

Clerk's report and item information for Full Council meeting 4th March 2025

Clerk's report:

1. **IT Update** – All rewiring of the internet has been completed. New Wi-Fi codes have been established one for guest and one for office. New Wi-Fi points have been introduced to the centre.
2. **AGAR** – the AGAR was changed and resent to the external auditor PK Littlejohn. All objections/complaints made to the external auditor by members of the public have now been withdrawn. The Clerk is still awaiting the returned external auditors report and will circulate to Council when she has received it.
3. **Bank Mandates** – all Councillors have been added to both the bank and CCLA.
4. **Budget/Precept** – all paperwork has been submitted to SCC.
5. **Worknest** – The Clerk can confirm that she has managed to cancel the contract with Worknest as at 24th January 2025.

Item 8 Bank Accounts

The Clerk asks the Council to agree to the closing of the Imprest Account and the Payroll Account at HSBC as at 31st March 2025 as per recommendation from the Finance and Governance Committee.

Item 9 Risk Register – Level and Control

The Clerk has relooked at this using the previous register and has updated it accordingly. This now shows the scale of the risk and has a section added for Safeguarding.

The Clerk asks the Council to discuss the register and agree it for the financial year 2024/25.

Item 10 Business Continuity Plan

The Clerk has updated the previous plan and added all the relevant contacts etc. The Clerk has not circulated the copy with people's telephone numbers in for GDPR reasons. Once the Council have agreed the updated plan the Clerk will circulate the plan with all content to those who are on the Recovery Team. The Clerk asks the Council to agree the updated plan.

Item 11 Asset Register

This has been brought back to Council after the Clerk had to relook at it for the external auditor. The amount on the AGAR for 2023/24, £627,378, was incorrect and the Clerk had to amend and forward the correct asset register to the auditors as part of the complaints/queries raised by residents. The Auditor is now happy with the

adjusted register and the Clerk will have to make sure the correct value for 2023/24, £639,201.75, is on the 2024/25 AGAR return. Therefore, this has made a difference to the Asset Register for 2024/25 needing for the Clerk to recirculate for approval. The value as at the end of February 2025 is £647,717.05. The Clerk asks Council to reapprove the asset register for the financial year 2024/25.

Item 12 Financial Transactions

The Clerk will circulate the income, and expenditure reports along with the invoices for February 2025 for agreement to be paid once they have been checked by two Councillors on Friday 28th February.

The Receptionist and Administration Assistant's computer has completely stopped working. The IT company have advised that it is very old and needs replacing. The Clerk does not want to replace this with another desktop computer but with a laptop which allows for far more flexibility in working. The Clerk has circulated the quote for a laptop and installation along with the cost for the old machine to be taken away and destroyed in the correct manner. The quote is for £965. The Clerk asks the Council to agree to the purchase of the laptop.

The hedge along the south boundary of the Manchester Drive allotments needs cutting back. This is normally undertaken once a year. It is now becoming very close to nesting season when all hedge cutting needs to cease therefore a decision on this cannot wait until the next C&C meeting.

The quotes are as follows:

D R Gardens & Trees - £1,850

Evolution Tree Care - £1,800

Hunter & Sons Tree Services Ltd - £2,400

Hunter & Sons do provide wood chip for the allotment site.

The Clerk asks the committee to discuss the and decide on which contractor to engage.

The Council has many paper documents that it has to keep indefinitely. These need to be kept as safe and secure as possible. There is one safe type cabinet in the main office which holds all the minutes from when the Council was first formed. There is no room for other documents, such as leases, allotment papers etc which also need to be kept. Therefore, the Clerk asks for the Council to agree to purchasing a new fireproof cabinet. Below are the quotes for a Phoenix Fire Ranger FS1514K cabinet.

Office Furniture Direct - £1,842

Safe.co.uk - £1,798.80

SafeOptions.co.uk £1,725.

The Clerk asks the Council to agree the purchase and to buy this from SafeOptions.

Item 13. Financial Review

The Clerk will circulate the February 2025 bank reconciliations on Monday 3rd March 2025 once they have been completed.

The Clerk will circulate the budget comparison report showing the budget that was set, income received, and expenditure up to the end of February once all payments have been checked on Friday 28th February.

The Clerk will circulate the cashflow report once the payments have been checked on Friday 28th February.

Item 14 Grant Application

The Clerk has circulated a grant application from a resident at the Yantlet Flats for consideration by the Council.

The Clerk reminds the Council that no accounts are submitted with the application or constitution.

Item 15 Community Centre Accounts 2022/23 and 2023/24

The Clerk has circulated the accounts for the community centre to be sent to Southend City Council. As Council will see the figures are relatively the same/static as previous years.

The Clerk asks the Council to agree the accounts to be sent to SCC.

Item 16 Investigation into a possible Dog Park for Leigh-on-Sea

The Clerk has circulated a report from Cllr P Barber on the possibility of a Dog Park near to the Skatepark on Two Tree Island. Further investigation would need to happen before this could be brought to Council for a full discussion and decision, but Cllr P Barber would be interested to hear Councillors views/comments on this before any further work/investigation is undertaken. Cllr P Barber will talk to this item.

Item 17 Community Centre Maintenance Plan

The Clerk has circulated Cllr P Barber's report after his walk around the centre looking at what needs to be undertaken. Cllr P Barber will talk to this item, a discussion needs to take place and decision made as to next steps.

The Clerk has circulated the two quotes she has received for the work to be undertaken on the flat roof over the atrium and replacement of the bird netting. The Clerk has had four different companies come in and take a look at the roof but getting quotes back has proven difficult.

The work needs to be undertaken as soon as possible as the roof appears to be unsafe in various areas and therefore the netting cannot be replaced until this work has taken place.

The Clerk asks the Council to discuss the quotes and decide on which contractor to use.

Item 18 Paddling Pool

The Clerk has circulated the reply she received from EALC who contacted the NALC legal department regarding whether the Council would need to go out to tender for the work or if they were within their rights to appoint SCC. The Clerk has also recirculated the papers and plans from SCC as to the work to be undertaken.

Councillor Mulroney, at the last Full Council meeting, also advised the SCC would

undertake the restoration work on the Gypsy Paddling Pool. Therefore, this should also be considered at the same time.

The Clerk asks the Council to discuss the reply from NALC and agree if the Council fulfils the criteria which would mean that engaging SCC would be legal and appropriate. This is only a decision, as per the reply, the Council can make.

If the Council agree with SCC undertaking all the work, then the Clerk will go back to SCC to advise them of this, ask them to start the process and give the Council a full and final cost. The funding for this will coming out of CIL monies.

Item 19 Safeguarding Processes and Procedures

The working group met and discussed what the Council already undertakes, the risk that the council is under with its current proceedings and how possible improvements could be made. The actual Safeguarding Policy will be looked at and amended accordingly once the Council has agreed to the changes.

The Clerk has circulated the report from Cllr C Willoughby as to what was discussed and possible changes that are required. Below are the steps that the working group asks Council to consider and agree to being put in place:

1. The council agrees to request all staff to undertake safeguarding training
2. The council agrees that the safeguarding officer must risk assess whether staff need a DBS and if it is found that a check is required then the Council will apply for a DBS for that employee and enrol them on the update service.
3. The council agrees to request all councillors to undertake safeguarding training
4. The council agrees to request all councillors to have a DBS and enrol in the update service.
5. The council agrees to request all regular volunteers, namely those involved with Community Transport and Over-60s events, to have a DBS paid for by LTC and enrolment in the update service, paid for by LTC.
6. The council agrees all room hirers involved in a regulated activity must provide a copy of their DBS, ID and safeguarding policy/protocols.
7. The council agrees any room hirer involved in a regulated activity who fails to provide their ID, DBS (and updated copies every three years) and safeguarding policy/protocols will be advised that they cannot hire a room at the community centre

The Clerk asks for Council to discuss the above in line with the report produced and agree all of the actions.

Item 20 Meeting Dates for 2024-26 and Annual Town Meeting

The Clerk has circulated a list of the dates for meetings for the municipal year 2025/26 for agreement.

The Clerk asks the Council to agree a date for the Annual Town Meeting which needs to take place between 1st March and 1st June.

Item 21 Society of Vincent de Paul (SVP) Partnership Working

To receive a report from Cllr B Arscott on how the Council could possibly work with SVP on delivering a food cupboard collection point and activities for the summer holidays. Cllr B Arscott will speak to this item.

Item 22 Water Summit Presentation

The Clerk has circulated the presentation received from Anglia Water and also a report from Cllr C Mulroney on the meeting which took place at the beginning of February. Cllr Mulroney will speak to this item.

Item 23 Greater Essex Devolution Consultation

The Clerk has added to the agenda and here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/greater-essex-devolution/greater-essex-devolution-consultation> the link for the devolution consultation which is open until the 13th April. There are a series of questions asking whether you agree or disagree on a sliding scale as to how the changes will affect and possibly make things more efficient. The consultation can be answered individually or as a Council. It is for the Council to decide if they wish to respond as a collective or if they would prefer Councillors to answer on their own. If the Council would like to respond as a collective the Clerk asks what response they would like her to give.

These are the questions:

Proposed Geography

10 To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority over the proposed geography will deliver benefits to the area?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Proposed Governance

11 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed governance arrangements for the Mayoral Combined County Authority?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Supporting The Economy

12 To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the economy of the area?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Improving Social Outcomes

13 To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve social outcomes in the area?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Local Government Services

14 To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve local government services in the area?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Improving The Local Natural Environment

15 To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Mayoral Combined County Authority will improve the local natural environment and overall national environment?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Supporting Needs of Local Communities

16 To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined County Authority will support the interests and needs of local communities and reflect local identities?

Please use this text box to explain your answer:

Referral source

17 Please tell us how you found out about this consultation?

Item 25 Café

Information on this will be given out at the meeting.

Item 26 Christmas Lights Tender

The Clerk has circulated the tender documents and asks the Council to discuss and agree the papers so that they can be put on contract finder as per the procurement process.