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Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 11th January, 2024

Time: 7.00 pm

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

Chair: Councillor N Gregory

Members: Councillors M Ahmed, G Bagnall (Vice-Chair), C Criscione,
B Donald, R Gooding, R Haynes, S Luck, C Martin, A Reeve and
G Sell

Substitutes: Councillors N Church, M Coletta, G Driscoll, R Pavitt and R Silcock

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.

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AGENDA

PART 1

Open to Public and Press

- 1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**
To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** 5 - 8
To consider the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 3 Responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee**
To consider any responses of the Executive to reports of the Committee.
- 4 Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee in relation to call in of a decision**
To consider any matter referred for call in.
- 5 Cabinet Forward Plan** 9 - 10
To receive the updated Cabinet Forward Plan.
- 6 Scrutiny Work Programme** 11
To receive the Scrutiny Work Programme.
- 7 Climate Crisis Action Plan** 12 - 16
To receive the Climate Crisis Action Plan.
- 8 Crime and Disorder Scrutiny (Presentation)**
To receive the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Presentation.
- 9 Housing Compliance Policies and Procedures** 17 - 21
To receive the timetable relating to Housing Compliance Policies and Procedures.

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Agenda Item 2

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on THURSDAY, 30
NOVEMBER 2023 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Councillor G Bagnall
Councillors M Ahmed, R Gooding, R Haynes, S Luck, A Reeve
and G Sell.

Officers in attendance: R Auty (Director of Corporate Services), B Brown (Director of Environmental Services), C Edwards (Democratic Services Officer), A Knight (Director of Business Performance and People) and S Lewin (Economic Development Manager).

Also in Attendance: Councillor J Evans (Portfolio Holder for Planning Councillor N Hargreaves (Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy) and Councillor N Reeve (Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change).

SC22 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Criscione, Donald and Gregory.

SC23 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

SC24 **CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Cabinet forward plan was noted.

SC25 **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Work Programme was noted.

The Director of Corporate Services said to note that the Housing Revenue Account 30 year Business Plan had moved to the 6th February 2024 meeting and the Walden Place report would be added when a date was finalised.

SC26 **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Director of Environmental Services gave a performance update, the presentation is appended to the minutes.

Councillor Reeve apologised that there had been no written report, he said that the Service was considering what changes to make but there were no definite plans yet. He thanked the Environmental Services Team for their hard work during a difficult period. He said that a future plan for the department was underway, focusing on staffing, replacement of vehicles and delivery locations.

In response to questions the Director of Environmental Services said: -

- The 29% of recycled material related to dry recyclables which was a percentage of the total household waste collected including street bins, road sweepings and litter pickings.
- The replacement cost of a vehicle was in the region of £285K.
- The front-line fleet consisted of 9 large and 1 smaller vehicle.
- Whilst the front-line fleet were not in need of replacement, they were requiring more frequent repairs and therefore the older spare fleet were being operated every day.
- The growth of housing in the district and therefore an increase in volumes were causing on going issues that would only get worse as the vehicles aged.
- The main front line fleet were approximately halfway through their operating life and there were plans and budget in place for their renewal. It was the spare fleet of 3 vehicles that needed replacement.
- There had been some changes to key management posts, but these were being monitored and recruitment was taking place.
- There had been problems with the garden waste collection which had been redesigned to take into account an increase in customers, however a change to the tip location had made it impossible to accept any further residents onto the scheme.
- There were plans to change to a tipping location more locally and this would make a huge difference and enable growth in the customer base of what was a paid service.
- The option of electric vehicles had been considered but because of the size of the district this was not currently possible as they do not have the range and were double the price.
- Uttlesford were fortunate to have a Waste Recycling Officer who was working on an education plan for the coming year targeting specific areas that have issues.
- Essex County Council were funding a food waste campaign which included the addition of liners for the food waste caddy's.

This item would come back to the meeting for a further update within the next few months.

SC27 **ECONOMIC RECOVERY DELIVERY PLAN - YEAR 3 PROGRESS REPORT**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy presented the Report he thanked the team for their hard work in assessing the applications and ensuring that the monies were paid out. He made the following comments:-

- There were three sources of funding, Uttlesford District Council (UDC) Post Pandemic Business fund, and two funded by the Government, UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).
- The UDC funding was for £1million to be spent by March 2024. The two Government funds together equalled £1.8million to be spent over three years up to March 2025.
- Appendices A and B gave a breakdown of the total spend on all three funds.
- No flexibility about the end date for the Government funds would be allowed.

- The UDC funds were paid on presentation of an invoice.
- The Government was sent a quarterly report of spend to date.

In response to questions the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy and Officers said:-

- This year there was particular focus on engagement with small and micro businesses.
- The Team produced regular newsletters, sponsored posts on social media, and engagement with different groups and business forums.
- There had been a noticeable increase in businesses engaging with the Council.
- There was currently not enough publicity promoting how the Council helped businesses within the district. This was often down to time and resources, however there was work under way to share and promote the work being carried out with small businesses.
- It would be helpful if posts and newsletters could also be shared on Parish Websites.
- There had been mixed results when trying to engage with Parish Councils but this would continue.
- The High Street Enhancement Fund was a shop front grant which prioritised town centres and encompassed new signage, gutters, repainting etc. It was a match fund of up to £5K paid in arrears on the receipt of invoices, on a first come basis.
- Great Dunmow businesses were aware of the funding available, but there had not been much of a response.
- It was not always easy to quantify the effectiveness of the support, the request for feedback to be shared with Members was noted.
- There were still funds available for the High Street Enhancement Fund.

SC28 **CORPORATE CORE INDICATORS 2023/24**

The Director of Business Performance and People introduced the report. A condensed version of key indicators was now dealt with through Cabinet, having previously been in the remit of the Governance, Audit and Performance Committee.

She said that the report was for Members to note and to make comment on those indicators that were being used to monitor performance for this year.

She said that the indicators were benchmarked against statistical near neighbours.

The Director of Corporate Services said that it was not the role of the Scrutiny Committee to replicate the work of Cabinet and to drill into the indicators. He said that they were brought to the Committee to raise awareness of the monitoring being carried out and to take a view on how best they could be used within the work of the Committee.

The Chair said that some of the percentage figures were not clear and asked for more clarity within the report.

In response to questions the Director of Business Performance and People said:-

- There were 25 indicators and of those 6 had gone down since the last quarter and 10 were in a longer term decline. These areas were targeted and changes put in place to help bring them back up to target.
- The Blueprint Workforce Plan had been developed to support the organisation and employees and this could also help in managing sickness. The Director of Corporate Services agreed to circulate to all Members of the Committee.
- Performance against statutory obligations were reported at the Corporate Management Team meeting and monitored on a quarterly basis. This report was also taken to the Audit and Standards Committee.
- No long term sick details were individualised and reasons for long term sickness were not shared.

The meeting ended at 20.35.

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Item	Meeting	Date	Brief information about the item and details of documents submitted for consideration	Key Decision?	Part 2?	Portfolio Holder	Contact officer from where the documents can be obtained
Future Housing Options	Cabinet	9 Jan	To consider the report regarding Future Housing Options	Yes	Fully exempt	Cllr Arthur Coote	Kerry Clifford, Director of Housing, Health and Communities KClifford@uttlesford.gov.uk
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029 and Annual Budget 2024/25	Cabinet	13 Feb	Full suite of financial strategies and annual budget reports covering 2024/25 and the medium term.	No	Open	Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy	Jody Etherington, Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits JEtherington@uttlesford.gov.uk
Quarter 2 Financial Forecast - 2022/23	Cabinet	13 Feb	Q2 forecast outturn positions for General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and capital programme	No	Open	Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy	Jody Etherington, Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits JEtherington@uttlesford.gov.uk
2023/24 Q3 Corporate Core Indicators (CCIs) Outturn Report	Cabinet	19 Mar	Outturn data for Q3 CCIs and comparable benchmarking analysis.	No	Open	Leader of the Council	Paula Evans, Risk, Contracts and Performance Manager pevans@uttlesford.gov.uk
Corporate Core Indicators 2023/24 - Quarter 3	Cabinet	19 Mar	present members with the q3 CCI's and performance data	No	Open	Leader of the Council	Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk
Quarter 3 Financial Forecast - 2023/24	Cabinet	19 Mar	Q3 forecast outturn positions for General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and capital programme	No	Open	Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy	Jody Etherington, Director of Finance, Revenues and Benefits JEtherington@uttlesford.gov.uk

Item	Meeting	Date	Brief information about the item and details of documents submitted for consideration	Key Decision?	Part 2?	Portfolio Holder	Contact officer from where the documents can be obtained
2024/25 Corporate Core Indicators (CCIs) and Targets	Cabinet	18 Apr	To agree the indicators and relevant targets for the 2024/25 performance year collection and reporting.	No	Open	Leader of the Council	Paula Evans, Risk, Contracts and Performance Manager pevans@uttlesford.gov.uk
Annual Procurement Update	Cabinet	18 Apr	to provide members with an update on procurement activity during the financial year	No	Open	Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy	Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk
Corporate Core Indicators - Target Setting 2024/25	Cabinet	18 Apr	presenting members with the targets for CCI's for the year 2024/25	No	Open	Leader of the Council	Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk
Economic Recovery Plan 2021 - 2024	Cabinet	18 Apr	To present to members the outcomes/initiatives delivered via the 3 recovery plan.	No	Open	Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Economy	Angela Knight, Director of Business Performance and People aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk

Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

22 June 2023	11 October 2023	30 November 2023	11 January 2024	6 February 2024	16 April 2024
Work Planning	Corporate Plan	Economic Development Recovery Plan	Climate Crisis update	Corporate Plan	Economic Development Recovery Plan
Housing review scoping report	Local Plan	Environmental Services	Crime and Disorder Scrutiny	Medium Term Financial Strategy and 2023/24 Budget	Climate Crisis Action Plan
Feedback from Centre for Governance and Scrutiny Annual Conference	Housing Management	Corporate Core Indicators 2023/24	Housing compliance policies and procedures	HRA 30 Year Business Plan	
				Car Parking tariff review	

Agenda Item 7

Committee: Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 11
January 2024

Title: Climate Change Action Plan – Progress
Update

**Portfolio
Holder:** Councillor Neil Reeve

**Report
Author:** Vicky Reed, Climate Change Lead Officer

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 netzero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.
2. The existing Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was approved by Cabinet on 11 January 2022 and incorporated feedback from this Committee.
3. The Lead Officer for Climate Change started in post on late September 2022 and has taken forward the council's CCAP, in addition to delivery of the DEFRA funded, Saffron Walden Clean Air Project.
4. In January 2023, Scrutiny Committee previously considered an update report detailing the CCAP actions that were due to be completed during the 2022/23 financial year.
5. This report provides a brief update on the work undertaken to update the UDC Climate Action plan, proposed approach and next steps.

Recommendations

6. To note progress on the Climate Change Action Plan as set out below.
7. To note highlights, arising issues, follow-on actions, and a forward plan proposed by the Climate Change, Lead Officer.

Financial Implications

8. The Council has already agreed a specific climate change budget of £1,000,000 budget over 3 years.
9. To date a total of £842,000 of the climate Change budget has been committed or spent. An allocation of £300,000 was made to provide grants for community projects that will deliver on the Council's climate action priorities, via the Zero Carbon Communities Fund.

10. External funding totalling over £1,700,000 has also been secured.

Background Papers

11. 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

12.

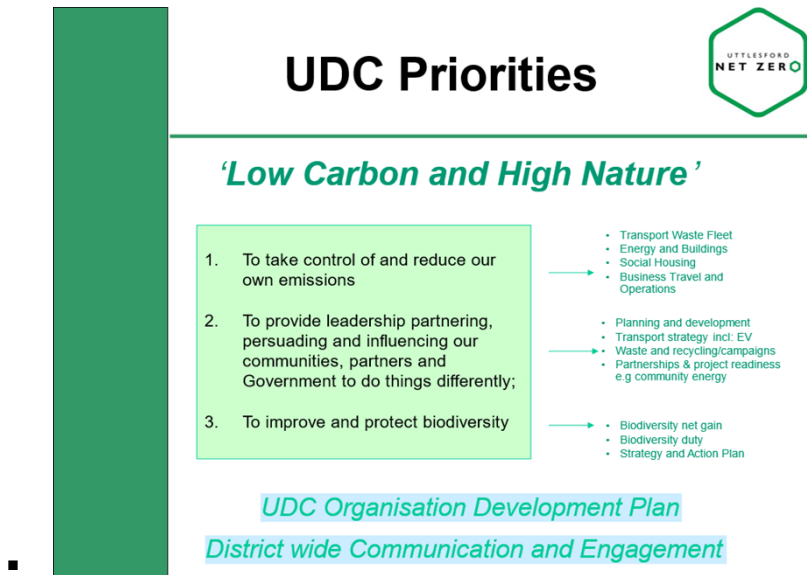
Communication/Consultation	The Climate Change Action Plan has previously been reviewed by the Energy and Climate Change Working Group. The Action plan is underpinned by a robust supporting communication and engagement plan.
Community Safety	
Equalities	Scoping and delivery of climate change action projects and activities will consider the needs of all groups in the community.
Health and Safety	
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The council have responsibilities under the Environment Act, to protect our environment, clean up our air and rivers and boost nature.
Sustainability	Putting in place a carbon management plan will support the council in improving their energy use and driving down carbon emissions.
Ward-specific impacts	The council have a responsibility to lead and influence action on climate change across the district.
Workforce/Workplace	A new council operational 'Environment and Sustainability' Group 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.
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Situation

Climate Change Future Programme Management

13. It has previously been reported to this Committee that the Climate Change Action Plan would be updated. After researching best practice across the Country, reflecting our own experience, it has been concluded that an annual plan should be developed. As well as being more focused with SMART objectives, activities and tasks, an annual plan enables the Council to adapt to the changing landscape around climate related matters and legislation.
14. Key themes and priorities within the UDC Climate Change Strategy remain underpinning the updated action plan as illustrated below:



15. In the updated Climate Change Action Annual Plan 2024/25 activities and tasks will be grouped/framed using the UDC Corporate priorities as follows:

UDC Corporate Priorities	Including
Take Action on Climate Change	<i>Councils own housing, Council buildings, services and people</i>
Manage Waste in a Sustainable Way	<i>Waste and Recycling; Campaigns</i>

Work with partners to deliver sustainable transport	<i>Transport strategy; EV infrastructure; active travel: air quality</i>
Conserve and enhance the quality and diversity of the district's natural habitats and wildlife	<i>UDC Biodiversity Duty; Implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain Legislation</i>

16. 'Low Carbon and High Nature' will be the core objective at the centre of the annual Climate Change Action Plan.
17. The council have agreed to develop a Carbon Management plan, building on best practice in carbon and energy management. This plan will be crucial to achieving the UDC 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.
18. 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 'Environment and Sustainability' group that will provide oversight to the action plan and which will mitigate any arising risks to delivery.
19. The annual Climate Change Action plan for 2024/25 will be presented in draft form to the next meeting of this Committee. This will include an annual report on UDC Climate Change Action achievements made in 2023/24.

Risk Analysis

2.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Gap in programme staff resources, leading to reduced capacity to deliver CCAP and commence SW Clean Air Project	2	2	Priority growth bid to ensure Climate Team resources are made permanent.
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	2	3	Review of current action plan to be completed in winter 2023 in order to scope and validate existing actions, and to agree a revised action plan for 24/25, along with success measures

achievement of Council net zero carbon targets and/ or climate change objectives.			and carbon management plan.
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- 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.

Agenda Item 9

Committee: Scrutiny Committee

Date:

11th January 2024

Title: Update on the development of Health and Safety Compliance Policies

Report Author: Kerry Clifford –Director of Housing, Health, and Communities

Summary

1. On the 11th October 2023, the chair of Scrutiny Committee requested that an update be circulated to the Committee once the housing compliance policies and procedures had been reviewed and formally adopted. This report sets out a timetable for the approval by Cabinet and the adoption of the following policies relating to Health and Safety Compliance.

- Fire Safety Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Electrical Service Safety Policy
- Damp and Mould Safety Policy
- Water Hygiene Safety Policy
- Wood Burning Stove and Open Fire Safety Policy
- Asbestos Safety Policy
- Lift Safety Policy

Recommendations

2. Scrutiny Committee is asked to note this report and the attached timetable relating to the approval and adoption of the compliance policies.

Financial Implications

3. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Background Papers

4. None.

Impact

5.

Communication/Consultation	The new regulatory Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey which UDC will deliver this year focuses on gaining the perspective of tenants on how landlord services are provided, with a specific focus on repairs, maintenance and safety in the home.
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	Communication on UDC's commitment to delivering safe and good quality homes is vital to ensuring a good tenant and landlord relationship.
Community Safety	No direct impact arising from this report.
Equalities	No direct impact arising from this report.
Health and Safety	The health and safety of our tenants and leaseholders, their visitors, and also of staff and members of the public who access our buildings is the central driving factor behind robust policies and procedures relating to Health and Safety compliance.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	No direct impact arising from this report
Sustainability	No direct impact arising from this report
Ward-specific impacts	No direct impact arising from this report
Workforce/Workplace	This report specifically addresses not only those staff (not only housing, but others such as benefit advisors) whose work takes them into tenants' and leaseholders' homes in the course of their duties, but also a much wider group of staff, as the policies in this report include, for example, the fire and legionella checks of council buildings such as the London Road headquarters.

Situation

6. Following a self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing in August 2022, and the Regulator's subsequent decision to take no further action, all operational procedures and assurance systems have been reviewed, to ensure that health and safety compliance is being properly delivered across all council owned, managed or leased buildings and properties, whether domestic or non-domestic.
7. This includes a review of all related policies to ensure that the council is compliant with current legislation, Codes of Practice and Health and Safety Regulations, relating to each area of compliance.
8. The updated policies will provide an assurance framework that identifies clear roles and responsibilities throughout UDC for the implementation of the policies and will also set-out how each area of compliance will be measured, monitored and reported to ensure sufficient compliance.
9. The timetable as set-out in appendix A details the process and timescale for approval and adoption of the relevant policies.

Risk Analysis

10.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
<p>Poor management of Health and Safety Compliance issues with no strategies for monitoring measuring and reporting on compliance against legislative requirements and Codes of Practice.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Robust policies and procedures with clear roles and responsibilities identified and reported via Corporate Health and Safety Team (CHAST).</p> <p>KPI's and management information that is reported monthly and quarterly.</p> <p>Trained staff that are equipped to deal with compliance issues.</p> <p>Reporting mechanisms where compliance matters are reported or remedy is needed.</p>

- 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

Approval and Adoption of Compliance Policies

Appendix A

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	START	END
Internal consultation across UDC services and members of CHAST for comment.	Mark Dyer	08/01/2024	19/01/2024
CMT to agree lead roles and responsibilities.	Mark Dyer / Annette Smith	24/01/2024	24/01/2024
Tenant and Leaseholder Panel asked to review and comment.	Kerry Clifford / Mark Dyer	01/02/2024	01/02/2024
Housing Board to review the policies and recommend to Cabinet the approval and adoption of the policies.	Kerry Clifford / Mark Dyer	08/02/2024	08/02/2024
Corporate Health & Safety Team to give final sign off before publishing Cabinet papers.	Mark Dyer / Annette Smith	15/02/2024	15/02/2024
ICB report	Kerry Clifford	26/02/2024	26/02/2024
Recommend to Cabinet the approval and adoption of the Health & Safety Compliance Policies	Arthur Coote	19/03/2024	19/03/2024

Glossary: CHAST - Corporate Health and Safety Team