



Cabinet

25 January 2023

Report of

Chief Operating Officer

Author

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Title

Colchester Strategic Plan 2023-26 – A City fit For the Future

**Wards
affected**

All

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report concerns the draft Strategic Plan 2023-26 (attached). The Strategic Plan sets the priorities for the City and the Council for the next three years. The current Strategic Plan was published in March 2020 and runs to March 2023.
- 1.2 The Strategic Plan is one of the core statutory elements of the Council's Policy framework, as set out in Article 4 of the Council's Constitution. It must therefore be adopted by full Council.
- 1.3 The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the Council's three-year Medium Term Financial Forecast also being considered by Cabinet at this meeting. The proposed plan recognises the significant transformation of Council services that will be required to respond to future challenges and to provide services for a city fit for the future.
- 1.4 This plan recognises that it in the future it even more important that the Council works with and enables other organisations to support delivery of key priorities for the city.
- 1.5 Since the last Strategic plan was developed Colchester was granted City Status and the proposed plan recognises the opportunities this provides.
- 1.6 The recent Local Government Peer Challenge emphasised the need for a strong link between priorities and capacity to deliver. As such, once this plan is adopted by the Council as part of the Council's Policy Framework, a delivery plan for 2023/2024 based on available capacity and resources will be developed for consideration by Cabinet in March 2023.

2 Recommended Decisions

- 2.1 To agree the Strategic Plan 2023-26 and recommend to full Council that it be adopted.

3 Reason for the Decision

- 3.1 To enable the Strategic Plan 2023-26 to be agreed and adopted.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The current Strategic Plan expires at the end of 2022-23 so a new plan is required to reflect future challenges and opportunities. This needs to be adopted by full Council as the absence of a relevant Strategic Plan would create a significant risk of the Council failing to identify and deliver on its core priorities.

5 Background

- 5.1 The Council's Strategic Plan describes the organisation's view of the main priorities for the city. It covers a three-year time span, although many of the issues it addresses are long-term in nature.
- 5.2 The Strategic Plan 2023-26 sets out five strategic themes:
- Develop modern services for a modern city
 - Respond to the climate emergency
 - Tackle health, well-being and happiness
 - Deliver homes for those most in need
 - Grow our city's economy so everyone benefits
 - Celebrate our city and our heritage and culture
- 5.3 Each strategic theme includes key priorities, which address the key issues facing the City area and each priority includes key goals against which success will be measured.
- 5.4 The plan provides a springboard to maximise the opportunities and benefits of Colchester being granted city status. In the future this will also be supplemented by a long-term vision for Colchester created with others across Colchester to ensure the benefits are fully harnessed.
- 5.5 This new plan is being considered at a time of significant uncertainty and challenge and recognises the need for services to be transformed for the future through a new strategic theme to develop modern services for a modern city. This will include responding to the recent Local Government Association peer challenge including reviews of the of the Colchester Council family of companies. The plan also recognises that the City Council needs to increasingly work with others and enable them to help deliver key priorities.
- 5.6 Although other members of the Colchester Council family of companies, that is Colchester Commercial Holdings Limited, and Colchester Borough Homes have individual business plans and strategic plans these will be aligned with this strategic plan as an overarching vision for the City.

6 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 The Strategic Plan 2023-26 will continue to support the importance of equality and diversity in all aspects of life in Colchester.
- 6.2 The Equality Act requires councils to have an equality objective, and the new Plan does that throughout its themes and priorities. An Equality Impact Assessment is attaches as appendix 3.

7 Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 The themes and priorities of the Strategic Plan 2023-26 will be reflected in officer reports to councillors following its adoption by full Council.

8 Consultation

- 8.1 The key priorities identified in the plan arise from a range of information sources including various assessments available such as [Census data](#), [ONS data sources](#), [Essex Open Data](#), [Public Health Profiles](#), [indices of deprivation](#), [Colchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) profile 2019](#) as well as on results of public consultation. Consultation to inform the proposed strategic plan has included a public survey run during Autumn 2022. This resulted in 1113 responses. This was supplemented by several resident focus groups. A report of the responses is shown at appendix 2.
- 8.2 The proposed plan responds to the broad themes identified in the consultation. The results of the consultation will also be used to inform the delivery plan that will be considered by Cabinet in March 2023.
- 8.4 Key themes from the consultation were:
- Most respondents agreed that they enjoy living/working in Colchester, but fewer respondents agreed that they felt a sense of community in the area of Colchester. 'Creating Safe, Healthy and Active Communities' was also the 1st or 2nd priority for 60% of respondents suggesting this is a valid area the plan should focus on.
 - Improving and regenerating the town centre was mentioned by respondents throughout the consultation also suggesting this is an area of focus for the strategic plan. When asked about Colchester becoming a city, the regeneration of the city centre received the highest number of comments at 22%. Next, was culture/heritage and tourism at 21%.
 - The desire to have pride in the place which they lived was mentioned throughout the survey, however currently this appears to be lacking for some, with residents emphasising the need for a strong future vision for the city.
 - Climate and environment were also important to many respondents although this needs to be balanced with some of the difficulties for some in utilising sustainable methods of transport

9 Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 The Strategic Plan is a key element of the Council's continued external engagement activity. The Council will continue to ensure promotion of strategic activity via new and existing communications channels including direct, in person, in the media, on social media platforms and on its website.
- 9.2 The Council will communicate at key milestones of strategic projects to promote a strong positive reputation for the City, with half-year updates on the website.

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the Council's three-year Medium Term Financial Forecast. This is a period of significant financial challenge and

uncertainty, and the plan strikes a balance between ambition for the city with the reality of these financial circumstances.

- 10.2 The financial implications of delivering the Strategic Plan priorities will be incorporated into the annual budgeting process.

11 Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Health, wellbeing and community safety remains a key component in this Strategic Plan. This is clearly identified in the “Tackle Health, Wellbeing and Happiness” strategic aim, and the priority to “improve community safety”.

12 Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no Health and Safety implications from the Strategic Plan.

13 Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 When the delivery plan to deliver the Strategic Plan 2023-26 is developed, risks will be identified and addressed.
- 13.2 The absence of a Strategic Plan, or the retention of a Strategic Plan that is no longer fit for purpose, would create risks for the Council failing to deliver on its core priorities and use of resources.
- 13.3 The introduction of a new strategic plan, one year early, is a direct response to some of the key risks in the Strategic Risk Register, such as potential impacts on spending power and partnership delivery, and it will ensure that the whole organisation is focused a clearly understood, single set of priorities.

14 Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has committed to being carbon neutral by 2030. This plan will continue to deliver against this commitment as a golden thread throughout the plan as well as through the specific theme to respond to the climate emergency.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The draft Strategic Plan 2023-26.

Appendix 2: Summary of consultation responses

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Colchester City Council Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026

The City of Colchester deserves the very best this Council can do and deliver. In high quality services, in ambition and vision and for the value we can add, in our own right, and by working with others. With Essex County Council, and Government, at every level and with partners, including the University of Essex, the NHS, and our invaluable voluntary sector.

Together we must respond to the challenges of our times, alive to what matters most to the people of Colchester. From our environment, and quality of life, to the vibrancy of our city centre. Valuing as we do the rich and distinctive qualities of rural and city life, our many communities and identities and our culture and heritage.

Our new Strategic Plan continues to provide an overarching framework, sense of direction and the key outcomes we will address, deliver or influence in the coming years. To be supported by a more detailed Delivery Plan, updated as need, to ensure resources match ambitions and enable promises made are kept.

Central to all we do will be the discipline and professionalism we can apply, with our partners. To ensure in the most challenging times for our country, as well as our city, that our finances are managed well, that we do all we can with and through others. That our sense of optimism, and ambition show in all we do, to make life better. As Councillors, officers and full Council, for all those that live, and work or visit the great City of Colchester.

Colchester City Council's Strategic Plan 2023-26

Our Strategic Objectives and Priorities will govern and shape what we do. And the Outcomes we seek to achieve, mindful of the challenges we face and foresee. Our Plan providing a framework, direction and heading, for an ambitious Council that will respond the needs of the people of the City of Colchester, as changing circumstances require.

Strategic Objectives	Priorities	Outcomes
Respond to the climate emergency	<p>Reduce our carbon footprint.</p> <p>Conserve and enhance our biodiversity.</p> <p>Continuing to be a leader in waste and recycling collections</p>	<p>The Council continues to proceed at best pace towards net zero aspirations by 2030.</p> <p>The Woodland and Biodiversity Plan is renewed annually with targets to improve biodiversity across all areas. With Cymbeline Meadows a publicly accessible nature reserve.</p> <p>Waste and recycling services are reviewed, and collection arrangements simplified and revised, to support the government recycling collection targets of 70%.</p>
Deliver Modern Services for a Modern City	<p>The Colchester Council family of organisations work together to a shared and ambitious vision for the future of our city.</p> <p>The Council transforms services and moves to a community centred approach, where it enables, helps, and supports local communities as they help prioritise, shape and deliver local services.</p> <p>Our partnering approach maximises our influence and adds value through and with others, such as One Colchester, Essex County Council, the NHS, the Business Improvement District</p>	<p>The Local Government Association Peer Challenge recommendations of 2022 are delivered in full by end 2023.</p> <p>The future roles of the Council family of organisations including CCHL are refined to enable their delivery of improved services and profit for CCC that will support the delivery of essential services to our residents.</p> <p>Colchester Borough Homes is an efficient and respected quality provider of housing services.</p> <p>Assets are reviewed enabling greater use, and or transfer to community partners, rationalisation and or sale. Or use in support of city centre renewal.</p> <p>Colchester City Council closes the budget gap each year through the MTFF. And with CCHL and CBH, is able to fund capital and asset renewal and investment over the medium term.</p>

	and the Town Deal Board, the Garrison, and the University of Essex.	A new post transformation model of Council, partner, and community services delivers on our ambitions, cost effectively and with the support of the communities we serve.
Improve health, well-being, and happiness	<p>Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people</p> <p>Work with residents and partners to address quality of life and issues of happiness</p>	<p>Work with NHS and other partners on prevention, community engagement and awareness, helps us improve the life expectations and outcomes of our residents. and to support and help those most in need.</p> <p>We reduce the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis for our residents.</p> <p>With our residents we improve their sense of wellbeing.</p>
Deliver homes for those most in need	<p>Increase the number and quality and types of homes. Meet our duty to prevent or assist those facing homelessness</p> <p>Seek 30% affordable housing across all our own housing sites.</p>	<p>More Council homes have kept them in good repair and improving energy efficiency.</p> <p>More developers apply beautiful and sustainable design to all house builders across the city.</p> <p>We increase the number of affordable homes (seeking 30% where we build).</p>
Grow our economy so everyone benefits	Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant city and attract inward investment	<p>A longer-term vision and plan are created with the aid of Ambassadors and partners that will maximise the economic and social benefits of city status to all including young people</p> <p>Garden Community development that ensures Colchester gains maximum benefits.</p> <p>The Town Deal is delivered with partners, with city wide economic and social benefits.</p> <p>Economic advice and support to local businesses and key partners is available that attracts inward investment for social and economic benefit, exploiting city status with our partners.</p>
Celebrate our city, and our heritage and culture	<p>Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year</p> <p>To make our city a yet better place in which to live and work and visit.</p>	<p>The delivery with partners of the 2023 year of city status commemoration and celebration.</p> <p>With Essex County Council, we build on master planning, and take the next steps towards a transformed attractive and more accessible city centre, that makes the most of our public spaces, heritage and cultural assets.</p> <p>A step change in marketing Colchester as a destination</p>

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The Future of Colchester – A Consultation with Residents and Stakeholders

JANUARY 2023



Libby Britcher and Tricia Smith
Research Officers

Survey and discussion groups commissioned by the leader of the council, Councillor David King and Chief Operating Officer, Richard Block to shape the 2023 Strategic Plan.

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Introduction

This consultation was commissioned in September 2022 to engage residents, councillors, and other local stakeholders (local business owners and workers), to hear their views on the future of Colchester and how the Council should address the key challenges facing the borough which will be outlined in the councils Strategic Priorities for 2023-2026. The Strategic Plan sets out how Colchester City Council will play a part in making Colchester a place where people want to live, learn, work and visit.

Method

We engaged with residents, councillors, and other local stakeholders through two online surveys, consisting of both quantitative and qualitative questions:

- One for residents and other stakeholders (online), which was live from 5 October – 31 November.
- One for members, city and parish/town councillors (online), which was live from 12 October – 12 December.

We also undertook face-to-face, interactive discussion groups which were led by the content of the survey results and new emerging themes or areas of interest to the current cabinet.

The survey used opportunistic, convenience sampling and was promoted through various channels:

- Press release: 10 October
- Article in internal comms weekly update email: 6 and 28 October
- Toolkit for Members, Parish Council's and One Colchester Partners: issued 7 October
- Web banner on CCC homepage: w/c 10 and 17 October
- Borough News e-newsletter article: 14 October and 11 November issues
- Social media: multiple dates, including 21 October, 28 October, 31 October
- Facebook boost, £50: 31 October

Sample

1113 responses were received from the residents' survey. Despite being a convenience sample, we still achieved fairly good representation across different demographic groups. For a detailed breakdown by ward, age, gender, ethnicity, and disability see "[Achieved Sample of residents](#)".

There were 22 responses from members and councillors. This survey was extended for one week (5-12 Dec) to gather parish/town councillor responses which generated an additional 16 responses. There were 38 responses in total for the members survey when this closed 9am 12 December.

All those who responded to the residents' survey were invited to take part in some further face to face discussions. 230 showed interest in attending these. A further 123 said they would have been interested if they were to be virtual/online. We invited all those that stated an interest to our face-to-face discussion groups on 15 and 22 November. Of those that expressed an interest, 36 said they would attend. On the two days, a total of 29 attended (16 attendees on 15 November and 13 on 22 of November).

Headliners

- The majority (67%) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they enjoy living/working in Colchester (47% agreed, 19.5% strongly agreed)
- 42% of respondents agreed that they felt a sense of community in Colchester (35.2% agreed, 7.1% strongly agreed)
- Just over half agreed that they would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester (39% agreed, 11.9% strongly agreed)
- In open text box for priorities, two new themes were mentioned: The City Centre and Infrastructure
- 'Creating Safe, Healthy and Active Communities' was the 1st or 2nd priority for 60% of respondents.
- 85% of respondents ranked 'Environment' either first or second (out of 9) in order of importance to them in terms of budget spend.
- 36% ranked 'Parks and Open Spaces' first or second in order of importance.
- 71% ranked 'Corporate Services' 8th or 9th (out of 9).

Throughout this consultation, in open-text survey responses and discussion groups, some new themes emerged and stand-out areas of concern for residents included:

- **City centre regeneration** - Lack of shops, having a 'dirty' appearance, parking and general appearance. (The city centre was discussed by 27% of respondents, when people spoke about the town centre they were referring to the historic centre of Colchester).
- The centre was also mentioned when asked about the opportunities brought by city status.
- **Infrastructure** (including roads) was mentioned by 21.8% of respondents. E.g. How the current infrastructure can't cope with the development of Colchester (and doesn't keep up).
- Other themes mentioned throughout the qualitative responses related to the current strategic priorities and it was clear these were still important to residents. For example; 14.1% mentioned culture/leisure/history and tourism (including retail). During the discussion groups it became clear that residents want Colchester to make more of its history and to have its own identity.
- Other themes also echoed the current strategic priorities and included: Safe, healthy, active communities, climate/environment, housing/development, and employment/economy/education.

Recommendations

- **Colchester City Centre/high street to be included as a priority in the Strategic Plan.** The City Centre and High Street were highlighted a number of times within the survey responses and discussion groups as a priority for a number of residents. This included regeneration and a 'clean up' of the area. The areas were described as 'dirty' and 'grubby' however this wasn't always related to their cleanliness but how they appeared to be old/broken and outdated.
- **An Identity of its Own:** When residents discussed Colchester in the focus groups they generally spoke about Colchester as being unique and that this should be celebrated, comments in the survey and discussion groups indicated that we could learn from other city's that do it well.
- **Holistic Consultation Process** – there are many meetings, strategies, projects, and consultations continually taking place at Colchester City Council. These could work well if there was more of a holistic approach, and they were more joined up/strategic approach. Is there scope for a staff member to have an oversight of all projects?

- **Consult with Knowledge** consultations should be undertaken with awareness and understanding of local issues and internal plan.
- **Talk and Listen to Residents More** – Whether this is via more consultations or general groups. Residents feel like they are not listened to (there were many comments especially in the survey) where respondents said they weren't going to leave a response as they 'wouldn't be listened to anyway' so 'what's the point'.
- **Increased Communication** (including but not limited to);
 - What Colchester City Council is responsible for
 - What Essex County Council is responsible for (mainly in relation to roads)
 - Ensure staff understand what is in their remit (and if not in their remit, are able to triage appropriately. Residents mentioned 'giving up' when sent from one place to another when staff or organisations do not understand where responsibility lies.)
 - Use the right method of communication (Facebook mentioned as not always the best)
 - Youth (Youth councils mentioned)
 - Ensure full cycle of communication is adopted (e.g. ensure that responses to this piece of engagement is communicated)
 - Ensure staff are educated and understand where responsibilities lie
 - Recognition of how much weight resident opinion has

Detailed findings

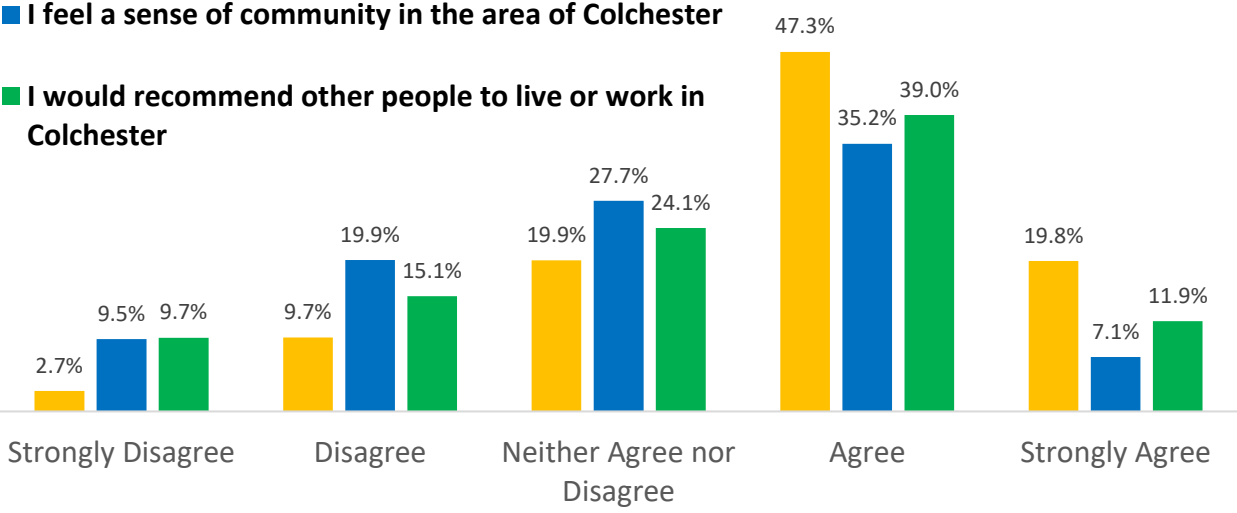
Living and working in Colchester: Residents sense of community

- The majority (67%) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they enjoy living/working in Colchester (47.3% agreed, 19.8% strongly agreed)
- 42% of respondents agreed that they felt a sense of community in the area of Colchester (35.2% agreed, 7.1% strongly agreed)
- Just over half agreed that they would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester (39% agreed, 11.9% strongly agreed)

I enjoy living/working in Colchester

I feel a sense of community in the area of Colchester

I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester



See Appendix 1,2 and 3 for a full breakdown by age, gender, disability, ethnicity and ward profile.

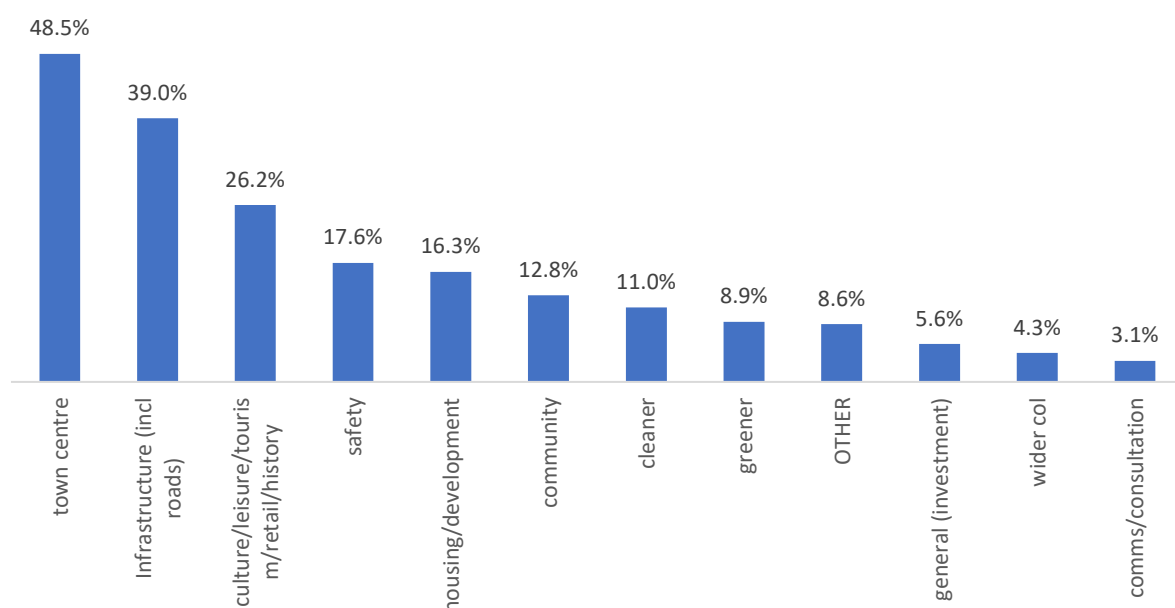
If respondents **didn't** agree with one of the three above statements, they were asked;
"What changes in Colchester would you like to see?"

All comments were sorted into themes, many comments fell into multiple themes. 55% (n=608) of respondents left a comment. (Detail regarding theme content and examples on next page).

• Infrastructure (Including Roads)	237	39.0%
• Communication and Consultation	19	3.1%
• Housing/Development	99	16.3%
• Cleaner	67	11.0%
• Greener	54	8.9%
• Culture/Leisure/Tourism/Retail/History	159	26.2%

• Town Centre	295	48.5%
• Safety	107	17.6%
• General (Investment)	34	5.6%
• Community	78	12.8%
• Wider Colchester	26	4.3%
• Other	52	8.6%

Changes residents would like to see



Below are a selection of random, anonymous, verbatim quotes sorted into themes for this question. Quotes are likely to also fall within multiple themes including the one it is sat under.

- **Infrastructure;** Including roads, congestion, car parks, schools and surgeries etc. usually in negative context.
 - *"The town centre needs a massive revamp (its really grim) and you need to stop building houses with no infrastructure"*
 - *"Less houses, more green areas, more things for children to do/places to go, better roads, less traffic, more gp surgeries, better town centre as it's awful!"*
 - *"A better 'city centre' that's clean! With better parking. I refuse to go into town due to the price of parking."*
 - *"Rush hour traffic issues have never been resolved, so many roads are overloaded and have never been improved in the last 70 years."*
- The need for more/better **communication and consultation** from Colchester City Council
 - *"Transparency, honesty and any works undertaken for Colchester Borough, closely monitored, but it won't be. Far too much time and money is wasted, but that will continue"*
 - *"Mote interaction with the uni and other collaborations with the groups and cultures we have."*
- **Housing and development;** often linked to infrastructure comments - usually in negative context.

- *"More infrastructure to cope with the enormous amount of new homes. Less 'coffee shops' more real shops. Repair the town centre pavements. More street cleaning."*
- *"It has become an overdeveloped monstrosity"*
- **Cleaner;** physical cleanliness and the appearance of cleanliness - including phrases like 'shabby and run down'
 - *"Ban indiscriminate scooter parking; improved riverside e.g. pop up street food stalls; clean up St Botolph Street; more street cleaning"*
 - *"More community feel, more activities, more investment in running a green, efficient, clean town"*
 - *"...Buildings look rundown, streets are dirty..."*
- **Greener;** This theme includes comments about open green spaces which have been developed, environment and climate comments and smaller scale such as want for trees in areas.
 - *"Less people, stop building, more green space and more for the environment"*
 - *"Too many coffee shops, hairdressers and barbers as well as closing shops that then get replaced and close again. I'd like to see more open space, greenery, maybe shutting off the high street and having tables and chairs out."*
- **Culture/Leisure/Tourism/Retail/History;** often mentioned together in relation to town centre (but not always)
 - *"Get the town centre working as a hub with more reasons to go there. At the moment it's extremely expensive to park to go to either pubs, coffee shops or restaurants. More local independent shops should be financially supported. Make more of what is unique about Colchester and its amazing history"*
 - *"More community and cultural festivals, more international events and a big focus on Roman history."*
- **Town Centre;** regeneration
 - *"More civic pride! City centre smartened up."*
 - *"The town centre is like a dustbin. The pavements are like an obstacle course - dodgy lifted slabs, broken glass, litter and dog mess. The High Street is a disgrace"*
 - *"I would like to see the city centre smartened and cleaned up. Decent roads and pavements are needed. Better social housing. The council property I live in is mouldy and damp suffering from subsidence, mould and damp etc etc."*
- **Safety;** General safety including; policing, anti-social behaviour (ASB), unsafe areas in Colchester and pavements
 - *"It has become a ghetto, It only used to be Greenstead that had a bad reputation, now its the whole of Colchester, thanks to the continuous overdevelopment."*
 - *"Make all the pavements safe, it is safer to walk in the roads, nowadays there is less traffic as no one wants to pay to park, only danger is from scooter users, and yes I have been hit by one on the pavement"*
 - *"The town has no shops, and the town is a very small part of what is colchester that is full of homeless, fly tipping and anti social behaviour"*
- **General (investment);** general comments regarding broad investment
 - *"Better investment in the city centre, better investment in supporting the environment and improving green areas"*

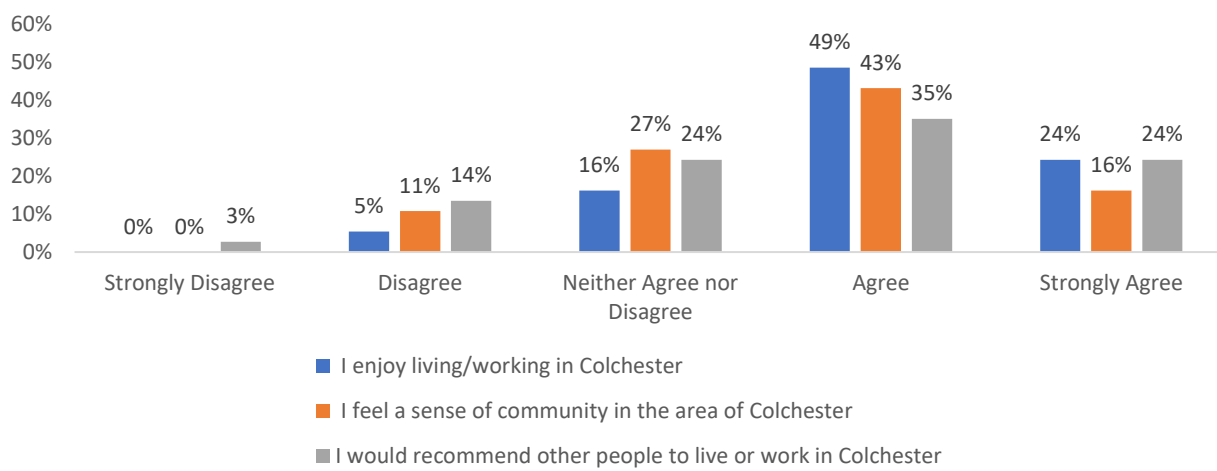
- *"More community feel, more activities, more investment in running a green, efficient, clean town"*
- **Community**
 - *"More neighbourhood community groups for residents to share ideas about their local streets/areas. One time free visit to the local castle for Colchester residents. A better door step rubbish/recycling service from weekly refuse persons. Council workers and police located in local areas of the Borough and towns/locations advertised."*
 - *"More childcare facilities, better free access services for families and children, more community events in the surrounding areas such as Stanway not just in town centre, fix the park in Westlands, better cultural and entertainment facilities"*
- **Wider Colchester** – specifically mentioning an area or outside of centre
 - *"More investment in outlying/satellite communities."*
 - *"Much more social events bringing community and villages closer"*
- **Other;** all other comments (including comment unable to group/theme as too broad or one off comment relating to specific item)
 - *"More links with the football club in the city center, e.g flags, murals, painting cable boxes with former players shirts and names. Have seen it in other towns locally and increases sense of pride in community."*
 - *"More things for young adults to do as there are many students at the colleges and university"*
 - *"More indoor facilities for kids. Kids museum or indoor playatorium"*
 - *"A council that cares for existing residents"*
 - *"More independent businesses, probable lower rents would help"*
 - *"People very unwelcoming...."*

Living and working in Colchester: Members and parish councillors - Feelings about Colchester and a sense of community

A high proportion of members also agreed/strongly agreed:

- That they enjoy living/working in Colchester (49% agreed, 24% strongly agreed)
- That they felt a sense of community in the area of Colchester (43% agreed, 16% strongly agreed)
- And almost two thirds agreed that they would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester (35% agreed, 24% strongly agreed)

Members & Parish Cllrs - feelings about colchester and sense of community



If members **didn't** agree, they were asked to tell us;

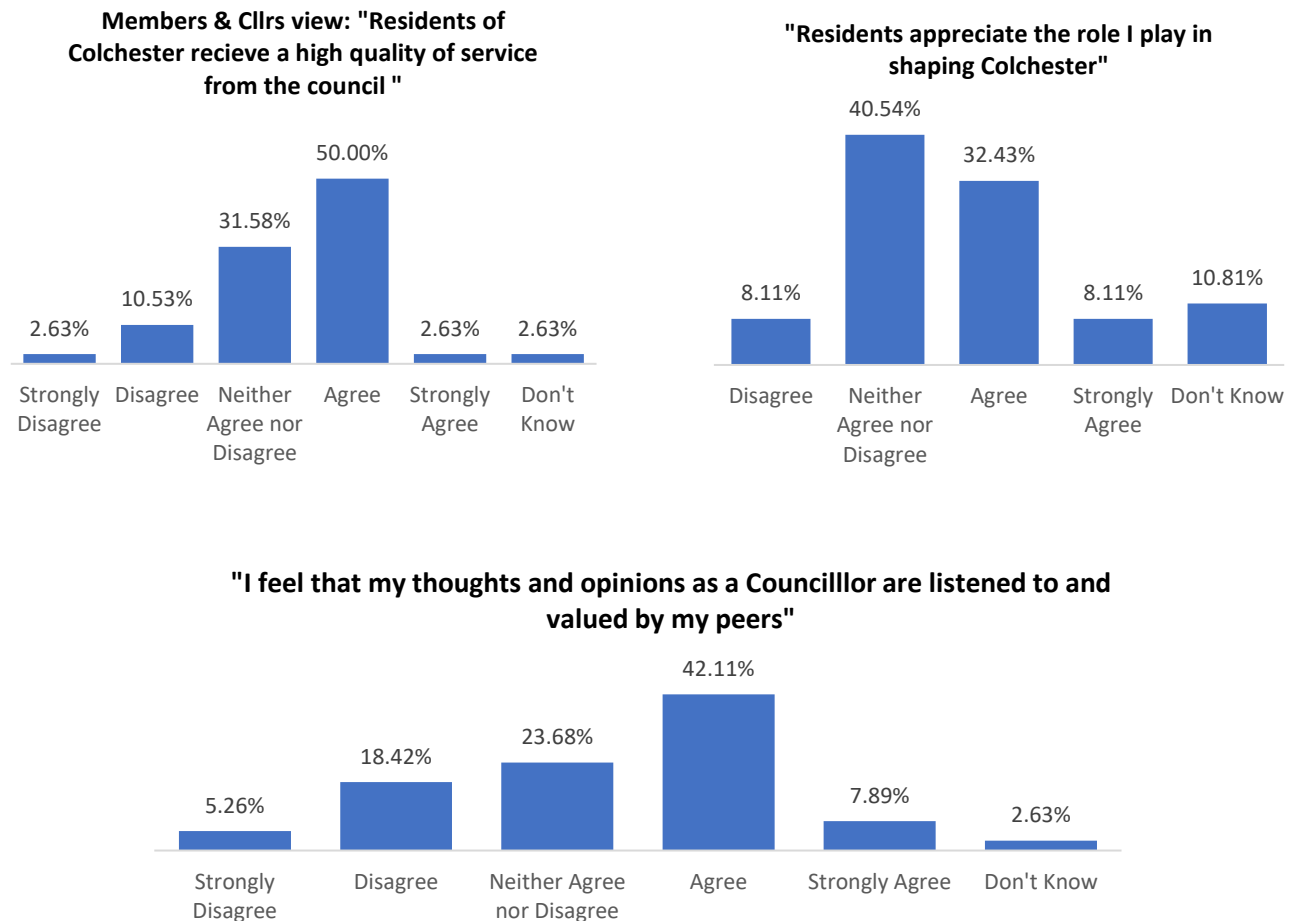
"What changes in Colchester would you like to see?"

(7 comments left, many of which mentioned multiple themes. All quotes verbatim, random, and anonymous).

- *"Changes to its shabby down market centre and better architectural design on new builds. See Chester"*
- *"I would not usually make recommendations on where to live or work"*
- *"I live in x, which is a rural ward. It doesn't have a particular affinity with Colchester. The administration needs to think of the Borough/City as a whole rather than the city centre. Life doesn't start and end in the city!"*
- *"Colchester's Direction of Travel has been distorted, and as a result, over the last 14 years it has become a singularly unattractive place to live in"*

The role of councillor's in representing communities

Members and Parish Councillors were also asked whether they felt residents were well served by the council and whether they felt their role as a Member or Councillor were appreciated.

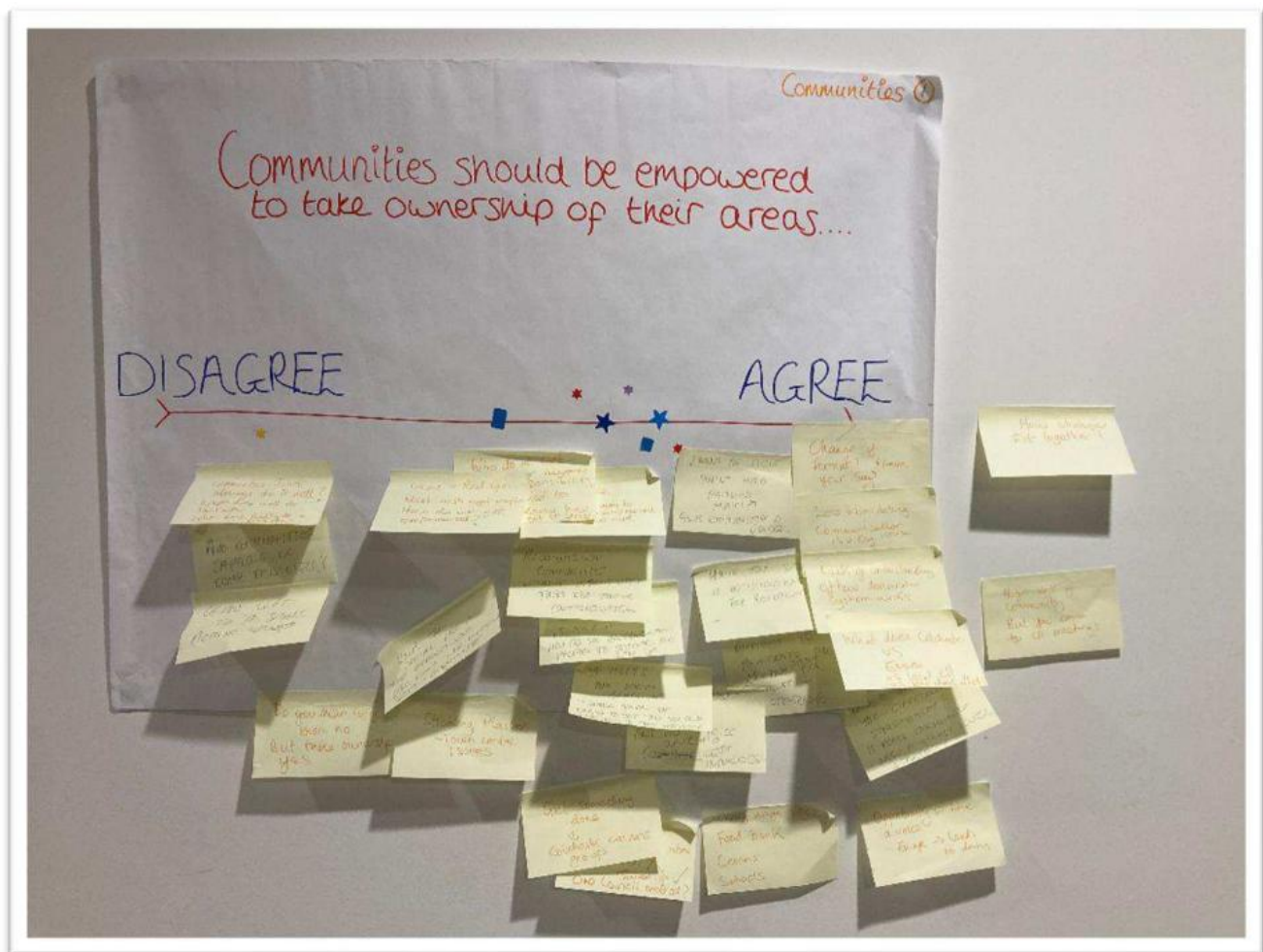


The role of communities - themes from discussion groups

There was a general view that **community empowerment** was both possible and important but that it should be **proportional to capability and not *instead of the council***. Residents explained that they knew it takes time and that **simple, easy initiatives would enable people to 'dip in and out'** (and thus not become a burden) and the focus should be on **quality rather than quantity**. The focus should be on tackling future issues rather than "bog-standard" recurrent issues and not just quick fixes or 'sticking plasters' on issues but a more **holistic approach**.

For this to happen, and for residents to feel more empowered, **the council needs to more accessible and less intimidating** (the group agreed that they knew there was the ability to attend meetings as a member of the public, but felt that they didn't know where/when these were and who held responsibility for different things (i.e. Parish, Ward, Colchester and Essex Councils) – and they felt that the council often didn't know either (examples were given here of when residents tried to 'fix' something in the community but councils, parishes and charities kept passing them to different organisations. **They felt deflated and**

frustrated and often gave up. It was agreed by the group that **communication needs to be better suited to residents and better in general**. There are so many different groups and organisations which don't seem to talk to each other – **a more joined up approach is needed**.

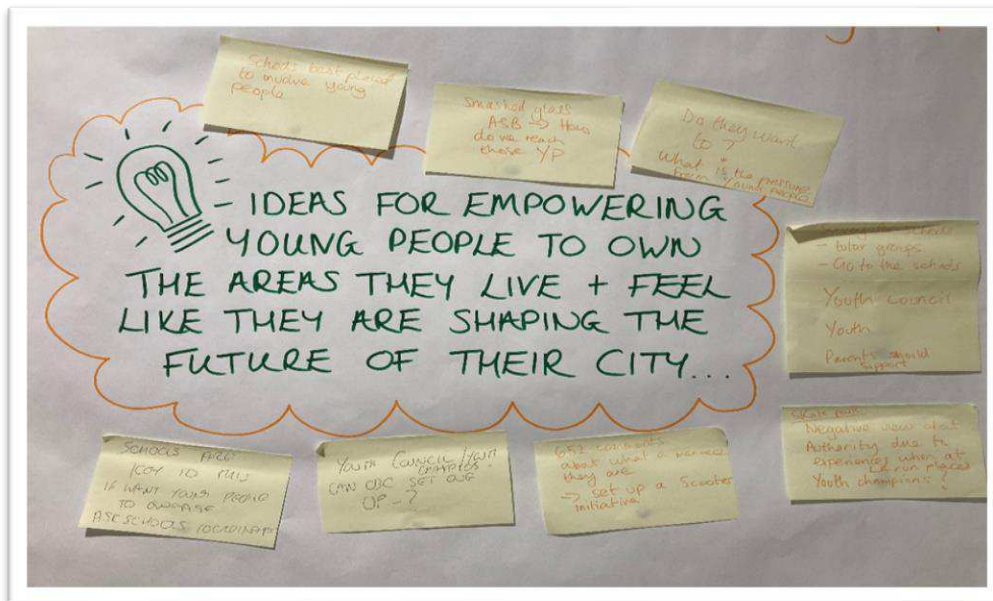


Other points made during discussion sessions with residents related to communities:

- Feel they do have empowerment but **it takes a long time for the council to respond** back to the resident once they've complained (after acknowledgment)
- Needs **more dialogue** with the communities and the councillors
- Look at other initiatives that help generate extra money e.g., **crowdfunding**
- Look at things which are **simple** for residents to be part of, i.e., tree planting. Get schools involved to learn about environment – **quality rather than quantity**. **Following up on initiatives is important** e.g., how the trees are growing etc. - an example was given in the room here of a similar initiative taking place but all trees dying after they were planted – who was responsible for this?).
- 'When it's done well it's great and when it's not it's a disaster!' – **must be well managed** by council
- When communities run their own areas, it **falls on the same people/age/group** to do everything
- Sometimes, a small handful of people get involved that **don't necessarily have the right skills**
- Look at ways of recognising things. (i.e., little warriors, litter pickers) and get **messages from co-ordinator** on what's involved

- Communities need **inspiration to get involved**
- People should **take ownership** – those who are engaged are willing
- The council doesn't really engage with the community. They need to **make it less intimidating**. How are they getting people to sign up? Integration and **communication need to be better managed**. People need to have clear signposts on how to sign up to get emails
- There's a **lack of understanding on how local democracy runs**. Takes a huge amount of **effort to understand and navigate the system**
- Council needs to make things easier as it's 'pretty impenetrable' and then **people give up**.
- **Citizens UK** – Colchester has a group. Invite them to your meeting and tell your personal stories. Ask Cllr King to attend or someone from the council
- Communities don't feel empowered to make a difference and though we have ward Cllrs it's never resolved – just a sticking plaster
- Town Centre Community – **Masterplan meeting was disjointed** as you've a strategy for the town centre, history, jumbo but it feels like it's a little bit here and a little bit there. It doesn't **look at the holistic picture** and we could have a better **strategy at the higher level** which could get people to buy into it a bit more, they could make sense of it on how it fits together.
- Living wage – Use all the platforms or the council could facilitate that through comms messages
- We should **empower young people** – don't shoot them down
- Suggested that schools are the best point of call for getting information out to different age groups. **Using the influence of the schools** of hearing of young voices.
- Youth Council - Do we have a youth council in Colchester that talks to the council? **Wendy** knows of someone that could talk to the council (Research team has Wendy's details)
- There needs to be **consistency**
- Look at a '**Champion**' model – for skateboarding, cycling etc,
- Every school can put out a survey through tutor groups and invite council to come in and have a forum
- Where is the pressure from young people to feeling unempowered? It's **mental health** side of things
- Young people don't know how to **express something they're passionate about**
- They don't know how/where to have any **interaction with someone in authority** to express their concerns
- **Have your say meetings**: they are quite **intimidating**, and it appears to be the **same people from the community attending**. You need to make it more inclusive and let people know you can make representations

- There's **no integration in communication at schools, across cultures** etc. There are over 20 sites where different events are going on

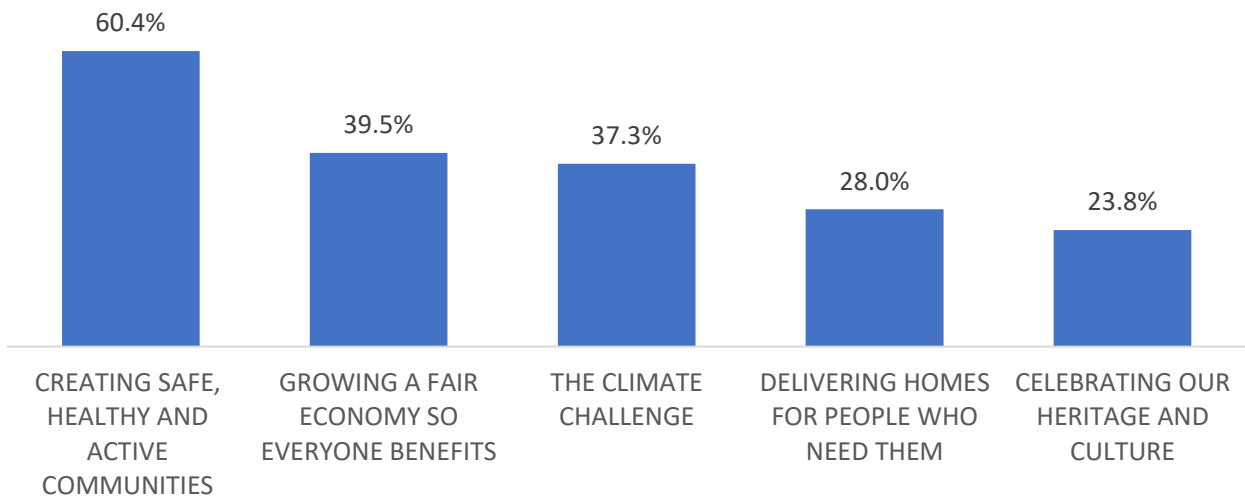


Priorities for the Council

Priorities of residents

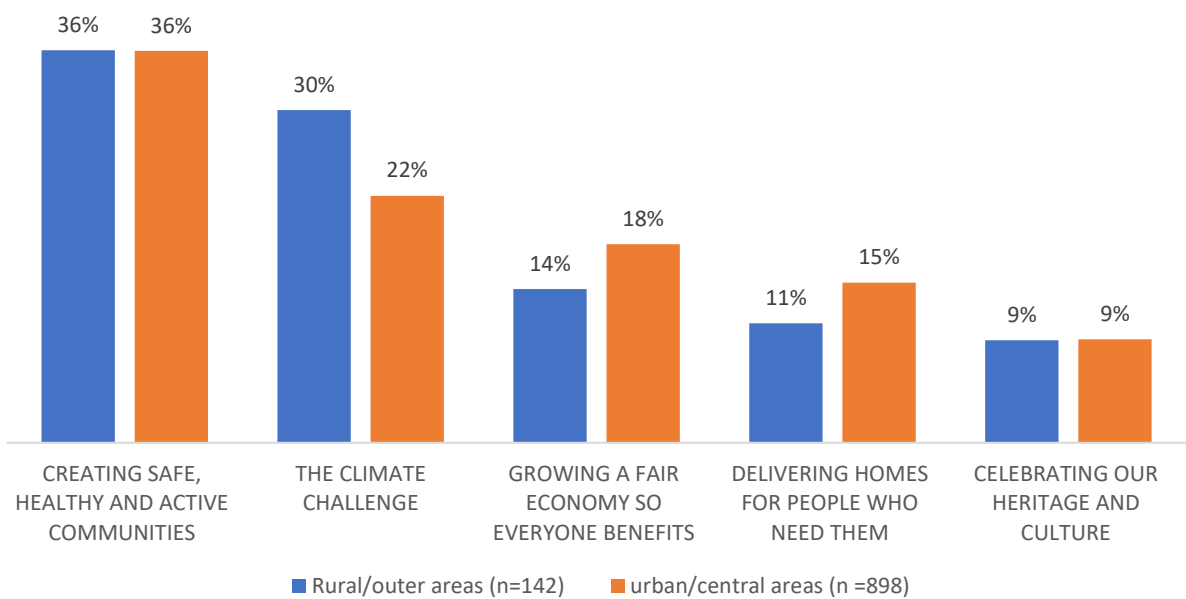
Residents were asked to rank the current council priorities in order of importance.

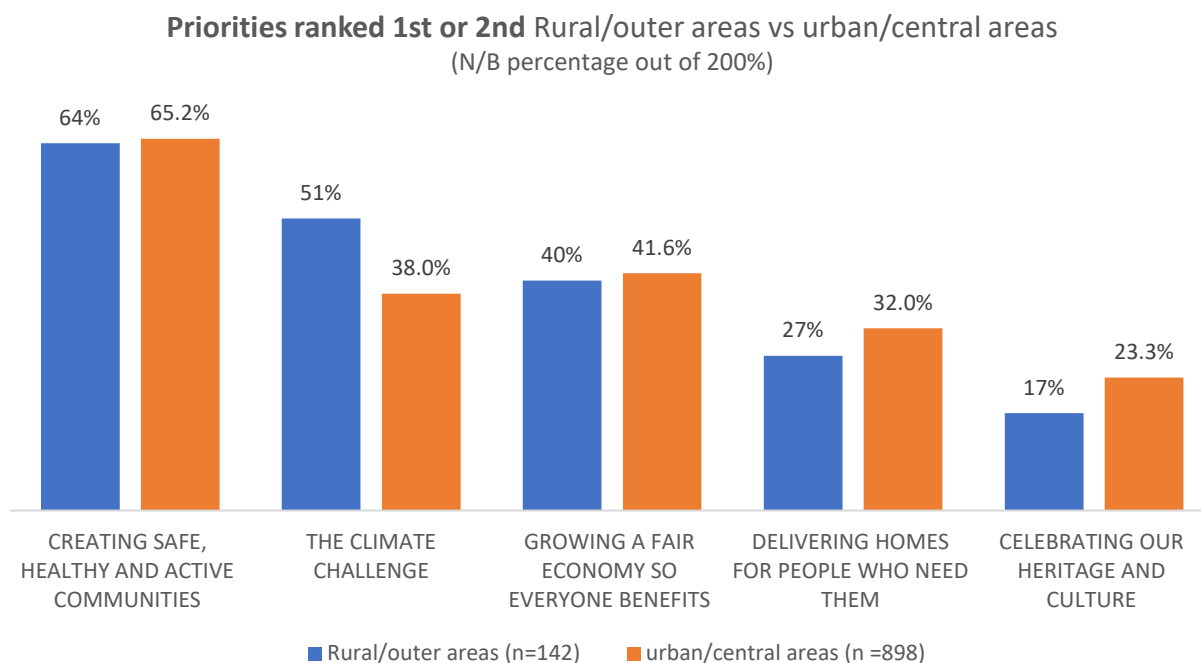
‘Creating Safe, Healthy and Active Communities’ was the 1st or 2nd priority for 60% of respondents.



We compared responses from those in rural/outer Colchester areas with those who live more centrally to see if there were any differences in priorities. There was little difference between the areas in the proportion each priority was ranked 1st. There were some small differences when combining which priorities were ranked 1st or 2nd, with a higher percentage of those in rural areas ranking the climate challenge 1st or 2nd and those in Urban/central areas ranking delivery homes and growing a fair economy higher (Rural/outskirts = Marks Tey and Layer, Mersea and Pyefleet, Rural North, Tiptree).

Priorities ranked 1st Rural/outer areas vs Urban/central





For a detailed breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity, disability and ward please see appendix 4.

Other priorities

Respondents were asked; **What would your number one priority for the council be for the next 3 years?** They were then asked to explain their answer. 97% (n=1075) of respondents put an answer in the initial text box and 87% (n=911) went on to explain their answer. In the 'top priorities' open text box, of those that answered, 237 people mentioned the **TOWN CENTRE** and said that it should be one of the top priorities.

The only other 'new' themes were; **INFRASTRUCTURE** and the need for this to sufficiently support the growing population and housing stock and **LESS HOUSING** although this could be grouped with the climate challenge/sustainability as was often in relation to green space in the borough (even if green space/climate wasn't specifically mentioned).

Priority Themes from Open Text Boxes;

Top 4;

- Town Centre 25% ***NEW PRIORITY***
- Climate 18%
- Infrastructure 14% ***NEW PRIORITY***
- Community and Safety 14%

All Other Priorities Mentioned; Cost of Living, Culture, Economy, Housing, Less Housing/ Development, Affordable Housing, Other, Safety)

Housing was split into 3 themes;

1. (Want for) Less Housing

2. General

3. (More/better) Affordable Housing

(Comments in this section were only attributed one over-arching theme. All comments are random and verbatim)

(Top 3; Town Centre, Climate and Infrastructure)

- **Town Centre - 25% (n = 237)**

(Regeneration, general cleaning up, filling empty buildings. Often linked with comments relating to community, culture, retail and safety).

- *"To move away from the current "anti car" policy that has seen people driven out of the town centre, which goes in tandem with the demise of the retail sector within the town - The priorities should be to ensure that the town centre has a thriving retail economy. There should also be easy vehicular access to the town centre roads, with cheap parking to encourage residence to visit, and not force them to drive miles to out of town bland retail parks."*
- *"Making the town centre more attractive and upcoming for tourism - I just feel too much is being done on the outskirts I.e by the stadium and Stan way because land is cheap but not enough in the town centre."*
- *"To improve the infrastructure around the town to make it more accessible to all. To clean up and improve dilapidated areas. Turn empty shops and offices into affordable housing rather than building on our green spaces. Make Colchester a place to celebrate, not feel embarrassed by - The current priorities seem very vague. I appreciate the need for affordable housing but I do think we as a nation should be looking at buildings that already exist but are not used (there are plenty of these spaces) that could be turned into housing, or using brownfield sites prior to more recreational space being culled."*

- **Climate - 18% (n=177)**

(Includes green transport and general measures to keep Colchester greener).

- *"Growing the local economy in a way that supports the climate challenge - Attracting businesses that help reduce demand unsustainable resources, through sustainable technology and renewables will help to upskill communities for the longer term whilst showing our commitment to the climate challenge. Colchester seems to need a niche in the business market."*
- *"Better Maintenance of the environment so that open and green spaces are ones that we can be proud of and use safely - The environment in which people live and work is in my opinion the most important service the local authority can deliver to encourage the well being and development of all strata demographic groups"*
- *"The climate challenge. Sorting out car dependency - It's unpleasant in Colchester in places as a pedestrian. Too much public space and consideration is given to vehicles. Even new developments (Stanway) are not pedestrian friendly and encourage car use. It would make a radical difference to Colchester if the Council could grapple with these issues and resolve them effectively"*

- **Infrastructure - 14% (136)**

(Includes roads and other infrastructure such as schools and GP surgeries and how these need addressing).

- *"Better services to manage the way too much new homes that has been built - Too many new homes, infrastructure can't support, it enough incentives to use public transport"*
- *"Infrastructure and facilities - It's no good building homes and encouraging companies to come to Colchester when the roads are awful, there aren't enough Doctors dentists and schools. The elderly need better facilities too, activities and clubs to avoid loneliness."*

- *"Stop wasting money on badly planned infrastructure - Bus station replaced by arts center that's hemorrhaging money and a bus station not fit for purpose now"*
- **Community and Safety - 14% (136)**

(General community comments. Includes; policing, ASB, pavements etc).

- *"Ensuring there is a safe environment - Lots of footpaths are in dangerous conditions from tree roots (that were planted by council on green verges)"*
- *"Safety in community - Street lighting extra policing"*
- *"Safe healthy and active communities - If residents feel safe, they take pride in their area and want to contribute to reducing carbon emissions, recycle more, keep area tidy etc"*
- *"Engagement with residents, actually understand what matters to people - For too long councillors and politicians have acted upon what agenda they choose, rather than listening to their customers (the residents/voters) and what they want. For example, our road is breaking up and in need of urgent repair. It's a busy road, on a major bus route, yet we are told it can't be fixed until 2024 at the earliest. These things matter to people. Drive a people's agenda, not a politician's/council's agenda."*

All Other Priorities Mentioned; Cost of Living, Culture, Economy, Housing (General), Less Housing/Development, Affordable Housing, Other.)

- **Cost of living**

(Comments mentioning that helping those in need should be prioritised).

1. *"Cost of living - Help the community that helps the council"*
2. *"Helping people to afford to live - It would be nice to see more support towards communities and small businesses."*
3. *"Helping those most in need."*

- **Culture**

(Often closely linked with 'town centre' theme and discussing need for Colchester to make more of its culture, heritage and tourism).

1. *"Community and promoting our heritage - If we promoted our heritage like other historic cities e.g. Bath, York etc. Would have a follow on effect to the city. I'd like to see more performance venues and community gatherings."*
2. *"To preserve the heritage and attract people to see it - Not enough is done to preserve and promote the town's history. While there are things to visit in, the wider "experience" leaves you lacking. The quality and diversity of shops is poor and there is little enticement. The development at Stane Park is fine, but traffic management has been poor. More quality events need to be put on in the town."*
3. *"Arts and culture - More funding for arts and culture events. Support us organisers and we will do our utmost to support support tourism into the city and boost the local economy."*

- **Economy**

1. *"Focus on the economy and supporting local businesses - Because that creates jobs and wealth and allows the other priorities to happen."*
2. *"Economic improvement and support for working households - There are lots of options for support for low income households and those on UC but they're not the only once struggling and I'd like to see financial support for hard working people."*
3. *"Growing economy - It's good for residents especially in these difficult times"*

- **Housing**

(General comments regarding housing. Usually the need for delivering homes. Sometimes mentioning 'infrastructure'.

1. *"Have a real comprehensive plan for achieving net zero, protect people's households and avoid housing speculation"*
2. *"Stop building housing stock till you fix the infrastructure - hospitals, doctors, dentists, roads are full, stop bring in more"*
3. *"To consider the level of housing and building across Colchester and how local amenities match that, i.e. A second recycling centre or expansion of the Stanway one and access, regeneration of the town centre and retail units, more frequent buses from places like Tiptree to Stanway and Colchester town centre, station and hospital - Planning seems to be high up on CBC's agenda, at the expense of the balance of green space and public amenities, eg. Proposed development of Middlewick Ranges, regeneration and redevelopment of Stanway and Stane Park, lots of building up by the hospital, yet no improvement to road access to the hospital for emergency vehicles - particularly around North Station. Also a huge housing development in progress in Barbrook Lane, Tiptree, as well as another one proposed for Brook Meadows. GP services in Tiptree are heavily oversubscribed, as are all local schools. Housing and public services, plus a balance of green space for health and well-being, must be balanced"*

- **Less Housing/Development**

(Often linked to 'climate' and some 'infrastructure' themes and how this is having a detrimental effect on Colchester's green space).

1. *"Stop building everywhere!- Stop building everywhere and stop importing every Tom Dick and Harry that doesn't integrate or speak English"*
2. *"Stop building houses on our green spaces like the wick - Concentrate on the economy and not lining your own pockets from housing firms"*
3. *To save all of the Green space we have especially Middlewick. - The council are obsessed with concreting over every last blade of grass and this need to stop now."*

- **Affordable Housing**

(The need for suitable, affordable housing for those in need and residents in general. This includes our current stock and ensuring they are of high enough quality).

1. *"Delivering homes which are affordable and high in quality - Having affordable homes is pointless if they aren't of sufficient quality. I.e. it's pointless to have a home if it gets frozen in the winter and boiling in the summer."*
2. *"Affordable housing for people who aren't students - We have a glut of student housing and housing built for those who work in London but none is affordable for those who actually live and work here. Less houseshares and more apartments for people especially those with mental and physical needs."*
3. *"Building more council homes (some of which should be for disabled residents so have wider doors and level access). Setting a cap on rental costs so that people on low incomes and benefits can afford to live - There are not enough homes that are affordable. And disabled residents are doubly excluded as most homes are entirely unsuitable"*

- **Other**

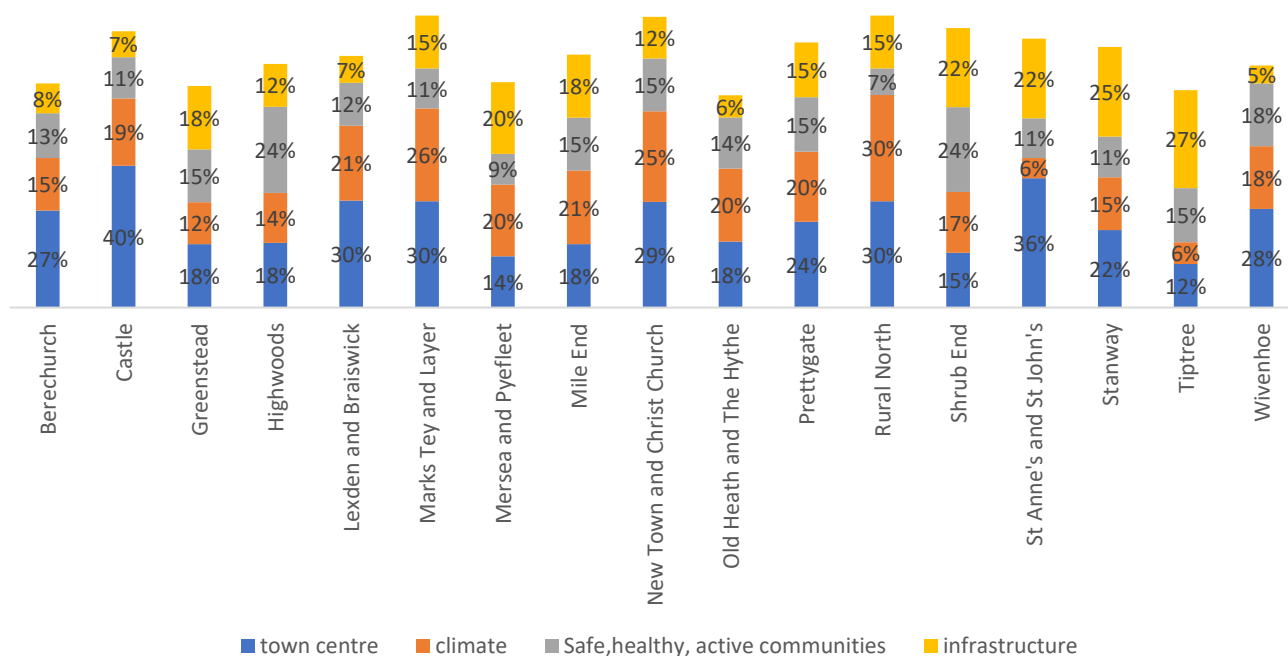
(Unrelated to any other comments thus unable to be themed).

1. *"Getting rid of the Tories"*

Top 4 'Other' priorities by ward

The town centre was one of the top 4 priorities mentioned by residents in all wards not just those that live close to the town.

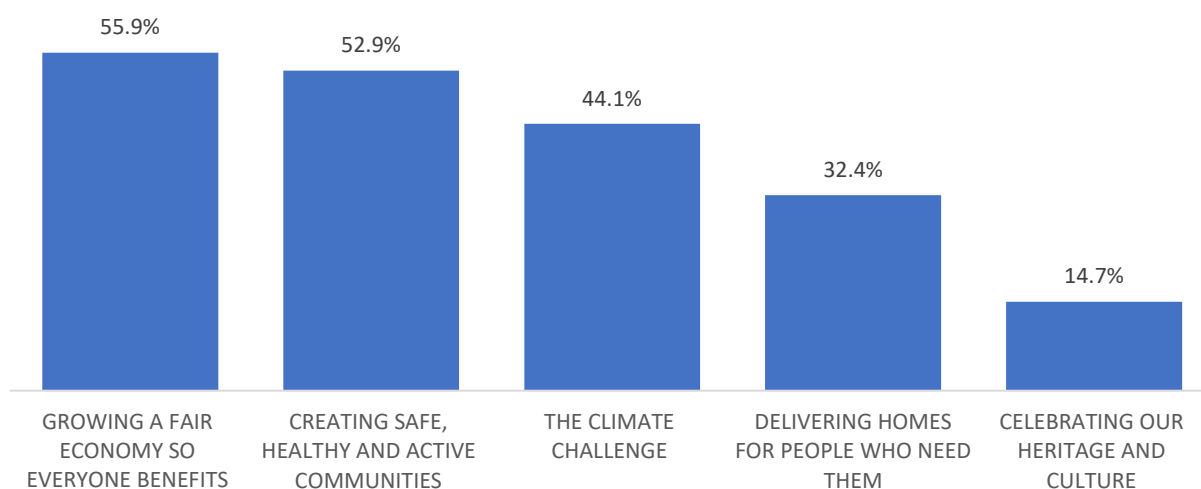
Top 4 priorities across wards - open text box



Priorities of members, parish and town councillors

Growing a fair economy was the highest ranked priority for councillors (55.9% ranked 1st or 2nd) but this was based on a much smaller sample of 38 respondents.

Priorities ranked in order of importance by members & Parish/town cllrs - %
Priority 1 or 2



PRIORITIES

After being asked to put current priorities in order of importance, members were asked what their top priority would be (Random selection of verbatim quotes below).

"The restoration of pride (in its proper sense), competence, abandoning Political Correctness, establishing more traditional values and order - Colchester's Direction of Travel is distorted: I do not agree with the priorities."

"Tidy up the town centre and High Street - Wealth of fine facades in High Street just being left to rot. Shop fronts ugly and garish. Too many fast food joints."

"Pressing ECC to sort out the horrendous traffic - Traffic is the most pressing problem causing pollution, congestion and misery. You can't go to eg Turner Rise / Asda without ending up in gridlock and then avoid using facilities. Stop building more houses introducing more traffic until the current problems are fixed. We don't need any more houses. Chesterwell have laid off builders as they can't sell the houses."

Discussion groups – focus on city centre priority

Because the renovation of the city centre was a strong theme amongst respondents of the survey, this was discussed in the face to face groups. There was a **strong relationship between the centre and out of town retail parks**. Initially it was apparent that residents felt that out-of-town retail parks were to blame for the 'decline' of the town centre, but after deeper discussion it appeared that there was room for both and that **they serve different purposes**. The older individuals in the room generally seemed angry about retail parks initially, whilst younger people liked them (along with online shopping) and said that **town was more for an 'experience'** rather than to just shop. It was also news to the majority in the room that the council opposed Stane Retail Park (after some very negative comments about the council 'letting' this happen and that the Council are to blame for the decline in the town centre). When it was explained by the discussion group facilitators that the council tried to oppose the plans, this sparked a wider debate about the **confusion around the council and what they are responsible for**. It was mentioned by those in the room that there is a **need for a clearer and more holistic communications strategy to residents** (including the need for a communications campaign to educate residents around what Essex County Council are responsible for, but this should be 'business as usual').

Other thoughts/comments from the discussion groups regarding the town centre:

- **Lower the rates and rent** on the empty buildings (especially for small or start-up businesses)
- Mend the **pavements**
- Look into why did the businesses feel the need to move out of the town?
- Chelmsford are not affected by online retail or out of town retail parks. So what are they doing that we're not doing in Colchester?
- Make more of **arts trail for shoppers**. Find a way to encourage independent/niche businesses to come into Colchester
- Rates are extortionate compared to other towns
- Empty shops - Look at **flexible terms** for independent people who are going to start their own business rather than 5 year leases.
- What are the stats with other towns? How many shops they have and how many are empty?

- **Safety factor** – People don't like walking home from work through the town. (Anti-social behaviour)
- **Circular park and ride** similar to system in Cambridge - multiple sites, multiple centres
- **Colchester as a destination rather than just retail**, it's about a destination where people go to enjoy themselves to have food, cinemas and living, shops. Has to be something **more than shops**. An experience day - dining/indoor market/experience events
- Need to do something with the old cinema instead of letting it go to complete ruin.
- Create areas where you can 'DIY'. **Pop-ups** where you can repurpose items or hold crafts areas (also beneficial for community spirit and social interaction).
- Shared working space in town – business hub – which would encourage those working from home to come into town, have coffee lunch etc.

We asked those in the room what would/could entice them to travel to the high street/centre vs. retail parks;

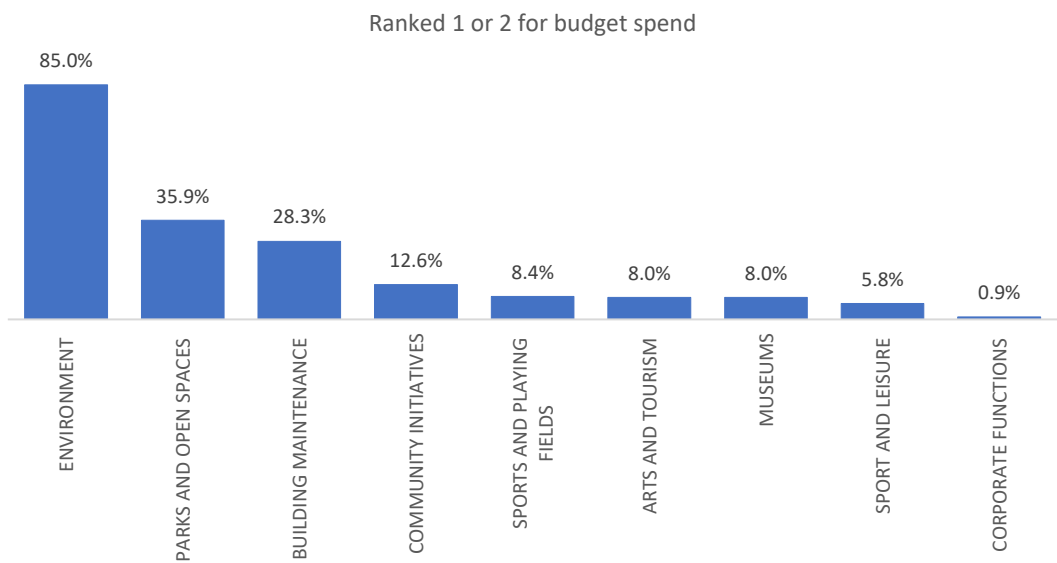
Town/City Centre	Out-of-Town Retail Parks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More electric parking • More small independent shops • Young people engagement for Osborne Street, NCP, bingo area. • Cultural facilities would entice • Incentives eg removal of charges if using the castle • Get rid of parking charges on certain days • Cargo bike hubs in the centre for families...hire and park them • Amazing history of Colchester but needs to be more accessible/available • Our heritage - need to take more advantage • Stores that are closed could exhibit as a museum - a celebration of Colchester / schools could come and visit re: roman history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closer together so more under cover (weather) • Convenience • Car parking is free • Cleaner and newer • No traffic • Shops generally bigger and more selection • More convenient to get to • Open longer hours • Difficult to get to for non-drivers • Could park and ride go out further? (The Old Sainsburys could be a potential site for park and ride?) • What about an orbital bus (circular) that goes both ways • Perhaps by using the park and ride/bus some of that money could be used to support the regeneration of the high street?

Budgetary spend

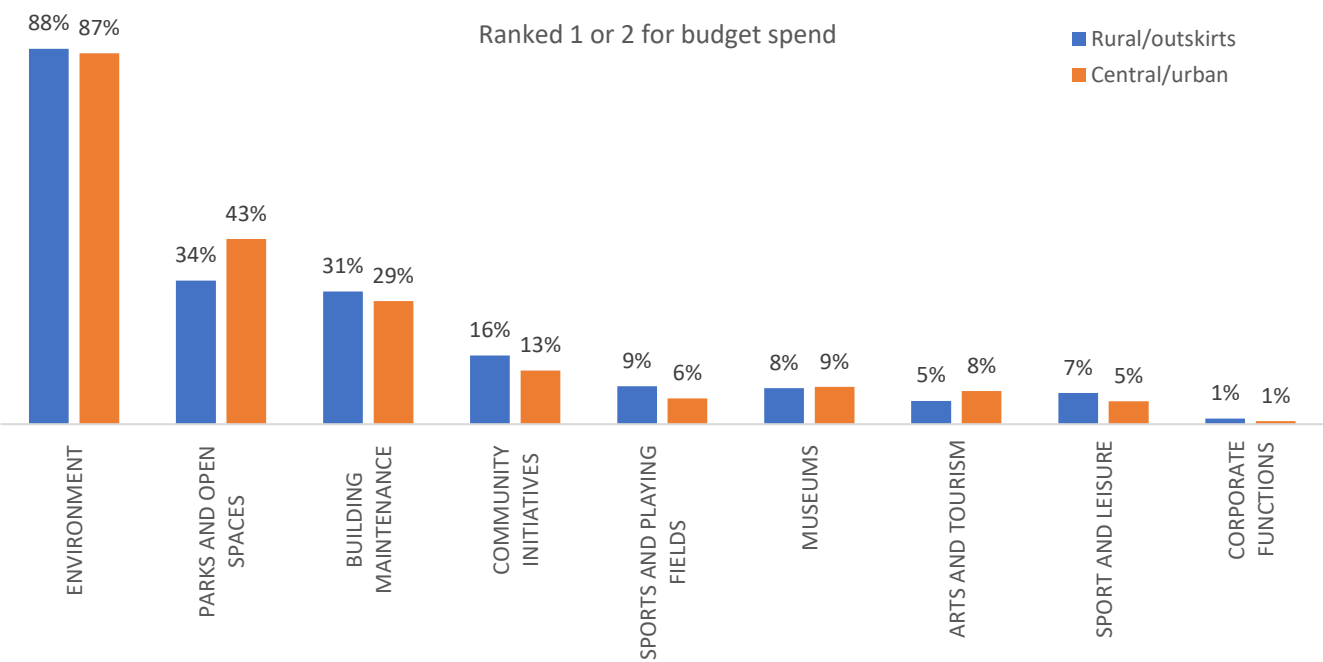
Budget areas important to residents

Residents were asked to rank the budgetary areas (that cost the council the most to run) in order of importance to them.

- 85% of respondents ranked ‘Environment’ either first or second (out of 9) in order of importance to them in terms of budget spend.
- 36% ranked ‘Parks and Open Spaces’ first or second in order of importance.

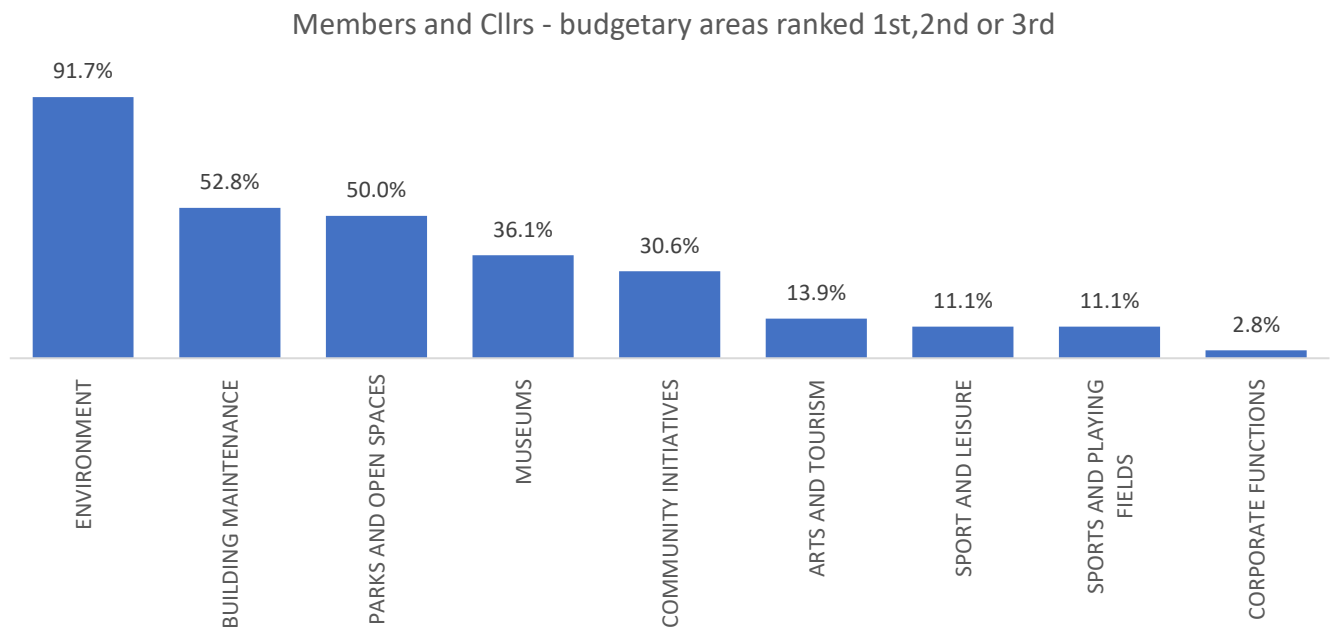


- There was little difference in how these were ranked when comparing those that live in the rural/outskirts of Colchester and the more urban/central areas of Colchester. **For a full breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and ward see appendix 5.**



Members and councillors budget ranking

Members and councillors also ranked Environment 1st, with 91.7% ranking Environment 1st, 2nd or 3rd.¹



Discussion group themes - budget saving ideas

At the discussion groups we discussed ideas with residents that could potentially save money for Colchester City Council. These ideas included: outsourcing of tourism and leisure services/facilities, country parks, and changes to waste and recycling collection.

Outsourcing of tourism/leisure/country park facilities

The discussion group facilitators asked those in the room how they felt about facilities, (including but not exclusively; museums, leisure facilities and country parks) and how important they felt it was that these were owned/managed by the council. Initially, they felt that this was very important – but after unpicking the reasons as to *why* the room felt like this, it was clear that it was more important that the council remained to have overall control but it could work well if they were to be managed by other companies (both private or charitable, but ideally not for profit);

- The council is a trusted entity. People know what they are getting and that they will get a fair price, so it is important the council maintains overall control if they were to outsource
- Concerns that if privatised, profits would be the only goal
- Leisure world – well run facility and targeted at the average person – don't want an over priced David Lloyd in its place!

¹ Not all Budget areas were ranked 1st or 2nd, in order for the graph to include all budget areas we have included those ranked 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

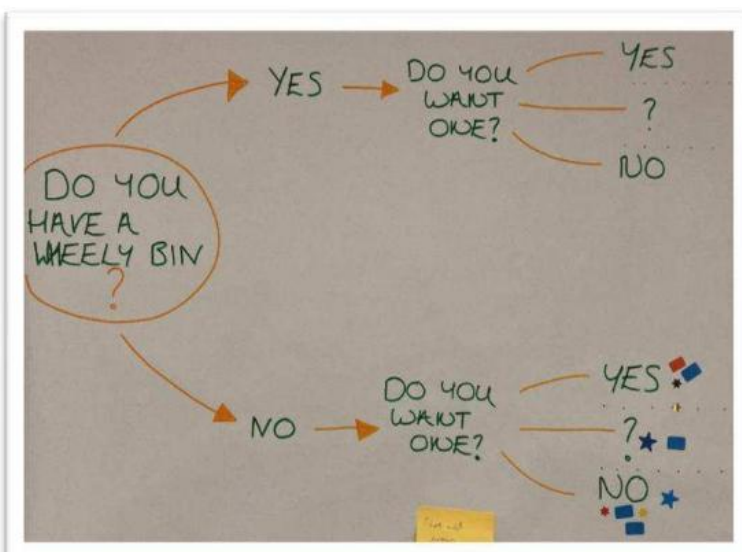
- Health & safety is trusted if run by council - if running as a non-profit (or profit) organisation they may cut corners
- You know what you're getting with the council, and you have continuity.
- If it's non-profit – it doesn't matter who really runs it as long as its run well
- Non-profit seemed to be favourable for museums and country parks
- Private companies were favoured for heritage as room recognised need for initial cash injection (Lion Walk mentioned here as example of this done well)
- Council could make more of it than we have now
- Residents want to know what service and price they're going to get
- Currently buses don't work in Colchester all different companies (they don't 'join up'). TFL is the sort of model that could work in Colchester (eg run by private companies but overseen by TFL).
- Must be looked at on a case by case – one size doesn't fit all
- Leisure world making a loss – you can't outsource it with the problems - council needs to be honest (many didn't know Leisure World runs at a loss)

Waste and recycling:

It was unanimous in the room that the participants would do whatever would be more cost effective for the council when it came to recycling. If sorting recycling (or putting all on one bag) would save money for the council, they would do it – in the hope it opened up more recycling opportunities. All options and costs or saving would need to be explained for a definitive decision (or vote) to be made.



The below boards (garden waste and wheely bins) were up in the room during discussion groups and individuals were able to 'vote.' There was no time to discuss in further detail.



City status

Resident views on city status

Respondents were asked what opportunities they hope Colchester city status will bring them. In total 89% (n=992) gave an answer to this open text box question.

As with the question regarding priorities, the town centre featured highly in the responses given with 22% (n =217/992) of comments mentioning the regeneration of the town centre as a potential opportunity following city status.

Other themes mentioned in response to opportunities included; culture/leisure/tourism, employment/economy/education, infrastructure, other, general (investment), community/safety, greener, cleaner and opportunities for the wider Colchester areas (explanation of themes on next page).

The top 4 themes (Employment/Economy/Education, Infrastructure, Culture/leisure/tourism and Town centre) were consistent across wards.

13% (n=129) of respondents, when asked about opportunities, gave a negative response. The question specifically asked about opportunities, so it does not mean the remaining responders necessarily felt positive about city status.

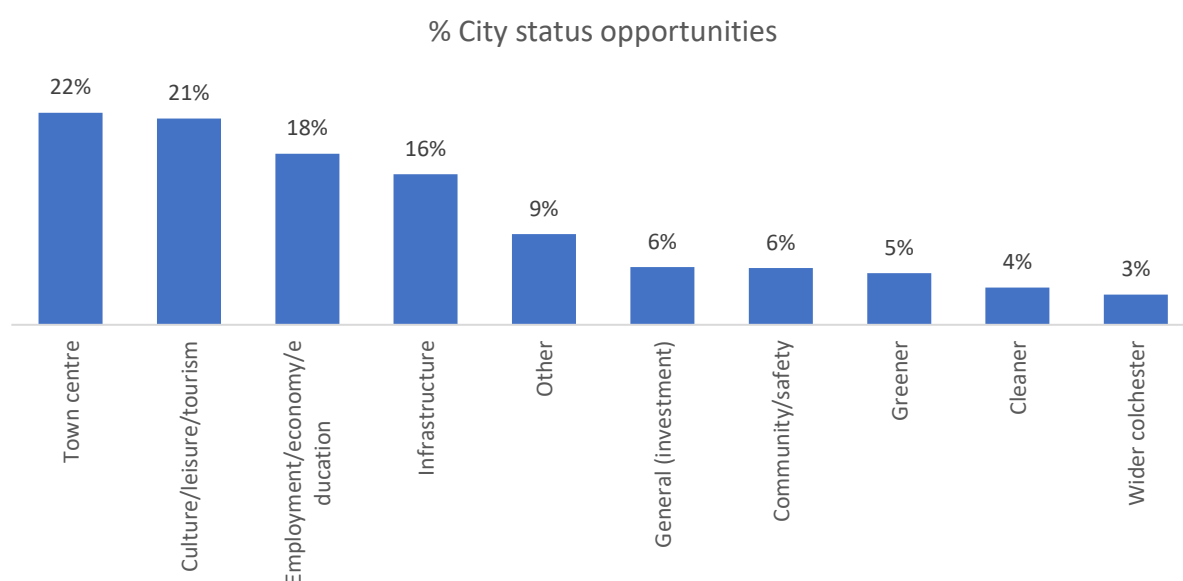
(129 negative comments) Random, verbatim examples.

"Nothing I will still not go into Colchester town it's a dump"

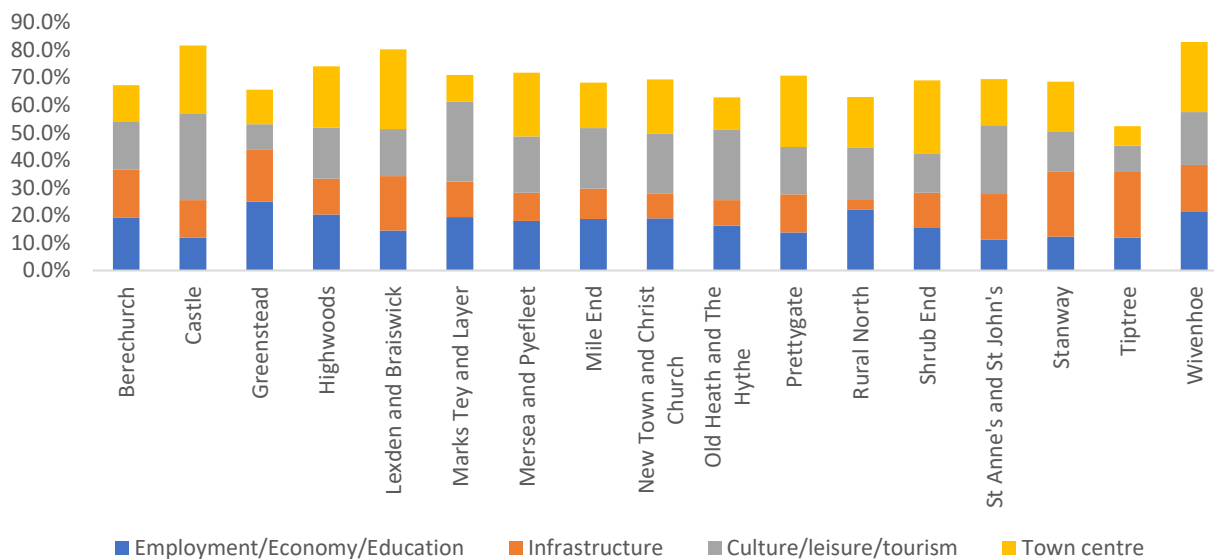
"None - waste of money"

"Did not want to live in a city"

"There is no proof that city status, I believe it's always been a vanity project"



Top 4 themes - City status opportunities by ward



Do you have any other thoughts or comments regarding Colchester City Council's priorities? (quotes verbatim) - many fall under and have been counted under multiple themes.

58% left a comment (n=643). All comments random and verbatim.

Infrastructure

(Inclusive of car, public transport, green transport and facilities such as GPs, schools and car parks and pavements – often related to expected rise in investment).

- "Better transport links"
- "Better tourism, less building, enhanced infrastructure"
- "Improving the transport network around Colchester to grow in line with homes, another hospital/drs"

Employment/Economy/Education

(Includes comments relating to more job opportunities, tourism income and jobs, more investment and opportunities for children now and in the future).

- "More tourism, more business and a high street with shops returning/opening."
- "More support for shops and family businesses"
- "Income so we can live rather than just exist"

Cleaner

(Spoken about in relation to Colchester being more inviting)

- "That the streets will be cleaner and more shops in the centre will stay open"
- "A better, cleaner and more successful town (city) centre."

Greener

(Including developing on green land, the climate and green transport and open spaces).

- "Better sports facilities. More cheaper environmental transportation via buses."
- "Green investment, renewables"

Culture/Leisure/Tourism

(Includes comments which discuss shopping, our history and heritage for jobs and investment from visitors and business)

- “More work opportunities and better shopping and eating experience”
- “Hopefully a job in heritage!”
- “Hopefully more funding for the arts and also leisure facilities.”

Town Centre

(Regeneration – often linked to leisure, tourism, culture and heritage related comments)

- “Make the city centre a nice place to be in.”
- “Better shopping, bigger brand names in town. More cultural events”
- “More choice shops, less barbers. Outside areas to sit and chill with no traffic.”

General (Investment)

- “More inward investment and growth (through business investment and additional tourism)”
- “More funding for the community”
- “Investment in reducing poverty in the area and increasing opportunities”

Community/Safety

(More support in local communities and/or safety relating to ASB, policing and pavements).

- “Safe, happy communities.”
- “A cleaner, Safer more attractive place to live in, to work in and to visit”
- “Greater investment into community activities, hopefully to bring down costs so that activities like swimming etc are more affordable”

Wider Colchester

(Comments which mentioned the wider borough or specifically outside of the centre).

- “Policing in Tiptree”
- “Don't forget the surrounding villages it's not all about Colchester”
- “To save MIDDLEWICK from development.”

Other

- “Make it somewhere to be proud of”
- “Big brand shops, upgrades to park play areas, house prices increase”
- “I'd like to see all of the above but we are in the midst of a cost of living crisis and as such I can't see any benefits happening in the near future.”
- “Better planning.”

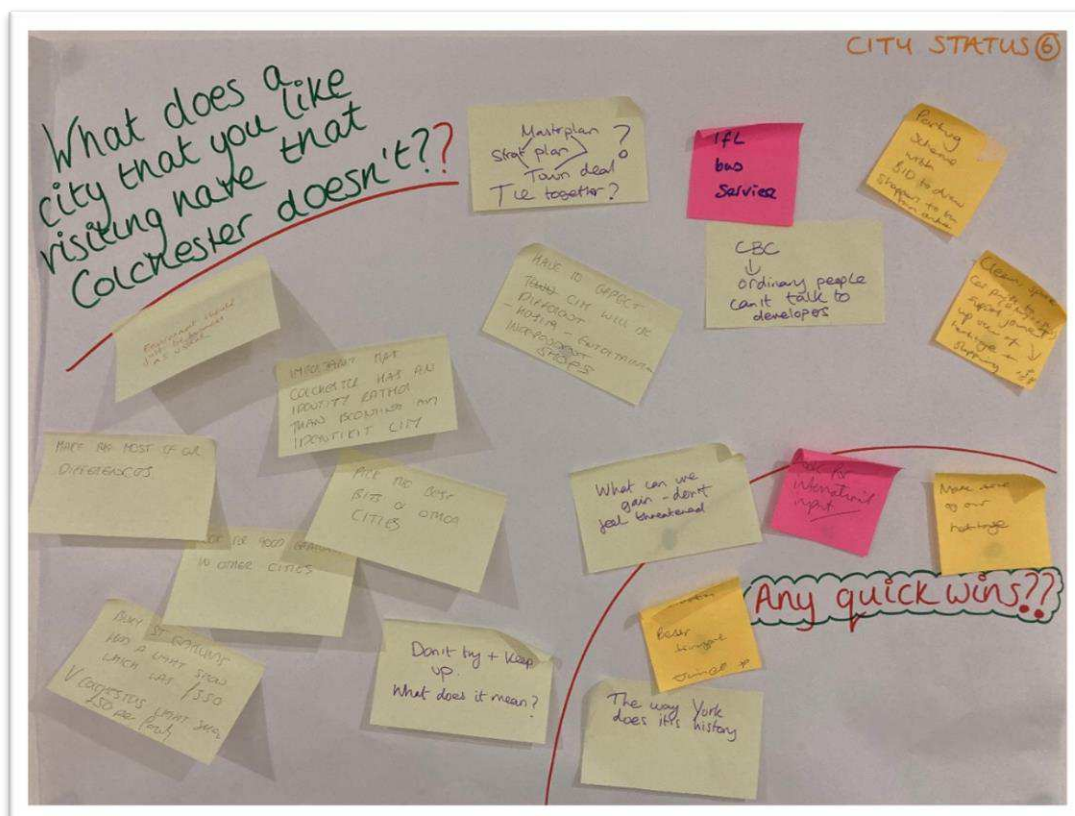
Members and councillor's views of city status

Comments from members and Parish Councillors 35 comments left in total. All comments random, verbatim and anonymous.	
Positive/Neutral Comments	Negative Comments
<p>"a flourishing future for Colchester"</p> <p>"A higher national profile resulting in business wanting to come here bringing high wage jobs"</p> <p>"Lowering the council tax and helping the homeless"</p>	<p>"I don't agree with city status and disagree it will bring any opportunities"</p> <p>"none keep it as a Town"</p>

Discussion group - city status

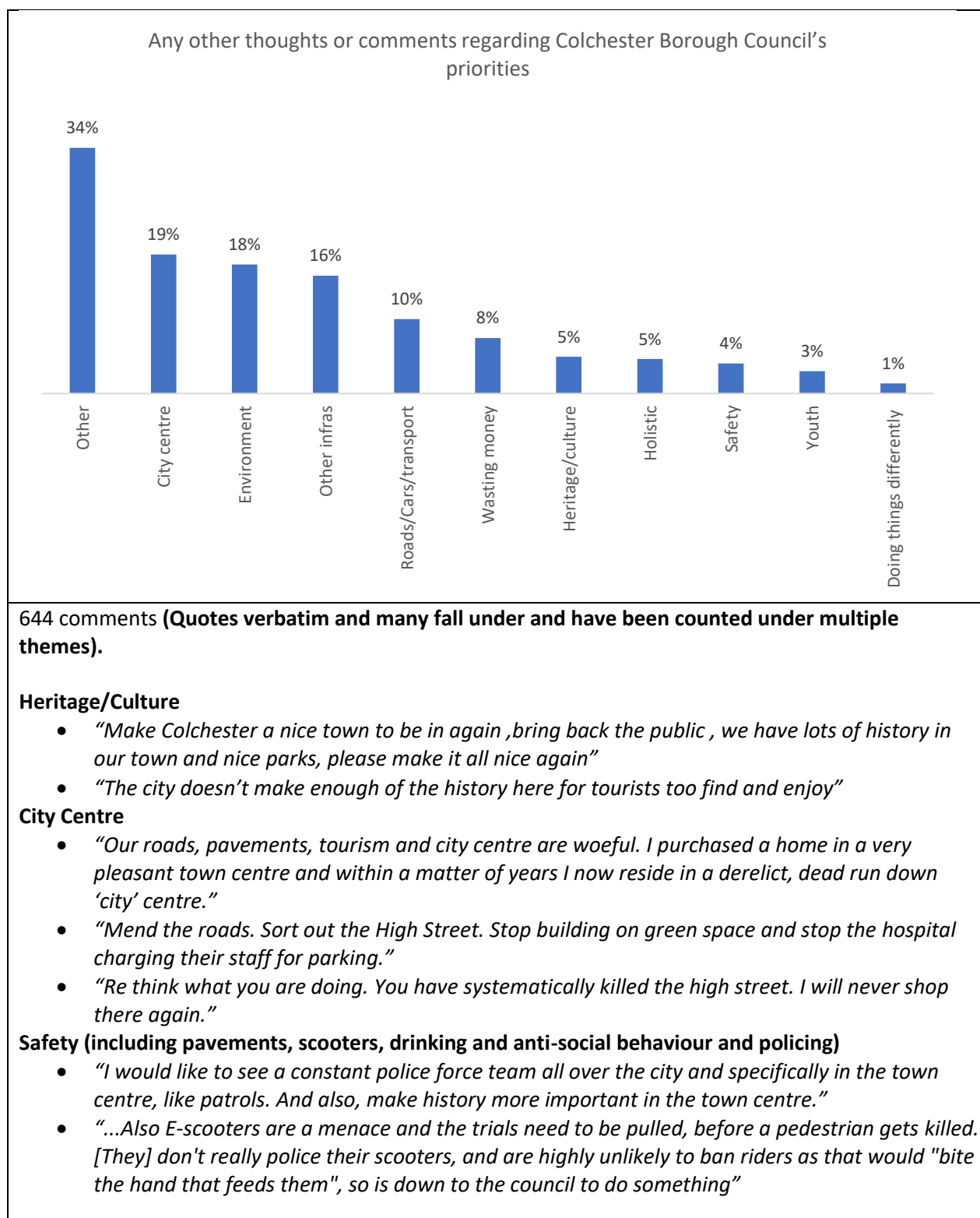
Points to note from residents;

- Colchester needs to have an identity now that it's a city, with the different boroughs, areas, parishes within Colchester. How do you bring those together, so you have an identifiable City?
- Try and gain from what other cities are doing
- We should make the most of our differences (historical sites and galleries for example)
- Look at how York/Bury St Edmonds/ Norwich etc runs its heritage/history
- [We] Like the independent pedestrianised shopping areas of Norwich - independent shops, cafes, filtering bus lane, outdoor market, cultural bits
- Have more housing in the centre of Colchester
- More entertainment venues – make Colchester an experience
- There are so many different meetings and consultations. It's confusing and they need to be joined up - it's hard to keep track of them all.



Final thoughts

Other thoughts or comments regarding Colchester borough/city council priorities from residents
A wide variety of other comments were made. The themes echoed much of what was said across other comment boxes. New themes, such as 'Holistic' (needing a joined up approach) were given further context discussion groups.



Wasting Money

- *"Get the basics done right, before wasting money on publicity stunts. Invest in the youth of Colchester. No more housing without more local services. Schools, hospitals, GPs"*
- *"Stop wasting money on cycle lanes and park and ride as residents don't care for either scheme. People have cars and will always continue to drive them, the council just needs to wake up to the fact and accept it."*
- *"They must ensure that money is spent carefully"*

Environment (including green spaces, Middlewick Ranges, housing developments on green land, parks, recycling and air pollution/green transport).

- *"Priorities should always be people and nature."*
- *"And I will repeat for emphasis - Your treatment of Climate Change as just one of a set of things the council might / might not do demonstrates that you have not understood the situation facing us. Reducing climate damage needs to be 'baked in' to the way the council runs (like equality, or violence in the workplace), not an optional part if it can be bothered."*
- *"Simplify doorstep recycling."*

Youth

- *"I believe the council are doing there best but there priories are not in the right place. There need to be more done for the younger generation and keeping the town centre a place to go - stop allowing shops to close et marks and Spencer's"*
- *"At times the town is beholden to a vociferous minority of an often older generation. Successful towns and cities are built upon a strong economy attracting young, vibrant, highly skilled people and their families to them. Not only do we need to encourage these types of business we need to be a town/city that those young people want to come and live in..."*

Holistic (mentioning and including other local stakeholders such as the police and ECC and/or the need for a more 'joined up approach' in general)

- *"It would be excellent if colchester could assume responsibility for our roads."*
- *"I would like to see a constant police force team all over the city and specifically in the town centre, like patrols. And also, make history more important in the town centre."*
- *"Break away from Essex county council. Stop having elections every year it's a waste of money & people are fed up of it"*

Roads/Cars/transport

- *"Safe areas with less crime, cheaper public transport"*
- *"Potholes are everywhere"*
- *"I feel strongly that we need to look at the road network. The accessibility of the town centre is killing it and breaking our road network. We need a plan to seriously improve the state of the town centre."*

Doing Things Differently

- *"Visit other successful towns. Question what happens in Colchester. Don't accept the same habits. Challenge everything"*
- *"I think the general idea is on right track, the execution needs to be improved, try to innovate and experiment with new projects"*
- *"The current council needs to start thinking outside the box. They don't work together but seem to want to promote their own individual priorities but don't reflect what most people want."*

Other (Comments which are unable to be themed, 'other' infrastructure not included in 'road' theme)

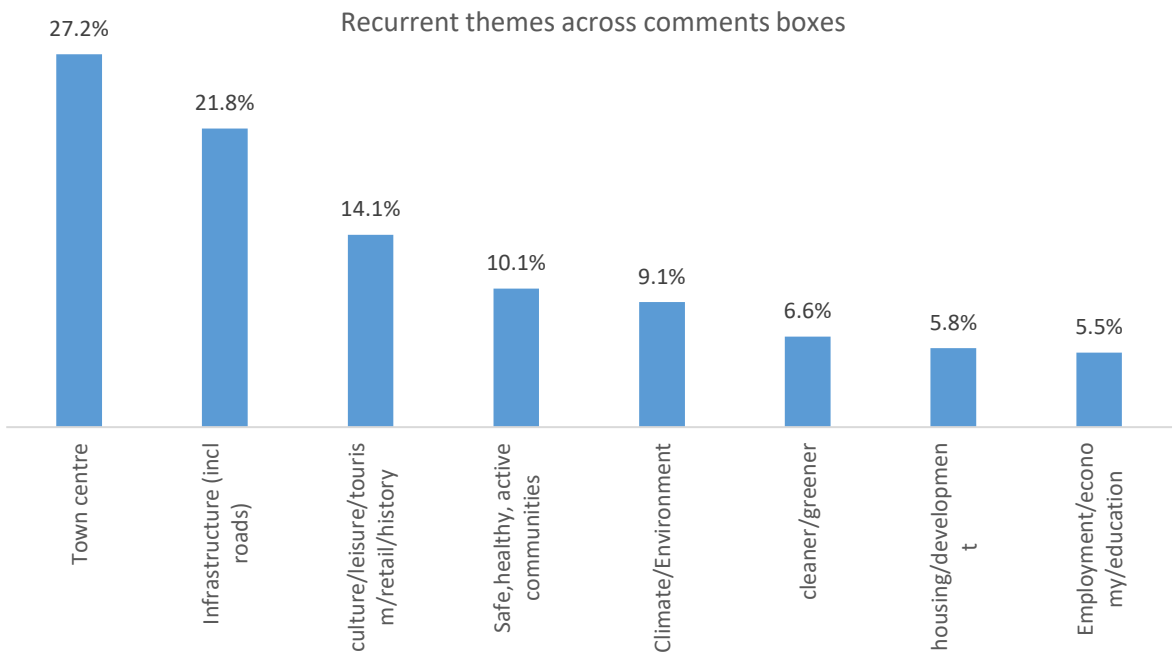
- *"Just fix things when broken, roads, barriers. Play areas fixed."*
- *"Another priority should be schools and catchment areas. More schools need to be built and catchment areas better governed. There is so much traffic every morning and afternoon caused by parents having to drive their children across town"*
- *"I think homelessness and begging should be prioritised a small it often seems that charities and church groups have to pick up this help for people."*

Final thoughts from member & councillors

Final thoughts from members and parish councillors 15 comments (random, verbatim and anonymous)
<i>"Ask the residents for THEIR priorities"</i>
<i>"Simplify them. Communicate more."</i>
<i>"Zone teams working in the community and with the community"</i>
<i>"Looks are everything, if the city looks smart, it looks prosperous and people will take a pride in it, visitor numbers will increase. Make Colchester easy to access by whatever means. At the moment the bus stops are confusing. We need to insist of high quality architectural design on all"</i>
<i>"I worry that the new found city status will see the council look towards 'vanity' projects, rather than creating the foundations on which to build from."</i>
<i>"Don't forget the rural parishes which often feel left out."</i>
<i>"I would like to see more autonomy for Parishes to manage local affairs"</i>

Recurrent themes across comment boxes

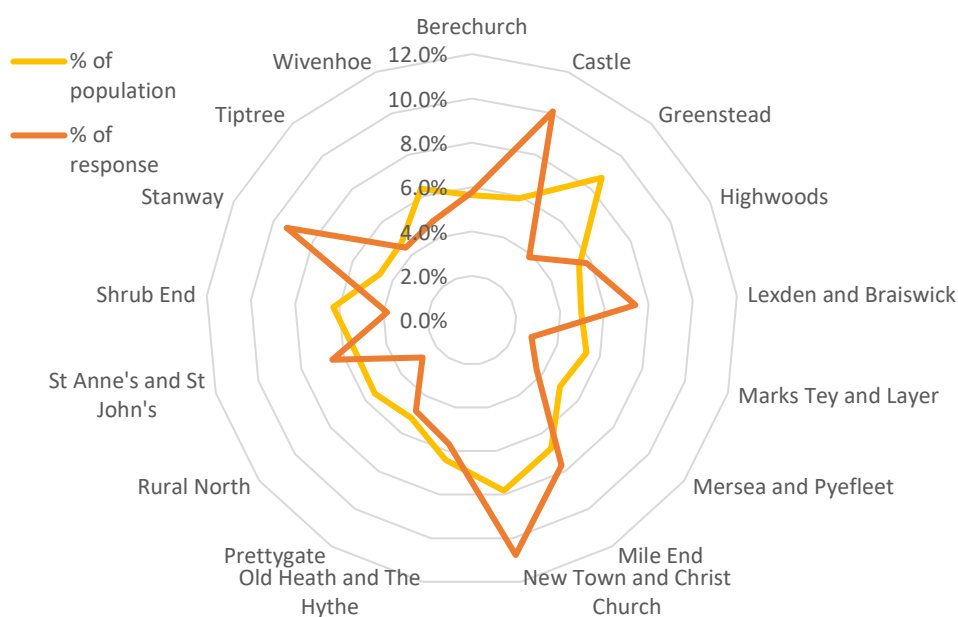
Overall, the town centre was mentioned most frequently. Across all open text boxes (totalling 3208 comments) the Town centre was mentioned by 27% of respondents (in 874 open text boxes). Other recurring themes included Infrastructure (incl roads); culture/leisure/tourism/retail/history; Safe, healthy, active communities; climate/environment; cleaner/greener; housing/development and employment/economy/education...



Achieved sample of residents

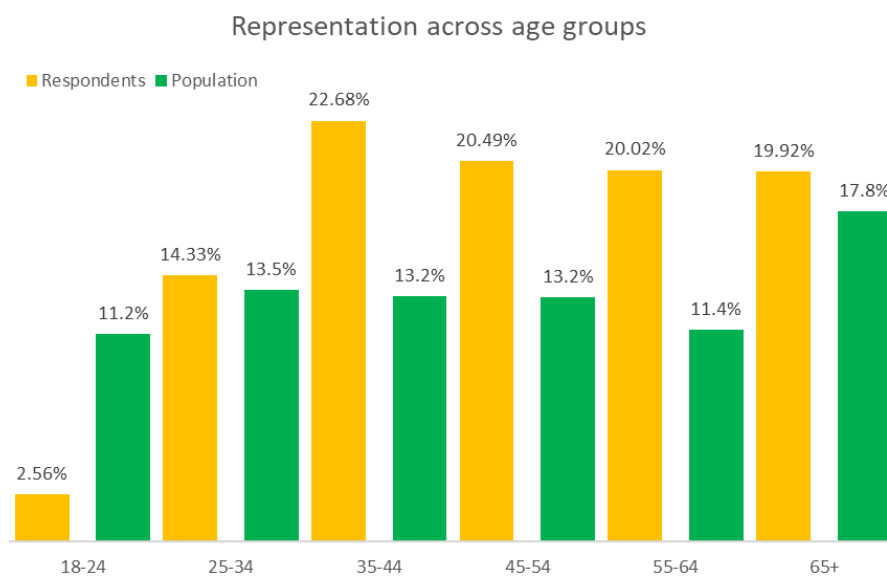
Respondents by ward

- There was some over representation in some wards (Stanway, Lexden & Braiswick, New Town & Christ church, and Castle)
- There was a underrepresentation in Greenstead, Mersea & Pyfleet and the Rural North.



Respondents by Age and Gender

- Good representation in the 25 to 34 and 65+ age groups.
- More females (63%) than males responded to the survey.



Respondents by Ethnicity and Disability

- 4.9% of survey respondents said they were of black or minority ethnic background, this is lower than the general population (12.5%). 8.7% preferred not to say.

	Respondents %	Population (2021 census) %
BAME	4.9%	13.0%
Prefer not to say	8.7%	
White British	86.4%	87.0%

- 12% of respondents said they considered themselves to have a disability.
- This is lower than the estimate for the Eastern region (23%)² but could be due to under reporting (those who do not consider their disability as such).

Members & Councillors by ward

Members and councillors responded from a variety of wards to the member/councillor version of the survey. Wards with a higher number of respondents contain a higher number of parishes. E.g. the Rural north has 11 parishes.

Ward	%	Count
Berechurch	2.63%	1
Castle	2.63%	1
Greenstead	5.26%	2
Lexden & Braiswick	2.63%	1
Marks Tey and Layer	10.53%	4
Mersea and Pyefleet	2.63%	1
Mile End	7.89%	3
New Town and Christchurch	2.63%	1
Prettygate	5.26%	2
Rural North	21.05%	8
Shrub End	2.63%	1
St Anne's and St John's	2.63%	1
Stanway	2.63%	1
Tiptree	2.63%	1
Wivenhoe	5.26%	2
not given	18.42%	7
not known	2.63%	1
Grand Total	100.00%	38

² [Family Resources Survey: financial year 2020 to 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2020-to-2021)

Appendices of tables

Appendix 1 - I feel a sense of community in the area of Colchester

AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREFER NOT TO SAY	(BLANK)	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	15%	6%	5%	6%	9%	9%	57%	40%	10%
DISAGREE	19%	20%	17%	21%	18%	24%	17%	20%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	26%	24%	29%	28%	34%	27%	17%	20%	28%
AGREE	41%	44%	39%	36%	33%	33%	9%	20%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	0%	7%	10%	8%	6%	7%	0%	0%	7%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

GENDER	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	(blank)	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	8%	0%	56%	17%	10%
DISAGREE	22%	18%	25%	12%	21%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	27%	32%	0%	14%	17%	28%
AGREE	36%	36%	75%	16%	38%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	8%	6%	0%	2%	8%	7%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DISABILITY	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	didn't answer	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	35%	13%	16%	10%
DISAGREE	19%	22%	22%	21%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	28%	24%	34%	24%	28%
AGREE	39%	20%	23%	31%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	7%	0%	9%	7%	7%

DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

ETHNICITY	ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	CHINESE	MIXED	OTHER ETHNIC GROUP	PREFER NOT TO SAY	WHITE	DIDN'T ANSWER	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5%	0%	0%	6%	0%	37%	7%	40%	10%
DISAGREE	5%	13%	0%	12%	40%	14%	21%	7%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	37%	13%	80%	29%	20%	28%	27%	27%	28%
AGREE	37%	50%	20%	29%	40%	21%	37%	13%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	16%	25%	0%	24%	0%	0%	7%	13%	7%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

I feel a sense of community in the area of Colchester

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREF ER NOT to Say	(bl an k)	Grand Total
Stro ngly Dis agr ee	15%	6%	5%	6%	9%	9%	57%	40%	10%
Disa gree	19%	20%	17%	21%	24%	24%	17%	20%	20%
Neit her Agr ee nor Dis	26%	24%	22%	22%	27%	27%	17%	20%	28%

agree										
Agree	41%	44%	39%	36%	33%	9%	20%	35%		
Strongly Agree	0%	7%	10%	8%	6%	7%	0%	0%	7%	
Don't Know	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Gender	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	(blank)	Grand Total
Strongly Disagree	6%	8%	0%	56%	17%	10%
Disagree	22%	18%	25%	12%	21%	20%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	27%	32%	0%	14%	17%	28%
Agree	36%	36%	75%	16%	38%	35%
Strongly Agree	8%	6%	0%	2%	8%	7%

Don't Know	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%													
Grand Total				100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
WARD	BERECHURCH	CASTLE	GREENSTEAD	HIGHWOODS	LEXDEN AND BRAISWICK	MARKS TEY AND LAYER	MERSEA AND PYEFLEET	MILE END	NEW TOWN AND CHRIST	OLD HEATH AND THE	PRETTYGATE	RURAL NORTH	SHRUB END	ST ANNE'S AND ST	STANWAY	TIPTREE	WIVENHOE	(BLANK)	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	8%	4%	13%	10%	4%	7%	8%	5%	8%	10%	4%	0%	7%	10%	5%	9%	8%	49%	10%
DISAGREE	23%	15%	18%	25%	22%	17%	14%	18%	11%	27%	24%	41%	19%	33%	22%	13%	22%	16%	20%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	28%	21%	33%	37%	38%	31%	39%	29%	22%	14%	33%	24%	35%	15%	35%	29%	30%	14%	28%
AGREE	28%	45%	35%	25%	31%	38%	33%	38%	49%	34%	35%	24%	34%	33%	33%	47%	36%	20%	35%
STRONGLY AGREE	10%	14%	3%	3%	5%	7%	6%	10%	11%	15%	2%	10%	4%	8%	4%	2%	4%	1%	7%
DON'T KNOW	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Appendix 2 I enjoy living/working in Colchester

I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREFER NOT TO SAY	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE		4%	1%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%
DISAGREE		11%	9%	8%	11%	10%	12%	10%
DON'T KNOW		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE		15%	14%	14%	17%	17%	23%	20%
AGREE		52%	58%	52%	50%	47%	40%	48%
STRONGLY AGREE		19%	19%	24%	20%	22%	20%	20%

GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY GENDER	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total			
STRONGLY DISAGREE	2%	4%	0%	0%	3%			
DISAGREE	10%	9%	0%	7%	10%			
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%			
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	17%	17%	0%	69%	20%			
AGREE	49%	50%	75%	21%	48%			
STRONGLY AGREE	21%	20%	25%	3%	20%			
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			
I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY ETHNICITY	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%	3%
DISAGREE	11%	0%	20%	6%	20%	12%	10%	10%
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	16%	13%	20%	24%	20%	51%	16%	20%
AGREE	47%	50%	60%	41%	20%	31%	50%	48%
STRONGLY AGREE	21%	38%	0%	29%	40%	5%	21%	20%
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY DISABILITY	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total				
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3%	2%	3%	3%				
DISAGREE	8%	11%	16%	9%				
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%				
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	16%	47%	23%	19%				
AGREE	51%	35%	43%	49%				

STRONGLY AGREE	22%	5%	16%	20%														
GRAND TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%														
I ENJOY LIVING/WORKING IN COLCHESTER BY WARD	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	The Hythe	Old Heath and Prettivate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tiptree	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3%	2%	5%	3%	0%	7%	11%	1%	2 %	5%	2%	3 %	1 %	3%	3 %	2 %	2 %	3 %
DISAGREE	8%	4%	8%	10%	9%	7%	14%	14%	9 %	14%	4%	28 %	6 %	15%	1 0 %	9 %	10 %	10 %
DON'T KNOW	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0 %	0%	2%	0 %	0 %	0%	0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	20%	9%	23%	20%	18%	17%	25%	11%	17 %	19%	8%	14 %	19 %	21%	1 9 %	22 %	24 %	17 %
AGREE	47%	50%	40%	50%	55%	52%	42%	55%	51 %	39%	68 %	38 %	51 %	38%	4 7 %	53 %	52 %	50 %
STRONGLY AGREE	22%	35%	25%	17%	18%	17%	8%	19%	21 %	24%	16 %	17 %	22 %	23%	2 1 %	13 %	12 %	21 %

Appendix 3 I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester

I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY AGE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	PREFER NOT TO SAY	GRAND TOTAL
STRONGLY DISAGREE	18.5%	2.6%	5.0%	7.0%	9.7%	8.8%	56.6%	9.5%
DISAGREE	3.7%	13.9%	10.9%	15.0%	17.9%	20.5%	15.1%	15.2%
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	37.0%	25.2%	23.8%	25.2%	22.7%	26.8%	9.4%	24.3%
AGREE	22.2%	43.7%	44.8%	41.6%	39.6%	32.7%	18.9%	39.0%
STRONGLY AGREE	18.5%	14.6%	15.5%	11.2%	10.1%	10.7%	0.0%	12.0%
DON'T KNOW	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%

GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%										
I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY DISABILITY	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total															
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6.7%	33.9%	10.4%	8.7%															
DISAGREE	13.3%	19.6%	22.6%	14.7%															
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	23.9%	23.2%	31.3%	24.7%															
AGREE	42.7%	23.2%	27.8%	39.8%															
STRONGLY AGREE	13.4%	0.0%	7.8%	11.9%															
DON'T KNOW	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%															
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%															
I WOULD RECOMMEND OTHER PEOPLE TO LIVE OR WORK IN COLCHESTER BY WARD	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Hythe	Old Heath and The	Prettygate	Rural North	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Tiptree	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
STRONGLY DISAGREE	3.4%	2.9%	7.7%	8.3%	1.3%	10.3%	21.6%	5.1%	7.2%	8.5%	6.1%	10.3%	5.9%	12.5%	9.4%	4.4%	10.0%	7.1%	
DISAGREE	13.6%	10.7%	10.3%	15.0%	23.4%	6.9%	10.8%	8.9%	13.5%	25.4%	14.3%	31.0%	17.6%	17.5%	15.6%	15.6%	16.0%	15.	
NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	37.3%	20.4%	28.2%	28.3%	24.7%	31.0%	32.4%	21.5%	19.8%	16.9%	28.6%	6.9%	25.0%	15.0%	31.3%	28.9%	28.0%	24.	
AGREE	28.8%	45.6%	35.9%	31.7%	41.6%	44.8%	29.7%	49.4%	45.0%	33.9%	44.9%	37.9%	44.1%	45.0%	32.3%	46.7%	42.0%	40.	
STRONGLY AGREE	16.9%	20.4%	15.4%	16.7%	9.1%	6.9%	5.4%	15.2%	14.4%	15.3%	6.1%	13.8%	7.4%	10.0%	11.5%	4.4%	4.0%	12.	

DON'T KNOW	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester by Central/urban wards														
	Berechurch	Castle	Greenstead	Highwoods	Lexden and Braiswick	Mile End	New Town and Christ Church	Old Heath and The Hythe	Prettygate	Shrub End	St Anne's and St John's	Stanway	Wivenhoe	Grand Total
Strongly Disagree	3.4%	2.9%	7.7%	8.3%	1.3%	5.1%	7.2%	8.5%	6.1%	5.9%	12.5%	9.4%	10.0%	6.4%
Disagree	13.6%	10.7%	10.3%	15.0%	23.4%	8.9%	13.5%	25.4%	14.3%	17.6%	17.5%	15.6%	16.0%	15.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	37.3%	20.4%	28.2%	28.3%	24.7%	21.5%	19.8%	16.9%	28.6%	25.0%	15.0%	31.3%	28.0%	24.7%
Agree	28.8%	45.6%	35.9%	31.7%	41.6%	49.4%	45.0%	33.9%	44.9%	44.1%	45.0%	32.3%	42.0%	40.4%
Strongly Agree	16.9%	20.4%	15.4%	16.7%	9.1%	15.2%	14.4%	15.3%	6.1%	7.4%	10.0%	11.5%	4.0%	13.0%
Don't Know	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

I would recommend other people to live or work in Colchester by Rural/outer wards					
Row Labels	Marks Tey and Layer	Mersea and Pyefleet	Rural North	Tiptree	Grand Total
Strongly Disagree	10.3%	21.6%	10.3%	4.4%	11.4%
Disagree	6.9%	10.8%	31.0%	15.6%	15.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	31.0%	32.4%	6.9%	28.9%	25.7%
Agree	44.8%	29.7%	37.9%	46.7%	40.0%
Strongly Agree	6.9%	5.4%	13.8%	4.4%	7.1%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix 4 - Priorities

PRIORITY 1 BY AGE

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer Not to Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	19.2%	25.2%	41.0%	38.6%	35.3%	36.2%	12.2%	34.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	23.1%	25.2%	29.7%	22.2%	21.2%	20.3%	6.1%	23.0%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	7.7%	5.0%	6.8%	12.2%	10.9%	11.9%	63.3%	12.1%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	30.8%	20.9%	10.8%	9.0%	14.1%	14.1%	4.1%	13.3%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	19.2%	23.7%	11.7%	18.0%	18.5%	17.5%	14.3%	17.2%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY AGE

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer Not to Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	26.9%	35.3%	27.9%	28.0%	26.6%	30.5%	32.7%	29.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	3.8%	15.8%	20.7%	13.2%	13.0%	18.1%	16.3%	16.0%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	34.6%	23.0%	29.3%	29.1%	20.7%	15.8%	36.7%	24.8%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	19.2%	15.8%	10.4%	18.0%	22.8%	21.5%	2.0%	16.7%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	15.4%	10.1%	11.7%	11.6%	16.8%	14.1%	12.2%	13.0%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 1 BY GENDER

	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	36.8%	34.0%	25.0%	16.7%	34.8%

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	22.7%	24.8%	25.0%	11.1%	22.7%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	8.9%	10.2%	0.0%	57.4%	12.0%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	14.3%	12.6%	25.0%	3.7%	13.2%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	17.3%	18.4%	25.0%	11.1%	17.3%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY GENDER

	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.8%	29.3%	25.0%	33.3%	29.2%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	16.7%	15.3%	25.0%	14.8%	16.2%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	25.4%	23.1%	50.0%	29.6%	25.1%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	16.7%	18.7%	0.0%	3.7%	16.5%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	12.3%	13.6%	0.0%	18.5%	13.0%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY1 BY ETHNICITY

	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	52.9%	33.3%	66.7%	18.8%	40.0%	20.9%	35.8%	34.6%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	11.8%	0.0%	0.0%	18.8%	20.0%	19.8%	24.1%	23.2%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	20.0%	38.4%	9.1%	11.6%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	5.9%	16.7%	33.3%	12.5%	20.0%	7.0%	14.0%	13.3%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	23.5%	50.0%	0.0%	43.8%	0.0%	14.0%	17.0%	17.3%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY ETHNICITY

	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	11.8%	33.3%	33.3%	37.5%	40.0%	33.7%	29.1%	29.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	35.3%	16.7%	0.0%	18.8%	20.0%	8.1%	16.5%	16.1%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	35.3%	0.0%	33.3%	18.8%	0.0%	29.1%	24.6%	24.8%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	11.8%	50.0%	33.3%	6.3%	40.0%	10.5%	17.3%	16.8%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	18.8%	0.0%	18.6%	12.6%	12.9%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY DISABILITY

	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	36.2%	18.5%	31.1%	34.4%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	23.3%	20.4%	18.9%	22.6%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	9.3%	38.9%	12.3%	11.5%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	13.3%	9.3%	20.8%	13.9%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	17.9%	13.0%	17.0%	17.5%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

PRIORITY 2 BY DISABILITY

	No	Prefer Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.8%	29.6%	34.0%	29.5%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	16.5%	14.8%	17.0%	16.5%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	24.6%	25.9%	18.9%	24.0%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	16.5%	13.0%	21.7%	16.9%
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	13.6%	16.7%	8.5%	13.1%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

[illegible]

PRIORITY 2 BY CENTRAL/URBAN														
	Grand Total	Wivenhoe	Stanway	St Anne's and St John's	Shrub End	Prettygate	Old Heath and The Hythe	New Town and Christ Church	Mile End	Lexden and Bratwick	Highwoods	Greenstead	Castle	Berechurch
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	13.9%	4.3%	8.1%	11.1%	22.0%	15.2%	13.5%	21.9%	10.0%	16.7%	7.5%	2.7%	21.7%	11.5%
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	29.6%	27.7%	32.6%	36.1%	30.5%	17.4%	28.8%	29.2%	34.3%	29.2%	24.5%	35.1%	29.3%	28.8%
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	17.6%	17.0%	20.9%	16.7%	15.3%	23.9%	19.2%	14.6%	12.9%	11.1%	20.8%	29.7%	16.3%	17.3%
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	23.6%	34.0%	25.6%	19.4%	16.9%	30.4%	23.1%	14.6%	18.6%	30.6%	26.4%	27.0%	20.7%	28.8%
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	15.5%	17.0%	12.8%	16.7%	15.3%	13.0%	15.4%	19.8%	24.3%	12.5%	20.8%	5.4%	12.0%	13.5%
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PRIORITY 2 BY RURAL/OUTSKIRTS														
	Grand Total	Tiptree	Rural North	Merssea and Pyefleet	Marks Tey and Layer									
CREATING SAFE, HEALTHY AND ACTIVE COMMUNITIES	28.7%	22.0%	37.0%	32.4%	25.9%									
THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE	20.9%	17.1%	14.8%	14.7%	40.7%									
GROWING A FAIR ECONOMY SO EVERYONE BENEFITS	26.4%	26.8%	37.0%	32.4%	7.4%									
DELIVERING HOMES FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED THEM	16.3%	26.8%	7.4%	17.6%	7.4%									
CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE AND CULTURE	7.8%	7.3%	3.7%	2.9%	18.5%									
GRAND TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%									

Appendix 5 – Budget spend

Budget spend ranked 1 or 2

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Prefer Not to Say	Grand Total
ARTS AND TOURISM	7%	9%	5%	6%	10%	9%	16%	8%
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	30%	24%	26%	27%	33%	37%	12%	28%
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	11%	15%	13%	16%	12%	10%	2%	13%
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%
ENVIRONMENT	78%	83%	87%	88%	88%	92%	43%	85%
MUSEUMS	11%	10%	6%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	30%	47%	48%	38%	41%	35%	69%	43%
SPORT AND LEISURE	15%	4%	6%	9%	3%	2%	8%	6%
SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	19%	6%	7%	6%	4%	6%	41%	8%
Gender	Female	Male	Other Gender	Prefer Not To Say				
ARTS AND TOURISM	7%	10%	0%	14%				
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	29%	32%	0%	7%				
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	15%	8%	50%	9%				
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	1%	1%	0%	0%				
ENVIRONMENT	88%	87%	75%	47%				
MUSEUMS	7%	10%	25%	7%				
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	44%	36%	50%	75%				
SPORT AND LEISURE	4%	7%	0%	5%				

SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	5%	9%	0%	35%				
	200%	200%	200%	200%				
Ethnicity	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black Britis h	Chinese	Mixed	Other Enthic Group	Prefer Not To Say	White	Grand Total
ARTS AND TOURISM	14%	20%	0%	7%	20%	11%	7%	8%
BUILDING MAINTENANC E	36%	60%	50%	20%	0%	13%	30%	29%
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	7%	0%	0%	40%	20%	10%	13%	13%
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
ENVIRONMEN T	79%	100%	75%	87%	100%	62%	88%	86%
MUSEUMS	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	12%	8%	8%
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES	36%	0%	50%	33%	20%	62%	41%	43%
SPORT AND LEISURE	7%	0%	0%	7%	20%	6%	5%	5%
SPORTS AND PLAYING FIELDS	21%	0%	0%	7%	20%	24%	6%	8%
Disability	No	Prefe r Not To Say	Yes	Grand Total				
ARTS AND TOURISM	8%	15%	8%	8%				
BUILDING MAINTENANC E	29%	27%	32%	29%				
COMMUNITY INITIATIVES	11%	5%	23%	12%				
CORPORATE FUNCTIONS	1%	0%	0%	1%				
ENVIRONMEN T	87%	64%	88%	86%				
MUSEUMS	7%	9%	11%	8%				

Colchester Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy to be assessed:

- Colchester's Strategic Plan 2023-26.

1. What is the main purpose of the policy?

- This plan sets out the direction and future potential for our borough. As a Council we have an ambitious range of priorities and goals.
- The Strategic Plan 2023-26 sets the framework for the Council's three-year Medium Term Financial Forecast and its Capital Programme.
- These priorities are kept under review to ensure they remain relevant and take account of changing needs and issues locally, as well as the changing legislative, financial and policy context for local government.

2. What main areas or activities does it cover?

- All Council areas and activities.

3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so what are they?

- This is will update the Council's policy framework.

4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?

- All residents, customers, businesses and partners
- Visitors to the borough.

5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?

- Colchester has a rich heritage and an ambitious future. The Strategic Plan 2020-23 sets out five key themes to build on this, and the outcomes will be based on achieving these themes, which are:
- Develop modern services for a modern city
- Respond to the climate emergency
- Tackle health, well-being and happiness
- Deliver homes for those most in need
- Grow our city's economy so everyone benefits
- Celebrate our city and our heritage and culture

The Strategic Plan will have a delivery plan which will set out the specific actions needed to achieve this.

6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:

- All Council services
- Colchester Borough Homes
- Colchester Commercial Holdings Ltd - parent company to Colchester Amphora Trading, Colchester Amphora Homes and Colchester Amphora Energy
- Town and Parish Councils
- Partners in the public, private, community, voluntary and education sectors
- Businesses
- Employers
- Essex borough/district councils
- Essex County Council
- Essex Police
- Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
- NHS
- North Essex Garden Communities
- Government departments and agencies.

7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?

The Strategic Plan is informed by a range of relevant information, data, surveys or consultations including:

[Census data](#), [ONS data sources](#), [Essex Open Data](#), [Public Health Profiles](#), [indices of deprivation](#), [Colchester Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) profile 2019](#).

We have also used the wide range of research and statistics which are shown on the Council's website [here](#) (or follow the pathway [www.colchester.gov.uk/Our Council>Local Research and Statistics>Colchester Statistics or >Census](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/Our%20Council%20Local%20Research%20and%20Statistics%20Colchester%20Statistics%20or%20Census)) which include [key statistics for Colchester](#).

This longer term view is important in ensuring that the Strategic Plan takes due account of future needs such as population growth and diversity.

We also referred to the results of a recent consultation shown here.

As priorities are developed, so the objectives and outcomes will be shared and views sought, from potential partners, key stakeholders, councillors and the public. To deliver these shared priorities, the contribution of local stakeholders and other agencies will be particularly important where the Council must work with others and where their help and contributions may be sought.

8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'¹ and those who do not²
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.³

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the 'general duty':

The Strategic Plan's broad themes, priorities and goals will all play their part in helping to further or facilitate our 'general duty'.

- The Strategic Plan is a key part of setting the direction and future potential for our City, with its themes providing support in achieving this aim. In summary:
 - Living in welcoming, tolerant and diverse communities helps to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Living in a thriving and prosperous place helps to advance equality of opportunity for everyone in fulfilling their potential.
 - Encouraging communities to meet and interact helps people to know and understand each other better, and it can support joint working on practical solutions.

A positive encouragement towards helping individuals, families and communities to flourish in the borough whatever their circumstances has been a key part of the Council's Strategic Plans since their introduction in 2002. This is backed by:

- The "Tackle health, well-being, and happiness and " theme, and its priority to "Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable
- The "Deliver homes for those most in need theme", and its priorities to "Increase the number and quality and types of homes and Meet our duty to prevent or assist those facing homelessness"
- The "Grow our city's economy so everyone benefits" theme

¹ The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

² This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

³ This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the 'protected characteristics'.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	√	The Strategic Plan is designed to work with and influence people in showing tolerance and in changing behaviours, to enable and create better local communities and better understanding. A welcoming and supportive borough will benefit all residents, whatever their personal circumstances or protected characteristics.	None identified	See 10. below
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)				
Disability	Physical		As "Age" above. It aims to create opportunities for all residents in fulfilling their potential. It helps ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place that embraces tolerance and diversity. This includes tackling anti-social behaviour such as disability harassment.		
	Sensory				
	Learning				
	Mental health issues				
	Other – <i>specify</i>				
Ethnicity ⁴	White		As "Age" above. It helps ensure Colchester is a welcoming and safe place that embraces tolerance and diversity. This includes tackling anti-social behaviour such as racial harassment.		
	Black				
	Chinese				
	Mixed Ethnic Origin				
	Gypsies/ Travellers				
	Other – <i>please state</i>				
Language	English not first language	As "Age" above.			

⁴ National Census 2011 categories are: Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian (Asian or Asian British), African, Caribbean, Other Black (Black or Black British), White and Black African, White and Asian, White and Black Caribbean (Mixed), British, Irish, Other White (White), Chinese, Other (Other Ethnic Group).

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could particularly benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could particularly disadvantage the group
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		It aims to address the increasing population – the borough's growth must be matched with opportunities for jobs, homes, infrastructure and community life, now and in the future.		
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)	√	<p>The Strategic Plan is designed to work with and influence people in showing tolerance and in changing behaviours, to enable and create better local communities and better understanding.</p> <p>This includes tackling anti-social behaviour such as sexual harassment.</p>	√	
Sex	Men				
	Women				
Gender Reassignment ⁵	Transgender/ Transsexual				
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual, Heterosexual, Gay or Lesbian				
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are married or in a civil partnership				

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

- Not applicable. The Strategic Plan is an “overarching vision” for the borough. Individual policies and practices will support its implementation, and equality impact assessments will be part of this process. Negative impacts are more likely to be identified at that point – when the detail of implementation is being assessed. Any such negative impacts can then be considered to see how they can be minimised or removed.

⁵ The protected characteristic of gender reassignment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as “a person proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.” This is a personal process that may involve medical interventions such as counselling, psychotherapy, hormone therapy or surgery, but does not have to. NB: It is generally held that transgender people disguise their features or clothing to resemble their preferred sex, whereas transsexual people wish to change their body to completely resemble their preferred sex.

11. Could the policy discriminate⁶ against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly⁷?

- No.

Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

- Richard Block, Chief Operating Officer.

14. Date of completion:

- January 2023

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

- Not applicable – EQIAs are undertaken on a three-year basis, and that matches the 'life' of this Strategic Plan 2020-23. It will however be reviewed if circumstances demand.

⁶ The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.