

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 31 October 2023 at 7.30 pm
Council Chamber - Civic Centre

1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

2. Declarations of Interest

To receive Councillors' declarations of interest (if any) in relation to any matters on the agenda.

3. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023.

4. Matters arising

5. Written questions from members of the public

To receive any questions from members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.

6. Written questions from Councillors

To receive any questions from Councillors in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.

7. Responses of the Cabinet to Reports of the Scrutiny Committee

To consider responses (if any) of the Cabinet to reports and recommendations from the Committee.

a) Review of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Cabinet resolved that:

- i) The Council seeks to take proactive steps to tackle the 'hot spots' the Police identified for harassment, and consideration be given to putting these locations in the public domain.
- ii) Additional 'softer' measures to chart progress in tackling domestic violence (i.e., in addition to conviction rates) be developed.
- iii) Agreements between relevant local authorities in supporting those who have escaped domestic violence to return to their home authority are formalised, where this is considered appropriate.

8. Corporate Plan (Pages 7 - 26)
9. Climate Change Strategy - Initial Report (Pages 27 - 32)
10. Work Plan (Page 33)

To review the Committee's work plan for the current year.

11. References from Other Committees
12. Matters of Urgent Business

Such other business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be received as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances to be specified in the minutes.

**MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON**

12 September 2023

7.30 - 9.01 pm

PRESENT

Committee Members

Councillor Tony Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Alastair Gunn (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Colleen Morrison
Councillor Kay Morrison

Also Present

Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of the Council
Councillor David Carter, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing

Officers

Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services
Hannah Marriott, Governance Support Officer

77. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James Griggs and Matthew Siggers.

78. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

79. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

80. **MATTERS ARISING**

Councillor Tony Edwards noted that at the previous meeting Councillor Dan Swords agreed to provide the committee with a copy of the implementation plan on the five priorities and a link to the monthly performance date for key performance indicators. Councillor Dan Swords agreed again to circulate this information.

81. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None.

82. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

None.

83. **RESPONSES OF THE CABINET TO REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

84. **ROOFING AND MAJOR REPAIRS TO COUNCIL HOUSES - FINAL REPORT**

The Committee received two reports on roofing and major repairs to council houses; one from Harlow Council and one from HTS.

Councillor Tony Edwards noted that there were no Housing or HTS officers present at the meeting and requested it be noted that this was unsatisfactory. Councillors Dan Swords, Leader of the Council, and David Carter, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing, were present to answer questions on the report.

Councillor Tony Edwards advised the Committee that the Task and Finish Group had met twice. It was noted that there had been some progress towards the completion of jobs and progress achieved towards the agreement of joint working strategies for Harlow Council and HTS.

Councillor Dan Swords advised the Committee that all 56 roofing jobs which had been outstanding since before Christmas 2022 had now been completed. Councillor Dan Swords also confirmed that 28 full roofing jobs had been referred this year and that all were in process of being completed. Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that more money had been allocated in this year's budget for full roof replacements.

With regard to the backlog of 5,800 jobs, Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that £3.4 million had been allocated to deal with the backlog. It was noted that over 1,000 jobs had been cleared from the backlog with HTS operatives completing around 3.6 jobs per day. Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that this meant that the backlog level was at its lowest level since pre-covid. Councillor Dan Swords also confirmed that HTS was prioritising backlog jobs for vulnerable residents first where needed.

Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that Harlow Council and HTS were in the process of re-ordering the schedule of works to aim for a maximum timeframe of 30 days for repairs to be completed. The Committee noted that the maximum timeframe used to be nine months, however, this had been reduced to 60 days as an interim measure.

Councillor Dan Swords noted that HTS have had to use a supply chain of sub-contractors to reduce the backlog. Once the backlog is cleared, HTS in-house workforce would have the capacity to deal with all repairs.

Councillor Dan Swords also confirmed that Harlow Council had appointed a contractor to complete a 100 per cent internal and external stock condition survey. The contractor will start on 1 October 2023 and it would take around three years to complete.

The Committee was advised that there had been a full review into the major works process for council properties. Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that the new process would be brought to Cabinet in November 2023 for approval.

Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that data was available on the achievement on completion of jobs within 30 days for “work in progress” repairs and that this could be provided to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the cost per job ratio had now been worked out. Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that the Council would be agreeing a new contract with HTS which would be based on cost and performance. This contract should be agreed by early 2024.

Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that the target will be for HTS to have a 30 day rolling programme of around 2,400 jobs.

Councillor Tony Edwards suggested that a Tenants Repair Charter be introduced to provide tenants with appropriate information when they are having a repair completed on their property. Councillor Dan Swords confirmed that lots of work was being completed on improving the service and clarity of communication which tenants receive. Councillor Dan Swords noted that a charter could be considered when the schedule of works is completed.

The Committee expressed its disappointment that the information presented verbally by the Cabinet members did not correspond with the information provided within the report. It also requested that future reports be combined into one joint report from both Harlow Council and HTS.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- A** Noted improvements to the business process, following the reviews of both the major works and roofing referral processes.
- B** Noted the completion of the 2022/23 Housing Capital Roofing Programme and clearance of the backlog of roofing projects.
- C** Noted the increased allocation within the HRA Business plan 23/34 for capital roofing work £2.3m and a further £3.4m allocated to HTS to reduce the backlog of responsive repairs, which includes roofing repairs.

D Requested that a further report be brought back to Committee in December 2023.

85. **SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Committee received a report on recommendations for Cabinet following its review into support for victims of domestic abuse and sexual harassment.

The Committee agreed to remove the wording “on-street harassment” from recommendation A.

RESOLVED that the Committee recommends to Cabinet that:

A The Council seeking to take proactive steps to tackle the ‘hot spots’ the Police identified, and consideration be given to putting these locations in the public domain;

B Developing additional ‘softer’ measures to chart progress in tackling domestic violence (i.e., in addition to conviction rates); and

C Formalising agreements between relevant local authorities in supporting those who have escaped domestic violence to return to their home authority, where this is considered appropriate.

86. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee received a report summarising its work plan for 2023/24.

It was agreed that a report on roofing and major repairs to council houses would be brought back to Committee in December 2023.

The Committee agreed to re-consider the New Princess Alexandra Hospital review submission form in October 2023.

The Committee also agreed to consider a report on the councillor enquiry system in March 2024. The Committee agreed to set up a sub-group for this review.

RESOLVED that the work plan be noted.

87. **REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

None.

88. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

Corporate Plan



Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31 October 2023

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of the Council

Lead Officer: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Support
(01279) 446099

Contributing Officers: Becca Farrant, Assistant Director – Corporate Services
(01279) 446811

Simon Pipe, Customer and Business Insight Manager
(01279) 446544

Recommended that:

- A** The committee considers the consultation draft of the Corporate Plan 2024-28 and makes recommendations to the Leader of the Council, as necessary, on the proposed priorities and outcomes contained within the plan.

Background

1. This report brings forward a consultation draft of the new Corporate Plan 2024-28 for scrutiny.
2. A robust Corporate Plan is a central component of the council's business planning and is underpinned by the council's financial planning set out in the new Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024-28 coming to Cabinet in November 2023. The plan document will set out the council's vision and priorities for a four-year period and ensures that everyone in the council is working towards the same outcomes. The document will inform service and team planning through to be developed annual delivery plans, as well as individual staff performance plans. The council's current 'Corporate Strategy' period runs until end of March 2024.
3. A new plan document will be adopted by Full Council in advance of April 2024 when the current plan expires. Presenting to Cabinet for approval in late November will allow

sufficient time to draw up a full delivery plan and associated service plans under this to be in place for April 2024.

4. The new Corporate Plan will cover a four year period (2024-28) which is a move away from the previously conventional three year strategies. The new plan will also be coupled with the new MTFP covering the same period to ensure the plan is fully costed and deliverable. The decision to move to a four year period is in line with the Local Government Association (LGA) recommendations and the electoral cycle.

Draft Plan and Thematic Approach

5. The consultation draft plan document is attached for consideration by the committee. The Corporate Plan, covering the period 2024-2028, has a focus on issues that have arisen from the recent residents survey, the Council's own priorities and recent work with the LGA to develop a Corporate Narrative for the Council.
6. The narrative focuses on three key themes of what we do for our **People**, changes we make to our **Place** and how we improve our **Performance**.
7. The corporate narrative for the council sets out the vision for the duration of the plan. Working with officers from across the council as well as Cabinet members, the corporate narrative has been developed to articulate a common purpose and direction and creates a context for change in the period of the new strategy, including the council's strengths and weaknesses and direction of travel for the future. The narrative is set out in the introductory section of the plan.
8. A thematic approach to the new corporate plan has enabled a strategic level approach to service delivery by the council. Work to identify appropriate themes set in motion data mapping against these which commenced in early summer 2023 and is addressed further below.
9. A new communications strategy will identify key communications campaigns which will support the corporate plan from April 2024 onwards.

Process

10. The council has acted on LGA peer review recommendations to ensure a clear evidence base is in place to support informed decision-making the development of the new plan document. Relevant data sets held by the Council in relation to the three themes have been used to identify issues and opportunities and benchmarked against other local authorities and national averages.
11. This data mapping has identified datasets which link to each thematic area; data considered relevant included:
 - a) 2021 census data;

- b) LG Inform benchmarking data;
 - c) Harlow and Essex resident surveys data;
 - d) Staff survey data;
 - e) Council housing tenant satisfaction data;
 - f) KPI data on service delivery;
 - g) Supporting data from the councils' health and wellbeing and economic development strategies; and
 - h) the Safer Harlow Partnership strategic assessment.
12. The recently completed Residents Survey has also widely informed the drafting of the document in terms of the council's proposed priorities. Officers have taken key findings from the recent residents survey which show the council's performance is generally comparable to the national average in terms of satisfaction, value for money, council responsiveness and trust. 77% of Harlow residents are 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with their local area as a place to live, and close to three-in-five are satisfied with the way that the local council runs things. Full details of the Residents Survey can be found here: [Residents survey | Harlow Council](#)
13. The survey has flagged that tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (49%) is viewed as the main priority for Harlow Council by residents, followed by providing a range of housing (41%). Additionally, the other most important local issues were shown to be:
- a) Improving council services (96%);
 - b) Securing investment into Harlow (94%);
 - c) Restoring pride in Harlow (91%);
 - d) Providing activities and support for younger people (35%); and
 - e) A regenerated town centre (33%)
14. Workshops between Cabinet members and council officers were used to consider the key issues demonstrated through the data and identified priorities linked to these.
15. To aid future development of appropriate annual delivery plans and milestones, the activities of the Council have been aligned as below:

a) **People** Theme

- i) Area Housing (people), Benefits, Communications, Community Leisure and Cultural Services, Community Safety, Customer Services, Economic Development, Electoral services, Housing Assets/Business Systems, Housing Needs and Options, Supported Housing, Youth and Citizenship.

b) **Place** Theme

- i) Area Housing (property), Building Control, Commercial Development, Development Control, Economic Development, Environment, Environmental Health, Forward Planning, GIS and Infrastructure, Home Ownership, House Building, Housing Operations, Investment Partnership, Museum, Non Housing Property, Pets Corner, Playhouse, Regeneration, Town Centre, Town Park, Waste Collection and recycling.

c) **Performance** Theme

- i) Policy and Performance (incl Business and Customer Insight), Corporate and Democratic Services Management, Finance, HR, ICT, Insurance, Internal Audit, Legal, Revenues, Risk Management.

16. The consultation draft of the Corporate Plan includes proposed priorities based upon these data led priorities. Further work has been undertaken to identify outcomes and success measures for each theme area and details of how outcomes will be financed.
17. Consultation with all council staff has identified synergies in current work which will contribute towards achieving these priorities, alongside new work which could be developed in order to do so. For each priority a number of outcomes to demonstrate what residents, businesses and visitors to the town can expect to see have been set out.
18. The views of the committee are sought on these outcomes and whether they are robust enough to meet the priorities identified or whether the committee have further suggestions.
19. Measuring and monitoring the success of the plan through KPIs and milestones will demonstrate the council has delivered what it set out at the end of the four-year period. Additionally, once the plan has been approved by the Council, yearly delivery plans will give clear milestones in each of the plan years.
20. Consultation on the Corporate Plan is already being carried out and will continue during November 2023, seeking views of strategic partners, residents of Harlow and representative groups across Harlow specifically targeting all demographics to build upon the equality assessment already undertaken.

Implications

Equalities and Diversity

Equality impact screening has identified that a full equality impact assessment will be required to be undertaken on the draft strategy document which is in the process of being completed, subject to results of consultation. The resident survey dataset has been weighted across demographic information so that it provides a representative sample of responses. When looking at the unweighted results the responses given are not disproportionately different across specific demographic groups. Carrying out the equalities impact assessment will ensure the priorities set by the council support the Council's equality objectives while maintaining compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Climate Change

The Corporate Plan will include further work to be undertaken by the Council in the next four to underpin and set a framework to its emerging Climate Change Strategy.

Community and Wellbeing

The key themes set out within the new draft corporate plan align with the strategic objectives contained within a number of specific strategies and action plans which collectively will facilitate the delivery of priority actions identified through the recent residents survey.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Finance

The resources earmarked to facilitate the delivery of the Corporate Plan will be detailed within the Councils' Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Governance and Corporate Services

The plan, currently in its consultation phase, is aimed for adoption by the Council during December 2023. Once approved, an annual delivery plan will set out actions in each year of the plan to meet the proposed outcomes.

Public and stakeholder consultation during November will also aid in the shaping of the plan.

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services

Strategic Growth and Regeneration

The ongoing Regeneration of the town is highlighted as a clear priority within the draft Corporate Plan, which responds to feedback received from the Resident Survey. Further engagement and input on this is welcomed over the coming weeks before a final version is presented to Cabinet.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Chief Executive

Appendices

Appendix A – draft Corporate Plan (to follow)

Appendix B – People datasets summary
Appendix C – Place datasets summary
Appendix D – Performance datasets summary

Background Papers

Harlow Resident Survey report 2023 – <https://www.harlow.gov.uk/your-council/have-your-say/residents-survey>

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

KPI – Key Performance Indicator

Appendix B – People

Source	What the data tells us
Corporate Risk Register	If the cost-of-living crisis continues on adverse trajectory, then a UK recession could be triggered which will impact quality of life of Harlow communities and local business
ECC social Cohesion data analysis	<p>Preferred communication methods are 17% mail and 40% text message across the predominant household types in Harlow.</p> <p>Priorities for improvement reported as (ranked): Crime and anti social behaviour Affordable, decent housing Less traffic congestion Clean streets comparable wage levels Access to health services</p> <p>1% of adult population actively receiving social care service</p>
Economic Development Strategy evidence base	<p>Harlow faces several critical challenges to delivering shared prosperity:</p> <p>securing investment, jobs and new business growth</p> <p>ensuring that local employers access the skills they need and that local residents can benefit.</p>
Elections data	<p>Electoral Registration</p> <p>Data from Property classification statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx. 2,500 properties that have residents not registered to vote – main areas are new developments and Flat blocks (office conversions) but also high number in Staple Tye area and Little Parndon around the hospital. Also the numbers are high in HMO properties. • Little Parndon and Toddbrook North has highest number of foreign nationals not eligible to register <p>Data from ERO performance standards spreadsheet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest number of additions and deletions happen during the annual canvass and in March/April just before an election. Most popular method is online applications. • Data mining creates a high number of Pending Electors and electors deleted following review – indicate frequent movers but do not re-register. <p>Voting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas have a higher postal turnout compared to polling station

Source	What the data tells us
	<p>– see polling station turnout report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of postal turnout increases each year e.g. in 2023 38% of overall turnout voted by post; in 2018 it was 34% • In general voter turnout for local elections has decreased over the years 33% in 2014 – 25% in 2023 • Turnout figures per ward seem to be similar figures but Great Parndon have always had the highest ward turnout and the lowest have been in Netteswell, Staple Tye and Little Parndon & Hare Street wards. <p>Engagement with HMOs is hard. We try and engage with the college but the Council doesn't really have any data about how many 16/17 years olds missing as data held by ECC and not shared.</p>
Health and wellbeing strategy evidence base	<p>Increase of 13.9% in population recorded in 2021 since 2011 with life expectancy 2nd worst in Essex at 78.6 years compared to the national average of 79.4 years (also varies between the least and most deprived areas within the town with 7.1 years difference for men and 3.5 years for women)</p> <p>Socio-economic factors that have a bearing on health and wellbeing outcomes – high benefit claimant levels, high child poverty levels, high fuel poverty levels within Essex.</p> <p>Childhood obesity levels are within top highest Essex cohort.</p> <p>Mental health and suicide rates are highest in Essex.</p>
Housing tenant and leaseholder survey data 2022/2023 - overall satisfaction, engagement and ASB data	<p>2 in 3 (65%) of tenants are satisfied with the overall service provided to them by Harlow Council's Housing Service. Older respondents are more likely to be satisfied, with those aged 70 and over reporting 77% satisfaction.</p> <p>Under half (47%) of tenants are satisfied that Harlow Council Housing Service listens to their views and acts upon them.</p> <p>. 2 in 5 (44%) of tenants are satisfied with the council's approach to handling ASB. 37% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.</p> <p>The highest satisfaction rating among those who have reported ASB, with just 2 in 5 (40%) satisfied, is with the advice provided by staff. The lowest satisfaction rating was given to the speed with which the report was dealt with, with only 1 in 4 (27%) satisfied with this.</p> <p>Tenants chose post as the preferred form of communication, with 2 in 3 (68%) choosing this method. This is followed by 2 in 5 (41%) who prefer email</p>
Residents survey	77% of Harlow residents are 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with their local

Source	What the data tells us
data 2023	<p>area as a place to live.</p> <p>Close to three-in-five are satisfied with the way that the local council runs things (58%).</p> <p>Sense of belonging to the local area is high, at 72%, with community cohesion also relatively strong (67%).</p> <p>Residents typically get information from or about Harlow Council and the services it provides through leaflets (61%), the Harlow Times (61%), the council’s website (60%) and word of mouth (58%).</p> <p>While just under a quarter hear about the Council through emails and e-newsletters (23%), close to half say that this would be a preferred channel (47%). Similarly, while 15% hear about the Council directly from councillors, more than a quarter would like to receive information in this way (26%).</p> <p>The most important local issues are improving council services (96% feel this is important), securing investment into Harlow (94%) and restoring pride in Harlow (91%).</p> <p>Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour is viewed as the main priority for Harlow Council (49%), followed by providing a range of housing (41%). Providing activities and support for younger people (35%) and a regenerated town centre (33%) are also relatively important priorities.</p> <p>Harlow performance is generally comparable to the national average in terms of satisfaction, value for money, council responsiveness and trust. The main differences are seen in terms of resident safety, with Harlow residents significantly less likely to feel safe at night than the population nationally.</p> <p>Older Harlow residents are typically more positive towards the local area and the Council than younger inhabitants.</p>

Appendix C - Place

Source	What the data is telling us
Air quality data	<p>Air Quality is good in Harlow. Yearly report 2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report produced jointly by Harlow Council & Public Health at Essex. In 2022, Harlow Council measured no exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives. Air pollution is considered to be generally low in Harlow and monitoring of local Air Quality has measured no exceedances of air quality objective at relevant exposure. The trend of results across all monitored sites indicates that Air Quality is improving.</p>
Corporate risk register	<p>If we do not have sufficient and adequate infrastructure, then the town will not achieve its growth potential or risks being adversely impacted by growth in surrounding Districts</p> <p>If we fail to attract amenities, investment and skills, then the town will not achieve its economic growth potential</p>
Economic Development Strategy evidence base	<p>Harlow is a key UK location for ICT, aerospace and life sciences industries. Harlow offers distinct advantages as an economic location.</p> <p>Harlow faces several critical challenges to delivering shared prosperity:</p> <p>addressing our infrastructure deficits, which are preventing private and public investment,</p> <p>delivering the top quality locations and communities that knowledge based businesses and their employees demand.</p>
Economic impact of Tourism report	<p>Total value of tourism in 2021 was £58M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £45M direct tourism spend • 3.4% of all employment within the town
Emissions data for Harlow	<p>Harlow town wide emissions data can be found using national datasets at https://naei.beis.gov.uk/laghgapp/. Further breakdown of emissions data can be found at the LGA website https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/lga-research/lga-research-report-climate-change-1?mod-area=E07000073&mod-group=AllDistrictInRegion&mod-type=comparisonGroupType#text-6.</p> <p>For the year 2021, Harlow emitted 374kT CO2. UK tonnes per capita for 2021 were 4.69, compared to Harlow's 4.9</p>
Emissions data for HDC	<p>Emissions targets can be found within the Carbon Management Plan 2021 – 2026. The target to achieve by 2026 is a 50% reduction of 2014 baseline data. 2014 baseline data is 2700 tonnes, target is 1,350 tonnes.</p> <p>Figures of 2022/23 show Harlow Council carbon emissions currently at 1,768 tonnes.</p> <p>The scope of emissions data is HDC operational buildings (gas, electricity and biomass), HDC fleet, Veolia waste fleet, HTS fleet, HDC staff travel.</p>

Essex residents survey data 2022	<p>One of lowest proportions of population accessing green spaces in Essex</p> <p>Harlow residents were lowest % in Essex who felt green and natural spaces were of high enough standard to want to spend time in or were places that encourage physical health and exercise</p>																		
Food premises	<p>As at 1 April 2023 the Environmental Health Service’s database identifies that it is responsible for enforcing Food Safety in 749 food premises within Harlow. According to the Code of Practice risk categories, these premises are broken down as follows;</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="412 617 1482 1052"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Risk Category</u> <u>Frequency</u></th> <th><u>Number of premises</u></th> <th><u>Inspection</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A Months</td> <td>1</td> <td>6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B Months</td> <td>16</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C Months</td> <td>54</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D Years</td> <td>257</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E / 3 Years</td> <td>363</td> <td>AES</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>New Premises not yet rated: 29</p>	<u>Risk Category</u> <u>Frequency</u>	<u>Number of premises</u>	<u>Inspection</u>	A Months	1	6	B Months	16	12	C Months	54	18	D Years	257	2	E / 3 Years	363	AES
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Harlow residents survey data 2023	<p>The most important local issues are improving council services (96% feel is important), securing investment into Harlow (94%) and restoring pride in Harlow (91%). Fewer deem regenerating the town centre and fixing council housing important (87% and 88% respectively).</p> <p>Overall, a third of residents feel that Harlow would benefit from improved public services (33%). Specific mentions include better youth facilities (14%) and healthcare (4%). Improvements to crime and policing are mentioned by a similar proportion (31%), specifically increased police presence (17%) and reducing anti-social behaviour (15%). Slightly fewer mention regeneration of Harlow (29%) and more affordable/ improved housing (22%).</p> <p>Council tenants place more importance on fixing council housing (99%) and regenerating the town centre (94%) than residents overall.</p> <p>Overall, three-in-five are supportive of creating additional housing in and around Harlow</p> <p>Rubbish or litter is deemed to be the biggest problem in the local area, with half viewing this as either a very big or fairly big problem (48%). Drug use is also problematic (45%).</p>																		

	Fewer believe that vandalism (37%), groups on the streets (31%), people being drunk in public (26%), or noisy neighbours (16%) are problematic.
H&S premises data	<p>Harlow Council has the responsibility for enforcing the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and health and safety regulations made under the Act in approximately 1180 commercial premises located within the District. Due to the number of new developments in the District, this figure is likely to increase in the next few years.</p> <p>There are 1180 commercial premises within the District of Harlow, with approximately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 242 Retail shops; 109 Wholesale shops, warehouses; 203 Offices; 391 Catering, restaurants and bars; 44 Leisure and cultural services; 132 Consumer services; 59 Other unclassified premises;
Housebuilding	Phase 1 of the New House Building Programme will see 99 new council homes built
HMO	Harlow has approximately 302 HMOs which are licensed. A register of the details of the HMOs is published on our website & is updated monthly
Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	<p>We are still facing significantly higher than usual inflation increases in the cost of living, along with procurement and supply chain issues which are having a direct impact on the landlord service. For a Housing Service, this becomes particularly important where:</p> <p>The Council has to set cap rent increases. Service charges to tenants and leaseholders are likely to increase due to increases in energy costs and the wider impact of inflation. Tenants and leaseholders may have experienced hardship due to “furlough” and loss of jobs. There is a backlog of repairs. Energy costs and building costs have increased significantly. Access to building materials is not straightforward. There is a shortage of labour in the building industry Building Safety – changes to the act and implications for stock.</p> <p>Building Safety Cases – New Fire Regulations standard – Significant impact on resourcing</p> <p>Priority Estates - Options appraisals for key estates identified with multiple maintenance requirements.</p> <p>Increase in Disrepair cases with active publicity campaigns evident in the town and in the wider media</p> <p>Estate infrastructure – Health and Safety issues</p> <p>Qualified staff</p>

	<p>Changes under the social housing regulation bill include:</p> <p>changes needed to the consumer standards that all social landlords will be required to meet</p> <p>the proactive consumer regulation activity (including, for example, a programme of inspections as outlined in the White Paper) through which we will monitor and assess whether those standards are being met;</p> <p>agreeing a set of tenant satisfaction measures that will both inform our regulation and help tenants hold their landlords to account</p>
<p>Housing tenant and leaseholder survey data 2022/2023 - repairs, major works and communal areas data</p>	<p>Communal areas - just over half (53%) of tenants are satisfied that these areas are kept clean and well maintained.</p> <p>71% tenants rate the overall quality of the repair that had been carried out in their communal area as good and 2 in 3 (69%) say this repair was completed right the first time</p> <p>Repairs - 77% are satisfied with the overall repairs service they received in the past year from Harlow Council. A similar proportion of tenants (72%) are satisfied with the time it has taken to complete the repair from the time they reported it to the council. 19% were dissatisfied with the time taken. 82% said the overall quality of the repair work was good. 81% rated their being advised of when the repair will take place as good, but only 43% said they were kept informed throughout the process.</p> <p>Major works – 76% rated being advised when major works would take place as good with 66% rating the overall quality of these works as good. Almost 2 in 3 say the major works were carried out correctly the first time, with under half (43%) saying they were kept informed throughout the work.</p> <p>Significant increases in billing for leaseholders associated with major works</p> <p>Implications of Fire Safety – recharging leaseholders</p>
<p>Landscape maintenance data</p>	<p><u>Quarterly KPIs</u></p> <p>Percentage of Grass areas maintained in-line with the specification and annual work schedules.</p> <p>Q3, 22-23 79.92%</p> <p>Q4, 22-23 90.71%</p> <p>Q1, 23-24 79.75%</p> <p>Q2, 23-24</p> <p>Percentage of Landscape maintained in-line with the specification and annual work schedules of programmed and unprogrammed work.</p> <p>Q3, 22-23 91.25%</p> <p>Q4, 22-23 92.97%</p> <p>Q1, 23-24 Due Dec 23</p> <p>Q2, 23-24</p> <p>Non dangerous tree works identified from inspection – work carried out within 80 working days</p> <p>Q3, 22-23 56%</p>

Q4, 22-23 59.65%
Q1, 23-24 66.67%
Q2, 23-24

Maintenance of existing playgrounds and ball courts and associated hard standing areas and features as per the specification

Q3, 22-23 99%
Q4, 22-23 98%
Q1, 23-24
Q2, 23-24

Monthly KPIs

Reported and inspected dangerous trees reported to be made temporarily safe within 24 hours

Dec 22 100%
Jan 23 100%
Feb 23 100%
March 23 100%
April 23 100%
May 23 100%
June 23 100%
July 23 100%
August 23 95%
September 23
October 23
November 23
December 23

Rectification of dangerous trees previously made safe temporarily, to be fully rectified within 5 working days of the original notification.

Dec 22 100%
Jan 23 100%
Feb 23 100%
March 23 100%
April 23 100%
May 23 100%
June 23 100%
July 23 100%
August 23 95%
September 23
October 23
November 23
December 23

Inspection of trees (not dangerous) requiring attention/ maintenance reported within 20 working day

Dec 22 100%
Jan 23 100%
Feb 23 100%
March 23 100%
April 23 100%

	<p>May 23 100%</p> <p>June 23 77.37%</p> <p>July 23 20.4%</p> <p>August 23 66.95%</p> <p>September 23</p> <p>October 23</p> <p>November 23</p> <p>December 23</p>
Levelling Up Priority places	<p>Changes in Harlow over the past decade mean that the town no longer ranks among the most acutely deprived in Essex, but the town remains home to estates where residents face financial challenges, poor quality housing and poorer than average outcomes. The Garden Town development – as well as infrastructure development and regeneration schemes – provide a mechanism to secure better outcomes for new and existing communities.</p>
Licensed premises	<p>237 Licensed Premises</p> <p>58 pubs/bars</p> <p>14 members club certificate</p> <p>47 restaurants/cafes</p> <p>73 shop/off-licence</p> <p>18 late night refreshment only (i.e. takeaway)</p> <p>81 number of premises variations etc 01/04/2022-31/03/23</p>
Local plan	<p>10,620 total supply of additional housing from start of local plan period identified</p> <p>Includes delivery of strategic housing sites (HGGT)</p> <p>Employment land allocated for Offices/Research, Development/Light Industry, Industry and Storage and Distribution.</p> <p>Infrastructure elements in local Plan include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable transport corridors • River Stort crossing • Cemetery extension • New allotment provision
Non Housing asset management strategy	<p>-493 properties</p> <p>- worth £100.444m in terms of book value</p> <p>-producing a rental income of £6.380m per annum</p> <p>- repair backlog and statutory obligations requiring an investment of £13.8232m</p>
Permitted premises	<p>There 21 premises in Harlow which require an Environmental Permit (EPR Regs 2016 under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999). (LA – IPPC) & (LAPPC)</p> <p>In Harlow this includes a glass making premises, the only one in the South of East of England, 1 crematorium, 7 petrol stations, 2 mobile concrete crushers, 1 Dry Cleaners, 1 powder coating premises, 5 mineral premises, 1 vehicle refinishing premises, 1 metal powders manufacturing Premises and 1 wood cutting/wood</p>

	burning premises.
Recycling rates data	<p>2018-19 - 7985 tonnes 43.31%</p> <p>2019-20 - 7642 tonnes 41.42%</p> <p>2020-21 - 8626 tonnes 41.4%</p> <p>2021-22 - 8026 tonnes 39.93%</p> <p>2022-23 - 7579 tonnes 39.56%</p>
Regeneration data drivers	<p>Impact of regeneration of town centre will be measured through:</p> <p>m2 public realm improved</p> <p>Stakeholder and community engagement including surveys at key milestones</p> <p>Town Centre footfall and dwell time data</p> <p>Arts Council national survey on cultural engagement</p> <p>Local cultural engagement numbers - including monitoring numbers and types of events taking place in the town centre and visitor numbers attending the events held in the town centre</p> <p>% crime reduction within the town centre by March 2029</p>
Trip advisor data – Museum, Pets Corner, Playhouse Google review data	<p>Museum – 4 out of 5</p> <p>Pets Corner – 4.5 out of 5</p> <p>Playhouse – 4.5 out of 5</p> <p>Paddling pools – between 3.8 for Old harlow and 4.2 for Town park out of 5</p>
Visitor numbers	<p>2023 is baseline year for recording of visitor numbers for Museum and Pets Corner. This can be used to measure future impact of service changes.</p> <p>Playhouse</p>
Waste collection rates data	<p>Missed collections per 100,000 collections – January 108.65</p> <p>February 80.33</p> <p>March 93.47</p> <p>April 87.48</p> <p>May 103.51</p> <p>June 151.33</p> <p>July 131.26</p> <p>August 99.56</p> <p>Strike rate (Collections completed on the scheduled day – can be influenced by factors outside the control of the contractor)</p> <p>January 95.44%</p> <p>February 96.54%</p> <p>March 99.46%</p> <p>April 98.95%</p> <p>May 97.55%</p>

	June	92.53%
	July	98.51%
	August	96.67%

Appendix D – Performance

Source	What the data tells us
Collection rates (CT/NNDR/benefits)	<p>CT collection rate as a % of current year annual debit – slight decrease in this year compared to 22-23, (45.51% compared to 46.64% at 31 August) but there are multiple factors to be considered regarding CT collection, specifically the covid legacy of historic arrears alongside shorter term impact of the 2022 dividend and £150 energy rebate credited to CT accounts.</p> <p>Council Tax support maximum award for working age is 76%, which impacts collection rates.</p> <p>NNDR collection rate as % of annual debit – collection rates are relatively static but slightly up on 22-23 levels.</p>
Corporate risk register	<p>Strategic risks at 22/23 year end:</p> <p>If a sustainable budget is not secured, then the Council will lack financial resilience</p> <p>If the council does not have a resourced People Resource Plan – that considers new ways of working, then this may create significant workforce issues around having the right skills, behaviours, productivity and capacity, each of which may adversely impact upon service delivery if not managed effectively.</p> <p>If the council does not lead on carbon emissions reduction, then it is unlikely to meet its carbon net zero target of 2040</p> <p>If suppliers are unable to provide contracted services, then Harlow Council may not be able to comply with its statutory, strategic or service delivery obligations</p> <p>If the Council does not have adequate Business Continuity arrangements, then it may struggle to recover from events which prevent it delivering normal levels of service</p>
Resident survey 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to three-in-five are satisfied with the way that the local council runs things (58%). This is comparable to the national picture. Satisfaction is significantly higher among residents aged 65+ • Satisfaction is highest for waste collection (78%) and parks and green spaces (78%), while fewer are satisfied with street cleaning (63%) and sport and leisure services (54%). • Harlow performance is generally comparable to the national average in terms of satisfaction, value for money, council

Source	What the data tells us
	<p>responsiveness and trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44% local residents agree that Harlow Council provides value for money, similar to national perceptions (42%). Perceptions of value for money are relatively consistent among Council tenants (47%), other renters (45%) and owner occupiers (44%). • Half of Harlow residents agree that Harlow Council is responsive (49%), acting on resident concerns either a great deal or a fair amount. A third feel it doesn't act on concerns very much (35%), while 8% think it doesn't act on concerns at all. Perceptions of council responsiveness are in line with the national average. Those aged 55-64 are significantly less likely to agree that Harlow Council is responsive (39%) and more likely to feel it doesn't act very much or at all (52%).
Complaints data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total of 1099 complaints. • 29% Housing, 43% HTS Housing • 80% performance, 15% policy, 5% person • 18% escalated from S1 to S2 • 28% upheld, 55% not, 18% partially • 77% in target • Average of 11 days to respond
Invoices paid within 30 days	Consistently around 95%
IT strategy	<p>Spend for IT support is s £2.25k per user and is within a low to normal range when benchmarked against other organisations.</p> <p>Cloud first approach to all IT environment and software decisions is required to keep up resilience and functionality with fact moving IT landscape.</p> <p>Ocal authorities have seen 50% increase in attempted cyber attacks; Harlow records multiple brute force attempts on its IT infrastructure every day.</p>
LGO case report 22/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Cases were submitted to LGO • 4 investigations were carried out by LGO • 2 were upheld • 100% compliance with recommendations
Spend analysis	<p>Highest spend is for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building construction and maintenance • Utilities • Agency and consultant staffing

Source	What the data tells us
Staff survey outcomes	<p>Key drivers for improvement: Improve conversations around doing more with less</p> <p>Promote employee and employer contributions to experience of working for Council</p> <p>Give staff more opportunity to shape change</p> <p>Keep providing excellent organisational support</p>

Climate Change



Report to: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31 October 2023

Lead Officer: Donna Beechener, Assistant Director Revenues & Benefits (01279) 446245

Contributing Officers: Vicky Forgione, Principal Forward Planning Officer (01279) 446878
Dean James, Operations Manager GIS and Infrastructure (01279) 446687

Recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

- A** Notes the progress the Council has made to date in formulating a Climate Change Strategy, and in cutting its own emissions in line with the current Carbon Reduction Plan.

Background

1. Development of the Climate Change Strategy has been on-going in 2023 following the agreement of a strategy Position Statement at Cabinet in March 2022. The agreed Position Statement set out seven objectives which have been brought forward into the strategy as seven themes, which are;
 - To achieve Net Zero emissions from the Council's operational buildings, land, vehicles and services, including those provided by service delivery partners;
 - To achieve Net Zero emissions from all homes and the built environment within Harlow;
 - To reduce consumption of resources, reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling in Harlow;
 - To adopt good stewardship of the natural environment across the town to support both climate change adaptation and mitigation;
 - To achieve a significant modal shift towards more sustainable means of transport;

- To promote reduction of emissions by businesses to Net Zero, supported by a successful green economy; and
 - To lead and encourage local communities, partners and stakeholders to reduce their emissions and contribute positively to meeting the challenges posed by climate change.
2. The draft strategy has been informed by a series of internal workshops with colleagues across the Council, including housing services, environmental health, HTS, planning services, landscape and biodiversity officers, parking, economic development, waste management and operations.
3. The workshops have identified a range of measures being undertaken by the Council to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate against climate change, including;
- Retrofitting the Council's housing stock using a number of pilots and reviewing Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings of homes.
 - Implementing measures such as PV (solar) panels, LED lighting, replacement windows in the Council's operational buildings.
 - Replacing some vehicles with electric vehicles in the HTS fleet.
 - Raising awareness of climate change and using more sustainable engagement methods as set out in the Council's Communications Strategy.
 - Tree planting strategy with over 2,000 trees planted already as well as more wildflower areas planted.
 - Installation of solar panelled bins to improve efficiency in their collection and the installation of electric charging points in some of the council's car parks.
 - Production of a sustainability checklist for developers to complete and an addendum to the Council's design guide regarding sustainable measures and energy efficiency in new buildings.
 - The inclusion of sustainable measures in the Council's house building projects.
 - Use of digital technology in waste collection to improve efficiencies and a review of the routing of refuse vehicles.
 - The delivery of 10% net gain on new developments as per the Environment Act and a Supplementary Planning Document on net gain and Green Infrastructure has been prepared alongside a draft Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Stewardship Charter.

- Implementing two new walking routes across the town as identified in the Essex County Council Local Cycling and Walking Plan and work to begin on the North to Centre element of the Sustainable Transport Corridor which will improve walking and cycling and provide a dedicated bus route.
 - Development of an improved bus station and cycle storage area in the town centre.
 - Production of a Harlow Economic Strategy which refers to supporting a green economy and skills on retrofitting and modern methods of construction.
4. The draft climate change strategy sets out the proposed actions in the short, medium and long term for the Council to aim to achieve Net Zero by 2040. A number of the short term actions in the draft strategy are to develop more specific proposals and costings, as further work is needed to quantify these. The council will also seek external funding as it becomes available, and it is envisaged that Government will continue to implement top-down measures, which may be accompanied by funding, which the council continues to monitor.
 5. In terms of external bodies, businesses have also been implementing sustainable measures such as PV panels, and energy efficiency measures, Harlow College has opened an Electric Vehicle Maintenance Centre, and Essex County Council are undertaking engagement activity with residents and business which the Council is supporting.
 6. The Council's Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) for 2021-26, sets out the steps the Council will take to achieve its target of net zero for its operations by 2040. To deliver this, the Council will take the following steps:
 - Fitting no fossil fuelled boilers into operational buildings after 2025/26
 - Buying no new carbon emitting vehicles after 2022/23
 - Achieving Net Zero from its waste service during the lifetime of the next contract from 2029
 - Developing a broader climate change strategy for the town
 - Working with HTS to help them achieve Net Zero by 2040 and to identify a potential 12% saving during the lifetime of this Plan.
 7. The CRP focuses on the Council's emissions and considers energy use / consumption in its operational buildings. Harlow Council's target for the period of the CRP will be to reach a 50% reduction in CO2 emissions from the 2014/15 2,700 tonne baseline, i.e., a reduction to 1,350 tonnes by 2026. The council monitors its CO2 emissions and voluntarily reports this annually at <https://www.harlow.gov.uk/your-council/accessing->

[information/carbon-emissions](#) with the published figures showing emissions being 1,765 tonnes for 2022-23.

8. Whilst the data shows an increase in emissions in comparison to 2020-21, this is largely due to the requirement for the Veolia fleet to travel further to dispose of waste. The emissions for 2022-23 are overall lower than 2021-22, indicating the trend is downward. Additionally, the council is committed to boiler replacements in its operational buildings over the next 12 to 18 months and this will further help to achieve our target.
9. It should be noted that if the council acquires buildings which are then deemed as operational, these would need to be included in the CRP, and could then affect the overall emissions.

Issues/Proposals

10. The next steps are to complete the internal engagement workshops and compile the final draft of the Climate Change Strategy to present to Scrutiny committee in February 2024. The strategy will then be presented to Cabinet in March 2024, seeking approval of the strategy for consultation externally. Following a period of consultation and engagement the strategy will be amended where necessary and subsequently recommended for adoption.
11. As technologies, supplies, skills and legislation changes, the Climate Change Strategy, actions and plans arising from it will need to be respondent to this, therefore the Strategy will need to be periodically reviewed and updated. This will be supported by the review and refresh of the Council's Carbon Reduction Plans (latest 2021/26) which will outline how the Council has reduced its carbon output. Other monitoring tools will also be considered.
12. Climate Change will form an important part of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Implications

Equalities and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed once the strategy has been subject to consultation and prior to adoption.

Climate Change

As detailed in the report.

Communities and Environment

The successful implementation of recommendations and actions stemming from the Climate Strategy once approved are anticipated to have wide ranging positive benefits for harlow

residents, communities, and the local environment. The successful delivery of net zero will also benefit the wider context of the Environment nationally and internationally.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Finance

The report sets out the measures already taken by the Council to reduce its carbon emissions which have been funded through specific grant funding, revenue budget or the councils capital programme. Once the strategy is fully developed there will be a requirement to factor further and ongoing costs of delivery in to its medium term financial plans.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

Governance and Corporate Services

The Governance Directorate work supports the implementation of many of the projects mentioned in both this and previous reports. Technology exploitation that avoids the use of fossil fuel energy and resources is essential. Examples include hybrid working, moving away from on-site IT infrastructure and our IT Strategy for SAAS and changing procurement to encourage use of local resources and reducing carbon footprint.

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services

Strategic Growth and Regeneration

The delivery of the Council's Net Zero ambitions is already being factored into the delivery of regeneration programmes such as through the commitment to Passivhaus standards in the Council's housebuilding programme. Commitment to Net Zero in the delivery of new housing by the private sector can to some extent be influenced by the Council's planning policy but to a larger extent will be influenced by the National Planning Policy Framework. The delivery of the town's growth ambitions though will also be reliant on the provision of suitable sustainable infrastructure, particularly transport, and the Council will need to see that keeps pace with growth plans.

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Chief Executive

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

Carbon Reduction Plan

Glossary of terms/abbreviations used

PV – photovoltaic or Solar Panel.

Net Zero - refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) that's produced and the amount that's removed from the atmosphere. It can be achieved through a combination of emission reduction and emission removal.

CRP – Carbon Reduction Plan

Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2023/24

Work	Tuesday 11 July 2023	Tuesday 12 September 2023	Tuesday 31 October 2023	Tuesday 5 December 2023	Tuesday 6 February 2024	Tuesday 14 March 2024
Allotments						
Support for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment	Q&A with Police and Safer Harlow Partnership	Agreement of Recommendations				Progress Update
Climate Change	Review submission form		Initial Report		Report	
Roofing and Major Repairs to Council Houses		Report/ Q&A with Director of Housing and HTS		Report		
Councillor Enquiry System	Review submission form	Review submission form				Report
New Princess Alexandra Hospital	Review submission form		Review submission form		Agreement of Questions	Q&A with PAH/others
New Estate Developments	Review submission form			Report		
Corporate Strategy			Report			