I had identified that it was possible [REDACTED] future employment was a risk earlier in the summer and on 17 July 2023 had booked myself onto training to obtain the Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence qualification and help mitigate the risk of being left without a transport manager. I am booked to attend between 7-17 November 2023 (APPENDIX 1). When [REDACTED] chose to resign, I did attempt to attend an earlier course, however the dates clashed with my planned annual leave and that of other colleagues. It would have meant that there was no management supervision of our operations for the best part of two weeks. I did not consider this an acceptable risk.

Commissioner's Question - the period of time you seek for your period of grace?

I am seeking a period of six months grace covering the period since 1 August (the day after [REDACTED] last day with us to 31 January 2024. This will enable me to attend and obtain the Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence and allow further time to apply to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner for consideration. There are further plans to increase resilience which are set out below.

Commissioner's Question - how will you cover the duties of a transport manager during the period of grace?

As the Director responsible for the service, I have a sound background knowledge of the requirements in relation to transport, although perhaps not yet some of the detailed processes. As highlighted above I am due to attend Transport Manager CPC training in November and assuming that I successfully pass, I propose to apply to be our transport manager immediately after obtaining the qualification.



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

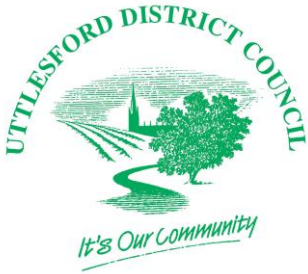
Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
Telephone (01799) 510510
Textphone Users 18001
Email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk Website www.uttlesford.gov.uk

I am supported by [REDACTED], Workshop Team Leader, who is our nominated safety inspector. [REDACTED] has extensive experience in maintaining and operating vehicles, although he does not hold transport manager CPC.

As a result of [REDACTED] departure and another vacancy with my service, I am reviewing our management team structure, with the aim of giving greater priority to compliance. As part of this I will create a refreshed assistant manager position (title to be confirmed) who will provide support to me in ensuring compliance, both in terms of transport and health and safety. They will also be tasked with completing the FORS accreditation project that I mentioned earlier. They will not manage our workshop team or [REDACTED] to ensure a degree of separation of duties. This post will be expected to hold a transport manager CPC qualification.

In terms of covering the duties of a transport manager, the Council already has robust systems in place to ensure that we have a positive safe culture and comply with license requirements. By way of summary, we have the following measures in place :-

1. Operator Compliance Risk Score of Green (detailed report attached as APPENDIX2)
2. Safety inspection of all LGVs carried out every 6 weeks.
3. Daily driver walk around checks carried out using R2C app enabling defects to be reported directly to our workshop team in real time.
4. Full driver induction programme in place including inhouse driving assessments.
5. All drivers licenses, CPCs are checked every six months after starting work with us.
6. Fleet performance indicators are monitored by corporate management team on a quarterly basis including :-
 - a. Percentage of vehicles service or inspected on target week,
 - b. Percentage of vehicles passing MOT without additional work,
 - c. Percentage of drivers license and CPC checks carried out,
 - d. Percentage of overweight vehicles tipped,
 - e. Percentage of vehicle defects reported which are not rectified or signed off.
8. At a service level we monitor compliance with the number of pre-use checks undertaken and enforcement on drivers hours records, highlighting contraventions.
9. The majority of our fleet is fitted with digital tachographs and we monitor drivers hours electronically.
10. Our front-line vehicles are fitted with regularly calibrated onboard weighing systems with automatic cut outs to prevent overloading.
11. Vehicle maintenance plans are in place for every vehicle in the fleet. Inspections, services and MOTs are planned 12 months in advance.
12. Our current management team have previously received Operators



UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4ER
Telephone (01799) 510510
Textphone Users 18001
Email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk Website www.uttlesford.gov.uk

License Awareness training however I will organise a refresher to be undertaken.

The measures above will be managed by myself and the assistant manager, when appointed. For the sake of clarity, I am present at the operating centre at least 3 days per week and work full time. I have a team reporting to me that are able to provide management information in relation to all aspects of our operation including the measures highlighted above. I recognise that there are, as in many organisations, improvements to make and I am committed to ensuring that we operate to a high standard.

It will be my intention that the new assistant manager will undertake Transport Manager CPC if they do not already hold the qualification.

We are a member of Logistics UK and able to access professional support and advice as required. If recommended by the Commissioner, I would put in place a transport consultant to assist us during the interim period. As a local authority we also seek advice from our peers and certainly took on board learning from our neighbours, Braintree District Council in relation to their previous inspection.

Commissioner's Question - what action you are taking to meet the transport manager requirement as soon as possible.

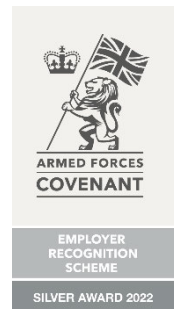
As already highlighted, I am booked on Transport manager CPC training for November, this was booked prior to [REDACTED] decision to leave. I am currently reviewing the overall structure of the service to ensure that we have more resilience in future and will ensure that we have two qualified transport managers in future.

I fully recognise the importance of maintaining excellent standards and would welcome comments from the Commissioner on the proposed interim arrangements.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Director - Environmental Services





Office of the
Traffic Commissioner

MR BEN BROWN
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN
CB11 4ER

Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
HILLCREST HOUSE
386 HAREHILLS LANE
LEEDS
LS9 6NF

Our reference:OF0216604

13/09/2023

Dear Mr Brown

Thank you for your letter dated **07.09.2023** regarding the loss of your transport manager [REDACTED] from your goods vehicle operator's licence.

Your licence is at risk

Please read this letter and the deadlines given carefully. If you do not take the appropriate action in time, the traffic commissioner will revoke your licence under section 27(1)(a) of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 (the Act).

Your request for a period of grace

You have requested further time to nominate a suitable replacement. The Traffic Commissioner has granted your application for a period of grace. This means that your licence can remain in force until **13th January 2024** without a specified transport manager.

During the grace period, you must ensure ongoing compliance with all other terms and conditions under which your licence was granted.

This includes:

- vehicle maintenance
- scheduled safety inspections
- drivers' hours rules
- retaining associated records and making them available on request

The traffic commissioner reached their decision in accordance with Section 27(3A) of the Act. The traffic commissioner has recorded that you no longer meet the requirement to designate a suitable number of transport managers satisfying the requirements of paragraph 14A(1) and (2) or 14A(1) and (3) of Schedule 3 of the Act as necessary to meet the ongoing requirement set out in Section 13A(3) of the Act. In doing so the traffic commissioner has complied with the requirements of Section 27(2) of the Act.

Your deadline for compliance

The period of grace will end on **13th January 2024**.

This should be a sufficient period for you to add a suitable transport manager to your licence. Before this deadline you must satisfy the traffic commissioner that you have made suitable transport manager arrangements. If you do not, your licence will be revoked.

Take action well in advance of the deadline

The requirement is not met until the traffic commissioner accepts a proposed transport manager. The traffic commissioner must have accepted them as capable of meeting the requirements of paragraphs 14A(1) and (2), or (1) and (3), of Schedule 3 of the Act before the period of grace expires.

You must:

- submit the application in time
- provide sufficient information to satisfy the traffic commissioner

We recommend you submit your application at least 4 weeks before the deadline.

What you need to do

You must apply for a new transport manager as soon as possible.

Complete a transport manager application

Sign in to your VOL online account at www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence and complete a transport manager application.

Upload your nominated transport manager's CPC

You need to upload the full page of your nominated transport manager's Certificate of Professional Competence in Road Haulage to your VOL account.

Upload relevant documents or explanations

The individual(s) must be capable of meeting the relevant requirements. You may need to send supplementary evidence to demonstrate this to the traffic commissioner. Please refer to our previous letters for details.

What if I need more time?

You should make every effort to appoint a transport manager in time and must consider contingency plans. There is no power to extend a period of grace beyond the maximum six months except in cases where the previous transport manager is

physically incapacitated or deceased and it will take more than six months to recruit a replacement where the maximum increases to nine months.

Any request for an extension must:

- be submitted well in advance
- include what steps have been taken to recruit a new transport manager

You should not assume that a request will be granted.

Once we have received your information

Your application for a transport manager will be considered in accordance with the Act.

We may request further information

We may need further information, depending upon the answers provided in your application and information held by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner. You should allow time for this.

You will be notified of the traffic commissioner's decision

If the traffic commissioner accepts your nominated transport manager, a new licence document will be issued via your VOL user account. The transport manager details will be included within the licence document.

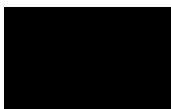
If the traffic commissioner is unable to accept the transport manager, you will be sent a letter giving reasons.

Your licence will be revoked if you do not respond or if your nominated transport manager is not suitable

If you do not add a suitable transport manager to your licence before the grace period ends, the traffic commissioner is obliged to revoke the licence and will do so. They must do so under section 27(1)(a) of the Act.

You must take prompt action if you wish to continue to operate.

Yours sincerely



Sign in to [the Vehicle Operator Licensing system](http://www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence) at www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence to make applications, vehicle changes, and manage your licence.

VOL username and passwords must not be shared, you can always add additional new users.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [External] >> OF0216604 UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Date: 17 January 2024 10:32:41
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)

Good Morning Mr Brown,

Your period of grace expired 13/01/2024 and a response has not been received.

Please provide your comments as to whether a transport manager has been recruited and respond to the period of grace letter by the end of the day.

Thank you

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | Compliance

Office of the Traffic Commissioner | Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF

[REDACTED]
[@TrafficCommsGB](#) [REDACTED]

The information in this e-mail and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to legal professional privilege. Unless you are the intended recipient or his/her representative you are not authorised to, and must not, read, copy, distribute, use or retain this message or any part of it. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

Please quote your licence or application number in all correspondence with this office.

Please upload any application related documents through your VOL user account. Only send documents by email if you are unable to use the self-service system. Where possible you should correspond with us by email, but you may send correspondence to us by post at the above address.

If you are an existing operator without a VOL user account, and you would like one, please sign up online at <https://www.vehicle-operator-licensing.service.gov.uk/auth/login/> - select 'create an account' and follow the on-screen instructions.

For advice on Coronavirus (Covid-19) please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/traffic-commissioners>.

Sign up to receive news alerts from the Traffic Commissioners:
<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKOTC/subscriber/new>

You can [view the traffic commissioners' privacy notice here](#)



Ben Brown

From: Ben Brown
Sent: 17 January 2024 16:21
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: [External] >> OF0216604 UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Dear [REDACTED]

This is a quick note to say that I have received your email and I will provide a full response as soon as I can. Realistically, this may be tomorrow and I hope that is ok.

Yours sincerely

Ben Brown
Director of Environmental Services

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 10:32 AM
To: Ben Brown <bbrown@uttlesford.gov.uk>
Subject: [External] >> OF0216604 UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Good Morning Mr Brown,

Your period of grace expired 13/01/2024 and a response has not been received.

Please provide your comments as to whether a transport manager has been recruited and respond to the period of grace letter by the end of the day.

Thank you

Kind Regards

[REDACTED] | Compliance
Office of the Traffic Commissioner | Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF

The information in this e-mail and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to legal professional privilege. Unless you are the intended recipient or his/her representative you are not authorised to, and must not, read, copy, distribute, use or retain this message or any part of it. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete the email immediately.

Please quote your licence or application number in all correspondence with this office.

Please upload any application related documents through your VOL user account. Only send documents by email if you are unable to use the self-service system. Where possible you should correspond with us by email, but you may send correspondence to us by post at the above address.

If you are an existing operator without a VOL user account, and you would like one, please sign up online at <https://www.vehicle-operator-licensing.service.gov.uk/auth/login/> - select 'create an account' and follow the on-screen instructions.

For advice on Coronavirus (Covid-19) please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/traffic-commissioners>.

Sign up to receive news alerts from the Traffic Commissioners:
<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKOTC/subscriber/new>

You can [view the traffic commissioners' privacy notice here](#)





Office of the
Traffic Commissioner

MR BEN BROWN
UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN
CB11 4ER

Office of the Traffic Commissioner
East of England
HILLCREST HOUSE
386 HAREHILLS LANE
LEEDS
LS9 6NF

Direct Line: [REDACTED]
e-mail: [REDACTED]

Our Ref: OF0216604

23/01/2024

Dear Mr Brown

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE OF0216604

GOODS VEHICLES (LICENSING OF OPERATORS) ACT 1995 (the Act)

THIS LETTER REQUIRES URGENT ATTENTION

Sent by Recorded Delivery and email.

I refer to our letters dated 18/08/2023 notifying you that the Traffic Commissioner was considering revoking your goods vehicle operator's licence as the mandatory requirement of professional competence is not met.

I also refer to our letter of 13 September 2023 detailing the Traffic Commissioner's decision to grant a Period of Grace for the purposes of professional competence until 13 January 2024. The Council was informed in this letter that professional competence would need to be restored or an extension to the Period of Grace requested prior to the expiry of this grace period or the licence would be revoked.

In the absence of a response to this letter or a request for a public inquiry to be held the Traffic Commissioner has revoked your operator's licence with immediate effect in accordance with the grounds stated in our letter.

Notification of this decision will be placed in the publication 'Applications and Decisions'. This decision may also be recorded on an electronic national register that can be inspected by the competent authorities of other EU member states.

What you must do now

You must now return the operator's licence and vehicle discs to me at the above address for cancellation. Failure to do this is a criminal offence.

Right of Appeal

There is a right of appeal against the Traffic Commissioner's decision. To appeal you should, **within one month from the date of this letter**, apply to:

Upper Tribunal (Transport)

Administrative Appeal Chamber
5th Floor, Rolls Building
7 Rolls Building
Fetter Lane
London
EC4A 1NL

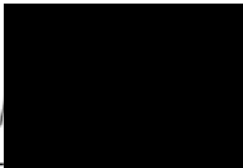
Guidance on the appeal procedure, including an explanatory booklet, is available from the Upper Tribunal website –

www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/upper-tribunal-administrative-appeals-chamber

This letter has been sent by recorded delivery post and email.

If you believe that you have received this letter in error due to responding to previous letters please contact me on the telephone number shown above IMMEDIATELY.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.A black rectangular redaction box covering the name of the sender.

Office of the Traffic Commissioner

APPENDIX D

Waste Disruptions Recovery Response

3 x workstreams

1 – work to reverse previous decision of TC

2 – work to obtain a new Operator’s Licence

3 – to put in place contingency arrangements to allow core operations to take place

Date	Event	Note	Additional information or documents
Tue 23 Jan 2024	Calls and emails to Office of Traffic Commissioner (OTC) trying to find a way to reinstate licence	Spoke to compliance officer who suggested that it would be possible for them to ask the TC consider our case.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Tue 23 Jan 2024	Messaged Transport Consultant 1 / trainer for assistance	Seeking advice on predicament, possible Transport Manager (TM) CPC support. Not available for immediate assistance.	N/A
Tue 23 Jan 2024	Contact made with Transport consultant 2 and provider of interim TM CPC support	Agreed to allow Transport Consultant to speak to OTC on UDCs behalf.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Wed 24 Jan 2024	Letter of Authority provided to interim TM to act on our behalf and talk to OTC.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Wed 24 Jan 2024	Halted operation 24 Jan. Stood down crews etc	Held a meeting with all front line staff at 6:45 informing them that we would not be operating, staff redeployed to training and vehicle washing.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Wed 24 Jan 2025	Called Logistic UK – Transport trade association and provide advice to Members. UDC a member.	Sought view of their compliance and licencing expert on best approach.	Not included as part of pack but available.
Thurs 25 Jan	Meeting with chief exec to discuss potential contingency plans and making contact with any companies that had offered to assist.	At this point in time a number of organisations had come forward to offer TM advice or operational support.	N/A
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Email to all Essex CEOs asking for operational support and mutual aid.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Interim Transport Manager appointed and details provided to OTC	Interim TM supplied qualification documents etc collected by UDC staff	N/A
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Saffron Walden Reporter arranged public notice for new operator licence application.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Fri 26 Jan 2024	Sent all information required for a new licence to OTC enquiries + recorded delivery	Attempted to submit new licence application but system issue identified. Attempted to call OTC.	N/A

	Email from OTC saying the commissioner has considered the request and licence should remain revoked.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Mon 29 Jan 2024	Interim TM contract outlining support returned		Not included as part of pack but available.
Mon 29 Jan 2024	Calls made to OTC for support and assistance with Vehicle Operator Licensing system (VOLS) , emails also sent.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Mon 29 Jan 2024	Followed up all offers of help and proactively rang / contacted all neighbours to see if mutual aid was possible	Start of Operation Patchwork Quilt	N/A
Tue 30 Jan 2024	Calls made to OTC for support and assistance with VOLS system, emails also sent.		Not included as part of pack but available.
Tue 30 Jan 2024	Lightwood PLC (max 2 vehicles)	Given two UDC vehicles and inspected records and concluded that they could not assist.	N/A
Tue 30 Jan 2024	Widdington mobilised 2 x Trade vehicles (under their own licence)		N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	Insurance issues identified with BDC	Insurance providers view as that UDC staff would not be insured if working for BDC. Individual drivers would need to be added to BDC insurance.	N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	Submitted application for new licence on VORS after resolving technical issues with assistance from OTC helpline.	Application paid for	N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	BDC mobilised vehicles 2 BDC owned domestic vehicles – under their licence.	No food waste recycling capability	N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	Widdington mobilised 2x UDC owned Trade vehicles (under their own licence)		N/A
Wed 31 Jan 2024	UDC sent 1 x domestic vehicle to BDC for inspection Thurs		N/A
Thu 1 Feb 2024	UDC sent 1 x domestic vehicle to BDC for inspection Fri.		N/A
Thu 1 Feb 2024	UDC sent 2 x domestic vehicle to Widdington Operations Fri.		N/A
Thu 1 Feb 2024	UDC vehicle 1x to BDC		N/A
Fri 2 Feb 2024	Vehicles operating across district		N/A

Fri 2 Feb 2024	UDC vehicle 2 x vehicle to BDC for inspection.		N/A
Sat 3 Feb 2024	BDC operating at the weekend supported by UDC staff, some areas with food waste recycling capability.		
Sun 4 Feb 2024	No operations		
Mon 5 Feb 2024	Some BDC vehicles operating.		
Tue 6 Feb 2024	2 trade vehicles operating from Widdington 2 domestic vehicles operating from Widdington 2 UDC domestic vehicles operating from Braintree depot 2 BDC domestic vehicles operating all day + supported in PM by 3 vehicles		
Wed 7 Feb 2024	Interim Licence Granted 7 Feb 2024		
Thu 8 Feb 2024	UDC Vehicles recalled and restarted operations from Canfield depot		
Thu 8 Feb 2024	Catch up operations begin support continued from BDC.		

APPENDIX E

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group **Date:** Tuesday 12 March 2024
Title: Public Engagement
Report Author: Richard Auty, Director of Corporate Services

Summary

1. This report describes the impact on the council of the disruption to the waste and recycling service through the increased number of calls to the Customer Service Centre, complaints and comments on social media. It also sets out common types of enquiries and complaints and the council's approach to keeping residents informed.

Recommendations

2. None

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	This report explains the steps the council took to keep the public informed during the period of disruption to waste and recycling services
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None

Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	The impact on some areas of the workforce is touched on in this report.

Situation

6. As the waste and recycling service is the most visible front-facing service the council offers, the disruption inevitably caused a large increase in enquiries and complaints from residents. Primarily these contacts came through the Customer Service Centre, although a small number of complaints were sent directly to the Chief Executive and/or the Leader and the Portfolio Holder. In addition there were thousands of comments via social media which are covered elsewhere in this report.
7. This report provides information on the number of such customer contacts during the peak period of disruption in January and February and also explains the steps the council took to keep residents informed, as much as possible, about what was happening on a day-by-day basis.
8. Inevitably there are lessons to be learned for senior management, Customer Services and the Communications and Website teams, as is always the case when an unexpected widespread issue such as this arises, and this will be incorporated into a subsequent report to the Task and Finish Group.
9. The report breaks the statistics down into three categories – contact directly to Customer Services, complaints sent to the aforementioned senior officer and councillors, and lastly some information about how the council used communication channels to inform and update residents and also online activity during the period.

Customer Services

10. The Customer Service Centre is the primary point of contact for residents wanting to receive services or ask questions of the council. It deals with more than half of all phone calls received across the entire authority; it has responsibility for two of the most high traffic email accounts – uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk and wasteaware@uttlesford.gov.uk – and the team also runs the council's LiveChat instant messaging service which can be accessed via the website.
11. Complaints received via the council's online website form go into the uconnect inbox and are either dealt with in Customer Services or, where this is not possible due to the need for specialist officer intervention, are forwarded on to the relevant department. These forms are included in the email data presented in this report – ultimately it doesn't matter how the complaint is received; from a customer's point of view all that matters is that their complaint is dealt with.

12. Inevitably, the widespread disruption caused a massive rise in the number of enquiries received by Customer Services. The table at Appendix A shows week by week how many calls, emails and LiveChats were dealt with, compared to the same time period the year before.
13. While reporting on phone calls and LiveChats is done through the council's phone system, monitoring of emails is a manual process whereby supervisors have had to count every email. Although daily stats compiled by Customer Services list the total number of emails received and dealt with, this reporting does not provide a service-by-service breakdown. Should members require a week-by-week breakdown of emails, this can be provided although it will be many hours' work for an already hard-pressed service.
14. The most common enquiries and trends during the period as reported by the Customer Services team are as follows:
- The first calls that came through to Customer Services were requesting clarification on communications sent out via parish councils – initially the team was unable to provide further information as to how the council was resolving the issue beyond what had been explained to parish councils. Customer Service Advisors did reassure residents the council was taking the issue very seriously and would let residents know the plan once it was agreed, and in the meantime to leave their bins out.
 - There were enquiries as to whether Council Tax would be reduced due to non-collection. Once a statement on this was released, these calls reduced in number. Additionally it gave Customer Service Advisors the information they required should a resident not have seen that statement.
 - Residents wanted to know how the council let this happen.
 - As the disruption progressed, the majority of calls became those just asking when their bins would be cleared, even if wasn't that day.
 - Where the council said, in good faith, a particular area would be cleared and then this ended up not being the case due to the volume of waste that needed to be collected or mechanical issues with the fleet, this then produced further calls and further frustration.
 - The general message to "leave your bins out we will get to you as soon as we can" was not well-received in some quarters.
 - Residents felt that being in local government should mean the council should be able to get a licence quicker and phoned the council to say that.
 - Some Parish Councils called for further information.
 - Towards the end of the period of disruption as services were returning to normal the number of calls relating to the garden waste service started catching up with, and then overtaking, the calls about general domestic collections.

15. Customer Services' Supervisor and Team Leaders liaised with Environmental Services and the Website and Communications Teams to ensure they were able to provide the best possible information to residents. Ultimately, the Customer Services team wanted residents to feel reassured and even though an error had been made their communication was important to the council and staff were doing their best to rectify the issue.
16. While a level of annoyance and frustration is completely understandable, unfortunately staff were at times subjected to unreasonably aggressive and rude customers. In such circumstances, staff let the caller vent their frustrations, then reiterated what the council could, and was doing, and apologised.
17. The most abusive customers were escalated to the Team Leaders and Supervisors.
18. This has been an extremely difficult period for Customer Services. The sheer volume of customer contacts has been difficult to keep up with and that, combined with the level of aggression from a minority, has had a substantial impact on the team. The only way the team has been able to cope with the workload is by working extra hours. The additional cost of this will be included in the report being prepared by the Section 151 Officer which will be presented to Council.

Complaints

19. A small number of residents complained directly to the Chief Executive and/or the Leader. In addition, some complaints were escalated either by Customer Services or the Environmental Services team where initial responses were not accepted by the complainant.
20. The table at Appendix B sets out these complaints as coordinated by the Executive Support Team. They were relatively small in number, with the majority being general complaints about the disruption to service. A small number of emails requested refunds of Council Tax and an even smaller number were complaints specifically about either trade waste or garden waste collections. One complaint was received about a problem with an assisted collection.
21. Residents also complained to their ward councillors but numbers for these are not held centrally and in any case many of these also complained directly through Customer Services or senior staff and/or members.

Communication approach

22. As it did with enquiries from residents, the disruption to the waste and recycling service generated a high volume of enquiries from local, regional and trade media over a number of weeks.
23. This peaked in the days after it became apparent the council's licence had been revoked. As this was an operational rather than political issue, the Chief Executive conducted TV interviews with BBC and ITV on 26 January. The

Leader took part in a follow-up interview with the BBC on 30 January and the Portfolio Holder also spoke to the local press. Multiple statements and updates were provided on request to regional and local outlets as well as to journalists working for trade or national organisations. The coverage was extensive in the local press with online and paper articles running over several weeks.

24. Alongside traditional media, the council used its social media channels heavily to cascade information and service updates. It was important the information was coordinated across services and channels and therefore the council adopted a consistent process early, which was used throughout the period of disruption:

- An update was provided at the end of most days, detailing the work that had been completed and the plan for the following day.
- These updates were published at around the same time, in the early evening, to ensure consistency for residents.
- Each message was uploaded to a dedicated space on the council's website, linked from the homepage
- It was emailed out, almost always by the Chief Executive to all councillors and all parish councils
- It was posted on Facebook and Instagram
- The recorded message that greets people phoning the Customer Service Centre on 01799 510510 was changed every time with the latest information
- The statement was an important source of information to allow Customer Service staff to help customers phoning, emailing and using LiveChat. Internally a Microsoft Teams group was established for Customer Service Team Leaders, Communications, Website and Environmental Services staff to quickly exchange information and provide updates during each working day
- Every statement included an apology for the disruption

25. The main difficulty encountered by the Communications Team in compiling the daily statement was the reliability of information about the following day's plan. Every daily statement released was accurate at the time of publishing; however because of issues on the ground including the sheer volume of waste being collected, vehicle breakdowns and the unfamiliarity of parts of the district of crews provided by other organisations, it sometimes proved to be the case that despite best efforts the day's work could not be completed. This then led to further complaints to the Customer Services team and on social media.

26. To ensure as much clarity as possible in the messaging (and to avoid people leaving comments about their bins on unrelated posts) the decision was taken to suspend social media posts related to other service areas.

27. A decision was taken early that the council would not reply to comments on bin-related social media posts. The reasons for this were:

- The volume of correspondence – collectively the 20 related social media posts reached hundreds of thousands of users and generated almost 3,000 comments. This was an unprecedented amount and over an extended period, and it was simply not possible to reply to all.
- In many circumstances, the council was simply unable to provide users with the information being requested, such as the exact day and exact time when their bins would be collected.
- The situation developed at pace and the service plans were changing frequently which made messaging extremely challenging. This was exacerbated by the complex nature of the patchwork collection arrangements and operational issues within the service once the interim licence was granted.

28. Many of the comments were not requesting information; they were simply stating opinions about what had happened or venting frustration. Even though there were examples of social media users making claims that were simply not true, in the interest of transparency no posts were hidden by the council, except for two from the same person that contained defamatory statements about current and former members of staff. There were a small number of posts using offensive language that were automatically hidden by Facebook.

29. Although the decision not to respond was taken as per the reasons set out above, all social media comments were read. These comments were a valuable listening tool and in the later stages helped inform the service's approach to clearing the backlog of bins.

30. The table at Appendix C shows the volume of social media contacts during the period of disruption.

APPENDIX E 1

Public Engagement Report – Appendix A

The tables below show the number of customer contacts by phone, email and LiveChat to the Customer Service Centre, for the period of disruption to waste and recycling services and the equivalent period the previous year.

There was a sharp drop off in waste related calls in the week commencing Monday 26 February as the service returned to normal – around 250 calls.

As per paragraph 13 of the report, a weekly breakdown of waste and non-waste emails is not readily available and would require a lengthy manual process to calculate. However, the total for the period is provided, which shows 62 per cent of all emails received were about waste and recycling compared to 17 per cent over the equivalent period in 2023.

Phone calls

This year

22/01/24 - 23/02/24				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 22/01/24 - 26/01/24	1668	1332	336	20%
Week 2 - 29/01/24 - 02/02/24	1752	1374	378	22%
Week 3 - 05/02/24 - 09/02/24	1867	1291	576	31%
Week 4 - 12/02/24 - 16/02/24	1760	1195	565	32%

Last year

23/01/23 - 24/02/23				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 23/01/23 - 27/01/23	1530	1242	288	19%
Week 2 - 30/01/23 - 03/02/23	1476	1208	268	18%
Week 3 - 06/02/23 - 10/02/23	1589	1261	328	21%
Week 4 - 13/02/23 - 17/02/23	1508	1291	217	14%

APPENDIX E 1

Public Engagement Report – Appendix A

Week 5 - 19/02/24 - 23/02/24	3024	2160	864	29%
Calls	1007 1	7352	2719	27%

Week 5 - 20/02/23 - 24/02/23	1685	1396	289	17%
Calls	7788	6398	1390	18%

LiveChat

This year

22/01/24 - 23/02/24				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 22/01/24 - 26/01/24	155	59	96	62%
Week 2 - 29/01/24 - 02/02/24	154	64	90	58%
Week 3 - 05/02/24 - 09/02/24	204	89	115	56%
Week 4 - 12/02/24 - 16/02/24	151	53	98	65%
Week 5 - 19/02/24 - 23/02/24	297	148	149	50%

last year

23/01/23 - 24/02/23				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 23/01/23 - 27/01/23	112	88	24	21%
Week 2 - 30/01/23 - 03/02/23	115	90	25	22%
Week 3 - 06/02/23 - 10/02/23	96	79	17	18%
Week 4 - 13/02/23 - 17/02/23	48	39	9	19%
Week 5 - 20/02/23 - 24/02/23	156	81	75	48%

APPENDIX E 1

Public Engagement Report – Appendix A

Chat	961	413	548	57%
------	-----	-----	-----	-----

Chat	527	377	150	28%
------	-----	-----	-----	-----

APPENDIX E 1

Public Engagement Report – Appendix A

Emails

This year

22/01/24 - 23/02/24				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 22/01/24 - 26/01/24	427			
Week 2 - 29/01/24 - 02/02/24	1172			
Week 3 - 05/02/24 - 09/02/24	623			
Week 4 - 12/02/24 - 16/02/24	374			
Week 5 - 19/02/24 - 23/02/24	333			
Email	2929	1116	1813	62%
Totals	1396 1	8881	5080	57%

Last year

23/01/23 - 24/02/23				
Queue	Total	Non-waste	Waste only	Percentage of waste only enquiries
Week 1 - 23/01/23 - 27/01/23	394			
Week 2 - 30/01/23 - 03/02/23	437			
Week 3 - 06/02/23 - 10/02/23	560			
Week 4 - 13/02/23 - 17/02/23	508			
Week 5 - 20/02/23 - 24/02/23	434			
Email	2333	1702	399	17%
Totals	10648	8477	1939	28%

APPENDIX E 1

Public Engagement Report – Appendix A

APPENDIX E 2

Public Engagement Report - Appendix B

This table shows the complaints coordinated by the Executive Support Team from week commencing 22 January to 1 March 2024. These are complaints either forwarded on by Customer Services or Environmental Services if the complainant requested their complaint be escalated once the initial response was received, or where the complainant directly contacted the Chief Executive and/or the Leader/Portfolio Holder.

With regard to the category “General” – these complaints are those which do not fall into any of the other more specific categories listed and are those which complain about the disruption to the domestic waste and recycling service and/or the loss of the Operator’s Licence.

Nature of complaint	Total
General	99
Missed assisted collection	1
Refund of council tax	20
Garden waste	7
Trade waste	2
	129

Received via	Total
CSC	41
Environmental Services	35
Leader/Chief Executive/Portfolio Holder	53
	129

APPENDIX E 3

Public Engagement – Appendix C

The tables below provides statistics for each daily update on Facebook and Instagram. In addition to the figures below there were 133 direct messages from residents – 128 on Facebook and five on Instagram.

The definitions of the columns are:

Reach – the number of people who viewed the post at least once

Impressions – the total number of times a post was visible on a user's timeline

Comments – the number of comments left under each post

Shares – the number of times the post was shared to another Facebook page or the user's own timeline

Engagement – any action someone takes on a post other than just reading it, including a comment, reaction, share or clicking on a link

FACEBOOK

	Reach	Impressions	Comments	Shares	Engagement
24-Jan	6445	6799	41	7	1121
25-Jan	31792	26240	259	87	14943
25-Jan	32155	39877	209	99	11375
26-Jan	16603	21343	190	47	5911
29-Jan	26928	32517	212	119	7369
31-Jan	17121	19303	177	46	4591
01-Feb	11654	13657	153	35	3731
02-Feb	13222	15341	235	27	4415
05-Feb	17461	19053	227	39	6080
06-Feb	16997	18534	174	46	4931
07-Feb	16981	18448	132	61	3830
07-Feb	13767	15686	139	51	3706
08-Feb	9287	10030	84	13	2140
09-Feb	10546	11631	110	13	1847
12-Feb	8675	9086	82	8	1935
13-Feb	7262	7534	65	13	1364
14-Feb	6114	6432	44	5	1318
15-Feb	5014	5129	61	4	1124
16-Feb	5583	5822	72	8	1512
19-Feb	3852	3825	60	6	1161
23-Feb	7054	7054	31	10	1060
26-Feb	5038	5204	30	10	746

INSTAGRAM

	Reach	Impressions	Comments	Shares	Engagement
24-Jan	n/a				
25-Jan	893	1025	2	1	17
25-Jan	950	1168	8	2	23
26-Jan	1382	1631	12	0	43
29-Jan	1196	1351	6	1	28
31-Jan	762	854	1	0	9
01-Feb	820	953	5	1	11
02-Feb	876	1040	5	0	7
05-Feb	706	822	4	0	9
06-Feb	738	817	9	1	15
07-Feb	664	756	5	1	20
07-Feb	499	553	3	1	9
08-Feb	464	512	2	0	4
09-Feb	504	552	1	2	5
12-Feb	534	577	5	0	9
13-Feb	483	518	2	0	4
14-Feb	391	420	0	0	3
15-Feb	371	399	0	0	4
16-Feb	433	482	1	0	3
19-Feb	617	672	8	0	10
23-Feb	294	308	0	0	3
26-Feb	507	515	1	0	2

APPENDIX F

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group **Date:** Tuesday 12 March 2024

Title: Waste Refunds

Report Author: Peter Holt, Chief Executive

Summary

1. This report sets out the position with regard to requests for refunds following the period of service disruption.

Recommendations

2. None

Financial Implications

- 3.

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The council communicated the position with regard to council tax refunds during the period of disruption
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None

Workforce/Workplace	None
---------------------	------

Situation

6. Provision of weekly residential waste collections is funded through taxation not by an individual charge. All homes in the district are entitled to these collections, and there is no differential charge for larger/smaller homes, though homes in different Council Tax bands obviously pay different amounts of Council Tax, and individuals are entitled variously to single-person Council Tax discounts, Council Tax Relief Scheme etc.
7. As all homes pay for this service, there is effectively no incentive for a competitive commercial market for residential waste collection to exist, as any resident paying another supplier to empty their bins would get no Council Tax discount or refund, making the Council's domestic waste collection service a monopoly supplier. This of course has long been the case for every single local authority area in the country.
8. Service standards and frequency are at the Council's discretion, whether that is the alternating fortnightly cycle of recycling and residual waste (ie recycling bins one week and residual bins the next week), or the weekly food caddy collection. Over Christmas week in 2023, the waste collection service was suspended for the week, with staff required to take the three days that week which weren't statutory holidays as annual leave, with waste collections resuming as normal the following week.
9. There is therefore no contractual frequency or standard for waste collection which if not met gives any legal entitlement to residents to a refund or compensation, whether that is an individual bin missed or a wholesale system failure.
10. In contrast, the Council's commercial waste collections operate on a commercial basis, and in the market in direct competition with a number of commercial competitors. Individual businesses that choose to buy their commercial waste services from the Council pay a bespoke rate depending on frequency, volume etc. Failures in commercial waste collection services, whether an individual missed collection or a systemic failure, are therefore contractual do therefore in contrast stimulate conversations about refunds/compensation, though such discussions are normally a lot more fluid in terms of resolution, including a catch-up collection, and potentially influencing the negotiation at contract renewal time, such as rolling over the deal with an extra charge-free week of collection on renewal.
11. As well as the recycling, residual and food collection, the Council does offer residents a paid-for garden waste collection service for £50 a year, and this is taken up by about 25% of residents. This service did face its own operational difficulties prior to the recent bin disruption, though it also could not be operated for those weeks where there was no operator's licence in place. In light of these various disruptions, the 12 months of paid operation of this service has been extended to run for 15 months before renewal/charge for the next year, and Members also abandoned consideration as part of the 2024/25 budget just passed of raising the annual fee from £50 to £60.

12. Of these three separate waste collection models, it is therefore only the one – the main residential waste collection service – that has not already applied its own system in relation to charging following service disruption.
13. Residents in an average property – ie a Band D – pay Uttlesford District Council some £3.50 a week, as the district council only retains about 8% of the Council Tax it collects, with the rest going to Essex County Council, the Police and Fire Services, and to Parish/Town Councils
14. Of that c£3.50 a week, around 1/7th of that is attributable to the residential waste collection service. In layman's terms, this means that residents pay an average of 50 pence a week to have their bins emptied.
15. During this waste collection disruption the pattern of missed collections was asymmetric, as described elsewhere on the agenda, with most residents not having collections in one or two of the weeks affected (albeit with their collection days often out of the normal rota), with a smaller number of residents missing out for three or in the case of individual difficulties four weeks.
16. Various Councillors and members of the public have raised the issue of a refund or compensation; one resident sent an invoice claiming compensation of over £200 for a single missed waste collection (though this has no legal foundation, and is not being paid).
17. The obvious opportunity for Councillors to bring forward this issue for serious consideration was the February 2024 budget setting Council meeting – not least as any large scale refund or rebate would quickly add up to a substantial sum of money for which individual budget provision and authorisation would be required.
18. No Councillor proposed a budget amendment to this effect at the February full Council meeting, though all party groups were (as usual) offered the opportunity of officer support in advance of the meeting if they wished to bring forward an in-order budget amendment.
19. The opportunity to respond to this disruption by way of not increasing (or even reducing) the base level of Council Tax which funds this service has been missed by Councillors for the year. There would be an opportunity for Councillors to propose some other form of refund or rebate in-year still exists, though this would because of its scale likely require a mid-year budget change resolution, and would incur substantial additional administrative costs disproportionate to the cost of a small number of 50 pence a week service missed.
20. In light of the importance of providing the interim service during the disruption, drawing on the support of a local commercial provider and a neighbouring council, the waste service has spent more money than usual, rather than less. Both these additional costs incurred (which will be subject of a separate report, once the recharge bills from the other suppliers have actually been submitted) and the cost of any refund/rebate would need to either be carried by the waste

service – which would put future reliable provision at risk – or from Council funds generally,

21. Members of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group are invited to take a view on this issue.

APPENDIX G

Committee: Operational Resilience Task and Finish Group **Date:** Tuesday 12 March 2024

Title: Broader Operational Resilience

Report Author: Peter Holt, Chief Executive

Summary

1. This report describes work being undertaken to identify any system weakness across the council.

Recommendations

2. None

Financial Implications

3. None

Background Papers

4. None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	Management colleagues are being consulted as per paragraph 10
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None

Workforce/Workplace	The resilience review summarised in this report has implications across the workforce.
---------------------	--

Situation

6. Beyond the issues specifically around the waste service disruption, this experience has flagged up the risk of 'single points of failure' elsewhere in the organisation. Although the Council is one of the larger local employers, with some 330 staff, these staff are spread over a vast number of different specialist services. There is a rich and proud tradition of Council staff stepping sideways to help fill gaps in other services under pressure, caused for whatever reason, and this was proved most visibly during the pandemic. The fact remains however that there are so many various specialist, complex or statutory requirements which cannot instantly or smoothly be filled by such best endeavours.
7. The chief executive has therefore initiated a process to consider the whole organisation's business functions to spot for system weaknesses in terms of resilience and business continuity to see how well they are already mapped and covered, proportionate to their risk.
8. For example, there is a requirement that at the end of every working day, every Council banks with the Government any funds over a certain agreed limit, rather than leaving them in banks overnight. As a district council, UDC often holds sizeable sums not only of its own money, but of Council Tax receipts collected on behalf of other preceptor authorities (with 92% of such tax collected paid over periodically to Essex County Council, the Police, the Fire and Rescue Service, and all of our Parish and Town Councils who raise their own precept), so these can be very sizeable sums. The physical process for transferring this money to Government coffers late in the afternoon requires specialist knowledge, security equipment and log-ons, and so there is in place an identified local resilience system within our finance team to carry this out.
9. This council-wide resilience check exercise will both test the appropriateness of that system, as well as capture and record it centrally in the Council in a way that is not currently done, so that any vacancies or absences in those specific posts that carry out this work can be flagged up through an HR system, with step-in arrangements put in place as appropriate.
10. This action includes an immediate addition of a risk to the Corporate Risk Register (as below), and an initial trawl of the organisation by the Director of Business Change and People to identify such issues (see template as below). The chief executive has also secured the agreement of an experienced director of a neighbouring local authority to join in this exercise as a 'critical friend', providing insight and independent, constructive challenge and advice.
11. A report back on this resilience review will be provided in due course, though by the nature of the risks and issues involved, various specific details will not be published for security reasons.

New strategic risk:

NEW RISK

- *Impact of regulatory/enforcement/intervention action by various Government departments/regulators on UDC – both their individual risks and impacts, and also cumulative impacts on both operations, reputation, ability to recruit and retain etc.*

23-CR-21 BUSINESS RESILIENCE			Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Lees	
Risk Owner: Peter Holt				
<p>If the council does not have officers in post with the correct statutory or regulatory qualifications to carry out the key functions/activities of the council or ensure adequate back up is in place to avoid single points of failure this could lead to adverse impacts on service provision and reputational damage.</p>	Original Likelihood	Original Impact	Original Score	Current Controls
	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and proactive management of regulatory requirements both at a corporate and operational level • Succession planning/deputisation of key roles within the authority to mitigate operational/service failure • Support professional qualification or specialised training programmes throughout the organisation to mitigate single points of failure
	Current Likelihood	Current Impact	Current Score	Further Action
	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update Business Continuity plans for each service area to include where specific qualifications and/or licences are required and ensure back up options are specified to avoid single points of failure and ensure continuity of service delivery
	Target Likelihood	Target Impact	Target Score	Planned Completion date
	1	4	4	31.03.2024

Template for organisational trawl (edited to remove specifics):

Operational Resilience

Service Area	Activity/Function	Responsible Officer/s	Back up/Deputy	Service Impact	Other information
Environmental Services	Operator's Licence				
Finance	Statutory Officer - Section 151 Officer				
Finance	Treasury Management				
Legal	Statutory Officer – Monitoring Officer				
Car Parks					
Economic Development	Not applicable				
Private Finance Initiative					
Homelessness					
Housing Strategy					
Building Control	Building Inspections				
Development Management					
Highways Infrastructure Planning					
Planning Management					
Planning Policy					
Planning Specialists					
Contract, Performance and Risk Management					
Committee Administration					

APPENDIX H

Scrutiny Task and Finish Group – Meeting on 18th March 2024

Estimated cost of waste service disruption

Peter Holt, Chief Executive

It is important to transparently account for the costs of this service disruption to Councillors, and ultimately to the general public. Rather than just give a single figure, for sake of transparency, a detailed breakdown is offered as below. Some of these figures are based on estimates, including the largest element – the amount that Braintree District Council will ultimately recharge to Uttlesford District Council for their costs in assisting with our collections during the period of disruption, which were hugely appreciated.

It is important in being fully transparent to also avoid double-counting, and to take account of costs incurred that can subsequently be reclaimed.

For example, had Uttlesford never lost its operating licence and operated as usual during the weeks in question, it would have spent an estimated £28,745 in diesel. As the costs recharged to us by Braintree District Council will include the costs to them of the diesel they used, a line item has been included in the table below to account for this double-counting of 2 sets of diesel when only 1 was actually burned.

Similarly, costs recharged by Widdington Skips includes the amount that they had to pay, when assisting us, to discharge the waste they collected, but which Essex County Council has helpfully agreed (in writing) to subsequently refund to Uttlesford, and this is estimated at £19,000 (ie offsetting more than half of the £36,000 that Widdington Skips have had to charge us for their assistance).

Similarly, officers thought it important to show not only the cost of the appropriately qualified extra staff member brought in to allow us to apply for the new licence, but also the savings on the permanent staff member post that this temporary staff member was replacing.

In total therefore, the total net cost to the Council (and therefore to Council Tax Payers) of this period of disruption is estimated at approximately £53,000. A full and final accounting will be provided in due course, once all elements therein have been finalised and are all actual rather than estimated costs.

This approximate £53,000 cost contrasts to the very rough estimate given to Members previously of £80,000-£100,000 by the chief executive.

It would be possible to look beyond the period of disruption in January and February 2024, and also consider excess costs/further savings – e.g. approximately six months' salary saving at c £5,000 per month in 2023 from the vacant qualified

manager post, but officers want to be careful to not be seen to be minimising net costs on reputational grounds, so are providing a full and transparent costs breakdown related to the actual period of disruption only.

Direct cost of revocation of licence	
Widdington Skips	36,000
Full Cycle Waste Management	6,848
Braintree District Council – NB estimated cost (invoices not yet received)	45,000
Replacement Licence Application Fee	800
Overtime for Customer Service Centre staff answering concerned residents	2,508
Overtime cost for Waste Services inc operating catch up for bins not emptied during the main period of disruption	9,321
Temporary licence holder staff costs for period of disruption	4,400
Transport consultant advice	515
Less items that represent double-counting, recoverable costs, or salary for vacant post covered by temporary licence holder	
Diesel	(28,745)
Tipping fees to be reclaimed from ECC, as agreed with them	(19,000)
Saving on Fleet Operations Manager vacant post for period	(5,070)
Net total cost of service disruption (including current estimates pending invoice receipt etc.)	£52,981